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.

Myanmar's commercially-valued Vannamei shrimp to penetrate China's market

The white shrimp Vannamei farming is thriving in Kadan Island of Myeik Archipelago.
PHOTOS: KANU

MYANMAR has been shipping its commercially-valued white shrimp Vannamei which has been successfully produced in fishing ponds in Myeik Archipelago, Taninthayi Region for five years, to Japan. Now, the country is making concerted efforts to expand its market to China.

Myanmar, belonging to rich fishery resources, has been sustainably using its resources in harmony with the sea and maintaining the balance between the ecosystem and fishing activities. The State is fulfilling the need to step up exports in the fishery sector.

The white shrimp Vannamei farming is highly consumed and farmed in China and Thailand. Good seawater quality improved shrimp production. The production in the Vannamei shrimp farming pond in Thailand is estimated at 25 tonnes per acre, whereas Myanmar can produce 40 tonnes per acre on account of the clean marine environment. Myanmar's officials and Chinese counterparts are exerting efforts to have Myanmar's shrimp direct shipments to China. At the end of last year, Chinese Commercial Attaché and its delegation observed Vannamei shrimp farming ponds in Myeik Archipelago. They cooperated to export Myanmar's shrimps directly to China and connected with fish farmers through the Fisheries Department to meet the criteria and standards for fish farms.

"Vannamei shrimp farming can be found in Myeik Archipelago and Thahtay Island (Thahtay Kyun). Myanmar has been working together on Vannamei shrimp farming with Russia to export them. They are also joining hands with China as well. Myanmar's shrimp production rate sees growth due to good water quality compared to Thailand's. That being so, there is a great prospect to grasp a strong foreign market share. The country indicated readiness to ramp up production on demand. At present, four businessmen are running 300 hectares of shrimp farms and two more are also preparing to rear the Vannamei shrimp. Once its legitimate export channel is open, exports will be accelerated. At present, Chinese buyers purchase shrimp that are frozen and cooked. Whether it is live shrimp or frozen ones, we could earn a good market price on a legal path.

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National Objectives for 76th Anniversary of Union Day 2023

1. To strive for the perpetual existence of national solidarity and perpetuity of the Union through the internal strength
2. To make collaborative efforts of all ethnic nationals to restore perpetual and durable peace
3. To join hands in harmony for ensuring the prosperity and food sufficiency of the nation as two national plans through the Union spirit
4. To help develop all regions and states on equal terms and increase employment opportunities with ensuring the health and fitness of the entire National people
5. To practise the genuine, discipline-flourishing multiparty democratic system through fraternity, solidarity and united endeavours of all ethnic national brethren for building the Union based on democratic and federal systems

Myanmar Travel Fair 2023 to be held starting from 27 January

Entrance signboard is pictured at the Secretariat Office in Yangon yesterday. **PHOTO : KANU**

THE Myanmar Travel Fair 2023 will be held at the Secretariat Office in Yangon starting from 27 to 29 January.

The event will include over 40 booths of travel companies, airlines, hotels, restaurants, handicrafts, local products, local foods, insurance companies, healthcare companies and travel agencies from Thailand and Malaysia.

The event is organized by the Myanmar Tourism Entrepreneurs Association and aims at encouraging the revival of the tourism industry in January, the beginning of the tourist season, according to officials.

In the tourist season of 2023, vacationers are visiting Bagan, Popa, Pindaya, Inlay, Ngapali, Chaungtha, Ngwehsaung, Myeik Archipelago and historical pagodas. The Myanmar Tourism Entrepreneurs Association and partnership associations together provide services for the pleasure trip to be quick and smooth.

Visitors can participate in the lucky draw programme for inbound/outbound air tickets, hot-air balloon tickets and hotel tickets. The fair will be open from 9 am to 6 pm. — Nyein Thu(M-NA)/MKKS

MYANMAR GAZETTE

Appointment of Heads of Service Organizations

THE State Administration Council has appointed the following persons as Heads of Service Organizations shown against each of their names on probation from the date they assume charge of their duties.

Name	Appointment
(1) Dr Myint Myint Khine Pro-Rector Technological University (Pakokku) Department of Advanced Science and Technology Ministry of Science and Technology	Rector Technological University (Pakokku) Department of Advanced Science and Technology Ministry of Science and Technology
(2) Dr Nang Soe Soe Aung Pro-Rector University of Computer Studies (Lashio) Department of Advanced Science and Technology Ministry of Science and Technology	Rector University of Computer Studies (Lashio) Department of Advanced Science and Technology Ministry of Science and Technology

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.

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.

Mottos for 76th Anniversary of Union Day 2023

1. Let's go forward in joining hands among ethnic nationals in unison
2. Let's firmly join hands among national brethren of the Union in unity
3. Energetic harmony and stronger unity represent the souls of the Union

Concerted efforts needed to ensure better enhancement of NCA

ON the occasion of the 7th Anniversary of signing the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA), I myself would like to urge all-

- to make concerted efforts for analyzing the advantages and disadvantages of peace and stability based on experiences along our route for ensuring better essence of NCA,
- to regard the Our Three Main National Causes and deeply follow the commitments of NCA to ensure the success of building the Union based on democracy and federalism,
- to nurture ourselves and our environment to become the persons with mindsets of good citizens endowed with knowledge of national politics and loyalty of citizens,
- to organize and lure remnant organizations to sign the NCA as much as possible so as to post a historical milestone.

(The excerpt from the speech made by Chairman of State Administration Council Prime Minister Chairman of the National Solidarity and Peacemaking Central Committee Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at the 7th Anniversary of Signing the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) on 15 October 2022.)

State Peace Talks Team holds talks with RCSS Chair-led peace delegation for second day

The second-day meeting between the State Peace Talks Team and the peace delegation headed by the RCSS Chair is progress yesterday.

THE second-day meeting between the State Peace Talks Team and the peace delegation from the Restoration Council of Shan State (RCSS) was held yesterday morning at the National Solidarity and Peacemaking Centre in Nay Pyi Taw.

The meeting was attended by State Administration Council Member Union Minister at the Government Office Chairman of the National Solidarity and Peacemaking Negotiation Committee-NSPNC Peace Talks Team Leader Lt-Gen Yar Pyae and members — SAC Member Lt-Gen Moe Myint Tun, NSPNC Secretary Lt-Gen Min Naung and member Lt-Gen Win Bo Shein, RCSS Chair General Yawd Serk, RCSS's central executive committee members Sao Saung Han, Sao Um Khe and representatives.

Both sides discussed the pending issues from the first-day meeting and bilateral proposals on democracy and federalism. The 33 basic policies on Shan State proposed by the RCSS and common agreements on peace and development were mutually clarified and discussed openly with the attendees. The two sides also discussed and negotiated drafts to have agreements, and the second-day meeting was adjourned.

The third-day meeting will continue on 26 January, and the two sides will sign the completed agreements as both sides already had the same attitudes on preliminary agreements. — MNA/TS

Myanmar's commercially-valued ...

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The more fishery products are added to the export list, the more fish farmers earn. It could help raise the government's revenue. As a result of this, they are ready to execute this farming business", U Thet Soe, secretary of Kawthoung District Fisheries Federation, said.

The price of Vannamei shrimp is estimated at US$6,000-8,000 per tonne. After Myanmar reaches a Memorandum of Understanding agreement with foreign buyer countries, the farmers will receive a better price.

The Vannamei shrimp farming costs K600 million per hectare. The shrimp species and feedstuffs are imported from Thailand. If Myanmar can successfully run shrimp hatcheries, it can reduce the outflows of funds. It will generate revenue for the Fisheries Department. Vannamei shrimp is harvested every three months. It is a lucrative business so the Fisheries Department and research centre and Kawthoung Fisheries Federation are cooperating to achieve shrimp breeding and larvae production.

That breed was imported from Hawaii of the US and Myanmar adopted it. Aquaculture of white shrimp Vannamei yielded fruitful results. Thus, Myanmar with a favourable marine environment has a great prospect for successful shrimp production from self-hatcheries. This might be a positive change for fishery product exports, farmers pointed out. Myanmar has been conveying frozen white shrimp Vannamei harvested from Myeik Archipelago to Japan by sea with container ships in the cold chain through Yangon Port. Efforts are underway for white shrimp to penetrate the Chinese market. — Nyein Thu(MNA)/EMM

Yangon international airport's departure building under extension

YANGON International Airport's arrival and departure buildings are being extended by Yangon Aerodrome Co Ltd, according to the Yangon City Development Committee. The extension work will be done in four phases and it is expected to be completed by the end of this year. — TWA/KZW

Myanmar hosts Regional Seminar on Food Security and Sustainable Food Systems in BIMSTEC

The Regional Seminar on Food Security and Sustainable Food Systems in BIMSTEC is in progress online.

THE Regional Seminar on Food Security and Sustainable Food Systems in BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation) was organized in Myanmar via videoconferencing yesterday.

It was attended by a Myanmar delegation led by Director-General U Kyaw Swe Lin of the Planning Department under the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation together with Secretary General of BIMSTEC Mr Tenzil Lekphell, representatives of BIMSTEC member countries- Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Thailand and Sri Lanka.

