

# 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.

## New Sittway Port for Myanmar-India transport project to open soon



General view of the Sittway Port construction site.

**T**HE new Sittway Port, a transit transport project of Myanmar and India, will be opened soon, according to the Rakhine State Chambers of Commerce and Industry.

The new port is a multi-modal transit transport facility on the Kaladan River connecting Myanmar and India.

Currently, the port is ready for the entry and exit of international ships and plans are underway to admit the local vessels.

A total of 2,500 tonnes of quality rice from Rakhine State can be exported via the Sittway Port in early January this year and the Rakhine merchants

expect that the port would be operational during this month.

The Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project includes Sittway Port expansion, dredging for Kaladan River expansion and road construction to link Paletwa of Chin State with Mizoram state of India.

The Indian products will be transported to Paletwa via Sittway passing the Kaladan River by sea and Myanmar products will be exported by truck from Paletwa to Mizoram.

The merchants, entrepreneurs and officials of the two countries also discuss establishing a shipping line to run weekly

or monthly boat services after the port is inaugurated.

The Indian and Myanmar governments signed the Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport

Project in 2008 and the operation of the project was started in September. The Indian government invested \$484 million in the project. — TWA/KTZH



The signboard of the Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project which will be inaugurated soon.

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# Congratulatory messages from foreign heads of states on 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary (Diamond Jubilee) Independence Day

**Choe Son Hui, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Democratic People's Republic of Korea sends Congratulatory Message to U Wunna Maung Lwin, Union Minister for Foreign Affairs**

I extend my warm congratulations to you on the occasion of the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the independence of Myanmar and wish you good health as well as greater success in your work.

**Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Saudi Arabia sends Congratulatory Message to U Wunna Maung Lwin, Union Minister for Foreign Affairs**

ON the auspicious occasion of the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar which falls on 4 January 2023, I have the great pleasure to extend heartfelt congratulations and warmest wishes to Your Excellency as well as good health and happiness, and for the continued progress and prosperity of the government and people of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

## Bagan-NyaungU Ancient Cultural Zone packed with pilgrims on Pyatho Full Moon Day

BAGAN-NYAUNGU Ancient Cultural Zone was alive with the visit of domestic tourists and pilgrims to famous pagodas and religious buildings on the full moon day of Pyatho, according to the board of trustees of Buu Pagoda.

There are still more than 3,000 ancient pagodas and religious buildings in NyaungU Township, Mandalay Region. Mural paintings and ancient architecture are worth seeing and one cannot be tired of making observations in Bagan, said U Toe Maung, a pilgrim from the

Ngamyarlay Village, Yesakyo.

Bagan is always crowded with pilgrims from all parts of the country and tourists from abroad. It is breathtaking to see ancient buildings altogether in one large place. Not far from the Bagan-NyaungU, there is Mount Popa which is a must-visit for international tourists. Bagan is the region that the entire Myanmar nation must value and preserve, commented Ma Htet Ekari, a pilgrim from Mandalay Region.

Parking is difficult on the full moon day of Pyatho at fa-



Pilgrams are pictured at pagodas in Bagan-NyaungU Ancient Cultural Zone.

mous pagodas due to the large number of pilgrims and tourists that visited the Buddha Pujaniya festival of the Ananda Temple and the famous pagodas in Bagan.— Ko Kyemon/CT

Public Notice for elimination of violence

1. SO called "CRPH", "NUG" and "PDF" terrorist groups are unlawfully committing killings of monks, teachers, civil servants and general people and looting under the pretext of saying "for the people".

2. Not rendering of encouragement support and assistance to the "CRPH", "NUG" and "PDF" terrorists that are committing intimidations, killings and destructive activities could be construed as protecting lives and property of general public.

3. Giving information secretly relating to bearing of their arms, ammunition and terrorists to authorities could be tantamount to protecting lives and property of innocent people.

4 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 5 January, total figure rises to 633,700

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to 633,700 after four new cases were reported on 5 January 2023 according to the Ministry of Health.

The total number of patients who have recovered from COVID-19 in the country reached 608,331, including three new recoveries.

The death toll from COVID-19 in the country remained unchanged to 19,490 on 5-1-2023 with no new death reported from the pandemic.

## COVID-19 vaccine drive continues in various states, regions

VACCINATION is being carried out in full swing in various regions and states as the vaccination programmes are one of the most important activities in the prevention, control and treatment of COVID-19 disease.

Yesterday, doctors and nurses from public hospitals, medical teams from the Tatmadaw, and relevant health-care workers in collaboration with volunteers gave COVID-19 vaccines to 425 people from twenty-six townships in Ayeyawady Region, and 143 people from Toungoo Township in Bago Region, respectively.

—MNA



A local from Hinthada Township in Ayeyawady Region gets jabbed against COVID-19 on 5 January 2023.

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

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

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

## SPTT holds peace talks with UWSP, NDAA and SSPP delegations

THE meeting between the State Peace Talks Team and delegations of the United Wa State Party-UWSP, the National Democratic Alliance Army-NDAA and the Shan State Progress Party-SSPP took place at the National Solidarity and Peacemaking Centre in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

State Administration Council member Union Minister at the Government Office National Solidarity and Peacemaking Negotiation Committee-NSPNC Chairman State Peace Talks Team Leader Lt-Gen Yar Pyae and members – SAC Member Lt-Gen Moe Myint Tun, NSPNC Secretary Lt-Gen Min Naung – and NSPNC members Lt-Gen Min Naing, Lt-Gen Win Bo Shein and Lt-Gen Aye Win, and UWSP Vice-Chairman U Lau Yaku, NDAA Vice-Chairman U San Pae and SSPP Vice-Chairman-2 Sao Khun Seng were present at the meeting.



The State Peace Talks Team meets delegations from the United Wa State Party-UWSP, National Democratic Alliance Army-NDAA and Shan State Progress Party-SSPP in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

SPTT Leader Lt-Gen Yar Pyae and UWSP Vice-Chairman U Lau Yaku on behalf of four EAOs extended their greetings at the meeting. Plans and matters to be discussed at the meeting were negotiated by both parties. Then, participants made a discussion about the political needs of the groups and matters that remained to be discussed at the third meeting, according to the agreements from the second meeting. Afterwards, they discussed the issues of amending the basic articles of the Constitution (2008) in building a Union based on democracy and the federal system and adjourned the first-day meeting. The second day of the meeting will continue on 6 January. — MNA/CT

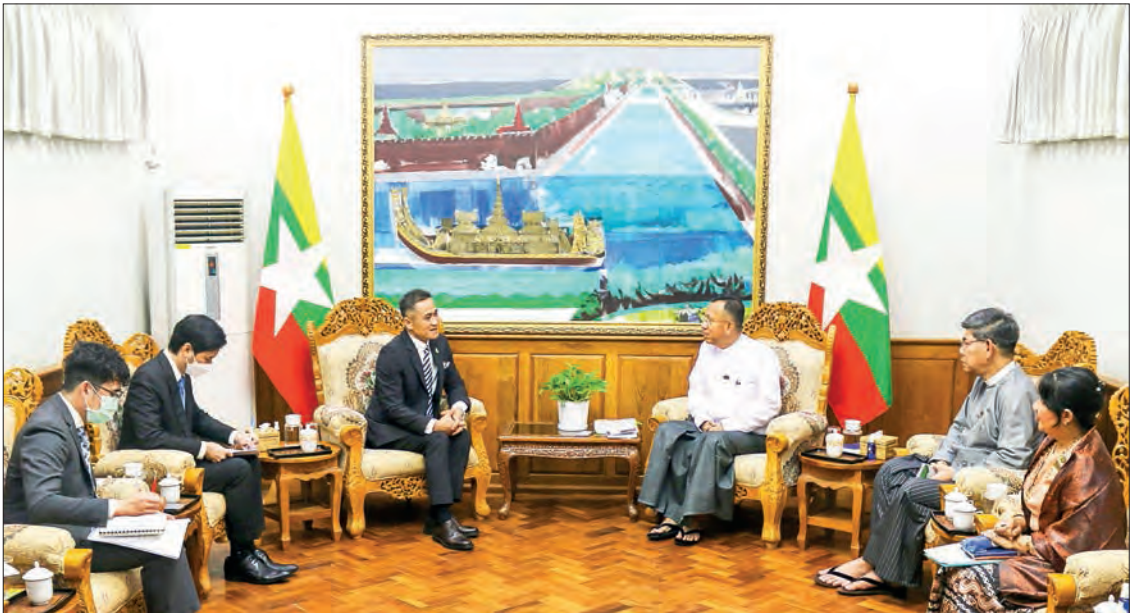
## Honorary dinner in commemoration of 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary (Diamond Jubilee) Independence Day held in Nay Pyi Taw



UNION Minister U Wunna Maung Lwin of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Union Minister U Ko Ko Hlaing of the Ministry of International Cooperation hosted the honorary dinner to title recipient retired and in-service ambassadors who are currently serving in foreign countries and high-ranking officials in the ministry yesterday evening in Nay Pyi Taw.

