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The Republic of the Union of Myanmar State Administration Council: Five-Point Road Map

1. Priority will be given to fully realizing peace, stability and rule of law throughout the Union to safeguard the socioeconomic life of the people.
2. People-centred development work that enhances socioeconomic well-being will be undertaken to ensure the country's prosperity and food security.
3. Processes will further continue to consolidate a genuine, disciplined multiparty democratic system and build a Union based on democracy and federalism.
4. Priority will be accorded to work aligned with the agreements set out in the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement, in order to achieve enduring peace for the entire nation.
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.

Message sent by State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister of Republic of Union of Myanmar Senior General Thadoe Maha Thray Sithu Thadoe Thiri Thudhamma Min Aung Hlaing to ceremony marking 76th Anniversary of Union Day 2023

12 February 2023

Esteemed ethnic national brethren of the Union,

On the auspicious occasion of the 76th Anniversary of Union Day which falls on 12 February 2023 today, I wish all ethnic national brethren of the Union who have been living in the Republic of the Union of Myanmar together physical and mental happiness and prosperity.

As all ethnic national brethren have been residing in the Republic of the Union of Myanmar in unison, the Union has been firmly standing tall in the world with prestige for thousands of years. Nonetheless, as capitalist invaders severally waged aggressive wars over Myanmar, the whole country of Myanmar fell under colonialist British as of 1886. The colonialists raised the administrative power to the mainland under the Government of Burma Act in 1935, it left the hilly regions in order to separately govern the hilly regions and the mainland.

Restrictions were imposed on the people from the mainland not to visit the Shan State as the border act was enacted. That is why the people from both hilly regions and the mainland missed the chance to contact each other, and they were too far but areas were close to each other. In passing a long time, the instigation of imperialists waged suspicions and disbelief among the ethnic people. Up to now, everybody knows that all our ethnic people are suffering from the bad impacts of such consequences.

British Governor Sir Dorman-Smith released the White Paper on 17 May 1945, mentioning that independence shall be granted for the mainland but the hilly region shall be placed under British rule. General Aung San held meetings with national leaders in Panglong in 1946 and unanimously demanded to grant independence for both hilly regions and the mainland together without absolutely accepting the White Paper.

On 12 February 1947, a total of 23 ethnic leaders including General Aung San signed the Panglong Agreement comprising nine unification points for hilly regions and the mainland as part of laying the cornerstones to forge the national unity between the hilly regions and the mainland. Hence, the government recognized and designated 12 February as Union Day when the Panglong Agreement in which the unity of ethnic nationals conceived was signed.

In fact, Union Day shows the unity of Union ethnic people residing in Myanmar to the world. In accord with the motto “Unity is Victory”, entire ethnic people escaped from colonial rule on 4 January 1948, and the country regained independence as a sovereign country. Celebrating the victorious ceremonies for independence as a heritage of the Union has been held on a grand scale as the Diamond Jubilee Independence Day on 4 January 2023. Currently, the Union heritage based on the solidarity of the ethnic people turned 76 years.

Only when all ethnic people of the Union are to safeguard the independence with the Union spirit in successive eras with the Union spirit will it be perpetual. Hence, I would like to urge all to strive for the perpetual existence of national unity and Union through internal strength.

Esteemed ethnic national brethren of the Union,

As a consequence of the instigation of the colonialists, all ethnic national brethren did not fully enjoy the essence of independence, and controversies in attitudes and armed conflicts are happening until today. All ethnic people are join hands and honestly and transparently hold negotiations among themselves to restore perpetual peace, cease armed conflicts across the nation and fully enjoy the essence of peace.

It is necessary to take lessons from the disunity and conflicts among the ethnics and the people due to racism, personal cult and dogmatism in the history of the country in building the Union based on democracy and federalism. Discriminating, setting aside and attacking persons as enemies for different attitudes and concepts are not in conformity with the democratic system. Likewise, localism and personal cult may cause disunity and harm the country to disintegrate, so I would like to urge all to deeply consider integration for harmonizing diversity.

The State Administration Council since its assumption of the State responsibilities in accord with the State Constitution (2008) has been emphasizing the ending of local armed conflicts for ensuring national unity and peace which are actual needs for the State. It will strive to secure success in a point of the five-point road map: “Priority will be accorded to work aligned with the agreements set out in the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement, in order to achieve enduring peace for the entire nation.” Tatmadaw One-sidedly suspended the ceasefire from 21 December 2018 to the end of 2022 for implementing the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) through talks with ethnic armed organizations. Moreover, as the ceasefire was suspended for the whole of 2023, it is necessary to make efforts for ceasing the internal armed conflicts through the talks for the sake of the nation and the people.

All citizens are to participate in initiating two political objectives such as exercising the genuine, disciplined multiparty democratic system and restoring peace which plays a crucial role in building the Union based on democracy and federalism.

The State Administration Council is striving for filling the basic needs and creation of situations in order to hold free and fair elections in accord with the last point of the five-point roadmap “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”. To do so, the year 2022 was set as the year of peace, and efforts were made to end the internal armed conflicts and restore durable and perpetual peace through talks with ethnic armed

organizations. Nonetheless, as the country is still far from peace and stability due to local and foreign interferences and the needs of stakeholders in considering the interests of the nation and the people, it is regrettable for the nation. Hence, relevant organizations and persons and ethnic people are to join hands among them to participate in relevant roles for marching towards the goal they inspire to in accord with the motto: Keep Moving Forward to Achieve Our Goal.

Esteemed ethnic national brethren of the Union,

Knowledge and genuine goodwill of all ethnic national people in the entire nation are crucial for building a new peaceful, tranquil, modern, developed democratic nation. They all are to consider serving the interests of the whole Union, rather than their self-interests. Only when they objectively analyze their stances whether there are right or wrong will their activities benefit the State and the people. It is necessary to bring about correct ideas and concepts, disseminate knowledge and forge the spirit loving the State and the Union spirit for the youths who will shoulder the responsibilities of the future State and the entire people. Hence, I would like to urge all to nurture their offspring and youths to become able persons of the future.

In our tenure, we have adopted and are implementing two national objectives: “prosperity of the nation and food security”. Improvement of socio-economic life and strengthening of the economy of a country is a basic root cause to ensure peace and stability of the State and development. Our country, formed with the majority of the population from rural areas is primarily engaged in agriculture and livestock farming businesses and the development of other sectors.

The government is prioritizing and encouraging the successful operation of agriculture and livestock farms as well as micro, small and medium scale enterprises, creation of more job opportunities and increase of income. The development of human resources is very important for the economic development of our country blessed with abundant natural resources and a sound foundation of the economy. Hence, the government plans to teach agriculture, livestock and mechanical subjects to the students at each basic education high school in 50 districts in order to contribute to the rural economy and MSME businesses and makes arrangements for outstanding students to continue higher learning. As such, officials and responsible persons concerned from the government and private sector are to strive for the improvement of the socioeconomic life of the ethnic people and the development of the State economy. Similar schools will be opened in all remaining districts.

As the government is fulfilling the requirements in relevant sectors in order to develop all parts of the nation including ethnic regions without vacancies, ethnic national brethren are to grasp such an opportunity to thoroughly utilize it.

Esteemed ethnic national brethren of the Union,

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar is a Union where all ethnic people have been residing together through thick and thin. They all have to exercise the genuine, disciplined multiparty democratic system through their fraternity, solidarity and united efforts so as to build the Union based on democracy and federalism.

The State Administration Council has adopted the five-point roadmap and 12 objectives and is implementing them to have success.

However, internal and external destructionists and terrorist groups wage instigations into the citizens and ethnic people for losing the interests of the State and ethnic national people at present and persuade the people of committing wrong attitudes, opinions and acts. Moreover, the entire people are to carefully consider possible dangers for the State and the people triggered by external interference of neo-colonialists making attempts to cause disunity and deterioration of peace and stability of the nation and selfishness of some persons. I would like to notify all the people of the time to make collaborative efforts with might and main for ensuring the non-disintegration of the Union, non-disintegration of national solidarity and perpetuation of sovereignty.