At the opening ceremony, BIMSTEC Secretary-General Mr Tenzil Lekphell delivered a greeting speech.

Then, Director-General U Kyaw Swe Lin said it supported regional and global food security in overcoming the challenges in Myanmar's economic growth including the COVID-19 pandemic. It needs to implement the policy and projects focusing on food security and sustainable food system related to global crises such as malnutrition, chronic diseases, poverty, environmental damage and climate changes.

It also should carry out for economic development and food security by implementing free trade among member countries and the governments need to make investments in basic infrastructures, research and awareness programmes and coordinate to ensure the market to ensure benefits for farmers.

He then urged the member countries to accelerate mutual relations to improve the manufacturing capacity of farmers for food security and nutrition security development mentioned in the Action Plan for Strengthening BIMSTEC Agricultural Cooperation (2023-2027) which was approved during the 2nd BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting.

Then, the secretary-general of BIMSTEC talked about the meeting of BIMSTEC Ministers on Agriculture on 10 November 2022 to draft action plans to boost cooperation in the agriculture sector, 17 plans in five cooperation sectors, appreciation to Myanmar for implementing the Plan of Action and exchange of views on matters related to resolve the food security and sustainable food system.

The meeting also discussed the activities to establish a food security system to resist the vulnerable and sudden changes and ongoing work plans to promote the food security of BIMSTEC countries. — MNA/KTZH

Border reopening drives high demand for seasonal plums in China's market

SINCE the border trade route between Myanmar and China reopened, the seasonal plums (Taiwan) have received good prices in export to the China market, said U Myint Swe, a plum cultivator and trader.

Since the second week of this month, plums have been delivered by 12-wheel trucks to the China market daily. Plums are priced at 85 Yuan for a carton of 110 large-size plums, 60 Yuan for a carton of 150 medium-size plums and 45 Yuan for a carton of 600-700 small-size plums. It is reported that plums are sold at a high price due to the competitive demand of wholesale buyers.

"We are getting handsome prices for plum export in the China market this year. Since the border trade route has reopened, the flow of goods is convenient and fetches attractive prices. Plum prices have turned out to be good as expected. Taiwan plums are in season at the end of December and can be plucked and sold till the end of March. The current prices of plums in Myanmar currency are K25,000 per carton for large sizes, K18,000 per carton for medium sizes and K8,000 per carton for small sizes. This year's Taiwan plum price went up in leaps and bounds, benefiting everyone," he added.

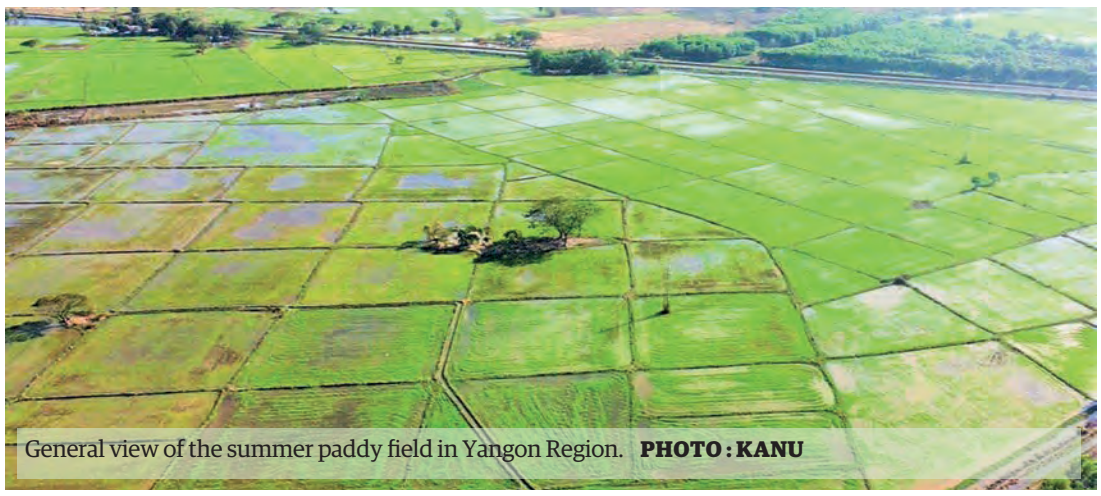
This year's Taiwan plums are exported to the Chinese market and the domestic market every day. In exporting to the domestic market, it is mainly exported to Yangon and the lower regions of Myanmar, in addition to Lashio and Mandalay. There are over 500 plum acreages in Patheingyi Township and an acre of plum trees can generate K10 million. — Min Htet Aung (Mandalay Sub-printing House)/CT

205,554 acres of summer paddy to be cultivated in Yangon Region

A total of 205,554 acres have been earmarked for summer paddy plantation in Yangon Region, according to the Department of Irrigation and Water Utilization Management of Yangon Region.

Rice has already been planted on 21,765 acres in Taikkyi Township, 12,927 acres in Hlegu, 3,689 acres in Hmawby, 14,071 acres in Htantabin, 303 acres in Mingaladon, 78 acres in Shwepyitha, 1,990 acres in Dagon Myothit Township, 3,967 acres in Thanlyin, eight acres in Kyauktan, 424 acres in Kayan, 31,414 acres in Twantay, 801 acres in Dala, 11,832 acres in Kawhmu and 11,036 acres in Kungyangon up to 15 January 2023 in Yangon Region.

Yangon Region has Ngamoeyeik dam, Paunglin dam, Mahuya dam, Kalihtaw dam, Lagunpyin dam, Tabuhla dam and Bantbwegon dam that can contribute to the improvement of the agricultural and livestock sector. — Nyein Thu (MNA)/KZW



General view of the summer paddy field in Yangon Region. **PHOTO : KANU**

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CIRCULATION & DISTRIBUTION
(+95) (01) 8604532,
Hotline - 09 454237515
ADVERTISING & MARKETING
(+95) (01) 8604530,
Hotline - 09 251022355
marketing@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
subscription@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

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gnlmnews@gmail.com
www.gnlm.com.mm

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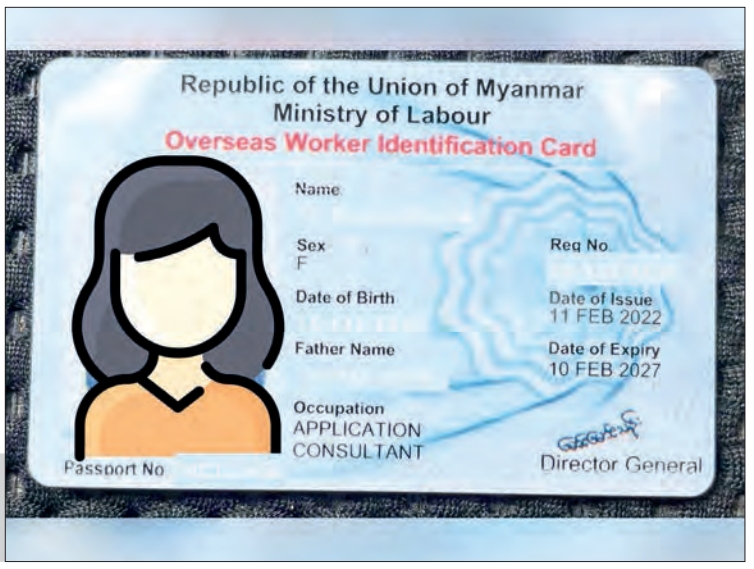
CURRENT AFFAIRS

PJ passport holders who are not working abroad must apply to change to relevant category: ME

ALL those who will work as skilled labour in foreign countries will have to carry OWICs (overseas worker identification cards). There are also Myanmar people who live in foreign countries with work visas, resident visas and business visas. When they return home and leave the country again, they also have to carry OWICs.

That statement was announced by the Myanmar embassy in the Republic of Korea. In addition, the Myanmar embassy has announced that those who are not working abroad but are holding an ordinary passport should apply for a different type of passport.

When applying to change relevant passports, if the person is studying, they have to carry a PE type. If the person is married to a foreigner, they need to change to a PT type. The applications will be verified by the Myanmar Embassy. — TWA/KZW



A sample of the overseas worker identification card (OWIC).

20 EV cabs to be run at Yangon Airport, Nay Pyi Taw Thabyaygon Market

Battery electric vehicles (BEVs) imported from China are being inspected.

OF the first batch of 40 electric vehicles that arrived in Myanmar, two companies will operate 20 vehicles as taxis at Yangon Airport and Nay Pyi Taw Thabyaygon Market.

The vehicles that arrived at the Ywathagyi dry port were inspected by National-Level Leading Committee Vice-Chair 1 Union Minister for Industry Dr Charlie Than, chairpersons of five working committees and officials whether they meet the vehicle standards and correct licences on 24 January.

These 40 electric vehicles were China-made BYD E2 models and Chindwin Shan Construction Co Ltd imported 30 vehicles while 10 vehicles by NPK Motors Co Ltd.

The electric vehicles and spare parts were imported for the first time with the permission of the Steering Committee on National Development of Electric Vehicles and Related Industries.