Union Minister U Wunna Maung Lwin expressed his special pride and joy for being awarded honorary titles and these honorary titles were awarded in recognition of services to the State. The purpose of holding the dinner is to have more friendship, mutual respect and unity among each other, he added. In the afternoon, a coordination meeting was held between the directors-general and ambassadors who are temporarily back at home from abroad on duty to receive honorary titles at the ministry. Union Ministers, deputy ministers and the permanent secretary were also present at the meeting. — MNA/ UTS

Union Minister U Wunna Maung Lwin speaks on the honorary dinner event yesterday in Nay Pyi Taw.



Union Minister Dr Kan Zaw meets Ambassador Mr Mongkol Visitsump of Thailand to Myanmar yesterday in Nay Pyi Taw.

# MIFER Union Minister receives Ambassador of Thailand to Myanmar

UNION Minister for Investment and Foreign Economic Relations Dr Kan Zaw received a delegation led by Mr Mongkol Visitsump, Ambassador of Thailand to Myanmar yesterday morning at Office Building 1 in Nay Pyi Taw.

The Union minister congratulated the ambassador on his appointment as Ambassador of the Kingdom of Thailand to the Republic of the Union of

Myanmar. They cordially discussed the matters of boosting trade, investment and economic cooperation between the two countries.

The director-general of the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration, the director-general of the Foreign Economic Relations Department and senior officials were also present at the meeting. — MNA

# MoRAC Union Minister receives Nepali Ambassador

UNION Minister for Religious Affairs and Culture U Ko Ko met Ambassador Mr Harishchandra Ghimire of Nepal to Myanmar yesterday at the parlour of the ministry.

The meeting was also attended by deputy ministers, directors-general and officials.

They cordially discussed cooperation in religious affairs between the Buddhist universities of Myanmar and Nepal, matters related to

Lumbini-Bodhgaya pilgrimage tours, the cultural exchange programme of artistic and entertainment troupes and the issues of cooperation in archaeology. — MNA/KZL

Union Minister U Ko Ko receives Ambassador Mr Harishchandra Ghimire of Nepal to Myanmar in Nay Pyi Taw Yesterday.



# MoHT Union Minister receives delegation led by Thai Ambassador

UNION Minister for Hotels and Tourism Dr Htay Aung received the delegation led by Thai Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Mongkol Visitsump at the meeting hall of the ministry in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

At the meeting, the Union minister extended greetings and the Thai ambassador friendly discussed matters relating to the promotion of cooperation in the tourism sector in the post-Covid-19 period, the purchase of health insurance by Thai tourists visiting Myanmar, further cooperation in development of MSME businesses, ,



Union Minister Dr Htay Aung meets Thai delegation led by Ambassador Mr Mongkol Visitsump yesterday in Nay Pyi Taw.

organizing the trade and tourism exhibition and promoting cooperation with the ministry in tourism-related sectors.

The Union minister responded that it was necessary to increase the number of flights between the two countries, that all the necessary arrangements would be made to facilitate the influx of foreign tourists and that the two countries would need to increase cooperation in all relevant sectors so that Thai businessmen could come and invest in Myanmar. — MNA/MKKS

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Due to limitation of space we are only able to publish **"Letter to the Editor"** that do not exceed 500 words. Should you submit a text longer than 500 words please be aware that your letter will be edited.

# Public participation high on second-day exhibitions, traditional food booths, decorated floats marking 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary (Diamond Jubilee) Independence Day



Enthusiastic students, youths and people are pictured at the second day event in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO : KO KO AYE**

A large numbers of students, youths and people participated in the second-day display of 75th Anniversary (Diamond Jubilee) Independence Day commemorative booths, traditional food booths and decorated floats at Taboung Ground of Nay Pyi Taw Uppatasanti Pagoda yesterday.

The ethnic cultural troupes welcomed participants and shared their knowledge of cultures and traditions of respective regions and states. Moreover, the decorated floats of Nay Pyi Taw, regions and states and ministries featured the characteristics, traditions



and customs of ethnic people, local products and public service activities of the ministries concerned and so the participants observed the event happily. As a special event, the ethnic traditional choral dance troupes sang and performed in front of their decorated floats and the people joined the dance happily. Moreover, the traditional food booths and souvenir shops were also crowded with people. The booths of regions and states including Nay Pyi Taw also displayed scale models of famous pagodas, photos showing customs and traditions, wearing styles, local commodities and foodstuffs, handicrafts and in-

dustrial goods, famous recreational sites, well-known persons, cultural heritages and buildings and performance of ministries concerned. Moreover, the event included drawing lots, quizzes, games and hand-painting programmes. In the evening, the artistes of MRTV and the Department of Fine Arts and the ethnic traditional choral dance troupes entertained with songs and dances. Myanmar Police Force also provided security measures by cooperating with Tatmadaw members and Fire Brigade members and the clinics were also opened in case of emergency cases.

The Printing and Publishing Department of the Ministry of Information opened mobile book shops aiming to promote the literary knowledge of the public. The exhibition comprises 25 booths of ministries, 15 booths of Nay Pyi Taw, regions and states and 15 booths of traditional foods, totalling 55, showing 26 decorated floats from ministries, 15 decorated floats from Nay Pyi Taw and regions and states, a decorated float marking the Independence Day, a Union decorated float and five decorated floats for Tatmadaw, totalling 48. Admission is free for the people and they can visit between 4 and 8 January. – Myo Sett Thit/KTZH

## CRIME NEWS

### Illegal timber, foodstuffs, consumer goods, car parts and vehicle confiscated

A combined team led by the Forest Department under the supervision of the Yangon Region Illegal Trade Eradication Task Force conducted inspections on 2 January. Officials nabbed a total of 5.1120 tonnes of sawn ironwood worth K2,556,000 from a vehicle (approximately K12 million) between 0/6 and 0/7 Milepost on Hlegu-Sartalin road. The action was taken under the Forest Law. Similarly, on 3 January,

an inspection team led by Myanmar Police Force made inspections and confiscated 4,428 cartons of foreign cigarettes without official documents from four vehicles (approximately K22,140,000) heading from Kyeinchaung village to Yanaungmyin village in Maungtau township in Rakhine State. The action was taken under Customs procedures. In addition, a total of 9.8368 tonnes of illegal timbers worth K773,974 was seized in Kyangin

and Nyaungdon townships of Ayeyawady Region and the action was taken under the Forest Law. On 4 January, a total of 0.5500 tonne of sawn ironwood worth K275,000 was captured in Thayet township and the action was taken under the Forest Law. On 5 January, at the Kawkareik (Tadakyoe) combined checkpoint, officials captured 560 pairs of sandals and 25 car tyres worth K5.3 million with-



Officials check confiscated timbers.

out official documents from two vehicles heading from Myawady to Yangon. The action was taken under Customs procedures. Therefore, seven arrests

(estimated at K43,044,974) were made on four consecutive days from 2 to 5 January, according to the Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee. — MNA/MKKS

CURRENT  
AFFAIRS

Domestic and international palm oil prices set for highs



Imported palm oil jerry cans are seen in stacks.

THE prices of domestic and international palm oil have regained high in early 2023, said a consumer in the Yangon market.

According to the weekly notice for wholesale reference price of palm oil, the FOB prices headed for four-week falls at US\$1,056 per tonne during a week from 5 December to 11 December 2022, \$1,029 for a week ending 18 December, \$1,006 for a week ending 25 December and \$994 for a week ending 1 January 2023.

Nonetheless, the prices bounced back to \$1,019 per tonne for the week ending 8 January 2023. Consequently, the whole-

sale reference price rebounded to K4,470 per viss on 2 January 2023 from K4,630 on 5 December 2022 and K4,360 on 26 December.