Hence, while implementing the National Objectives for the 76th Anniversary of Union Day 2023 which are as follows: -

- to strive for the perpetual existence of national solidarity and perpetuity of the Union through the internal strength
- to make collaborative efforts of all ethnic nationals to restore perpetual and durable peace
- to join hands in harmony for ensuring the prosperity and food sufficiency of the nation as two national plans through the Union spirit
- 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
- 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,

I send this message by urging all ethnic national people to successfully implement these objectives through the united strength with the Union spirit so as to enjoy the fruits of the Union.

Senior General Thadoe Maha Thray Sithu
Thadoe Thiri Thudhamma Min Aung Hlaing
Prime Minister
Chairman, State Administration Council

Rice and rice products prioritized to promote export volume

RICE and rice products are prioritized in the national export strategy being implemented for promoting the export volume. The vision for the promotion of the rice export strategy is to produce and export rice which will be high quality for rural development and increased income as well as sustainable development suitable for the natural environment.

(The excerpt from the speech made by Chairman of State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at the opening ceremony of Myanmar Rice Conference-2022 on 6 October 2022.)

Part 4 of Maravijaya Buddha Image conveyed onto jewelled throne



State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing attends the conveyance ceremony for Part 4 of the Maravijaya Buddha Image in Nay Pyi Taw on 11 February 2023.

A ceremony to convey part 4 of the Maravijaya Buddha image onto the jewelled throne was held in the Maravijaya Buddha Image Park in Dekkhinathiri Township of Nay Pyi Taw Union Territory yesterday morning.

Leading donor Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and party led by venerable Sayadaws sprinkled scented Paritta water on the jewelled throne, the steel jewellery basket in which part 4 of the Buddha image was kept and the steel tower crane.

The Senior General pressed the button to convey part 4 of the Buddha image by the heavy machinery.

The jewelled throne is 18 feet high, 72 feet long and 54 feet wide. Part 4 of the Buddha image weighs 500 tonnes. The part of the Buddha image was conveyed by the steel tower crane.

Maravijaya Buddha image is being built for public obeisance with the aim of showing the flourishing of Theravada



The Senior General sprinkles scented Paritta water on the steel tower crane.

Buddhism in Myanmar to the world, ensuring peace and prosperity of the nation, developing the region with travels of local and foreign visitors to the Buddha image and contributing to the development of the nation.

The Buddha image com-

bined with parts 1, 2 and 3 weighs 1,700 tonnes. Conveyance of the image onto the jewelled throne started on 26 January and it was successfully settled on the jewelled throne on 31 January. Religious objects and precious jewellery items donated by well-wishers across

the nation led by the Senior General were kept in the reliquaries at the centrepieces on the jewelled throne on 27 January and 10 February.

Yesterday, part 4 of the Buddha image was conveyed onto the jewelled throne at the auspicious ceremony. Convey-

ance processes are being undertaken on the agenda.

The ceremony was attended by State Ovadacariya Maha Thihanada Monastery of Tatkon Abhidhaja Maha Rattha Guru Bhaddanta Acinna, East Intha Monastery of Lewe Abhidhaja Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotika Bhaddanta Pandita, Region Ovadacariya Wegyi Monastery of Pobbathiri Township Abhidhaja Maha Rattha Guru Bhaddanta Adiccavamsa and Ovadacariya of Building the Buddha image Pyinmana Pali Tekkatho Mingalazeyon Monastery Presiding Naya-ka Agga Maha Pandita Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Bhaddanta Vimalabuddhi and members of the Sangha, SAC Vice-Chairman Deputy Prime Minister Vice-Senior General Soe Win and officials.

In the evening, small pagodas on the stone plaque chambers, water fountains, the platform of the Buddha image, Thudhamma public rest houses and the main entrance road were illuminated for public pleasantness. — MNA



National Objectives for 76th Anniversary of Union Day 2023

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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



ACC Chair meets education staff in Taunggyi

ANTI-CORRUPTION Commission (ACC) Chairman Dr Htay Aung met rectors and lecturers from universities, state education officials, principals and teachers from basic education high schools, primary schools and middle schools in Taunggyi Township yesterday. Shan State Chief Minister U Aung Zaw Aye and state ministers along with officials attended the meeting and the ACC chair gave proper instructions. – MNA/MKKS

Anti-Corruption Commission Chair Dr Htay Aung meets personnel from the education sector in Taunggyi yesterday.

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

A combined team at the Ma-yanchaung permanent checkpoint conducted inspections on 8 February and captured 14,100 kilogrammes of porcelain ceramic pillar and 4,200 kilogrammes of raw material talc powder worth K12,531,000 that exceeded the Import Declaration (ID) from three vehicles and three goods include 150 cartons of M-150 energy drink worth K4.5 million without official documents from three vehicles and two trailers (approximately K255,000,000). The action was taken under Customs procedures.

On 9 February, the Customs Department inspection teams

seized 266,654 kilogrammes of galvanized squares worth K36,382,710 that were not declared in the Import Declaration (ID) from a container at the Hteedan container checkpoint and 30,000 kilogrammes of plastic black masterbatch worth K5 million that were not declared in the Import Declaration (ID) and without an import licence from a container at the Myanmar International Terminals (Thilawa). The action was taken under Customs procedures.

Similarly, officials made inspections at the Asia World Port container checkpoint and confiscated 1,680 PVC lunch boxes worth K10,080,000 that were different from the Import Declaration (ID) from a container. The action was taken under Customs procedures.



Officials confiscate illegal commodities at Asia World Port.

On 10 February, a total of 4.186 tonnes of illegal hardwood worth K1,046,500 was captured in the North Zarmayi forest reserve in Lepadon township and the action was taken under the Forest Law.

Therefore, 12 arrests (at an estimated value of K324,540,210) were made on three consecutive days from 8 to 10 February, according to the Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee. — MNA/MKKS



1 new case of COVID-19 reported on 11 February, total figure rises to 633,864

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to **633,864** after **one** new case was reported on 11 February 2023 according to the Ministry of Health. The total number of patients who have recovered from COVID-19 in the country reached **614,328**, including **four** new recoveries.

The death toll from COVID-19 in the country remained unchanged at **19,490** on 11-2-2023 with no new death reported from the pandemic. — MNA

Public Notice for Elimination of Violence

1. Declaring themselves to be “for the people”, the so-called CRPH, NUG and PDF terrorist groups are lawlessly killing Buddhist monks, civil servants including school-teachers, and members of the general public, as well as looting and robbing.
2. Not encouraging, supporting, or assisting “CRPH”, “NUG”, and “PDF” terrorists, who are intimidating and killing people and committing destructive activities, is to protect the lives and property of the general public.
3. Giving information secretly to the authorities on terrorists and on the possession and transport of weapons/ammunition is tantamount to protecting the lives and property of innocent people.

Visitors flock to ethnic traditional food booths, local product salerooms marking 76th Union Day

EXHIBITIONS from ministries, regions and states, as well as ethnic traditional food and local products from states and regions, which are being opened and exhibited at People's Square in Yangon, continued yesterday for the second day to commemorate the 76th Anniversary of Union Day, where students, staff from various departments and people are crowded.

Starting from 9 am, booths and fairs were opened for sale. Food and beverages from ministries are low-priced and well-packed. The public was keen to

view traditional clothes, accessories and food, dual-purpose portable solar water-pumping machines for farmers, agricultural seeds and fish hatcheries.

Visitors thronged to the Fire Brigade booth showcasing the 191 Report Mobile Phone Application and the booths from the ministries of science and technology, information and sports.

Yangon Region Chief Minister U Soe Thein, Yangon City Development Committee Chairman U Bo Htay, Economy Minister U Myo Myint Aung and



Visitors are seen at the commemorative event yesterday. PHOTO: KANU



officials viewed round the exhibitions and booths. A music concert is also staged near the People's Square fountain from 6 pm to 9 pm. The commemorative event is open to the public from 9 am to 10 pm until 14 February. — Nyein Thu (MNA)/KZL

Myanmar Fisheries Federation to mark Silver Jubilee



The office building of the Myanmar Fisheries Federation.