The Chindwin Shan Construction Co., Ltd will operate taxi services using 10 vehicles at Yangon Airport and another 10 by NPK Motors Co Ltd at Nay Pyi Taw Thabyaygon Market. The Steering Committee on National Development of Electric Vehicles and Related Industries designated the pilot-project period for promoting the use of electric vehicles between 1 January and 31 December 2023.

Moreover, officials allow electric vehicle imports, local production industries, the establishment of level-3 charging stations and guarantee for after-sale services reviewing the proposals of companies. — TWA/KTZH

Licences to be issued to unlicenced motorcycles and motorcyclists in Bago Region

LICENCES will be issued to unlicenced motorcycles and motorcyclists under the one-stop service system in Bago Region from 23 January to 24 February.

Motorcycle licences and driver's licences will be issued under the One Stop Service System in Bago, Toungoo, Thayawady, Pyay, Nyaunglebin and Nattalin districts.

It is known that the cost of a motorcycle licence includes 25 per cent of the cost of each motorcycle, including the wheel tax and the fees to be paid to the Road Transport Administration Department.

Currently, unlicenced motorcycles and motorcyclists are being arrested and educational activities are also being carried out in Bago Region. —TWA/KZW

Three foreigners are seen buying souvenirs at a traditional handicraft store in Yangon. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

Increasing numbers of foreigners entering Myanmar in 2022

IN 2022, there was a 78 per cent influx of tourists to Myanmar, an increase compared to 2021, Union Minister for Hotels and Tourism Dr Htay Aung said at a meeting of the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism on 23 January.

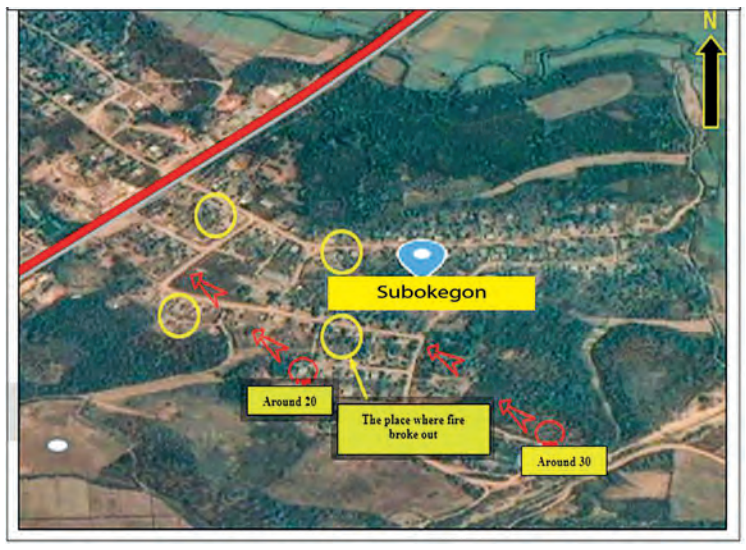
From January to December 2022, the arrival of tourists increased more compared to the last year's arrivals, mostly from China, Thailand, India, Korea, Japan, Malaysia, the United States, Great Britain and Russia respectively.

In order to increase tourism, the ministry is implementing cooperation between national governments and international organizations such as the World Tourism Federation to gain access to the tourism market.

In addition, international travel exhibitions are often held in foreign countries not only in tourism promotion conferences but also in airlines in these countries. Efforts are being made to promote destinations in Myanmar, the Union minister elaborated.

The Union minister said that he wants hotel and travel associations and industry workers to cooperate as the ministry has drawn up the necessary measures to develop tourism and attract domestic and foreign tourists. — TWA/KZL

Announcement to public regarding arson attacks on villages by NUG/ PDF terrorists, KIA insurgents



Map showing the location where terrorists set fires to Public Houses located on the way of their retreat, in Subokegon Village of Katha Township in Sagaing Region, in a clash between Security Force Members and KIA/PDF Combined Terrorists on 17 December 2022

NUG and PDF groups declared as terrorist organizations, with the intent to disrupt the State's peace, tranquillity and prevalence of law and order, are committing vicious crimes such as attacking and destroying non-military targets and wanton killings of innocent civilians by accusing them of informants. Moreover, the terrorists joining together with KIA insurgents are carrying out deliberate arson attacks on the villages in the Sagaing region as well as the ones in the areas adjacent to Kachin state.

According to the findings of the investigations at the scenes, it is reported that combined armed groups comprising NUG/PDF terrorists and KIA insurgents had burnt down a total of 22 villages, causing 23 fire outbreaks in which 1,122 houses of innocent villagers were destroyed in the fire in November and December 2022.

According to the accounts of the victims of local villagers following further investigations on the arson cases, it was found out that the NUG/ PDF/ KIA terrorists launched arson attacks primarily targeting the villages that do not support their violent acts, the ones that do not provide them extortion money as well as the villages where militia units are organized to protect against the terrorists' attacks; they set fire to the houses on their way of the retreat so that the security force members cannot pursue and attack them; and they drove off the villagers first, then set fire to the village when no villager in it and informed the villagers as if the security force members committed the arsons.

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Moetargyi Village

The first man (wearing a bamboo hat)

They were coming in and going out and wearing uniforms but we didn't know who they were. There are about 40 or 50 of them. Some of them were wearing mufti and others were in guerrilla uniforms. They torched my house. Some of them were guerrillas and I didn't know whether they were the PDF or the KIA. I saw them.

A villager of Moetargyi Village in Kachinsu tells what he witnessed in the incident.

A villager of Subokegon tells what he witnessed in the incident

The second man (wearing a cap)

I returned to the village from my farm as I was in fear after hearing gunshots. When I arrived at the village, Tatmadaw personnel had already entered the village and the PDF fired shots at the Tatmadaw personnel and torched homes while retreating. There were other groups. Some of them were wearing guerrilla uniforms while others were wearing mufti. I don't have a family. I am single and I came here to work as a farmhand.

Subokegon Village

The PDF passed through our village and torched my house in the early morning hours. They torched my house as well as those next to mine. There were about 20 or 30 of them. I saw them with my own eyes. They were wearing uniforms but some of them were wearing mufti. They torched my house. My children were at the farm. They came here about two or three days ago. There were about 20 of them and they had guns. Most of their uniforms were guerrilla uniforms. I was not well aware of them but I saw PDF badges. When Tatmadaw personnel arrived, they torched my house while shooting and running. I saw the PDF torching my house.

Minle Village

The first man

Fighting erupted in the morning. The PDF torched about 30 houses. We were too afraid to put out the fire.

The second man

We heard an exchange of fires between the PDF and Tatmadaw personnel in the morning. Then, the PDP came into the village and torched houses. About 30 houses were damaged by the fire. We were too afraid to put out the fire. The PDF entered villages and torched houses whenever fighting erupted.

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Regarding the arson cases, the subversive media agencies such as BBC, VOA, RFA, Irrawaddy, Mizzima, Myanmar Now, Khit Thit and DVB as well as other individuals and organizations opposing the State Government are making propaganda depicting the security force members are committing such arson attacks so that the people and international communities misunderstand the actions of security force members.

A villager of Minle tells what he witnessed in the incident.

A villager of Naungpin tells what he witnessed in the incident.

Particularly, the terrorists deliberately committed acts of terrorism inflicting much damage to the properties of innocent civilians so that they can make fabrications to ensure the innocent local people misunderstand the State Government and Tatmadaw, feel hatred for them, and support the terrorists.

After hearing the accounts of some victims of villagers from 22 villages that were burnt down by combined armed groups of NUG/ PDF terrorists and KIA members, security force members joining hands together with villagers are extinguishing the fire and providing security services to the victims of fire outbreaks, and Tatmadaw and relevant region

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governments are also providing necessary assistance to them. Therefore, it is announced to the public to ensure the people know the truth about arson attacks on the houses of innocent civilians by NUG/ PDF terrorists and KIA insurgents, and security force members are taking necessary security measures to combat terrorists who are destroying and attacking the peaceable civilians.

Information Team
State Administration Council

Table showing list of village houses burnt down by KIA/ PDFs

No	Date	Region/ Township	Village Names	Number of Houses	Houses Burnt (Approx.)
1	13-11-2022	Shwegu Tsp, Kachin State	Sithaw	270	15
2	22-11-2022	Katha Tsp, Sagaing Region	Minle	322	50
3	28-11-2022	〃	〃	322	38
4	28-11-2022	Htigyaing Tsp, Sagaing Region	Alaltaw	150	100
5	30-11-2022	〃	Laythagon	300	100
6	4-12-2022	〃	Shwechaung	273	80
7	4-12-2022	〃	Kyaukaik	68	60
8	5-12-2022	〃	Zeephyugyin	155	30
9	6-12-2022	〃	Kanpauk	250	5
10	6-12-2022	Katha Tsp, Sagaing Region	Myaynu	160	20
11	6-12-2022	Htigyaing Tsp, Sagaing Region	Aungthagon	160	20
12	7-12-2022	〃	Zeethaung	150	80
13	7-12-2022	〃	Thayagon	95	60
14	8-12-2022	〃	Magyeebin	112	100
15	8-12-2022	〃	Thinbonenyo	70	60
16	8-12-2022	〃	Paukpingwae	227	110
17	11-12-2022	〃	Myaingthaya	30	15
18	15-12-2022	Katha Tsp, Sagaing Region	Hena (Ywathit)	150	30
19	16-12-2022	〃	Naungpin	130	11
20	16-12-2022	〃	Moetargyi	437	43
21	16-12-2022	Indaw Tsp, Sagaing Region	Gyonegyone Kya (Ywathit/ Ywahaung)	165	30
22	17-12-2022	Katha Tsp, Sagaing Region	Subokegon village	150	15
23	17-12-2022	Htingyaing Tsp, Sagaing Region	Pyinsu village	191	50

NOTE - KIA/PDFs torched 1,122 houses in 22 villages of Sagaing Region and Kachin State in November and December 2022.