Similarly, the delivery order prices were K5,450-5,500 on 5 December and K5,050-5,100 on 26 December. On 3 January 2023, the price rose to K5,400 per viss, said Ko Phyto, who sends the edible oil to regions outside Yangon.

Malaysian palm oil prices moved up to 4,270 Ringgit per tonne on 3 January and slipped to 4,255 Ringgit in the evening, whereas it was priced at 3,829 Ringgit on 24 December 2022.

The market price of palm oil hit K5,580 per viss in the evening

and K5,600 in the evening of 3 January 2023 in the Mandalay market.

The 18-litre jerry can price increased to \$1,169 on 2 January from \$1,144 on 26 December.

The price differences of palm oil transported in tanks from jerry cans were relatively smaller. They stayed on the high side in August. The price of jerry showed an increase of K1,000 compared to the oil tank in November. This month, palm oil might freeze during winter. However, the demand for those jerry cans which do not simply freeze is surprisingly falling in the domestic market.

The wholesale prices of other edible oil stand at K11,000 per viss for peanut oil, K10,000-11,000 per viss for sesame oil and K12,000-13,000 per viss for sunflower oil in the Mandalay market.

The prices of peanut and sesame oil have remained unchanged in recent days. —TWA/EMM



Container trucks are seen on the Myawady-Kawkaireik Asia Road on 4 January.

Myawady-Kawkaireik Asia Road reopens on 4 January

THE Myawady-Kawkaireik Asia Highway reopened at 3 pm on 4 January after it had been closed for 40 days, according to truck drivers.

“We are now able to drive and were released from 20 days of suffering. Perishable goods have gone to waste. It is a loss for traders,” said truck driver Ko Tun Kyaw.

“The flow of goods has come back to normal due to the reopening of the road,” Ma Wah Wah, a Thai-Myanmar freight forwarder, told the GNLM.

The Myawady-Kawkaireik Asia Highway was temporarily blocked due to the clashes on 22 December in Kayin State and the explosion of a bridge near the Tawnaw waterfall. The drivers on the Myawady-Kawkaireik road had to stop over at the arrival point and the drivers who had to travel in time had to use Htaw Kaw Koe road when the Asia Highway was blocked.

Hundreds of trucks, passenger buses and private cars were stranded on the Highway and the drivers of the trucks carrying fruits had to sell them at whatever price they were offered, it is learnt.—TWA/MKKS

PHOTO NEWS

Writer Daw Than Myint Aung visits Seezayeik Twilight Villa shortly after her release from jail

WRITER Daw Than Myint Aung, who was charged under Section 505 (a) in February 2021, visited Seezayeik home for the aged as soon as she was released from the prison by the government on 4 January 2023, the Independence Day.

She served as vice-chair of Funeral Services (Yangon) and established Thukhayeikmyon Care Centre for Children Living with HIV/AIDS in 2005 and the Seezayeik home for the aged in April 2010.

When the Seezayeik was opened, there were only eight elderly citizens, and now there are over 100 elderly who are ailing or without any traceable family. —TWA/KTZH



Photos show writer Daw Than Myint Aung hugging the elderly at Seezayeik home for the aged on 4 January. PHOTO: KHAI WITT YEE HTET

# LOCAL BUSINESS

## Broken rice price rebounds

THE price of broken rice has risen again, according to the Wadan Rice Wholesale Centre. The price of broken rice was K38,000 per 108-pound bag at the end of December 2022. The price regained to K42,000 per bag on 3 January 2023, reflecting a significant increase of K4,000 per bag within a few days.

Additionally, the prices of rice also moved up in the domestic markets. The prices of old high-grade Pawsan rice increased to nearly K1 million per bag, while new varieties fetched K60,500-72,000 per bag. Other rice varieties (Kyapyan and 90-day short matured rice) were priced from K52,000-70,000 per bag.

Myanmar Rice Federation, Myanmar Rice and Paddy Traders Association, Myanmar Rice Millers Association, traders involved in rice wholesale centres (Wadan and Bayintnaung) have offered rice at a cheaper rate from 3 August 2022 every day between 9 am and 3 pm except for the government office holidays. Ayeyawady Pawsan, Shwebo Pawsan, Pawkywe and short-matured rice varieties (90 days) will be sold at a cheaper price between 35,000 and K77,000 per bag. Each household is entitled to buy one rice bag only and those resellers, traders and retailers are excluded from this scheme. – NN/EMM

## Myanmar ships over 1.639 mln tonnes of rice to external markets in past 9 months

MYANMAR conveyed over 1.639 million metric tons of rice and broken rice to foreign trade partners in the past eight months (April-December) of the current financial year 2022-2023, with an estimated income of US\$600 million, according to Myanmar Rice Federation (MRF).

In the past nine months, more than 42 exporter companies delivered over 1.264 million MT of rice and broken rice to external markets by sea, whereas over 369,162 MT were sent to neighbouring countries via border posts.

Myanmar shipped rice and broken rice to regional countries, countries in Africa and European Union member countries through maritime trade. It is also

exported to neighbouring countries, China and Thailand through cross-border posts.

China is still the main buyer of Myanmar's rice in the past nine months, purchasing over 264,000 tonnes of rice and over 237,000 tonnes of broken rice.

Myanmar exported rice to over 20 foreign markets in the past months, mostly to China (264,284 MT), followed by Bangladesh, the Philippines and other European countries such as Italy, Spain, Poland, Belgium, the Netherlands and France.

Additionally, Myanmar primarily conveyed 278,219 MT of broken rice to China and 230,488 MT to Belgium. The prices of high-



A female farming worker harvesting paddy plants in the field.

grade rice varieties stood at K60,000-100,000 per bag and K35,500-50,000 per bag for low-grade rice varieties. The export price of Myanmar's rice was relatively lower than the rates of Thailand and Viet Nam, according to MRF.

The federation targeted to ship two million tonnes of rice this financial year. Myanmar has shipped more than 1.4 million tonnes of rice and broken rice to foreign trade partners between 1 October and 31 March in the past mini-budget period (2021-2022), Myanmar Rice Federation stated.

Myanmar bagged US\$700 million from two million tonnes of rice exports to foreign countries in the past 2020-2021 financial year. — KK/EMM

## DICA blacklists 2 companies for forged documents

THE Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA) put two companies on the blacklist for submitting fake documents in tendering, as per DICA's statement released on 2 January.

The two companies; May Myat Myint Mo Construction Co Ltd and Pretty Peacock Co Ltd were found submitting forged fake bank guarantees to the department concerned after winning bidding, so they got blacklisted, and the Kayah State government issued a directive on 4 December 2022.

The registrar will publicly declare the blacklist and weak compliance matters on the DICA's website if companies registered on the online registry system, MyCO fail to comply with the existing law, rules and bylaws of the government institutions concerned and provisions stipulated in Myanmar Companies Law.

The registration and re-registration of companies on the MyCO website commenced on 1 August 2018 under the Myanmar Companies Law 2017. The number of registered companies stood at 10,699 in the past 11 months (January-November) 2022, 8,011 in 2021, 15,080 in 2020, 17,380 in 2019 and 8,506 in 2018, as per statistics of the DICA. The previously registered companies had to re-register on the MyCO and a total of 46,377 companies were re-registered on the MyCO between 1 August 2018 and 31 January 2019.

In addition, all registered companies need to file annual returns (AR) on the MyCO registry system within two months of incorporation, and at least once every year (not later than one month after the anniversary of the incorporation) under Section 97 of Myanmar Companies Law 2017. Under Section 266 (A) of the Myanmar Companies Law 2017, pub-



lic companies must submit annual returns and financial statements (G-5) simultaneously.

All overseas corporations must submit ARs in the prescribed format on MyCO within 28 days of the financial year ending under Section 53 (A-1) of the Myanmar Companies Law 2017.

As per DICA's report, over 400 companies are suspended every month for failing to submit AR forms within the due date.

As a result of this, newly established companies are required to submit ARs within two months of incorporation or face a fine of K100,000 for filing late returns. The DICA has notified that any company which fails to submit its AR within 13 months will be notified of its suspension (I-9A). If it fails to submit the AR within 28 days of receiving the notice, the system will show the company's status as suspended. Companies can restore their status only after shelling out a fine of K50,000 for the AR fee, K100,000 for restoration of the company on the Register, and K100,000 for late filing of documents. If a company fails to restore its status within six months of suspension, the registrar will strike its name off the register, according to the DICA notice. – NN/EMM

## Prices of fuel oil, gold and dollar on 5 January 2023

### Fuel Oil Price (Yangon)

|                |        |
|----------------|--------|
| Octane 92      | K1,975 |
| Octane 95      | K2,045 |
| Diesel         | K2,225 |
| Premium Diesel | K2,305 |

All of the prices are based on per litre.