MYANMAR Fisheries Federation established in December 1998 will celebrate its Silver Ju-

bilee in December 2023. The silver jubilee event will feature a cooking show

cooperating with the Myanmar Chef Association, booths of marine products, white shrimp,

fish, freshwater/saltwater educating programmes, fun fairs and entertaining programmes.

The federation earned over US\$800 million from marine exports in 2022. It will elect the new central executive committee members at the ceremony of the silver jubilee in the coming December.

"The federation turns 25 years in December. We are very sad as some experts who worked together with us passed away during the outbreak of COVID-19. Despite the difficulties, the federation is striving against the challenges. A project representing the federation is being implemented in Pantanaw Township. When it is fully operational, it will support the country's GDP.

Currently, all are making efforts to mark the silver jubilee of the federation," said Dr Toe Nandar Tin, senior vice-president of the Federation.

A river catfish farming zone is being established by the Global Earth Agro & Aqua Industry Public Co Ltd in Pantanaw Township to revive the marine product businesses in Southeast Asia and it is expected to launch the operation in 2024.

The Myanmar Fisheries Federation organizes its units across the nation except for Chin State. Currently, there are 10 working associations and over 60 district and township organizations with a total of 4,300 members. — Nyein Thu (MNA)/KTZH

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News and Periodicals Enterprise

LOCAL BUSINESS

Onion price plummets to K900 per viss in Yangon market



The photo shows onions flowing into the market.

THE prices of new monsoon onion indicated a significant fall of K3,000 per viss within the two months in Yangon markets, which accounts for a 75-per-cent drop.

The daily onion supply to the Yangon market from various regions is estimated at 200,000 visses. However, the market is relying on the demand of Yangonites and local communities from delta regions. That being so, the price is moving down, the onion depots stated.

Last week, the onion supply accumulated 1.28 million visses in six days. This week, the volume was around K1.2 million viss, as per data of Yangon warehouses.

The prices of onion stood at K1,000-1,300 per viss depending on producing areas (Seikphyu,

Myingyan, Myittha and Taungdwin)

From 8 December 2022, the onion price fell below K1,000, Ko Thein Myint told the Global New Light of Myanmar (GNLM).

The prices usually vary in size and quality. Large ones fetch a higher price in onion, garlic and potato prices.

When the onion prices rocket, the housewives use small ones to reduce the food cost. The large-sized onions are abundantly flowing into the Yangon market at present.

On 8 December 2022, the new monsoon onion prices

touched the highest of K4,400-4,800 per viss. After two months, the price plunged to K900 per viss in the wholesale market.

Those growers who cultivated monsoon onions earlier than usual reaped a handsome profit this year.

The prices of onions were K600-1,000 per viss on 2 June 2022. The prices hit a record high of K5,100 per viss on 2 December.

A market observer pointed out that the market witnessed a price spike after six months and a steep plunge over two months. — TWA/EM

Chickpea supply surpasses demand in domestic market

NEWLY-HARVESTED chickpeas are entering the market while the millers' demand is calming down, according to the Mandalay commodity depot.

Last year, demand outstripped supply, causing the price rise.

The prices moved in the range between K180,000 and K205,000 per 56.25/57.25 viss on 1 January 2023 and fell to K176,000 and K187,000 per 56.25/57.25 viss depending on varieties on 10 February.

The figures showed a sharp drop of K4,000-18,000 per 56.25 visses over one month.

New chickpeas from Monywa, Kyaukse and Sagaing areas started flowing into the Mandalay market.

The country primarily cultivates paddy, corn, cotton, sugarcane, various pulses and beans. Its second-largest production is pulses and beans, accounting for 33 per cent of agro-products and covering 20 per cent of growing acres. Among them, black beans, pigeon peas and green grams constitute 72 per cent of bean acreage. Other beans including peanuts, chickpeas, soybeans, black-eyed beans, butter beans and rice beans are also grown in the country.

Myanmar's agriculture sector is the backbone of the country's economy and it contributes to the Gross Domestic Product a lot.

Myanmar ships chickpeas to foreign markets beyond self-sufficiency. More than 18,000 kilos worth US\$12.798 million have been exported to foreign countries so far in the current financial year 2022-2023 since April 2022, according to statistics from the Ministry of Commerce. — NN/EM

Myanmar pockets over \$1 bln from pulses exports over past ten months

MYANMAR brought in over US\$1.1 billion from various pulses exports over the past ten months of the current financial year 2022-2023, the Ministry of Commerce's statistics indicated.

Between 1 April 2022 and 3 February 2023, the country shipped 1,252,818 tonnes of pulses worth \$982.588 million to external markets by the sea while 181,268 tonnes of various pulses worth \$128.38 million were sent to the neighbouring countries via cross-border posts, totalling over 1.4 million tonnes worth \$1.11 billion.

Myanmar primarily exports black gram and pigeon pea to India and sends green gram to China and some European companies. There are more than 1.1 million acres of various pulses

sowing every year in Myanmar and black gram and pigeon pea constitute 35 per cent of the overall acres.

The country primarily cultivates paddy, corn, cotton, sugarcane, various pulses and beans. Its second-largest production is pulses and beans, accounting for 33 per cent of agro-products and covering 20 per cent of growing acres. Among them, black beans, pigeon peas and green grams constitute 72 per cent of bean acreage. Other beans including peanuts, chickpeas, soybeans, black-eyed beans, butter beans and rice beans are also grown in the country. Myanmar's agriculture sector is the backbone of the country's economy and it contributes to over 30 per cent of the Gross Domestic Product.

Myanmar conveyed US\$1.57 million worth of over 2.02 million tonnes of various beans and pulses to foreign trade partners in the 2020-2021 FY. The country shipped \$966.4 million valued at over 1.24 million tonnes of pulses and beans to foreign markets through sea route, and \$604.3 million valued at over 786,920 tonnes were sent to the neighbouring countries through land borders, the MoC's trade data showed.

Myanmar grows 18 types of pulses, covering 11.45 million acres across the country. The pulses constitute 26 per cent for black gram, 25 per cent for black gram, 15 per cent for pigeon pea, eight per cent for chickpea and the remaining for other pulses. — TWA/EM



Various beans and pulses are displayed at a shop.

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LOCAL BUSINESS

Prices of black gram, pigeon pea set for 10-day high

THE prices of black grams and pigeon peas remain on an upward trend in the domestic market on the strong foreign demand.

On 1 February 2023, the prices stood at K1,762,000 per tonne of black gram (FAQ) and K1,930,000 per tonne of pigeon pea. The prices peaked at K1,840,000 per tonne of black gram and K2,012,000 per tonne of pigeon pea on 11 February. The prices indicated a sharp increase of K78,000 per tonne of black gram and K82,000 per tonne of pigeon pea.

The price fluctuation is highly correlated with the demand of the main buyer in India. The prices rebounded on its strong demand these days, traders elaborated.

India notified on 28 December that the free import policy of black gram (urad) and pigeon pea (tur) extended up to March 2024, pushing black gram prices down in the domestic market.

Additionally, the price of

black gram is positively related to the exchange rate. Kyat devalued at K2,860 against the US dollar.

Last August 2022, the price of black gram peaked at K2.1 million per tonne when Kyat hit a record low of K4,500 against hard currency.

Myanmar earned over US\$1.1 billion from over 1.4 million tonnes of pulses over ten months of the current financial year 2022-2023. Of them, Myanmar has shipped 577,099.271 kilos of black gram worth \$475.514 million and 171,812.352 kilogrammes of pigeon pea worth \$134.18 million to the external markets, the Ministry of Commerce said.

Myanmar primarily exports black gram, green gram and pigeon pea among locally produced pulses. Of them, black gram and pigeon peas are mainly sent to India while green grams are shipped to China and Europe.

India has growing demand and consumption requirements for black grams and pigeon peas.