CRIME NEWS

Illegal timbers, foodstuffs, consumer goods, industrial materials, electronics, boat and vehicles confiscated

10 arrests (estimated value of K210,359,920) were made on three consecutive days from 22 to 24 January, according to the Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee.

A combined team under the supervision of the Bago Anti-Illegal Trade Task Force conducted inspections on 22 January.

Officials captured a vehicle and a trailer (approximately K70 million) carrying a 40-foot container MOLU-2181177 (estimated value of K3.5 million) on its way from Myawady to Yangon. There were no official documents for the container. The action was taken under Customs procedures.

On 23 January, officials seized a total of 8.9320 tonnes of illegal timbers worth K589,650 from a motorboat (estimated value of K1.18 million) near Samonegalatwa in Kyunsu township in Taninthayi region. The action was taken under the Forest Law.

Similarly, a combined team confiscated K587,000 worth of illegal liquors in Salin township, a total of 6.4160 tonnes of illegal timbers worth K4,234,560 from a Mitsubishi Fuso car (estimated value of K25 million) on Minbu-Salin-Sinphyukyun- Seikphyu road and an unregistered Honda Airwave car (approximately K5 million) at the Ayeyawady Bridge in Minbu township. The actions were taken under the Myanmar Liquor Law, the Forest Law and the Export and Import Law respectively.

A total of 3.1618 tonnes of illegal hardwood worth K474,200 from a vehicle (estimated value of K7 million) was seized in Bhamo township and the action was taken under the Forest Law.

On 24 January, officials at the Yepu permanent checkpoint confiscated K54,141,000 worth of duty-free cosmetics, clothes, a Lenovo laptop, a laser printer and mobile accessories at the township bypass road near Sanlong village and responsible persons at the Mayanchaung permanent checkpoint seized 280 boxes of circuit breaker that were not declared in the Import Declaration (ID) from a Nissan Diesel car (approximately K35 million) heading from Myawady to Yangon. The action was taken under Customs procedures.

A total of 30.4640 tonnes of illegal timbers worth K1,066,240 was captured in Thanlwin river near Dawei island in Mawlamyine township and the action was taken under the Forest Law.

Therefore, 10 arrests (estimated value of K210,359,920) were made on three consecutive days from 22 to 24 January, according to the Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee. — MNA/ MKKS

Drugs seized in Hopong, Tachilek townships

DRUGS were seized in Hopong and Tachilek townships in Shan State, according to the Myanmar Police Force.

A combined team consisting of members of the Anti-Drug Police Force captured 50,000 stimulant tablets from a motorbike driven by Sai Sam Naw (aka) Saisam at 140/3-Milepost on Hopong-Loilen road in Hopong township at 12:50 pm on 23 January. Similarly, at 6:15 pm on 24 January, the Police Force searched a Mark II car in Tachilek township and seized 10,000 ecstasy tablets.

According to the investigation, at 6:45 pm on the same day, Police Force arrested a trafficker Sai Kam Teik, in Samsai and then searched his house in Maing Phone (A) ward in Tachileik township. Police Force seized 0.005 kilogramme of ecstasy powder and 0.025 kilogramme of caffeine from a bedroom of the house. They are being prosecuted under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law. — MNA/MKKS

Over K4.13 billion worth of drugs, weapons and ammunition seized in Monghsat township

OVER K4.13 billion worth of drugs, weapons and ammunition were seized in Monghsat Township in Shan State (east), according to the Myanmar Police Force.

At 3:30 pm on 22 January, a combined team consisting of members of the Anti-Drug Police Force searched a rubber plantation in Mongtwam village-tract in Monghsat Township according to information and arrested Kyabo and Kyasho together with over K4.13 billion worth of 6.6 million stimulant tablets, 192 kilogrammes of Ice, weapons and ammunition.

Legal action has been taken against offenders and the Myanmar Police Force is trying to uncover those connected with them. — MNA/MKKS

Conduct research for benefiting the whole nation

IN A couple of words, research and development are inseparable in all measures, the research measure of which is a lifeblood of any profession such as academic, manufacturing, social, economic and any other affairs to have progress in society.

Any workplace needs to do research for modernizing itself to be able to shoulder opponent workplaces. In Myanmar, experts and scholars are conducting research on respective arenas such as political, economic and social sectors theoretically and practically. Results from the research processes are combined with experiences to be applied in the development undertakings of the relevant workplaces as well as societies.

Conducting research measures is surging in all aspects of Myanmar thanks to experts and scholars in all fields. Everybody in relevant professions comprehensively understands the importance of doing research and development for the improvement of their workplaces as well as themselves. As such, paper-reading sessions have been held for 22 years in Myanmar as of 2001.

As findings from the research work directly benefit researchers, faculty members and students in respective subjects and help create good prospects for the development of relevant areas, all professionals, scholars and students need to join research fields to accelerate the research process for the interests of the nation and the nationals so as to uplift socioeconomic life of the people.

The Myanmar Academy of Arts and Science hosted the 22nd research conference at the convocation hall of Yangon University, which is a prominent institution in Myanmar, from 19 to 21 December 2022. The research conference of the MAAS focused on reading 243 research papers in 24 of 32 subjects being taught at universities and colleges of the higher education sector.

Only when all students, as well as faculty members, are keen to conduct research tasks will relevant societies achieve greater success. Hence, encouragement must be given to university students, faculty members, scholars and experts from relevant workplaces to continuously conduct research in order to find results on the greater process in the respective fields to be shared with new generations.

Especially, higher education institutions such as arts and science universities, computer, medical, engineering, forestry, veterinary, agricultural and other subjects are more responsible for conducting research tasks. Only when those from these institutions find new developments will they improve their scope of knowledge to be able to benefit society. Hence, the Ministry of Education arranges the establishment of the Centre for Research and Innovation (CRI) depending on the potential of the relevant regions.

As findings from the research work directly benefit researchers, faculty members and students in respective subjects and help create good prospects for the development of relevant areas, all professionals, scholars and students need to join research fields to accelerate the research process for the interests of the nation and the nationals so as to uplift socioeconomic life of the people.

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India Takes World Centre Stage with G20 Presidency

By Amb. Ashok Sajjanhar (Former Indian Ambassador to Kazakhstan, Sweden and Latvia)

Introduction

India assumed the Presidency of G20 (the Group of 20 countries comprising 19 large economies and the European Union) for 2023 from Indonesia on 1 December 2022. While accepting this responsibility, PM Narendra Modi said that India's G20 presidency will be "inclusive, ambitious, decisive and action-oriented."

India's assumption of the G20 presidency has decisively signalled its emergence as a significant player on the global stage. While most countries in the world, both developed and developing, have found it difficult to effectively handle the challenges thrown up by the Covid-19 pandemic and the Russia-Ukraine conflict, India, through its bold leadership and prudent policies, has been able to successfully navigate the headwinds it has encountered over the last three years.

What is the G20?

The G20 is an international forum which represents the world's biggest economies encompassing both industrialized and developing nations. Its core mandate is to address the major challenges related to the global economy, developmental issues and financial architecture, such as international financial stability, climate change mitigation, sustainable development etc.

Together, the G20 members represent 85 per cent of the global gross product; 75 per cent of international trade, and two-thirds of the world population.

Because the G-20 is a forum, its agreements or decisions are not legally binding but they do influence countries' policies and global cooperation.

The Setting

The Bali G20 Summit in November 2022 was held at a particularly difficult and uncertain moment in international politics and economics.

The world has been subjected to huge instability and volatility over the last 3 years inter-alia due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict has had global implications through high inflation, shortages of food, fertilizers and energy, unsustainable debts, supply chain disruptions and more. In addition, the challenges of climate change, terrorism, nuclear proliferation, achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and others continue to unsettle the global economy and community. It is in these circumstances that India has been entrusted with the responsibility of steering the activities of the G20.

The Summit

India emerged as a ''leader, solution provider and consensus builder'' at the Bali Summit. The shadow of the Russia-Ukraine conflict loomed large over the deliberations in the run-up to the Summit. It was not found possible to arrive at a mutually acceptable language on the conflict in several of the G20 meetings that preceded the Summit. India was able to act as a bridge between the opposing sides on the issue. A compromise solution was achieved which reiterated the assertion by PM Modi to Russian President Vladimir Putin in Samarkand on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Summit that ''today is not an era of war,'' and that the solution to the conflict should be found through ''dialogue and diplomacy.''