### Gold Price

|                                                     |                      |
|-----------------------------------------------------|----------------------|
| The reference price of high-purity gold set by YGEA | K2,179,500 per tical |
| High-purity gold in the gold market                 | K2,739,000 per tical |

### Dollar Price

|                                                |                  |
|------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| A US dollar set by the Central Bank of Myanmar | K2,100           |
| A US dollar in the forex market                | K2,835 to K2,855 |

The above prices may change from time to time.

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09 454 237 515

# Choose the best options to shape the future

SCHOOL is not only just a site where students learn education but also a venue where teachers share their knowledge with students to be able to widen the scope of children. To do so, teachers have to constantly learn everything in both teachings for the school and general knowledge with their open souls. Only when teachers can grasp the knowledge and education that flow into their hearts and soul will they be ready to apply teaching techniques in sharing their knowledge with students.

If so, all students need to uphold social ethics and pay respect to both parents and teachers forever. All teachers should not stop their learning for both themselves and their students. So, parents need to contribute to teachers for their profession as well as to control children not be derailed from systematic learning. They can see blossoming results from their tripartite efforts. Currently, the future can be seen in their hands.

levels of unseen questions which give chances for students to answer on a self-reliant basis. So, parents and teachers need to train students to have the capacity to apply their critical thinking in analyzing everything as a basic need of practice for solving the problems they may face in society in the future. In Myanmar, students of basic education schools will face final examinations in the coming few months. If they pass the examinations, they will have the chance to step up their grades in learning education. And, their lives will meet some changes. If so, all students need to uphold social ethics and pay respect to both parents and teachers forever. All teachers should not stop their learning for both themselves and their students. So, parents need to contribute to teachers for their profession as well as to control children not be derailed from systematic learning. They can see blossoming results from their tripartite efforts. Currently, the future can be seen in their hands.

# Shaping one's life with English

By Yin New Ko

THERE are a few people who could not accept studying English because English occupied our land and ruled for nearly a hundred years. Especially, they were probably in the colonial era but my granddad was not included among them. He was a farmer who created the land to grow paddy by removing bushes and mounds in virgin land. Later, he owned many acres of land and the Chit-tis (a kind of tribe from India) whose paddy fields were close to my granddad became jealous. My granddad and Chit-tis were often in arguments associated with the paddy fields as the borders of the paddy fields are adjacent. They faced each other before the township-level court. Sometimes, my granddad lost the case in court; sometimes, the Chit-tis did. No matter how the result came, there was a difficult situation for my granddad. It was nothing but the final order of the case released by the Sub-deputy Commissioner was in English. My granddad could not read it. He had to make the external office clerk translate into Burmese (Myanmar) costing one pya for one word. He felt it was very shameful that he could not read English. He could afford the cost of the translation but his feeling was one had to be able to know English under the rule of the British. Since then, he decided his son and daughter would be made to be able to become English literate. At that moment, the village he lived viz. "Thetkelgon" which was 2 miles away from Kyaunggon, Ayeyawady Region has only 7 households. It was just a small village indeed. No one was literate and knowledgeable. He sent his son and daughter to Yekyi, a town that was over 22 miles away from Kyaunggon but it had an English Vernacular School and made them learn English. All subjects were taught in English except Burmese.

Although his plan for the children's education was accomplished, the whole village taunt my dad saying Ko Kyaw Hla had dared his children to send them away from the parents' bosoms. When my dad retold me about it, I could not guess whether it was just jealousy of the villagers or their lack of knowledge. After over 15 years, the children of U Kyaw Hla, my granddad became English literate. The children of the other villagers were left in the paddy fields of Thetkelgon village. I have mentioned the real event of my dad and aunt before I was born. At present, the time comes to a situation in which English is learned by almost everyone across the world. However, there still are people who taunt the ones who are eagerly learning English. The following interview is the opinion of an expert whose name you all are going to see soon with a well-known magazine explaining how English is shaping one's life. The rise of English as a global language seems unstoppable. From Tunis to Tokyo, from Nairobi to New Delhi, good English skills are seen as highly desirable. According to the CEFR Language Exam Resource Centre: "English language instruction for non-native speakers is a \$63-billion-a-year industry." Who, though, might be losing out in the rush to learn English, and is the ascendancy of one language in business, culture, politics, and academia a good thing? Spotlight spoke to the American linguist and lawyer Rosemary Salomone about her latest book, *The Rise of English: Global Politics and the Power of Language*, in which she examines how English

is shaping our lives. *Spotlight:* Your book *The Rise of English* looks at the role of English in politics, economics, and societies around the world. What is the appeal of this topic for you? posed – and was ultimately adopted – that would ease restrictions on teaching university courses in languages other than French, i.e., in English. This caused huge controversy, particularly among R.S.: English is considered cosmopolitan, a sign of modernity. Even young people who don't speak it well pepper their talk with English phrases. What struck me is how privileged those of us are



The rise of English as a global language seems unstoppable. ILLUSTRATION: REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE/FREEPIK

Rosemary Salomone: I was always interested in languages. My doctorate is in linguistics and, while I was working on it, I was developing and running bilingual programs for French Haitian, Italian, and Spanish-speaking students in very disadvantaged neighbourhoods in New York City. So, I started to write a book about how the United States and anglophone countries were being left behind, but also how English was upending Europe. At the time, in 2013, there were two lively issues on this topic, in France and Italy. In France, a law had been pro-

the intellectual elite. At the same time in Italy, the prestigious Polytechnic Institute in Milan decided to change all its graduate courses to English within two years. About 100 professors took the institute to court to challenge this. Around this time, I also began looking at the role of English in postcolonial countries – a very different perspective on the problem of English spreading all over the world. Spotlight: You write: "For people worldwide, native English speakers are presumably the big-time winners in the language lottery."

who do speak English. We can travel the globe, go into any big city where signage will be in English, and in restaurants and hotels find someone who speaks English. And not just that: Political leaders around the world communicate in English, academic conferences are usually held in English, and scientific journals are mostly written in English – if you're a science professor, you publish in English or perish. Spotlight: Are there disadvantages to being a native speaker of English? R.S.: Well, in the US, for ex-

ample, poor children get a steady diet of mathematics and reading in English and that's very important, but they don't get what we call enrichment courses: arts, sports, music, and foreign languages. I found that few African-American students, for instance, were taking French or Spanish lessons. I looked at data on study abroad and, unsurprisingly, not many African-American or Latino students were studying abroad. Yet, we know that multiple language skills are an entrée into higher-level jobs with multinational corporations. Spotlight: Access to good-quality English-language lessons outside the Anglosphere seems very much hit-and-miss. Can you tell us more about this? R.S.: In postcolonial countries such as India, we see parents spending their last penny to send their children to fee-paying schools that are supposedly teaching them English. Even in Western Europe, from what I understand, many children are now required to learn English in primary school. In many cases, they're taught by teachers who don't speak English very well. All over the world, parents want their children to have the best possible opportunities, but what they're getting is not always particularly useful or good quality. Spotlight: In the chapters on English in the EU, it seems Germany is not promoting the use of German with the same intensity as, say, France is pushing the French language. Why do you think that is? R.S.: I think Germans are very pragmatic about learning

English. They see English as having a value in the global economy, but I also think – and this is a rather delicate subject and one I entirely understand – that since World War II, Germany has been careful not to exhibit signs of nationalism. There's lots of patriotism in the US and France, too, but I think Germany does not want to show such outward manifestations of patriotism. Spotlight: In *The Rise of English*, you say India still has a complex relationship with the English language. Can you tell us more about this? R.S.: India is probably one of the most complicated countries in terms of multilingualism. According to a 2011 census, there are over 19,000 overlapping languages in India, which is a very high level of multilingualism. At the same time, it has been unable to reconcile the tension between Hindi and English and the issue of which language was going to be dominant. English has always been a favourite language in India for government and schooling – although, from the numbers I've seen, only about four per cent of the population is fluent in English. The current government, led by Narendra Modi, is highly nationalistic and, in 2019, tried to impose Hindi in schools. There was a lot of resistance, especially in the south of India, where those who don't speak Hindi see English as their protector, their bulwark against Hindi. In the end, the plan was rejected. Spotlight: Do you think English, by its structure, is especially suited to being a lingua franca?