The prices of black grams and pigeon peas remain on an upward trend in the domestic market on the strong foreign demand. Myanmar yearly produces approximately 400,000 tonnes of black gram and about 50,000 tonnes of pigeon peas.

According to a Memorandum of Understanding between Myanmar and India signed on 18 June 2022, India will import 250,000 tonnes of black gram and 100,000 tonnes of pigeon peas (tur) from Myanmar for five consecutive years from 2021-2022 financial

year to 2025-2026 FY. This G-to-G pact will not affect the pulses' annual quota set by India. Myanmar's exporters are also entitled to deliver the pulses to India under that annual quota. Myanmar yearly produces approximately 400,000 tonnes of black gram and

about 50,000 tonnes of pigeon peas. Myanmar is the top producer of the black gram that is primarily demanded by India, while pigeon peas, green grams and chickpeas are cultivated in Australia and African countries besides Myanmar. — NN/EM

Fraudsters circulating rumours to hike exchange rate will face legal actions: CBM

INVESTIGATION and prosecution of market manipulation to hike the exchange rate in the local forex market with malicious rumours will be undertaken, according to a statement of the Central Bank of Myanmar on 10 February.

Some exporters, importers and banks are attempting to raise the exchange rate owing to the rumours. The statement called for bank institutions to govern the market and investigate those fraudsters who circulate rumours.

The CBM released a notice that the exporters, importers and banking institutions are asked not to elevate the exchange rate. Those banking institutions that will not abide by financial regulations will face legal action as well.

At present, Kyat depreciation against hard currency persists at K2,860 in the grey market although the Central Bank of Myanmar set the reference exchange rate at K2,100 against the US dollar.

CBM has set the currency trading band at 0.3 per cent for the Kyat to fluctuate between these two specified upper and lower exchange rates for transactions, selling or buying, according to a directive issued by the CBM on 10 August 2022.



Therefore, financial institutions including banks and informal money exchanges are instructed to set a dollar value at K2,094 for buying and K2,106 for selling. However, the over-the-counter Kyat-dollar exchange rate was K2,850 for buying and K2,865 for selling on 10 February.

There is a large price difference between the reference rate of the CBM and the unofficial market rate. However, there is no way to set the new price, as per the notification released on 15 January.

Some unscrupulous people were allegedly spreading fraudulent news to manipulate the market and attempt to make the dollar gain, stating that changing reference prices and repaying financing for the fuel oil companies, according to the statement.

The CBM injected liquidity into the banking sector. Approximately US\$108 million were sold within 45 days in the market through foreign salary transfers. More amount will be put for sale.

Last August, a dollar value hit an all-time high of over K4,500 in the grey market.

Consequently, the CBM sold dollars at its auction market for the sectors in need, to control the soaring dollar. A total of \$443.8 million were sold at an auction rate in 2021 as well. — NN/EM

Prices of fuel oil, gold and dollar on 11 February 2023

Fuel Oil Price (Yangon)

Octane 92	K2,170
Octane 95	K2,240
Diesel	K2,210
Premium Diesel	K2,290

All of the prices are based on per litre.

Gold Price

The reference price of high-purity gold set by YGEA	K2,196,000 per tical
High-purity gold in the gold market	K2,870,000 per tical

US Dollar Vs Kyat

A US dollar set by the Central Bank of Myanmar	K2,100
A US dollar in the forex market	K2,850 to K2,865

The above prices may change from time to time.

Join hands in marching towards the goal of the nation

AS ALL ethnic national brethren have been residing in the Republic of the Union of Myanmar in unison, the Union has been firmly standing tall in the world with prestige for thousands of years. Nonetheless, as capitalist invaders severally waged aggressive wars over Myanmar, the whole country of Myanmar fell under colonialist British as of 1886.

On 12 February 1947, a total of 23 ethnic leaders including General Aung San signed the Panglong Agreement comprising nine unification points for hilly regions and the mainland as part of laying the cornerstones to forge the national unity between the hilly regions and the mainland. Hence, the government recognized and designated 12 February as Union Day when the Panglong Agreement in which the unity of ethnic nationals conceived was signed.

All citizens and ethnic people are to rely on each other in marching towards the goal. They have to consider how to overcome restrictions and difficulties on their way to enjoy the perpetual peace and prosperity of the nation forever.

diversity.

All citizens are to participate in initiating two political objectives such as exercising the genuine, disciplined multiparty democratic system and restoring peace which plays a crucial role in building the Union based on democracy and federalism.

As the country is still far from peace and stability due to local and foreign interferences and the needs of stakeholders in considering the interests of the nation and the people, it is regrettable for the nation. Hence, relevant organizations and persons and ethnic people are to join hands among them to participate in relevant roles for marching towards the goal they inspire to in accord with the motto: Keep Moving Forward to Achieve Our Goal.

All citizens and ethnic people are to rely on each other in marching towards the goal. They have to consider how to overcome restrictions and difficulties on their way to enjoy the perpetual peace and prosperity of the nation forever.

Celebrating the victorious ceremonies for independence as a heritage of the Union has been held on a grand scale as the Diamond Jubilee Independence Day on 4 January 2023. Currently, the Union heritage based on the solidarity of the ethnic people turned 76 years.

It is necessary to take lessons from the disunity and conflicts among the ethnics and the people due to racism, personal cult and dogmatism in the history of the country in building the Union based on democracy and federalism.

Discriminating, setting aside and attacking persons as enemies for different attitudes and concepts are not in conformity with the democratic system. Likewise, localism and personal cut may cause disunity and harm the country to disintegrate, so I would like to urge all to deeply consider integration for harmonizing

Trial of new Covid treatment yields encouraging results: study

A SINGLE-INJECTION antiviral treatment for newly-infected Covid-19 patients reduced the risk of hospitalization by half in a large-scale clinical trial, according to a study published on Wednesday. Stanford University professor Jeffrey Glenn, coauthor of the study published in the New England Journal of Medicine (NEJM), said the new drug “showed profound benefits for vaccinated and unvaccinated

people alike”.

While the number of Americans dying daily of coronavirus has fallen to around 500, treatments for the disease remain limited. One of the most common, Paxlovid made by Pfizer, involves taking 30 pills over five days.

The new treatment involves a single dose of pegylated lambda-interferon, a synthetic version of a naturally occurring protein that infected cells secrete to defend against viral infection.

“What it does is it binds receptors on the surfaces of cells that activate our own antiviral defence mechanisms,” said Glenn, a professor of medicine, microbiology and immunology who heads the Stanford Biosecurity and Pandemic Preparedness Initiative.

“So if a virus has infected the cell it will turn on processes that aim to destroy the virus’s replication,” he said. “It will also send signals to neighbouring

cells to warn them viruses are on their way and get ready to defend yourself.”

Receptors for interferon lambda are primarily in the linings of the lungs, airways and intestine — the main places Covid strikes.

“We’re turning on these antiviral mechanisms in the cells, the lung, where the infection is happening,” Glenn said.

The Phase 3 trial of the drug, conducted between June 2021

and February 2022, involved nearly 2,000 patients with Covid symptoms in Brazil and Canada, about 85 per cent of whom had been vaccinated.

A total of 931 newly-infected Covid patients were given a single injection of interferon lambda while 1,018 participants were given a placebo.

The risk of Covid-19-related hospitalization or death from any cause was 47 per cent lower in the interferon group than in the

placebo group, according to the researchers.

Twenty-five of the 931 people who received the injection within seven days of exhibiting Covid symptoms were hospitalized compared with 57 of the 1,018 who received the placebo.

Vaccinated patients treated with interferon lambda experienced a 51 per cent reduction in hospitalization relative to the placebo group.