The Declaration, a 19-page document addressed in considerable detail, the major challenges confronting the global economy and financial system.

In his remarks in the first session on Energy and Food Security, PM Modi clearly stated that the United Nations had failed to resolve the political and economic challenges afflicting the world. It is because of the failure of multilateral organizations that the significance of G20 has increased. PM Modi exhorted the countries to evolve a new world order as had been done after the Second World War.

The G20 is an international forum which represents the world's biggest economies encompassing both industrialized and developing nations. **PHOTO: ANI**

While speaking on the need to make digital connectivity truly inclusive, PM Modi asserted that "digital transformation is the most remarkable change of our era. The proper use of digital technologies can become a force multiplier in the decades-long global fight against poverty. Digital solutions can also be helpful in the fight against climate change.'' PM Modi asserted that India's experience of the past few years has shown that if digital architecture is made 'inclusive', it can bring about socio-economic transformation. He declared that the principle of "Data for development" will be an integral part of the overall theme of India's Presidency "One Earth, One Family, One Future". Batting for sustainable growth, PM Modi stated that LiFE i.e. 'Lifestyle for Environment' campaign can make a big contribution to this. He encouraged the global community to make sustainable lifestyle a mass movement.

India's Presidency

During its Presidency, India will aspire to deliver outcomes in areas of critical interest such as integrating the climate and development agenda, accelerating progress towards achieving the SDG 2030 mandate, furthering development cooperation, supporting small and marginal farmers, enhancing food security and nutrition, addressing global skill gaps, women empowerment, promotion of blue economy and coastal sustainability, digital health solutions, green hydrogen and tech-enabled learning.

India hit the ground running on assuming the Presidency of the G20. Even before taking over charge, India organized a Special Briefing for envoys of G20 and invitee countries and International Organizations in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands on 26 November 2022. Starting with the first 4-day Sherpa meeting in Udaipur on 4 December 2022, India has already organized several substantive meetings including the first Finance and Central Bank Deputies Meeting in Bengaluru; the first Meeting of the G20 Development Working Group in Mumbai; the first Global Partnership for Financial Inclusion in Kolkata, and several more.

India has also emerged as a strong and clear voice of the global South. There is a persistent feeling among several small countries that their concerns and problems do not get the attention they deserve. In a remarkable path-breaking initiative, India organized the ''Voice of the Global South for Human-Centric Development'' virtual Summit on 12-13 January 2023. The theme of the Summit was ''Unity of Voice, Unity of Purpose.'' The Summit brought together 125 countries of the global South to share their perspectives and priorities on a common platform across a whole range of issues. The Summit, as is evident from the numbers, received a strong, positive response across the world. This initiative was inspired by PM Modi's vision of 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas, Sabka Prayas' (the support of everyone, development for everyone, trust of everyone with everyone's effort), and was also underpinned by India's philosophy of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam (The World is One Family). The Summit was a platform to exchange ideas and solutions and to unite in voice and purpose, the issues of concern and priorities for the Global South.

In his Opening Address, PM Modi declared that the Voice of the Global South will be the Voice of India and the priorities of the developing countries will be India's priorities. PM Modi gave a call for the 4Rs - 'Respond, Recognize, Respect and Reform' in the context of various priorities of the developing world. Prime Minister also announced a number of new initiatives by India. These include – Aarogya Maitri whereby essential medical supplies will be provided to any developing country affected by natural disasters or humanitarian crises; the Global South Centre of Excellence for research on developing solutions to be implemented around the world; Global South Science and Technology Initiative to share expertise in areas such as space technology and nuclear energy; Global South Young Diplomats Forum; and Global South Scholarships.

While assuming the Presidency, PM Modi had said that India's G20 priorities would be shaped in consultation with not just G20 partners, but also with our fellow travellers in the Global South, whose voice often goes unheard. This Summit was an opportunity for those countries that are not part of the G20 process to share their ideas, concerns, aspirations and expectations. Several developing countries like Bangladesh, Egypt, Mauritius, Nigeria, Oman and the UAE have also been invited as "guest countries" by India to the G20 Summit in September this year.

Conclusion

Accepting the G20 Presidency, PM Modi declared that India will organize more than 200 G20 meetings in 55 different cities on 35 different themes around the country. Visitors to India will get the full experience of its amazing diversity, inclusive traditions, and cultural richness. He invited all G20 members and international organizations ''to participate in this unique celebration in India, the 'Mother of Democracy' ''.

Assuming charge of the G20 at this critical moment is a huge challenge. It is also a great opportunity. The world is looking at India with hope and expectation to effectively deal with the turbulence engineered by the Covid-19, Russia-Ukraine conflict, global economic downturn, and climate change. India is committed to reaching out to all countries of the North and the South, the East and the West to ensure as PM Modi said at the Bali G20 Summit that "next year when the G20 meets in the holy land of Buddha and Gandhi, we will all agree to convey a strong message of peace to the world."

India will hand over the baton to Brazil at the end of November 2023. It is for the first time that the troika comprising of the current, past and future Presidencies of G20 will comprise three major developing and emerging economies. This provides a unique opportunity for India, supported by Indonesia and Brazil, to make a significant contribution to peace, security, stability and prosperity in the world. India looks forward to its Presidency of the G20 with determination and confidence.

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[Views expressed in the article belong solely to the author.]

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LOCAL BUSINESS

Peanut price rebounds on strong domestic, foreign demand

Peanuts are pictured in the market.

THE price of peanuts moved up again to over K7,000 per viss (a viss equals 1.6 kilogrammes), according to Mandalay Wholesale Commodity Centre.

During the last week of November 2022, the peanut market was stagnant due to a lack of demand by oil millers and foreign buyers. The peanut prices declined to K4,700-5,750 per viss then. The prevailing prices move up to K5,900 -7,050 per viss.

High domestic and external demand pushed up the price.

The peanut from various regions is flowing into Mandalay commodity depots at present. Chinese traders are buying them. Moreover, they are highly demanded by the oil millers in the domestic market.

Myanmar has been shipping oil seeds (sesame seeds and peanuts) to foreign countries. Last April 2022, the world's top palm oil exporter Indonesia, which is one of the main oil suppliers to Myanmar, declared an export ban on cooking oil export to reduce the domestic shortage. Consequently, Myanmar's Trade Department under the Ministry of Commerce temporarily suspended exports of oil crops (peanut and sesame) from 9 May to have oil self-sufficiency.

Exports of Myanmar's edible oil crops resumed as the world's top palm oil exporters returned to normalcy, according to a notification dated 5 July 2022 released by the Trade Department.

The country has shipped more than 15,000 kilogrammes worth US$17.336 million to foreign markets through the border trade channels as of 13 January in the current financial year 2022-2023 since April 2022. – NN/EMM

Companies registered on MyCO exceed 11,600 in 2022: DICA

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

THE number of companies registered on the online registry system, MyCO, reached 11,618 in 2022, the statistics released by the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA) indicated.

The registration and re-registration of companies on the MyCO website commenced on 1 August 2018 under the Myanmar Companies Law 2017.

The figures of registered companies stood at 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 the Myanmar Companies Law 2017. Under Section 266 (A) of the Myanmar Companies Law 2017, public 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-end 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 25 January 2023

Fuel Oil Price (Yangon)

Octane 92	K2,305
Octane 95	K2,385
Diesel	K2,480
Premium Diesel	K2,560

All of the prices are based on per litre.

Gold Price

The reference price of high-purity gold set by YGEA	K2,271,000 per tical
High-purity gold in the gold market	K2,820,000 per tical

Dollar Price

A US dollar set by the Central Bank of Myanmar	K2,100
A US dollar in the forex market	K2,840 to K2,855

The above prices may change from time to time.

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HEALTH/PANDEMIC WORLD

Japan cuts economic view in Jan. as COVID-19 surges in China

THE Japanese government on Wednesday downgraded its economic outlook for the first time in 11 months, reflecting a fall in exports amid a recent surge in COVID-19 cases in China.

The Japanese economy is "picking up moderately, although some weaknesses have been seen recently," the Cabinet Office said in its overall assessment report for January, noting that it continues to be weighed down by a multitude of factors including price hikes and supply chain constraints.

The government had assessed in its December report that the economy was "picking up moderately."

"The coronavirus situation in China had not been clear, but we are now able to see a weakening in its economy," a Cabinet Office official said in a briefing for the January report. "We need to pay full attention to its effects on our exports and manufacturing."

The latest report said exports "have been in a weak tone recently," the first time the component was downgraded in 14 months, with the fall particularly marked in Asia. Exports are expected to remain relatively weak overall due to a slowdown in the global economy.

The cost of living in Japan has been pushed up by higher energy and food prices, with inflation hitting its highest level in December since 1981. A shopper browses in the food section at a supermarket in Tokyo's Ota Ward in May 2022. **PHOTO: KYODO**

Meanwhile, assessments for imports were also lowered to be in a "weak tone", while the report said the number of bankruptcies, although still low, was recently increasing.