R.S.: Perhaps English is a bit easier because our nouns are not gendered, but then again, it's difficult because it's not phonetic. Some English words are similar to French, Italian, Spanish, or Portuguese, so those speakers might find it a little easier to navigate English vocabulary. But to me, the reason English is becoming a lingua franca is purely political. It began with the British Empire. Then, just as that empire was falling apart, in the mid-20th century, and Europe was trying to recover from the war, the US stepped in as an economic, cultural, and political power. At the same time, you had the development of organizations such as the World Bank and the British Council that was promoting a very pro-English agenda. Spotlight: If you had a wish for the development of languages in the coming years, what would it be? R.S.: I'm hoping that recent events may have been a reality check for us – seeing how we're connected in ways we didn't understand before. Certainly, the pandemic has put that to the forefront. It took a global effort to move us forward to a vaccine. The one developed by Pfizer here in the US together with BioNTech, a German pharmaceutical company, was produced largely by two scientists who were children of Turkish immigrants to Germany. I wondered if it could have been done as quickly if they had not been able to speak English together. At the same time, linguists have realized that language shapes our view of the world – and anyone lucky enough to speak more than one language understands that. XDHere, one can contemplate widely and in detail about English, the international language, as a useful tool or a beneficial device of the world, I assume. Reference: Spotlight July 2022



A pharmacist puts a bottle containing concentrated herbal granules into a machine to dispense traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) at a "mobile TCM pharmacy" in Sanya, south China's Hainan province, 20 August 2022. PHOTO: GUO CHENG/XINHUA

# TCM has unique strengths in treating COVID: expert

TRADITIONAL Chinese medicine (TCM) has unique advantages in the treatment of COVID-19 infections, a TCM expert said on Tuesday. TCM treatment can inhibit the virus, relieving clinical symptoms and preventing cases with mild symptoms from wors-

ening, said Huang Luqi, deputy head of the National Administration of Traditional Chinese Medicine, at a press conference held by the State Council joint prevention and control mechanism against COVID-19. For those with severe symptoms, integrated treatment of

Chinese and Western medicine can effectively prevent the disease development from becoming more critical or slow the progression, thus reducing the fatality rate, Huang said. The expert added that the proper use of TCM for home-based treatment can also relieve

the pressure on medical institutions and medical resources, as China has shifted the focus of its COVID-19 response strategy from infection control to case treatment to prevent severe cases. To this end, efforts have been made to roll out guide-

lines on TCM intervention for COVID-19 patients treated at home, strengthen the building of fever clinics in TCM hospitals, and ensure the supply of key traditional Chinese medicines, Huang said. — Xinhua

# South Korea’s lunar orbiter sends photos of Earth, Moon



People watch a television screen showing a live footage of a SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket launching with South Korea’s first lunar orbiter Danuri onboard from Cape Canaveral in Florida, at a railway station in Seoul on 5 August 2022. **PHOTO: JUNG YEON-JE / AFP**

SOUTH Korea’s first-ever lunar orbiter Danuri has sent black-and-white photos of the Moon’s surface and Earth, the national space centre said Tuesday.

Danuri — a portmanteau of the Korean words for “Moon” and “enjoy” — was launched on a SpaceX rocket from the United

States in August 2022 and entered lunar orbit last month.

Its images — taken between 24 December and 1 January — show the lunar surface and Earth, and were shot from less than 120 kilometres (75 miles) over the Moon, the Korea Aerospace Research Institute (KARI)

said in a statement.

The images and videos will be “used to select potential sites for a Moon landing in 2032,” it added.

Danuri is circling the Moon every two hours, the centre said.

The orbiter will begin its scientific mission next month, which includes mapping and analysing lunar terrain, and measuring magnetic strength and gamma rays.

It will also test experimental “space internet” technology by transmitting photos and videos to Earth.

President Yoon Suk-yeol has hailed Danuri’s achievements as a “historical moment” in the country’s space programme.

South Korea has laid out ambitious plans for outer space, including landing spacecraft on the Moon by 2032 and Mars by 2045.— AFP

# African scientists say green future at stake amid deforestation

THE loss of forest cover in Africa, escalated by climatic shocks, poor land-use practices and urbanization could slow down the continent’s transition to a green and resilient future, scientists said on Monday.

Speaking at a virtual forum from Nairobi, the Kenyan capital, to coincide with the 15th World Forestry Congress underway in Seoul, South Korea, the scientists called for enhanced

protection of African tropical forests to boost climate response.

Godwin Kowero, executive secretary of Nairobi-based African Forest Forum, noted that deforestation linked to governance lapses, poor farming practices and lethargic enforcement of laws is a threat to the continent’s green agenda. “Managing our forests sustainably will determine the success of green development in the continent,” he

said. “We must therefore find alternatives to charcoal and firewood in order to halt forest loss.”

He said the 15th World Forestry Congress, taking place in the South Korean capital on 2-6 May, will serve as a rallying call for African policymakers and scientists to place the resource at the centre of the continent’s quest for climate resilience at the grassroots level.—Xinhua



Fresh snow covered Mount Kilimanjaro seen at sunrise from Ambuseli game reserve in Kenya. **PHOTO: MLADEN ANTONOV/AFP**

# Construction milestone for China’s first deep-sea floating wind power platform

CHINA’S first deep-sea floating wind power platform, invested in and built by the China National Offshore Oil Corporation (CNOOC), has completed its floating body assembly, Tuesday’s edition of Science and Technology Daily reported.

It marks an important step in the construction of the world’s first offshore wind power project with a water depth of over 100 metres and an offshore distance of over 100 kilometres, said the newspaper.

The platform will be installed in an offshore oil field 136 kilometres from Wenchang,

in China’s southern island province of Hainan — where strong winds and big ocean waves posed a huge challenge to the design of the wind power platform. According to the newspaper, after the project is put into operation, the electricity generated by the turbine will be connected to the power grid of the offshore oilfield group for oil and gas production, with an annual power generation capacity of 22 million kilowatt hours — saving 7.73 million cubic metres of fuel gas and reducing carbon dioxide emissions by 22,000 tonnes.— Xinhua



Aerial photo taken on 12 June 2020 shows workers installing an offshore wind turbine at a wind farm in Fuqing, southeast China’s Fujian Province. **PHOTO: LIN SHANCHUAN./XINHUA**

LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

Coral bleaching causing ‘unnecessary’ fish fights

FISH that have lost food due to mass coral bleaching are getting into more unnecessary fights, causing them to expend precious energy and potentially threatening their survival, new research said Wednesday. With the future of the world’s coral reefs threatened by climate change, a team of researchers studied how a mass bleaching event affected 38 species of butterflyfish.—AFP

Spain confirms first death from 2021 volcano eruption

THE first death from a months-long volcanic eruption on Spain’s La Palma island in 2021 has been confirmed after a court ruled Monday that a man died from inhaling toxic gases from the volcano. The body of a 72-year-old man was found in November 2021 in the municipality of El Paso in an exclusion zone, an area that was off limits to the public without express permission due to the eruption.—AFP

HEALTH/PANDEMIC  
WORLD

NEWS IN BRIEF

Greece seeks EU support over medicines shortage

GREECE on Tuesday asked the European Commission and EU neighbours for help to tackle a dire shortage of medicines, worsened by exports of locally made pharmaceuticals.

Health Minister Thanos Plevris wrote to the Commission calling for “stepped up pharmaceutical production” across the bloc.

Greece has been battling a shortage of essential medicines for months, including antibiotics, anti-inflammatory products and cough mixtures.

“It is imperative to adopt central policies across the EU as a whole to resolve this problem,” Plevris wrote in a letter to EU Health Commissioner Stella Kyriakides.—AFP

Spain busts criminals smuggling e-waste to Africa

SPANISH police have broken up a criminal group that smuggled over 5,000 tonnes of hazardous electronic waste from Spain's Canary Islands to several African countries, authorities said Tuesday.

Police arrested 43 people suspected of having illegally shipped 331 containers of used electronics to Africa over the past two years, the finance ministry said in a statement.