SOURCE: AFP



One of the most common – Paxlovid, made by Pfizer – involves taking 30 pills over five days. PHOTO: PHARMACEUTICAL-TECHNOLOGY



Book Title	- Koe Yat Htar Nay
	A Place to Call Home by Deborah Smith
Translator	- Tin Maung Myint
Publishing House	- Gangaw Wutyee
Publication Date	- January 2023 (1 st Edition)
Price	- K6,800

Koe Yat Htar Nay (A Place to Call Home by Deborah Smith)

THE original novel titled, “A Place to Call Home” was written by Deborah Smith, who is one of the best seller writers of the New York Times. She has written about 35 novels, and this one has sold the best. Not only the original writer of this book but also the translator is great whose translated books are also best sellers. He has won National Literary Awards several times in the genre of translation (novel). This great translator is nobody but Saya Tin Maung Myint.

The translator said that long before the translation of this book, southern America has appealed to him greatly. The southerners from Mississippi have been dominating his mind for many years, he said.

Saya said, “River Mississipp-

pi is idly meandering along the New Orleans. The river is flowing smoothly and quietly in summer. But when she gets infuriated, she carries 60,000 tonnes of water per second. When coming wild, she roars like a gigantic monster and will tear the big oak trees apart. The translation of Saya Tin Maung Myint is highly entertaining, and this is the reason why his translated books are selling the best and winning him the National Literary Awards.

The storyline is about the romance binding a vagabond and a girl descending from a wealthy family. They are both from a small village in the State of Georgia in the South of America. They were separated for about 20 years but when the guy returned to his native village, their reunion

turned into a romantic affair.

The readers of the original novel remarked that their romantic affair is similar to that of Romeo and Juliet. However, their comments are not acceptable because the story of Romeo and Juliet ended in tragedy. As for A Place to Call Home, it is a story with a happy ending.

In the final episode of this novel, the translator wrote, “Winter has ushered in. We can hear the pitter-patter of the snow falling. Just as the seasons are ushering in and leaving, our lives are also changing, being unable to lead a steady life. We climbed the blue-ridge mountain, not accompanied by Mac and Tweet. It was really tiring to climb such a rocky mountain. I was too dependent on Ronnie. Anyway, we

were happy amidst excitement and anxiety. Upon reaching the summit, we were relieved by the scene of the roses blossoming. I was so amazed at the luxuriant growth of the roses that I even exclaimed with joy. Arriving at a place that I liked most, Ronnie, took a small wooden plank out of his bag, put it on a big oak tree, hitting a nail it in. I took a thing out of my jeans pocket and gave it to him. Holding it gently, he whispered into my ears and asked me if he needed to learn to play that small wind instrument. I replied that he should learn how to play that instrument because my grandpa was the type of man who was proud to keep the tradition. Then, he embraced me with his love light making his dark eyes shine. We were happy because we were together now. We missed the kisses we used to share in those days. Now again, we could hug each other and exchange kisses.



Book Title	- The Glass Mountain and Other Short Stories
Translator	- Myat Thit
Publishing House	- Hnit Karla Myar
Publication Date	- January 2023 (1 st Edition)
Price	- K4,000

Hman Thay Lar Hnit Ahchar Wuthtu Toe Myar (The Glass Mountain and Other Short Stories by Donald Barthelme)

THE original writer Donald Barthelme is a world-famous American short story writer and novelist who is noted for his playful, postmodernist style of short fiction. Those who are close to him call him Don B. In addition to being a writer, he is also a leading editor of a local magazine.

Barthelme holds the belief that short stories cannot be created without mastering the technique of writing. To present the facts and experience, the writers need a technique to make them become fiction. According to him, the art of writing involves finding the facts, conducting research,

developing a theme and plot and assessing or evaluating what had been written.

As part of sharing knowledge and experience, the original writer recounted his efforts in writing an essay titled, “Not-Knowing”. He said, “Inasmuch as a writer believes that he is creating the art, he will take great care to take into account many aspects. And the more he goes into the details i.e. the more he is meticulous with things, the more problems he will have to solve, many often not knowing where to start with. This is the reason why he gave the title, “Not-Knowing”. He

said there were times when he had to forget what he had already learnt because the background knowledge sometimes posed a barricade to creative writing.

There are ten short stories in this collection: (1) How I Write My Songs; (2) The Flights of Pigeons From the Palace; (3) At the Tolstoy Museum; (4) Paraguay; (5) A Few Moments of Sleeping and Waking; (6) The Death of Edward Lear; (7) On Angels; (8) Euge’ni Grandet; (9) Glass Mountain; and (10) Donald Brathelme’s ARIS.

Myat Thit, the translator, highlighted damage to

conscience in the short story titled, “Glass Mountain.” He also touched on degradation and loss of creativity. Additionally, his translation was great in depicting the nature of human beings. The fairy tale in which the actor saved the actress was a real cliffhanger. The readers are guaranteed that they will be quite excited to read the episode depicting the adventure of the actor.

In the Museum of Tolstoy, the interesting point is that Tolstoy means the fat guy in the Russian language. There were strange things in the story. His grandpa sent his own clothes to Holland for laundering. The mother of Tolstoy never knew the harsh words. Stranger still, Tolstoy had his eyebrow shaved with the hope of it growing luxuriantly again after shaving. Saya Zaw Aung and Saya Zeya Linn presented the forewords.

CURRENT
AFFAIRS

Land, related equipment will be leased under BOT system for fish, shrimp production: CBM

IN order to carry out fish and shrimp production activities, the land and related equipment that will allow the construction of a 500 tonnes cold storage factory will be allowed to be leased through the BOT system according to the Depart-

ment of Fisheries in Nay Pyi Taw. The leasing land is land survey No 2/2 in west Kyokone ward, Insein Township in Yangon Region.
Businessmen and companies can purchase the tender proposal and terms at the rate of

K10,000 per pair at the of Administration branch of the Department of Fisheries in Nay Pyi Taw.
Tender proposals will be sold at 9:30 am to 3:30 pm from 8 to 14 February and re-submitted on 16 February. —TWA/KZW



Female workers are pictured working on the processing line at one cold storage factory.



This handout photo taken and released on 25 January 2023 by the 7th Regional Coast Guard headquarters of the Japan Coast Guard shows Coast Guard personnel (centre L) checking on a lifeboat (centre R-in orange) from the Jin Tian cargo ship floating at sea, after the Hong Kong registered vessel sank between South Korea's southern island of Jeju and Japan's southwestern Nagasaki prefecture. **PHOTO: HANDOUT / JAPAN COAST GUARD / AFP**

Air rescue search continues for 5 missing crews from capsized ship

A cargo ship consisting of Myanmar seamen sank in Japan, the water search was suspended while the air search continued its rescue works for the remaining five crews, according to Myanmar Embassy in Tokyo.
Of eight Myanmar nationals who were aboard the Jin Tian cargo ship that capsized off the coast of Japan, Nagasaki on 25 January, five were miss-

ing. Among these five missing crews, three were found and of them, two died and one was alive.
The Myanmar Embassy communicated with the relevant organizations of Japan, and representatives of shipping lines to provide the needed assistance to the rescued U Zeyar Min. He was sent back to Myanmar by flight on 8 February. — TWA/KTZH

Imports push down palm oil DO price

THE entry of imported palm oil on 8 February 2023 brought down the delivery order (DO) price to K6,500 per viss in the same afternoon, according to an oil dealer.
It is known that the wholesale price of palm oil shot up to K6,750 per viss in the Yangon oil market on 7 February. The price was K6,650 per viss on 8 February.
Approximately 15,000 visses of palm oil from abroad arrived at the Yangon oil market on 8 February and most oil dealers set the oil price at K6,500 per viss on 9 February. The price still can fall on 10 February, it is learnt.
It is known that three palm oil ports in the city will be docked by vessels carrying 5212/4800/4300 tonnes of oil respectively.
The oil price went up to

K6,750 per viss at the Yangon external oil market due to the difficulty in getting oil. Imported palm oil price was only US\$970 per tonne on 8 February.
The wholesale reference price of palm oil, which is notified every Monday, was only K4,480 per viss at maximum and K4,430 per viss at a minimum within four weeks. During the period, the average exchange rate is only K2,480.
On 3 February, the wholesale reference price was set at K4,430 per viss while the DO price stood at K6,600 per viss. The DO price per viss was K2,270 higher than the reference price on 7 February.
Oil hoarders may buy and store more in the time of price falls since they earned great profits in early 2023, an oil dealer said. — TWA/CT

5 killed, 7 injured as vehicle falls into 1,000 feet ravine

FIVE people were killed and seven wounded when a vehicle plunged into a 1,000 feet ravine in eastern Shan State, said Myanmar Fire Brigade.
A Toyota Revo (white) car could not control its speed and fall into a 1,000-foot-deep ravine on the Kengtung-Mongkhun-Mon-



Rescue members are seen trying hard to save the injured at the incident site.



ghsat Road at 10 am on 10 February.
Firefighters and rescue members from Kengtung district and township fire stations went to provide assistance at the scene of the accident. — TWA/KZW

HEALTH/PANDEMIC
WORLD

Long-term air pollution exposure raises depression risk: studies

LONG-TERM exposure to air pollution raises the risk of depression, according to a pair of new studies published in the JAMA network of scientific journals.