The government retained its view that private consumption was "picking up moderately" for the seventh straight month despite accelerating inflation, citing a rebound in demand for travel and dining out as Japanese society moves toward living with the coronavirus.

The cost of living in Japan has been pushed up by higher energy and food prices, with inflation hitting its highest level in December since 1981, government data showed Friday.

Aggressive monetary tightening in the United States and Europe continued to cast a shadow on the country's economy, the report said.

There was no upgrade in the government's assessments of major components.— Kyodo

Afghanistan launches polio vaccination drive in 16 provinces

Afghanistan's Public Health Ministry, according to the statement, has been trying to bring to zero the crippling disease among children in the country. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

AFGHANISTAN launched the first campaign this year to administer the polio vaccine to more than 5.3 million children under five in 16 out of the country's 34 provinces, the country's Public Health Ministry said in a statement Monday.

Thousands of health workers will carry out the four-day campaign from Monday to Thursday in 16 provinces, including the capital Kabul, the statement said.

Afghanistan's Public Health Ministry, according to the statement, has been trying to bring to zero the crippling disease among children in the country.

According to the statement, in 2022, only two polio cases in the two eastern provinces of Paktika and Kunar were reported, while two polio cases have been registered in the neighbouring Nangarhar so far this year, showing a significant reduction compared to 56 cases in 2020.

The first anti-polio drive in 2023 comes amid growing respiratory disease and unknown ailments in parts of the country which had killed 17 people, mostly children, over the past month.— Xinhua

Swiss president faces parliamentary probe over media leaks

THE Swiss parliament decided Tuesday to open an investigation targeting President Alain Berset, among others, over media leaks linked to government measures at the height of the pandemic.

The investigation will focus on "numerous indiscretions concerning government affairs related to the Covid-19 pandemic", the parliament's control committee said in a statement.

The threat of a parliamentary probe has been looming for days, amid suspicion of significant leaks of confidential information from the Swiss health ministry, in an affair dubbed "Bersetgate" and "Coronaleaks" by Swiss media.

Health Minister Berset, who currently holds the country's rotating one-year presidency, was the face of the government's Covid response.

The Schweiz am Wochende newspaper reported earlier this month that Berset's former communications chief had, at the height of the pandemic, systematically leaked information to one of Switzerland's largest media houses about confidential government plans for measures to counter the spread of the virus, including around vaccines and the reopening of businesses.—AFP

People queue at a Covid test centre installed in a street of Swiss capital Bern on 17 September 2021. **PHOTO: FABRICE COFFRINI / AFP**

NEWS IN BRIEF

Canada reports over 50,000 Covid deaths in three years

CANADA announced that over 50,000 Covid-19 deaths were reported in nearly three years, Global News reported.

According to the Canadian website, the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) revealed that the death toll had reached 50,135 in Canada since the pandemic emerged the country.

The PHAC reports national data weekly based on the provincial reports that are released throughout the week. In Canada, Quebec is the only province that still reports Covid cases. This province has seen 17,865 fatalities to date.—ANI

Malawi cholera death toll passes 1,000

A cholera outbreak in Malawi has killed more than 1,000 people, the Health Ministry said on Tuesday as the country ran out of vaccines.

The southern African nation has been battling its worst cholera outbreak on record, with more than 30,600 people infected since the first cases were reported last year. —AFP

ECONOMY
WORLD

G-7, partners reaffirm commitment to helping Ukraine endure winter

FOREIGN ministers from the Group of Seven major democratic economies and their partners reaffirmed their commitment Tuesday to supporting Ukraine's energy infrastructure, the US and Japanese governments said.

The participants agreed to continue their close coordination to deliver equipment and humanitarian support this winter and procure essential infrastructure during the online meeting co-chaired by US Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Japanese Foreign Minister Yoshimasa Hayashi.

When the G-7 foreign ministers held a virtual meeting in late December, they denounced Russia for attacking Ukraine's energy facilities and infrastructure, and agreed to step up help for its people struggling to endure the harsh winter.

It's December, especially in Ukraine, where temperatures in some cities are already as low as 20 degrees Fahrenheit. **PHOTO: REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE/ SERGEY BOBOK/AFP**

During Tuesday's meeting, Blinken highlighted the $125 million aid package Washington revealed last week to support Ukraine's energy infrastructure, including procurements of high-voltage autotransformers, mobile gas turbines and distribution substation repair equipment, according to the State Department.

Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba took part in the meeting of the multilateral forum, whose membership comprises Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and the United States, plus the European Union.

Hayashi said Tokyo is providing the war-torn country with some 300 power generators and 83,500 solar-powered lanterns in steps, according to the Foreign Ministry. Japan, which now holds the rotating chair of the G-7, plans to make support for Ukraine against Russia's aggression a major agenda item when it hosts the group's summit in May in Hiroshima.— Kyodo

Brazil sees record-high tax collection in 2022

People visiting a commercial street in downtown Sao Paulo, Brazil. **PHOTO: AFP**

BRAZIL collected a record 2.218 trillion reals (429 billion US dollars) in taxes in 2022, the most since records started being kept in 1995, the Federal Revenue of Brazil (RFB), the tax administration agency, said Tuesday.

The figure represents a real increase, discounting inflation, of 8.18 per cent compared to 2021.

Tax revenue rose despite the fact that the RFB forewent some 120.45 billion reals (23.3 billion US dollars) in tax collection due to tax breaks provided by the government, said the agency. Among the factors that drove the growth in collection were the higher prices for fuel, minerals and food.

Brazilian economy's approximately three per cent growth in 2022 also helped boost revenue, according to financial market analysts. Tax collection set a monthly record in December 2022, registering a real increase of 2.47 per cent compared to the same month in 2021. Inflation-adjusted figures showed December's revenue collection was the best since those records started being kept in 2007.—Xinhua

Canada to commercialize world's first photonic-based quantum computer

CANADIAN Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced Monday a new federal investment to build and commercialize the world's first photonic-based, fault-tolerant quantum computer.

According to a news release from the prime minster's website, the investment of 40 million Canadian dollars (32 million US dollars) will enable Xanadu Quantum Technologies Inc, a Toronto-based Canadian quantum computing company, to develop the quantum computer which will have the potential to provide world leading capabilities to help solve complex data problems and could be used in a variety of sectors such as finance, transportation, environmental modelling, and health. Supported through the government's Strategic Innovation Fund, this project of 177.8 million Canadian dollars (142 million US dollars) is expected to create 530 new highly skilled positions in the high-tech and quantum computing fields, the release said.—Xinhua

The innards of an IBM quantum computer show the tangle of cables used to control and read out its qubits. **PHOTO: REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE/ IBM**

NEWS IN BRIEF

Norway to offer record number of Arctic oil, gas exploration blocks

NORWAY on Tuesday said it plans to offer a record number of gas and oil exploration blocks in the Arctic, with environmental NGOs condemning an "aggressive" promotion of fossil fuels.

The Scandinavian nation – Europe's primary natural gas supplier and a major oil producer – proposed 92 exploration blocks, including an unprecedented 78 in the Barents Sea in the far north.

The other 14 are in the Norwegian Sea near the Arctic Circle.

"New discoveries remain necessary to continue to develop the Norwegian plateau" and are important for Europe, Oil and Energy Minister Terje Aasland said in a statement.

The announcement is part of the annual granting of oil licences in so-called "mature" zones that have already been widely explored.

The centre-left government, lacking a parliamentary majority, reached an agreement with the Socialist Left party last year to forbid prospection in unexplored areas by 2025.

The government's propositions sparked outrage among environmental organisations.—AFP

Hundreds protest S Africa energy crisis

HUNDREDS of people took to the streets in Johannesburg on Wednesday to protest a prolonged energy crisis causing record power cuts in South Africa.

The demonstrators gathered in the centre of the financial capital of Africa's most industrialized nation to march on the headquarters of the ruling African National Congress (ANC) party.

Most were dressed in blue, the colour of the main opposition party, the Democratic Alliance (DA), which organized the rally. Some held signs reading "enough is enough", "power to the people" and "load-shedding is killing jobs".—AFP

US sues Google over dominance of online ad market

THE US Justice Department sued Google on Tuesday for its dominance of the online advertising market, launching a fresh legal battle against the California-based tech giant. The case was the second federal lawsuit against Google over alleged antitrust violations and the first since US President Joe Biden took office two years ago.

The earlier case targeted Google's world-dominating search engine and is expected to go to trial later this year.

In this latest suit, prosecutors took aim at Google's extremely profitable advertising business, asking that it be broken up to level the playing field for other companies.

Google's ad dealings generated more than $200 billion in sales in 2021 and is parent company Alphabet's biggest moneymaker by a wide margin.

The US said the revenue was unlawfully maintained by a monopoly that had "corrupted legitimate competition in the ad tech industry".—AFP

Google's ad dealings generated more than $200 billion in sales in 2021 and is parent company Alphabet's biggest moneymaker by a wide margin. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

EasyJet hikes profit forecast on demand boom

BRITISH airline EasyJet hiked Wednesday its annual profit guidance after record demand and falling quarterly losses, as customers prioritize holidays and shrug off the cost-of-living crisis.