The network allegedly forged customs documents for the exported waste to make it seem that the containers held second-hand goods, in an operation valued at over 1.5 million euros.—AFP

China’s Chongqing issues free medical packages to battle COVID-19

SOUTHWEST China’s Chongqing Municipality will issue free packages containing antipyretics to residents above 60 amid the spread of COVID-19.

Authorities have ordered 2.4 million “health packages”, containing antipyretics, traditional Chinese medicines, medical-grade masks, and antigen test kits, the municipal government said Tuesday evening. They will be given out before Thursday, prioritizing rural residents, people above 80, and those with underlying diseases.

Those with mobile difficulties can have the packages delivered to their doorsteps, officials said.

Chongqing is the latest among a number of Chinese cities to issue such care packages as rising COVID-19 cases prompted a rush buying of medicines, such as fever and pain relievers ibuprofen and paracetamol.—Xinhua



A staff member checks a passenger’s body temperature at the entrance of the Wanzhou North Railway Station, southwest China’s Chongqing Municipality, 1 February 2020. **PHOTO: WANG QUANCHAO / XINHUA/FILE**

Airlines slam ‘ineffective’ Covid tests for China travellers



A passenger wearing a face shield and mask amid the Covid-19 pandemic boards a domestic flight at Shanghai Pudong International Airport in Shanghai on 3 January 2023 **PHOTO: HECTOR RETAMAL / AFP**

THE global airline association criticized on Wednesday decisions by governments to impose Covid tests and other measures on travellers from China as ineffective “knee-jerk” reactions.

A growing number of countries, including the United States, Canada, Japan and France, have insisted that all travellers from

China provide negative Covid tests before arrival.

The measures have been imposed as China has been hit by a surge in infections after Beijing abandoned its strict containment measures last month.

“It is extremely disappointing to see this knee-jerk rein-statement of measures that have

proven ineffective over the last three years,” Willie Walsh, director-general of the International Air Transport Association, said in a statement.

IATA, which represents 300 airlines accounting for 83 per cent of total air traffic, argued that the coronavirus is already circulating widely within the borders of countries imposing the tests. “Research undertaken around the arrival of the Omicron variant (in late 2021) concluded that putting barriers in the way of travel made no difference to the peak spread of infections,” Walsh said. “We have the tools to manage COVID-19 without resorting to ineffective measures that cut off international connectivity, damage economies and destroy jobs,” he said.

Global passenger traffic, which was decimated by the emergence of Covid-19 in 2020, is expected to have reached 70.6 per cent of its pre-crisis level in 2022 — less than previously forecast as China had maintained strict travel restrictions.— AFP

US expands access to abortion pills through pharmacies

RETAIL pharmacies in the United States will be permitted to sell abortion pills, health officials said Tuesday, a move that could significantly expand access to the procedure after last year’s landmark Supreme Court ruling that overturned federal abortion rights.

Regulatory changes announced by the Food and Drug Administration mean that mifepristone, which is the first of two drugs used to terminate a pregnancy, will be available in local drug stores in states where abortion is permitted.

A doctor’s prescription will be needed to obtain the pills, which were previously only available from a few mail-order pharmacies or certified doctors and clinics.

Demand for abortion pills has risen since the conservative-dominated Supreme Court made a landmark ruling last June that overturned Roe v.



In a photo illustration, a person looks at mifepristone pills displayed on a smartphone on 8 May 2020, in Arlington, Virginia. **PHOTO: OLIVIER DOULIERY/AFP**

Wade, a 1973 case that had guaranteed women’s right to an abortion for half a century.

Abortion pills are already used in more than half of US procedures to terminate a pregnancy, experts say, and they have increasingly become a focus in the political and legal battle for abortion rights since the Supreme Court’s controversial decision.

Pharmacies will need to receive certification to dispense the drug, while patients will need to complete a consent form.

The FDA’s decision was welcomed by the American Civil Liberties Union. —AFP

# ECONOMY WORLD

## China, Ecuador set to sign free trade agreement



China is one of Ecuador's main trading partners, with bilateral trade estimated at more than \$10 billion annually. **PHOTO: AFP**

CHINA and Ecuador will sign a free trade agreement after almost a year of negotiations, Ecuador's president said Tuesday, with the deal expected to boost growth in the South American country.

"Good news to start 2023. The FTA negotiation between China and Ecuador has been successfully concluded," President Guillermo Lasso said on Twitter.

"Our exports will have preferential access to the largest market in the world, our industries will be able to acquire machinery and inputs at lower costs."

China is one of Ecuador's main trading partners, with bilateral trade estimated at more than \$10 billion annually.

It was Ecuador's main non-oil trade partner in the first half of 2022, the trade ministry in Quito said.

No date had been set yet for the formal signing of the deal, which would take place after formalities were completed, it said.

The agreement, once signed, will make Ecuador the fourth Latin American country to have a free trade deal with China, after Costa Rica, Peru and Chile. —AFP

## New year, cheaper beer: Dubai cuts alcohol tax

DUBAI has dropped a 30 per cent tax on alcohol sales in an apparent bid to lure tourists as competition rises between major cities in the wealthy Gulf. The cut, announced by distributors but not confirmed by authorities, looks set to slash prices that are among the world's highest, with beer routinely costing more than \$15 a pint, or half-litre.

The personal liquor licence, available to non-Muslims aged over 21 and required to buy alcohol at Dubai's small number of licenced shops, is now free, according to distributors MMI and African and Eastern.

"Buying your favourite drinks just got easier and cheaper!" MMI said in a Facebook post detailing the cuts. There was no immediate comment from Dubai authorities.

Dubai is the financial, trade and tourism hub of the United Arab Emirates, a Muslim country and major oil exporter which has gradually loosened the shackles on drinking.

Unlike neighbouring Saudi Arabia, most of the UAE is far from being a dry country, with alcohol sold in licensed venues including hotels, restaurants, bars and designated shops. It cannot be consumed in public, however.—AFP



Dubai kicked off the new year by scrapping a 30% tax on alcohol sales and making liquor licenses free, in an apparent attempt to bolster its status as the Middle East's leading business and tourism hub. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

## Venezuela receives first European cruise ship in 15 years

VENEZUELA on Tuesday received its first European cruise ship in 15 years after long being avoided by tourists due to high levels of insecurity and economic turmoil.

The Bahamas-flagged "Amadea" docked at the Caribbean island of Margarita with almost 500 passengers — mainly from Spain, France, Germany, Italy and Switzerland — on board.

"For many years Venezuela was off the radar of cruise ships," said Tourism Minister Ali Padron, as he welcomed the historic docking.

Exchange controls, product scarcity and unreliable basic services such as water and electricity have long kept foreigners at bay, forcing travel agencies to close their doors.

Venezuela "became a very insecure, high-risk destination," Reinaldo Pulido, vice-president of the Conseturismo tourism council, told AFP.

But after years of hyperinflation and a currency in free fall that plunged Venezuelans into misery and pushed millions to flee the country, the ravaged economy — and tourism sector — has recently shown timid signs of recovery.

The de facto dollarization of the economy and easing of price controls have bolstered imports, resulting in a greater variety of products on offer and new shops opening. And since last year, the country has received tourists from Russia who are unwelcome in many other countries since the start of the war in Ukraine.—AFP

## Thailand's tourism sector gears up for return of Chinese travellers

THERE'S a dearth of foreign visitors at Jim Thompson Farm, the reopening get-away tourist spot three hours drive away from Bangkok, despite the weather cooling and festive bells tolling.

Open for only six weeks of the year, the farm attracts visitors with its stunning flower

fields and local cultural experiences. However, the farm remains a hidden gem for foreign visitors though the country has been fully open to international travellers since last July.

"Visitors this year are fewer than before. It's inspiring to hear about Chinese tourists

returning in the near future! Just bring your friends here to experience a farm tour," said Nui, a vendor selling coffee at the farm who has been so excited since hearing someone speak in Chinese after nearly three years' absence of Chinese tourists. —Xinhua



The Amadea is the first European cruise ship to visit Venezuela in 15 years. **PHOTO: AFP**

German inflation drops to 8.6%  
in December: Destatis



The increase in food prices continued to be steep at 20.7 per cent. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

SUPPORTED by the government's relief measures, inflation in Germany fell to 8.6 per cent year-on-year in December, according to preliminary figures published by the Federal Statistical Office (Destatis) on Tuesday.