A study published on Friday in JAMA Network Open found that long-term exposure to elevated levels of air pollution increases the risk of late-onset depression among the elderly.

The other study, published in JAMA Psychiatry, found that long-term exposure to even low levels of air pollutants was associated with increased incidence of depression and anxiety.

Air pollution has long been linked to cardiovascular and respiratory diseases.

The new studies add to a growing body of evidence that air pollution also affects mental health. For the study of the effects of air pollution on elderly Americans, researchers from Harvard and Emory University examined the data of nearly nine million people on Medicare, the US government health insurance scheme for those aged over 64.

More than 1.52 million of them were diagnosed with depression during the study period



Southern California has the worst air pollution in the country, according to a new study by Environment California and CALPIRG. The report examines the interlocking roles of emissions, warmer temperature and drought. **PHOTO: REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE/ FREDERIC J. BROWN/ AFP/FILE**

of 2005 to 2016 according to Medicare claims.

“We observed statistically significant harmful associations between long-term exposure to elevated levels of air pollution and increased risk of late-life depression diagnosis,” the researchers said. “Socioeconomically disadvantaged individuals were observed to be at a much higher risk of late-life depression in this study,” they said. “They are simultaneously exposed to both social stress and poor environmental conditions, including air pollution.”—AFP

Texas judge to decide fate of abortion pill in US



Most abortions in the US are medication abortions – as opposed to the medical procedure – according to the Guttmacher Institute, a research and policy organization focused on sexual and reproductive health that supports abortion rights. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

A conservative Texas judge is poised to rule on whether to impose a nationwide ban on a drug used for more than half of the abortions in the United States.

Mifepristone, also known as

RU-486, is one component of a two-drug regimen used for medication abortion and has been on the US market for more than 20 years. Anti-abortion groups, galvanized by the Supreme Court’s ruling in June overturning the constitutional right to an abortion, have now set their sights on obtaining a ban on the abortion pill.

In a lawsuit filed in November with a Texas judge appointed by former Republican president Donald Trump, an alliance of anti-abortion groups claims the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) should never have approved the “dangerous” drug.—AFP

Single dose of azithromycin lowers maternal sepsis or mortality: Study

INFECTIONS that develop just before, during, or after delivery cause 10 per cent of maternal fatalities. Maternal infections and sepsis, a serious infection consequence, are two of the top five causes of maternal mortality globally. Maternal infection significantly raises the risk of neonatal sepsis, which is responsible for 16 per cent of newborn deaths. A new study published in the New England Journal of Medicine provides evidence that a single oral dose of azithromycin, a common antibiotic, reduced the risk of maternal sepsis or death by 33 per cent in women who delivered vaginally. —ANI



The World Health Organization and others have prioritized reducing maternal sepsis to reduce maternal deaths. **PHOTO: REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE /MILOS-KRECKOVIC / CLEVELANDCLINIC.ORG**

NEWS IN BRIEF

Chinese language training course resumes for Nepal’s tourism professionals

THE 5th Chinese language training course for Nepalese tourism professionals started in Kathmandu on Friday after a three-year hiatus over the COVID-19 pandemic.

Addressing the inaugural ceremony, Chinese Ambassador Chen Song noted that people-to-people and cultural exchanges have become an important part of China-Nepal cooperation under the Belt and Road Initiative, and China had become the second largest source of tourists for Nepal before the pandemic.—Xinhua

Omicron subvariant XBB.1.5 prevalence jumps to 75% in US

THE highly transmissible Omicron subvariant XBB.1.5 now accounts for about three-fourths of all COVID-19 cases reported in the United States this week, according to the estimates released Friday by the US Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

XBB.1.5 is estimated to account for 74.7 per cent of US COVID-19 cases, up from 65.9 per cent the week prior. BQ.1.1 remains the second most prevalent strain at 15.3 per cent. The CDC started tracking XBB.1.5 separately from its parent strain XBB from the week of 12 November last year, when it accounted for only 0.1 per cent of cases nationwide. Since then, XBB.1.5 has been spreading quickly in the United States.—Xinhua

Doctors in Rajasthan on 24 hour strike against “Right to Health Bill”

THE opposition to Rajasthan Government’s proposed Right to Health Bill has intensified across the state as the doctors took to the streets to protest against the proposed bill in Rajasthan on Saturday and declared a strike of one day. The medical and emergency operations are to be on hold for 24 hours starting at 8 am on Saturday. Taking to social media Indian Medical Association tweeted on Saturday said that they have demanded some amendments in the Bill the IMA stands with members.

“Dr Sharad Agarwal, N.P, IMA visited Kota on 10 February and held a press conference on the issue of the proposed “Right to Health Bill” by Rajasthan Government. He demanded amendment in the said Bill. He reassured the IMA members that the IMA stands with them, always.”—ANI

ECONOMY
WORLD



A wide range of items has experienced price hikes since last summer as rising oil prices have raised logistics costs. **PHOTO: KYODO**

Prices to rise in Japan on over 10,000 food items over higher costs

FOOD prices will continue to soar in Japan in the first four months this year, with prices on more than 10,000 items set to rise due to high material and logistic costs, according to a recent survey by a credit research company.

Prices of 12,054 items have climbed or are expected to do so this year. Prices would be 16 per cent higher on average from the

current level, up three percentage points from a year earlier, according to Teikoku Databank Ltd. data as of 31 January.

The pace of the increases will be about two times higher than the first four months of last year when 5,573 items became more expensive.

This month, prices of 5,463 items, such as frozen food and seafood products, will be raised,

in another “price hike rush”, following rises on over 7,800 items last October.

In March, 2,716 food items, including confectioneries, are expected to see price increases, while 3,192 items will see a rise in April, the survey said.

Teikoku predicts that the price increase of 2,000 to 3,000 items per month will continue until this summer. —Kyodo

Nepal President stresses economy push in last joint parliamentary address

WITH less than a month left for the presidential polls as the second term coming to an end, incumbent Nepali President Bidhya Devi Bhandari addressed the last joint parliament session of her tenure on Friday, stressing the need to continue the economic growth to progress further.

Addressing the joint session of the newly elected parliament on Friday, Bhandari said, “The economic condition of the nation is at a complicated turn and we all know about it and are worried.

We cannot achieve success until we find immediate, short and long-term solutions. Though silver linings are seen in the economic situation we are not in a condition where we can be assured about it would go in the long run. The problem of monetary liquidity, lack of enough resources for investments, and some external reasons have made the



A truck loaded with goods from Nepal enters the Gyirong port in southwest China’s Tibet Autonomous Region, 28 December 2022. **PHOTO: REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE/ SHEN SHUWEN/ XINHUA**

production sector weaker. With the debilitated economic progress, increasing inflation, and widening international trade deficit, we should be serious about enhancing the capacity of the production sector to address the situation thus created”. Bhandari addressed the joint meeting of

both houses of the Federal Parliament as per Article 95 of the Constitution of Nepal. Article 95 of the Nepal Constitution states that the President may address a meeting of any House of the Federal Parliament or a joint meeting of both Houses and call for the presence of members.— ANI

NEWS IN BRIEF

China’s current-account surplus up 32% in 2022

CHINA reported a current-account surplus of 417.5 billion US dollars in 2022, up 32 per cent from the previous year, the State Administration of Foreign Exchange said Friday.