The carrier believes it will outstrip expectations for annual pre-tax profit of £126 million ($156 million) for its financial year to the end of September, despite global economic gloom that is rooted in soaring inflation.

"Whilst we remain mindful of the uncertain macroeconomic outlook across the globe, based on current high levels of demand and strong bookings, EasyJet anticipates beating the current market profit expectations" for 2022-2023, it said in a statement.

EasyJet had already been expected to rebound into the black as the industry recovers from Covid fallout, having logged three annual losses in a row.

The carrier posted a reduced 2021-2022 loss in November, but this was far less than during the worst of the Covid pandemic.—AFP

Digital yuan in circulation hits 13.61 bln yuan

THE amount of digital yuan in circulation reached 13.61 billion yuan (about 2.01 billion US dollars) by the end of 2022, data from the country's central bank showed.

With the digital currency included, China's outstanding M0, the amount of cash in circulation, totalled 10.47 trillion yuan by the end of last year, up 15.3 per cent year on year, according to the People's Bank of China.

Visitors pay via e-CNY during an expo in Wuzhen, Zhejiang province. **PHOTO: CHINA DAILY**

As a digital form legal tender, digital yuan is a component of Chinese currency, just like the physical renminbi. It is necessary to combine the statistics and analysis as well as implementing overall management of the two forms of the currency, said Xuan Changneng, vice governor of the bank.

With application scenarios, transaction value and amount of digital yuan increasing steadily in recent years, relative management and calculation systems have improved, Xuan said.—Xinhua

Justin Bieber sells music rights for $200 mln

POP juggernaut Justin Bieber has sold his music publishing and recording catalog shares to the Blackstone-backed Hipgnosis Songs Capital for $200 million, the company said Tuesday — marking the industry's latest blockbuster rights deal.

The sale has been rumoured for weeks, and sees the 28-year-old join a who's who of artists who have cashed out recently on their catalogs. Hipgnosis did not publicly disclose terms of the deal, but a source close to the matter told AFP it was worth around $200 million.

Contemporary stars including Justin Timberlake and Shakira have sold large stakes in their work — both also struck deals with Hipgnosis — but the move has mostly been seen among legacy artists like Bob Dylan and Bruce Springsteen.—AFP

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2	Nicotrazine	Atrazine 24% +Fluroxypyr 5.5% + Nicosulfuron 3.5% OD	P2022-4851

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CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V UNI ACCORD VOY.NO. (0285-740N)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V UNI ACCORD VOY.NO. (0285-740N)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **26-1-2023** 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.

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CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V HTK CONFIDENCE VOY.NO. (2212)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V HTK CONFIDENCE VOY.NO. (2212)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **27-1-2023** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **TMIT-1** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: **2301928**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S ELDER TRIUMPHANT SHIPPING LINES PTE LTD

GLOBAL AFFAIRS

Japan's top court rules 2021 vote disparity constitutional

JAPAN'S Supreme Court on Wednesday ruled the vote disparity of up to 2.08-fold in the 2021 lower house election was constitutional.

The top court decision followed 16 conflicting rulings from lower courts, with plaintiffs demanding that the outcome of the House of Representatives election held on 31 October 2021, be nullified.

Among the 15 justices of the top court's Grand Bench, 14 ruled the 2021 lower house election as constitutional, while one said it was unconstitutional.

Two groups of lawyers had filed the 16 lawsuits. Out of them, nine rulings said the gap was constitutional, while seven others said the election was held "in a state of unconstitutionality". None of them favoured the plaintiffs' demand to nullify the election result. The top court's ruling comes after Japan's parliament last November enacted a law bringing about the country's largest-ever change to the boundaries and distribution of lower house single-seat constituencies, to correct a vote-value disparity.—Kyodo

Lawyers are pictured outside the Supreme Court in Tokyo on 25 January 2023, following its ruling that the vote disparity of up to 2.08-fold in the 2021 lower house election was constitutional. **PHOTO: KYODO**

Swedish government to tighten immigration

THE Swedish government on Tuesday announced an "international information campaign",which it expects to discourage refugees from coming to the country.

"The main objective is to inform about the Swedish migration policy so that fewer people will come here," Minister for Migration Maria Malmer Stenergard said at a press conference.

"Among other things, this includes distributing an information package to foreign authorities and other authorities with contact points abroad. Targeted information must also go to foreign newsrooms and news agencies," she said.

"If refugees who would be forced to return receive information about the regulations that apply here, we reduce the risk of suffering for these people and focus to a greater extent on those who have genuine reasons to get protection," she added.

Malmer Stenergard also said that 76 per cent of the refugees who arrived in the Nordic countries in 2019 ended up in Sweden and that this number must be substantially decreased.—Xinhua

Migrants, mostly from Syria and Iraq, set out on foot along a highway on the Danish-German border, heading north to Sweden. **PHOTO: CLAUS FISKER/AFP/FILE**

Conflict-torn DR Congo gears up for papal visit

IN DR Congo's bustling capital Kinshasa, the faithful are flocking to impromptu market stalls in churchyards to buy t-shirts and wax tissues adorned with the image of Pope Francis, ahead of the pontiff's visit.

Papal souvenirs have become hot-selling items in the city ahead of the Argentinian pope's four-day trip to the deeply religious central African country, which begins on 31 January.

Many in the Democratic Republic of Congo view the papal visit as a chance to soothe tensions in the east, where M23 rebels have captured swaths of territory since last year and provoked a humanitarian crisis.—AFP

RUSSIA-UKRAINE CONFLICE

Russia downgrades diplomatic ties with Estonia in retaliation

RUSSIA has decided to downgrade diplomatic relations with Estonia to the level of charge d'affaires in retaliation of Estonia's move to reduce Russian embassy staff. The Russian Foreign Ministry on Monday summoned Estonian Ambassador to Russia Margus Laidre in protest against actions of Estonia's authorities and ordered him to leave the country by 7 February.

"The Estonian leadership has purposefully destroyed the entire range of relations with Russia" by promoting Russophobia and hostility towards Russia, the ministry said in a statement.

In a tit-for-tat move, the Estonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs tweeted on Monday it will expel the Russian ambassador from its capital Tallinn.

Earlier this month, Estonia asked Russia to reduce staff at its embassy in Tallinn by more than half ahead of 1 Febuary . — Xinhua

Tallinn is the official capital of Estonia. **PHOTO: REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE/ AFP**

Two UK humanitarian workers killed in Ukraine: family

TWO Britons missing in Ukraine since this month were killed while attempting a "humanitarian evacuation" from a war-ravaged town in the east, one of the men's families confirmed Tuesday.

Chris Parry, 28, and Andrew Bagshaw, 48, died while undertaking voluntary work in Soledar, in the Donetsk region of Ukraine, Parry's family said in a statement released by Britain's Foreign Office.

Bagshaw is also a New Zealand citizen, according to reports, with the country's foreign ministry saying earlier this month it was "working with relevant agencies in the UK to confirm the latest situation". Concern had grown about their fates after the head of the Russian mercenary group Wagner, which helped captured Soledar from Ukrainian forces recently, said on January 11 that one of the missing men's bodies had been found there.

Wagner boss Yevgeny Prigozhin had also published online photographs of passports that appeared to belong to Parry and Bagshaw, which he claimed were found with the corpse.—AFP

GLOBAL AFFAIRS

Retired NATO general faces ex-PM in Czech presidential run-off

A retired NATO general leads a billionaire ex-premier going into the Czech presidential run-off that starts Friday, following an election campaign that saw Russia's war in Ukraine take centre stage.

Wealthy entrepreneur and former prime minister Andrej Babis has sought to woo voters nervous of a spillover from the conflict by implying his opponent — as a military man — could drag the Czech Republic into the war.

The populist lawmaker also said he would not send troops to Poland or the Baltics to help them under NATO's collective defence — comments he later walked back after raising eyebrows abroad.

Babis looks set to lose out to Petr Pavel, according to the latest opinion polls, after the former NATO general won over supporters of several first-round candidates.

"Turnout will be key. The question is whether Babis will manage to demobilize a part of Pavel's voters," said Otto Eibl, an analyst at Masaryk University.

"It doesn't seem likely really because Babis polarizes society and many people will want to stop him," he told AFP.

The winner of the run-off, which ends Saturday, will replace Milos Zeman, an outspoken and divisive politician who nursed close ties with Moscow before making a U-turn when Russia invaded Ukraine.

The new head of state will face record inflation in the central European EU and NATO member of 10.5 million people, as well as bulging public finance deficits related to the war in Ukraine.— AFP

Billionaire ex-prime minister Andrej Babis (L) and retired NATO general Petr Pavel face off in the Czech presidential run-off. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

Egypt archaeologists uncover 'complete' Roman city

The excavation site of the Roman-era city discovered in the Egyptian city of Luxor, as seen in this photograph from the Egyptian Ministry of Antiquities. **PHOTO: EGYPTIAN MINISTRY OF ANTIQUITIES/AFP**

EGYPTIAN archaeologists said Tuesday they had discovered an 1,800-year-old "complete residential city from the Roman-era" in the heart of the southern city of Luxor.