The increase in food

prices continued to be steep at 20.7 per cent. Energy and food prices in particular have increased considerably since the start of the Russia-Ukraine conflict and "had a substantial impact on the inflation rate", Destatis noted.

Despite the government's measures, consumers in Germany were still paying 24.4 per cent more for energy products, including household energy and motor fuels, than a year ago. The increase in energy prices slowed down, however, after Germans received one-off payments to help them cover their gas and heating costs. Within less than a year, the German government adopted three relief packages totaling 95 billion euros (100.3 billion US dollars). A "protective umbrella" worth another 200 billion euros was set up to finance a cap on gas and electricity prices.—Xinhua

Japan's new car sales fall 5.6%  
in 2022 to lowest level in 45 years

NEW car sales in Japan dropped 5.6 per cent in 2022 from the previous year to their lowest level in 45 years due to a semiconductor shortage and pandemic-caused supply chain disruptions, data from industry bodies showed Thursday. A total of 4,201,321 cars including minivehicles with engines of up to 660 cc were sold last year in the country, according to the Japan Automobile Dealers Association and the Japan Light Motor Vehicle and Motorcycle Association.

Domestic auto sales in 2022 declined for the fourth consecutive year and dropped to their lowest level since 1977 when

about 4,190,000 vehicles were sold. Sales of cars other than minivehicles fell 8.3 per cent to 2,563,184 units, according to the Japan Automobile Dealers Association data.

By brand, Toyota Mo-

tor Corp. saw a drop of 12.4 per cent to 1,217,128 units, while Nissan Motor Co's sales slipped 0.8 per cent to about 272,020 vehicles. Honda Motor Co sold 269,034 units, down 1.9 per cent.—Kyodo



Toyota Motor Corp is featuring an ultracompact electric two-seater car mainly targeted at elderly drivers and an indoor mobility device in which the user is transported in a standing position. **PHOTO: KYODO /FILE**

China's Beibu  
Gulf Port  
sees cargo  
throughput rise  
in 2022

BEIBU Gulf Port in south China's Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region saw its cargo throughput rise 16.78 per cent year on year to 7.02 million twenty-foot equivalent units (TEUs) of containers in 2022.

With advances in the new land-sea transit routes in the western region and the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) agreement, the port has been making efforts to explore supply sources in the western region of China, according to Beibu Gulf Port Group. Last year, the port opened 11 new container routes. It currently has 75 shipping routes, connecting almost all major coastal ports of the country, as well as ASEAN members. The port serves as an important transit point in the New International Land-Sea Trade Corridor, a trade and logistics passage jointly built by western Chinese provincial regions and Singapore.—Xinhua

Fuel prices surge in Italy as tax  
discount expires

GASOLINE and diesel prices in Italy have surged dramatically after a discount on fuel-related excise duties expired.

According to data from the Italian Ministry of Environment and Energy Security, national average prices were 1.64 euros (1.74 U.S. dollars) per liter for gasoline and 1.71 euros for diesel at self-service pumps during the week ending Dec. 31.

As tax discount expired, prices were 1.80 euros for gasoline and 1.87 euros for diesel respectively at self-service pumps, local media re-

ported on Tuesday. These correspond to increases of 9.8 per cent for gasoline and 9.4 per cent for diesel over the span of just a few days.

In the first days of 2023, national prices for full-service gasoline stood at 1.95 euros per liter and 2.02 euros for diesel, local media reported.—Xinhua



Gasoline and diesel prices in Italy have surged dramatically after a discount on fuel-related excise duties expired. **PHOTO: AFP**

Uruguay sees record high exports in 2022

URUGUAY'S goods exports grew 16.5 per cent in 2022 to reach a record high of 13.36 billion US dollars, the country's trade promotion agency Uruguay XXI said Tuesday. Each of the first eight months of 2022 registered year-on-year increases, while the last

four months saw drops in exports, the agency said in a report. Beef was the leading export product in 2022, bringing in 2.56 billion dollars and accounting for almost 20 per cent of the total exports, followed by soybeans, whose export more than doubled in val-

ue over 2021, generating 1.92 billion dollars, and cellulose, which brought in 1.82 billion dollars.

China was once again the top destination for Uruguayan exports, accounting for 28 per cent of total exports or 3.62 billion dollars.—Xinhua

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V MSC SUPARNA F VOY.NO. (SB252A)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V MSC SUPARNA F VOY.NO. (SB252A)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **6-1-2023** 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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# Russian frigate armed with hypersonic missiles starts combat duty

RUSSIA'S latest frigate Admiral Gorshkov with Tsirkon hyper-sonic cruise missiles on board embarked on a long-distance mission on Wednesday.

Before the warship's departure, Russian President Vladimir Putin heard reports by Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu and the frigate's commander via video link, the Kremlin said in a press release. The modern multi-purpose vessel, which is capable of pinpoint and powerful strikes against naval and ground targets, would sail across the Atlantic Ocean, the Mediterranean Sea and the Indian Ocean, Shoigu said.

The Tsirkon missiles, which can fly at a speed of over Mach 9 and cover a range of over 1,000 kilometres, are able to penetrate any air and missile defence systems, according to him. The mission is aimed at countering any threats to Russia, maintaining regional peace and stability together with friendly countries, Shoigu said, adding that the crew would practise the use of hypersonic weapons and long-range cruise missiles in various environmental conditions.—Xinhua



The new class of frigate is set to become the spearhead of Russia's surface navy. PHOTO: AFP

# Iran, Russia sign deal to build ship for Caspian Sea port



The logo of the Islamic Republic of Iran Shipping Lines mark containers being lifted from the Francorp in the Israeli port of Ashdod, Israel. PHOTO: AFP

IRAN and Russia have signed a contract for building a cargo ship for the Caspian Sea port of Solyanka, Iran's Press TV reported on Wednesday.

According to the report, the Russian side will manufacture a cargo ship for Iran to be used at Solyanka, which is located in the southern Russian city of Astrakhan and jointly developed by the two countries.

The order, which has been placed by the Islamic Republic of Iran Shipping Lines (IRISL), aims at "strengthening the transport network of the Caspian Sea" and renovating the IRISL fleet, Mehdi Akuchakian, Iran's consul-general in Astrakhan, was quoted as saying at the signing meeting with the Russian port officials. He said the vessel would be capable of carrying all kinds of cargo, indicating that the contract would boost trade and commercial relations between Iran and Russia.

"It will have a positive effect on the reduction of the final price of Iranian and Russian export goods, and as a result, the quality of life of the people of the two countries will improve," Akuchakian added.—Xinhua

WORLD: TOP HEADLINES

Ukraine's goods exports down 35% in 2022

UKRAINE'S goods exports dropped 35 per cent to 44.1 billion US dollars in 2022, a senior Ukrainian official said Wednesday.

Taras Kachka, Ukraine's trade representative and deputy economy minister, wrote on Facebook that Ukraine shipped 99.8 million tonnes of goods abroad last year.

In 2022, Ukraine's top exports included corn and sunflower oil, which generated 5.94 billion dollars and 5.46 billion dollars in export revenues respectively, Kachka wrote. Other major export items were iron ore, wheat, rapeseed, insulated wires and semi-finished steel products, he said.—Xinhua

War-themed video game fuels wave of misinformation

TROOPS battle through burning streets. Missiles take down fighter jets. Drones pulverize tanks. The dramatic visuals have the trappings of real-life combat, but they are clips from video games fuelling misinformation. Footage from the war-themed Arma 3 video game, often marked "live" or "breaking news" to make it appear genuine, has been used repeatedly in recent months in fake videos about the Russian offensive in Ukraine.—AFP

# Beijing parks see nearly 1.48 mln visitors during New Year holiday

BEIJING parks received nearly 1.48 million visitors during the three-day New Year holiday which ended on Monday, local authorities said Tuesday.

A total of 25 parks in Beijing, including the Summer Palace and Beihai Park, have launched ice and snow entertainment activities, such as ice car and ice slide, according to the Beijing Municipal Administration of Parks.

This year, the ice rink of the Summer Palace, the country's famous former royal garden — opened an area of 350,000 square metres and can accommodate nearly 4,000 people at the same time.