The figure, only second to that in 2008, accounted for 2.3 per cent of its gross domestic product during the same period, said Wang Chunying, a spokesperson with the administration.

Trade in goods posted a record surplus of 685.6 billion dollars in 2022, up 22 per cent year on year, said Wang. —Xinhua

UK avoids recession but ‘not out of woods’ over inflation

BRITAIN’S economy has narrowly avoided recession, official data showed Friday, but finance minister Jeremy Hunt warned it was “not out of the woods yet” over surging inflation.

Gross domestic product registered zero growth in the final quarter of last year, in line with expectations after shrinking 0.3 per cent in the previous three months, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) said. Britain’s flat growth in the fourth quarter contrasted with Europe’s biggest economy Germany, whose GDP shrank 0.2 per cent in the same period on fallout from the Russian invasion of Ukraine.—AFP

Tourism collapses in Russia following Western sanctions

THE number of foreign tourists visiting Russia collapsed last year due to the impact of Western sanctions imposed on the country following its military operation in Ukraine and strict Covid restrictions in China, industry professionals said Thursday.

Only 200,100 foreigners visited Russia in 2022, the Association of Tour Operators of Russia (ATOR) said, citing figures from border services, a drop of 96.1 per cent from pre-pandemic years.

“The reasons are clear: the closed skies between Russia and the vast majority of European countries, as well as the impossibility to use foreign-issued Visa and Mastercard cards in Russia,” ATOR said.

Most of Europe closed its airspace to Russian planes a few days after the Kremlin launched the Ukraine offensive in February 2022.

Beginning in March 2022, Russian national carrier Aeroflot suspended its international flights, though it gradually

resumed travel to “friendly countries”.

But draconian Covid-related restrictions in China that Beijing only recently abandoned kept Chinese tourists from taking advantage of the situation.

Before the pandemic Chinese tourists were the top visitors to Russia, accounting for around 30 per cent of the 5.1 million total.

In 2022 only 842 Chinese tourists visited Russia. —AFP



Crowds are thinner at Moscow’s top sights. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

US judge rules against family challenge in 737 MAX criminal settlement

A federal judge rejected a challenge by relatives of Boeing 737 MAX crash victims to the aviation giant's US criminal settlement, according to a ruling reviewed Friday by AFP.

In a win for Boeing and the Justice Department, US District Judge Reed O'Connor ruled against ordering changes to the controversial January 2021 deferred prosecution agreement (DPA), ruling that the "court lacks statutory authority to supervise, or substantively review" the settlement between Boeing and DOJ.

The decision is a setback for families who garnered a hard-fought public arraignment of Boeing last month in O'Connor's Fort Worth, Texas courthouse at which they argued that the 2021 accord should be radically revised and overseen by a court-appointed monitor.

The DPA required Boeing to pay \$2.5 billion in fines and restitution in exchange for immunity from criminal prosecution for charges it defrauded the government during the certification of the MAX.

The DPA came about six weeks after the Federal Aviation Administration cleared the MAX to resume service after two crashes killing 346 people grounded the plane worldwide for 20 months.

The families have argued that Boeing's role in what they have called the "deadliest corporate crime in US history" merit criminal conviction of the company and top brass.

But O'Connor also rejected the families' arguments that the Justice Department behaved in "bad faith" with respect to the families.— AFP

Zipporah Kuria, who lost her father in a Boeing airplane crash, spoke with the press in January 2023 following a hearing in Fort Worth, Texas. PHOTO: AFP/FILE



Balenciaga designer apologizes for 'child abuse' ads



Balenciaga designer Demna has apologized for an ad campaign by the fashion label that appeared to reference child abuse. PHOTO: AFP/FILE

BALENCIAGA'S creative director Demna has apologized for an ad campaign that appeared to reference child abuse and vowed to drop his provocative showmanship in an interview with Vogue.

The ads, published late last year, featured children holding bags designed to look like teddy bears, but with studs and harnesses, and surrounded by adult items including wine glasses. It sparked huge condemnation online, including from celebrities close to Demna and the brand such as Kim Kardashian.

In his first published interview since the furore, Demna (who dropped his last name in 2021), told the fashion bible there was never any intention to reference abuse.—AFP

Pet economy booms, sees potential for growth

PET stores in northeast China are still busy after the Spring Festival holiday, during which many pet owners left their animals in the care of these businesses.

"During the holiday, our six chain stores provided boarding services for many pets, with our average turnover increasing by about 20 per cent," said Zhang Jiaqi, manager of a store in the city of Shenyang. "Currently, our pet snacks and toys still sell well and the pets waiting to get groomed have to queue". Data from major online delivery platform Meituan shows that search volumes for Spring Festival pet boarding and pet grooming services respectively increased by 82 per cent and 255 per cent from the same holiday in 2022. And these services are only the tip of the iceberg when it comes to pet industry consumption in China.—Xinhua

Cosmeticians at a pet hospital in Liaocheng, Shandong province, dress up pet dogs. Many pet owners want grooming services for their pets. PHOTO: ZHANG YAO/CHINA NEWS SERVICE



The Global New Light of Myanmar

www.gnlm.com.mm

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CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V MAERSK VALENCIA VOY.NO. (306W)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V MAERSK VALENCIA VOY.NO. (306W) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 12-2-2023 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of MITT/MIP where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: 2301185

Shipping Agency Department

Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S SEALAND MAERSK ASIA PTE LTD

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V KOTA HIDAYAH VOY.NO. (KHDY0335N)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V KOTA HIDAYAH VOY.NO. (KHDY0335N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 12-2-2023 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.

Phone No: 2301185

Shipping Agency Department

Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL LINES

WORLD: TOP HEADLINES

Japan’s cabinet endorses using nuclear reactors beyond 60-year limit

THE Cabinet of Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida on Friday officially endorsed a policy permitting nuclear reactors to be operated beyond their 60-year maximum lifespan and for new reactors to be built under the government’s broader “green transformation” policy.

In a bid to secure a stable energy supply and cut carbon emissions, the government, through the policy, envisions building next-generation nuclear plants, and upgrading



The Mihama nuclear plant’s No 3 unit in Fukui prefecture, Japan intends to go “green” with extensive use of nuclear power. PHOTO: KYODO

some of Japan’s existing aging reactors.

The new policy will also effectively extend the lifespan of some of the aged reactors beyond the maximum of 60 years, despite safety concerns and criticism from within Japan’s nuclear watchdog and members of the public.

The government under the new policy will use the period that the country’s nuclear reactors have been offline for safety inspections by Japan’s nuclear regulator, the majority in the wake of the 2011 Fukushima nuclear disaster, as a means to extend the operational life of the aged reactors.

After the 2011 earthquake-triggered tsunami disaster at the Fukushima nuclear power plant, which led to the worst nuclear disaster since Chernobyl in 1986, the operational lifespan of Japan’s nuclear reactors was limited to 40 years, under much stricter safety protocols.—Xinhua

Anime “Slam Dunk” makes successful leap onto S Korean big screens

A recently released reimagining of hit Japanese anime “Slam Dunk” has proven hugely popular in South Korea and brought with it a wave of nostalgia for the 1990s manga and television series as well as the underdog basketball team the film features.

Jeong Jin Hyeok is one of many South Koreans in their 30s and 40s revisiting their childhood with “The First Slam Dunk,” a new film version of the beloved and wildly popular

basketball manga.

The film has currently sold the third-most theater tickets ever for a Japanese anime film shown in South Korea, according to the Korean Film Council.

Written and directed by the manga’s author Takehiko Inoue, the film now trails only the blockbuster hit “your name”. and “Howl’s Moving Castle” from Studio Ghibli, the film promotion group said. It has moved into third ahead of 2020’s “Demon Slayer”.