The city, dating to the second and third centuries, is the "oldest and most important city found on the eastern bank of Luxor", according to Mostafa Waziri, head of Egypt's Supreme Council of Antiquities. Archaeologists discovered "a number of residential buildings", as well as "two pigeon towers" — a structure used to house pigeons or doves — and a "number of metal workshops", Waziri said in a statement.

Inside the workshops, researchers found a collection of pots, tools and "bronze and copper Roman coins".

It is a rare archaeological find in Egypt, where excavations — including on Luxor's west bank, where the famous Valley of the Queens and Valley of the Kings lie — are most commonly of temples and tombs.—AFP

NEWS IN BRIEF

Cameroon denies seeking Canada's help in anglophone crisis

CAMEROON on Tuesday denied asking Canada for any help to mediate an end to years of separatist unrest after Ottawa said it had a mandate to facilitate a peace process.

Following the denial from government spokesman Rene Emmanuel Sadi, the foreign ministry in Canada maintained its version, saying meetings had already taken place with Cameroon government representatives. "Following recent reports by certain media, the government states... that it has given no country or external body, any role whatsoever as mediator or facilitator," the Yaounde spokesman said in a communique.—AFP

Tanzania opposition stalwart Lissu to return from exile

TANZANIAN opposition leader Tundu Lissu was heading home from exile on Wednesday to "write a new chapter" following the president's lifting of a ban on political assembly.

Lissu, who was shot 16 times in an assassination attempt in 2017 and has spent most of the years since in Belgium, will arrive on a flight from Brussels via Addis Ababa.

The 55-year-old said in a video posted on Twitter from Brussels airport that he will head to an opposition rally being held to welcome his arrival and discuss "our issues as Tanzanians".—AFP

Former Lebanese PM charged in Beirut port blasts investigation

FORMER Lebanese Prime Minister Hassan Diab and two former ministers were charged with homicide with probable intent on Tuesday over the Beirut port explosions in 2020, the local al-Jadeed TV reported.

Tarek Bitar, a Lebanese judge tasked with investigating the Beirut port explosions, also charged Abbas Ibrahim, chief of Lebanese General Security, State Security director Major-General Tony Saliba, and former Lebanese army commander Jean Kahwaji in connection with the blasts. Lebanese Prosecutor-General Ghassan Oueidat, who was also charged in the Beirut blast investigation, announced on Tuesday his rejection of the decision issued earlier by Bitar, arguing that the judge was suspended from his investigation over a year ago. Bitar's work had been interrupted for over a year following several complaints filed against him by two former ministers facing charges, forcing him to halt the probe. Bitar resumed his work after a legal opinion said he should be allowed to continue his investigation.—Xinhua

Smoke plume rising after the new collapse of the northern section of the grain silos at the port of Lebanon's capital Beirut, which were previously partly destroyed by the 2020 port explosion. **PHOTO: DYLAN COLLINS/ AFPTV/AFP**

SPORT

GLOBAL AFFAIRS

Retired NATO general faces ex-PM in Czech presidential run-off

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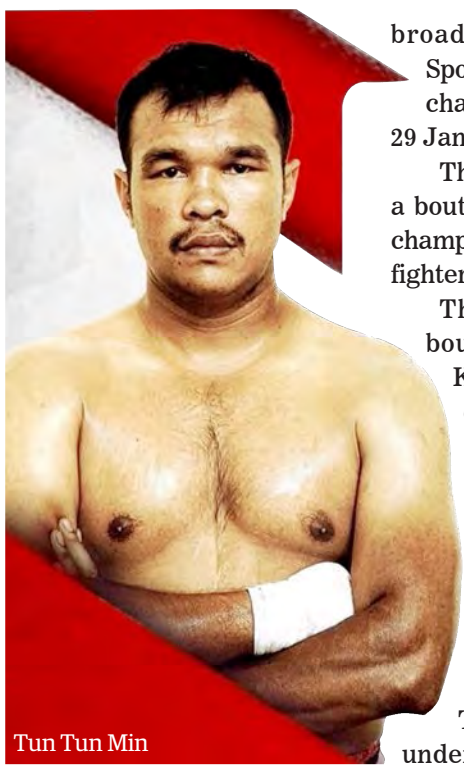
Lethwei Champion Tun Tun Min to fight against starfighter Thway Thit Win Hlaing



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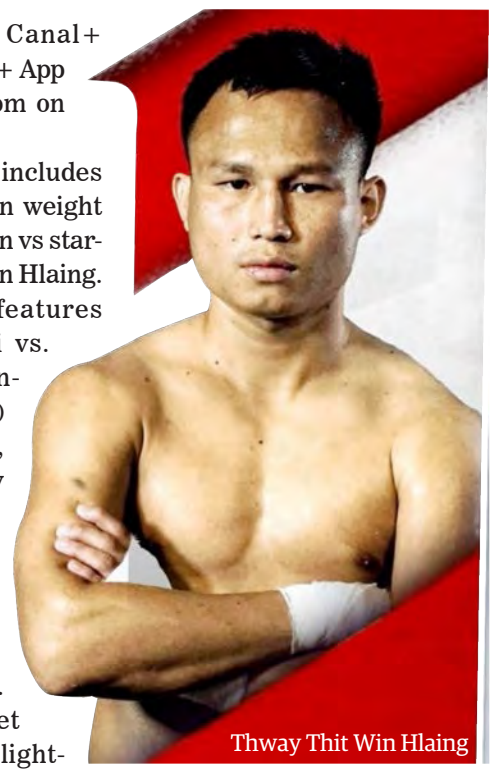

Thway Thit Win Hlaing

MYANMAR traditional Lethwei (Myanmar's boxing) First Class Champion Tun Tun Min will take on Lethwei star Thway Thit Win Hlaing this week, according to the event organizers.

The competition will be broadcast live on Canal+ Sports 1 and Canal+ App channels at 2:00 pm on 29 January.

The main event includes a bout of former open weight champion Tun Tun Min vs starfighter Thway Thit Win Hlaing.

The full card features bouts of Eh Mwi vs. Kabar Shar under (63.5-67 kilo) (welterweight), Saw Shwe Lay vs. Moe Htet Aung under (60-63.5 kilo) (light welterweight), Shan Tauk vs. Thway Lin Htet under (57-60 kilo) (lightweight), Saw John vs. Saw Tun Win Aung under (63.5-67 kilo) (welterweight), Saw Ke vs. Thar Soe under (63.5-67 kilo) (welterweight), Soe Min Tike vs. Kasaw Htoo under (54-57 kilo) (featherweight), and Saw Naing Lin vs. Kyar Yine under (57-60 kilo) (lightweight).

It is reported that the boxing competition will be held under the scoring rules and will be held without fans. — Bala Soe/KZL

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.

Ten Hag intent on ending Man United's trophy drought

ERIK ten Hag has pledged to do everything in his power to end Manchester United's worst trophy drought in 40 years ahead of their League Cup semi-final against Nottingham Forest on Wednesday.

United have not won any silverware since the League Cup and Europa League in 2017, when Jose Mourinho was in charge at Old Trafford. The English giants have reached at least the semi-final stage of various competitions on six occasions since then, losing the 2018 FA Cup final and 2021 Europa League final.

Ten Hag said United's six-year wait for a trophy — a relative drought last experienced between 1977 and 1983 — was "too long".

"It's the best feeling you can have winning a trophy," said the Dutch manager, who won the Eredivisie with Ajax last season.

"I had the luck in my career to win some trophies and it's magnificent, especially for the fans. It's so great and I think the fans here have some experience, especially the older ones. "But now it is a period Manchester United didn't win trophies and it is too long ago. —AFP

Djokovic crushes Rublev to reach Australian Open semi-finals

NOVAK Djokovic delivered a masterclass Wednesday to race into the Australian Open semi-finals and edge closer to a 22nd Grand Slam title with a straight-sets thrashing of Andrey Rublev.

The Serbian was in the zone to blitz past the Russian 6-1, 6-2, 6-4 on Rod Laver Arena and meets Tommy Paul for a place in Sunday's final.

The unseeded American Paul defeated countryman Ben Shelton 7-6 (8/6), 6-3, 5-7, 6-4.

"I cannot be happier with my tennis, honestly," said Djokovic, after reaching a 10th semi-final at Melbourne Park. Only Roger Federer (15) and Jack Crawford (11) have been there more often.

"I've been playing very solid from the back of the court and I really love playing in these conditions and this court," the 35-year-old told Rod Laver Arena.

"Some really close games that we had," he added. "Andrey is a great opponent, great player. I have tons of respect for him, one of the biggest forehands, quickest players on the tour.

"I knew what the game plan was and it was important that I found my best tennis." Djokovic's quest for a record-extending 10th Australian Open title has been far from smooth, plagued by a left hamstring strain suffered en route to the title at Adelaide this month.—AFP

Serbia's Novak Djokovic celebrates victory against Russia's Andrey Rublev during their men's singles quarter-final match on day ten of the Australian Open tennis tournament in Melbourne on 25 January 2023. **PHOTO: AFP**