In addition to ice and snow activities, various exhibitions

held in parks also proved popular among visitors during the New Year holiday, said the Beijing Municipal Administration of Parks.— Xinhua

People have fun on the ice rink at Beihai Park in Beijing, China, 31 December 2022. PHOTO: XINHUA



# Pope Francis to lead ex-pontiff Benedict's funeral



Catholic worshippers pay their respects at the Myeongdong Cathedral in Seoul. PHOTO: AFP

POPE Francis will preside Thursday over the funeral of his predecessor Benedict XVI at the Vatican, an unprecedented event in modern times expected to draw tens of thousands of people.

Almost a decade after Benedict became the first pontiff in six centuries to resign, his successor will deliver the homily in the vast St Peter's Square before his body is laid in the papal tombs beneath St Peter's Basilica.

The German emeritus pope was no longer a head of state but world leaders including German Chancellor Olaf Scholz will attend the funeral, alongside European royals and more than 4,000 cardinals, priests and bishops, according to the Vatican.

Queues of people, including many priests and nuns, formed before dawn in thick fog to enter the square, across which thousands of chairs have been laid out.

"Benedict is a bit like my father, so I had to pay homage to him... to learn his faith," said Cristina Grisanti, a 59-year-old from Milan who arrived at 5:30 am. She hailed the former pope's "purity, his candour, his mildness".

Benedict, born Joseph Ratzinger, died on Saturday aged 95, bringing an end to an unprecedented situation of having two "men in white" — he and Francis — living in the Vatican.—AFP

# S Korea may scrap buffer zone pact after North's drone incursion

SOUTH Korean President Yoon Suk-yeol said Wednesday he would consider suspending a 2018 agreement that created maritime buffer zones with the North should Pyongyang "violate" Seoul's territory again.

The deal, struck during a period of high-profile diplomacy at a summit in Pyongyang, aimed to reduce military tensions along the heavily fortified border.

At the time, the two sides agreed to "cease various military exercises aimed at each other along the military demarcation line", but Pyongyang began repeatedly violating the deal last year.

North Korea fired artillery shots into the agreement's des-

ignated maritime buffer zones multiple times in 2022, and last week sent five drones across the border into South Korean airspace.

The violations have

prompted growing calls from ruling-party parliamentarians for the hawkish Yoon administration to scrap the four-year-old deal, inked under then-president Moon Jae-in.—AFP



South Korean marines and navy forces in neutral waters around Ganghwa island. PHOTO: REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE/ JUNG YEON-JE/AFP/FILE

# Peruvians clamour anew for president's removal

AFTER a fortnight-long break, Peruvians took to the streets again on Wednesday, blocking roads countrywide to demand the resignation of President Dina Boluarte, who took over from her ousted predecessor in December.

Protesters used stones and burning tires to barricade main routes in the southern regions of Puno, Cusco, Apurimac and Arequipa, as well as Junin in the centre, chanting for Boluarte to leave.

In the capital Lima, police dispersed dozens of demonstrators with tear gas as they tried to reach Congress, while

in Arequipa, officers used tear gas to break up hundreds of protesters.

Boluarte took over on 7 December as the South American country's first woman president following the impeachment and arrest of Pedro Castillo after he tried to dissolve Congress and rule by decree. Castillo, a leftist former rural school teacher and union leader, faced vehement opposition from Congress during his 18 months in office, and had been the subject of numerous criminal investigations into allegations of widespread graft.—AFP



Cardboard coffins and a sign that reads "28 assassinations by the repression, resign Dina the murderer" are seen next to members of the police during a demonstration against the government of Peruvian President Dina Boluarte in Lima on 4 January 2023. PHOTO: AFP

# Brazilian fraud case reopened against US lawmaker Santos

PROSECUTORS in Brazil said Wednesday they have reinstated over-decade-old fraud charges against US Republican Congressman George Santos, who is under fire for admitting he made up large parts of his resume.

The first-term congressman from New York, whose 2022 election win helped the Republican Party secure a narrow majority in the House of Representatives, is accused in Brazil of using a stolen checkbook to buy some \$700 in merchandise from a store in 2008, according to local media.

It is the latest in a mounting pile of legal woes for the 34-year-old, who also faces a criminal investigation in New York after admitting he lied

about graduating from university, working at Goldman Sachs and Citigroup, and otherwise "embellishing" his resume.

"The Rio de Janeiro state prosecutor's office has requested to reopen the case," the office said in an e-mail to AFP.

The case had been archived because investigators were unable to locate Santos.

But "the accused has now been elected to Congress in the United States, meaning he has a verified address", the prosecutor's office said.

It said it had filed a petition Tuesday to reopen the case with a criminal court in Niteroi, a city outside Rio where the alleged crime occurred. Santos was not immediately reachable for comment.—AFP



# Ronaldo's Saudi debut on hold over player quota: sources

PORTUGUESE superstar Cristiano Ronaldo faces a wait to make his Al Nassr debut because the Saudi club have exceeded their quota for foreign players, club sources told AFP on Thursday.

When he was unveiled with great fanfare on Tuesday, the 37-year-old said he was keen to play as soon as possible, starting with Thursday's home game against Al Ta'ee.

But Ronaldo, whose deal is worth an estimated 200 million euros to June 2025, is Al Nassr's ninth foreign player — one more than the eight allowed by Saudi football authorities.

"Al Nassr has not registered him yet because there is no vacancy for a foreign player," one club official, who did not want to be named because he was not authorized to speak to media, told AFP.

"A foreign player must leave to register Ronaldo, either by selling or by terminating the con-



Cristiano Ronaldo was introduced to Al Nassr fans at a sold-out Mrsool Park. PHOTO: AFP

tract by mutual consent."

Al Nassr's foreign contingent includes Colombian goalkeeper David Ospina, Brazilian midfielder Luiz Gustavo and forwards Anderson Talisca of Brazil and Vincent Aboubakar of Cameroon.

Saudi reports said Uzbek midfielder Jaloliddin Masharipov was most likely to make

way for the five-time Ballon d'Or winner and Champions League record scorer.

A second club source confirmed that Ronaldo was not registered as of Thursday afternoon local time.

"There are ongoing negotiations to sell one of the players, but they have not reached their final stages yet," he said.—AFP

# Kane will break all goalscoring records, says Conte



England captain Harry Kane will end his career as record goalscorer for Tottenham, his country and the Premier League, club manager Antonio Conte says. PHOTO: AFP

TOTTENHAM Hotspur striker Harry Kane will have beaten every goalscoring record by the time he retires, according to the club's manager Antonio Conte.

The 29-year-old England captain needs just three more goals to become Spurs all-time

record scorer after his brace in Wednesday's 4-0 thumping of Crystal Palace.

The double — which took Kane's tally to 15 in the Premier League this season — moved him on to 264 goals, two shy of the late Jimmy Greaves' tally.

Kane has 198 Premier

League goals to his credit, with only Alan Shearer (260) and Wayne Rooney (208) ahead of him.

"I think to speak about Harry, I think a bit that we waste time to explain about the type of player that he is," said Conte after Spurs' first victory since the Premier League resumed following the World Cup break.

"I repeat, we are talking about a really world-class striker and he's going to beat every record with the goals."

Conte says his belief that Kane will set new milestones is based on what a strong character he is.

Kane has had to bounce back after his missed penalty in the World Cup quarter-final with France saw the French prevail 2-1. If he had converted it he would also have become England's record goalscorer.— AFP

## 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.

## Djokovic recovers from shaky start to reach Adelaide quarters



Novak Djokovic was tested by France's Quentin Halys at the Adelaide International. PHOTO: AFP

NOVAK Djokovic overcame a shaky start to beat Frenchman Quentin Halys on Thursday and reach the Adelaide International quarter-finals, stepping up his preparations for the Australian Open.

The top seed from Serbia won 7-6 (7/3), 7-6 (7/5) and will face Canada's Denis Shapovalov in the last eight.

Djokovic returned to the scene of his 2007 title run on Tuesday with a comfortable straight-sets win over France's

Constant Lestienne.

He backed that up against Lestienne's doubles partner Halys but was slow to get going, slumping 2-5 in the first set before clinching victory.

"It was a great performance from my opponent today," said the 35-year-old Djokovic, who is warming up for a tilt at a 10th Australian Open title after missing last year's Grand Slam when he was deported over his vaccination status.

"He played like a top-10 player today.

"It was difficult to break his serve because he was hitting his spots and he was being very precise, and big serves, as well," he added.

"Proud to be able to overcome a challenge like this. Winning two tiebreakers is always great I think for confidence level at the beginning of the year."— AFP