This latest theatrical hit demonstrates Japan’s soft power can to some degree overcome historical issues such as compensation over wartime unpaid labour and comfort women who were forced to work in wartime brothels.

While these issues occupy the political classes of both countries, South Koreans have appeared to be happy to embrace Japanese culture through the film that started showing in early January.—Kyodo



A special section for “Slam Dunk” comic books is created at a bookstore in Seoul on 23 January 2023. The manga-to-film adaptation of Takehiko Inoue’s 1990s sports anime series has drawn more than one million moviegoers in South Korea in the two weeks since its release. PHOTO: KYODO

RUSSIA-UKRAINE CONFLICT

IEA calls special meeting as gas crisis ‘not over’



A worker at a gas hub in north-east Austria which handles mainly Russian gas. PHOTO: JOE KLAMAR/AFP

THE International Energy Agency on Friday convoked a special meeting of energy ministers for urgent consultations on natural gas supplies.

The meeting, to be held on Wednesday by video conference,

is the first such special IEA ministerial meeting recent history.

The IEA provides policy advice to energy consuming nations but also helps coordinate the use of the emergency oil stocks held by its 31 member nations.

IEA Executive Director Fatih Birol said the measures taken following Russia’s invasion of Ukraine helped European nations whether Russia cutting off most of its gas supplies.

“But the crisis is not over and more needs to be done, particularly to get ready for next winter,” he said. “We are convening this ministerial because there is a continued need for our members and other partners to show solidarity with one another and to take concrete steps to ensure security of supply,” he added.

Russia’s invasion of Ukraine and its subsequent reduction of gas supplies as Western nations imposed sanctions caused energy prices to spike.—Xinhua

EU leaders fail to agree on Ukraine, migration policy at extraordinary summit

AN extraordinary European Council summit convened in Brussels to discuss Ukraine, economic policy and migration wrapped up on Friday with unresolved differences among leaders over key issues.

Although there was some agreement on continued European support to Ukraine in its conflict with Russia, opinions diverged on immigration policy and on specifics related to Ukraine’s candidacy for European Union (EU) membership.

During a visit by Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelensky to the two-day summit, he called for more economic and military aid for his country. Heads of state and government agreed to do whatever it takes to support Ukraine, but many of the details of what this will mean still need to be hammered out.—Xinhua

Attacks reported across Ukraine, Biden to visit neighbour Poland

UKRAINE said Friday that Russia had launched a major new wave of aerial attacks, as President Joe Biden announced he would mark one year since the invasion by visiting Kyiv’s neighbour Poland.

Strikes were reported from the eastern region of Kharkiv to the western region of Ivano-Frankivsk, a day after President Volodymyr Zelensky travelled to Brussels to lobby EU leaders for long-range weapons and fighter jets.—AFP

Peru’s president calls for multiparty dialogue to end crisis

PERUVIAN President Dina Boluarte on Friday called for a multiparty dialogue to help resolve her country’s political crisis, saying two months of sometimes deadly anti-government protests had left the nation a “fragile democracy”. Boluarte became president on 7 December, after her predecessor Pedro Castillo was impeached and arrested after attempting to dissolve Congress and rule by decree. But since that day she has faced calls to resign by protesters also demanding fresh elections. Demonstrations have at times turned violent and officials on Friday announced a new death, bringing the total number of people killed in clashes between security forces and protesters to 49.—AFP



Peruvian President Dina Boluarte called on all political parties as well as social and labor organizations to join in a national dialogue to find a resolution to a months-long political crisis. PHOTO: AFP

Pope Francis faces ‘civil war’ at heart of church

FROM his reforms to his foreign relations, criticism of Pope Francis has intensified since the death of his predecessor Benedict XVI, revealing a climate of “civil war” at a time when the Catholic Church is engaged in a global conversation about its future. Benedict, a conservative German theologian who was pope for eight years before resigning in 2013, died on 31 December at the age of 95. Within days of his death, his closest aide, Georg Gaenswein, revealed Benedict’s concerns at some of the changes made by his successor Pope Francis, notably his decision to restrict the use of the Latin mass. The criticism was not new. Many in the conservative wing of the Roman Curia, which governs the Church, have long complained the Argentine pontiff is authoritarian and too focused on pastoral matters



Pope Francis told reporters on his plane back from South Sudan last Sunday that his critics have “exploited” Benedict’s death to further their cause. PHOTO: AFP

at the expense of theological rigour. But it was followed by the death of Australian cardinal George Pell, and the subsequent revelation that he had authored an anonymous note published last year that directly attacked Francis. The note had described the current papacy as a “catastrophe”, and among others criticised “heavy failures” of Vatican diplomacy under his watch. Pell, a former close adviser to Francis, was jailed for child sexual abuse before being acquitted in 2020. Then, at the end of the month, German Cardinal Gerhard Mueller published a book adding fuel to the fire. —AFP

UN urges ‘immediate ceasefire’ in Syria to help quake aid

THE United Nations rights chief called Friday for an immediate ceasefire in Syria to facilitate the delivery of aid to all victims of the region’s devastating earthquake. “At this terrible time in Türkiye and Syria, we call for urgent delivery of assistance to ALL in need,” the UN rights office said in a tweet. “UN human rights chief Volker Turk calls for immediate ceasefire in Syria, and full respect for human rights and humanitarian law obligations so help can reach everyone,” it added. The call came as rescue workers continued their search for survivors in the rubble of the 7.8 magnitude quake that hit Türkiye and Syria on Monday, with the death toll approaching 24,000. The UN security council will meet on Syria -- likely early next week -- according to Swiss envoy Pascale Baeriswyl, who initiated the meeting along with Brazil. The two non-permanent

members are in charge of the Syria humanitarian file. At the session, the council will hear from UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs Martin Griffiths, who is to visit Türkiye and Syria this weekend. “He will be conducting an evaluation as to what the effective situation is, where the bottlenecks for the delivery of aid exist, and in how best members the council can address that,” said Brazilian ambassador to the UN Ronaldo Costa Filho said of Griffiths. At least 3,553 people have died in Syria, where more than a decade of civil war and Syrian-Russian aerial bombardment had already destroyed hospitals, collapsed the economy and prompted electricity, fuel and water shortages.—AFP



A convoy of trucks carrying humanitarian aid enters Syria through the Bab al-Salama crossing with Türkiye. PHOTO: AFP

NEWS IN BRIEF

For Nicaraguan dissident, flight to exile was out of the blue

It seemed like just another grim day in his solitary prison cell for Juan Lorenzo Holmann Chamorro, whose family owns Nicaragua’s oldest newspaper, but by evening he knew something was brewing. In a matter of hours, he and 221 other Nicaraguan dissidents would be on a US-bound plane to freedom, where they arrived Thursday. “We were getting ready to sleep when they came to our cells and told us, “Take off your uniforms and put on these civilian clothes”, Holmann told AFP. Holmann, 56, had been in the dreaded El Chipote prison since 14 August 2021, when police raided La Prensa, the nearly century-old newspaper owned by his family and where he served as general manager. —AFP

East Jerusalem car ramming kills two, including child

Two people, one of them a child, were killed in a car ramming attack on a bus stop in Israeli-annexed east Jerusalem on Friday, Israeli authorities said. The attack, which comes amid spiralling violence in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict this year, was condemned by Washington as “unconscionable”. A police spokesperson said that at around 1:30 pm (1130 GMT) the driver of the car, a 31-year-old resident of Issawiya, a Palestinian neighbourhood of east Jerusalem, hit “at high speed (...) innocent people waiting at the bus stop”. —AFP

Pope Francis
faces 'civil
war' at heart
of church

PAGE-15



SPORT

Shan United sign two foreign players for new football season

SHAN UNITED signed two expatriate players for the 2023 Myanmar National League season, according to the Shan United. "Here it comes, the very big news that we all have been waiting for. Shan United has recruited two talented foreign players in two positions we have planned to strengthen", said the team officials. "Bello for striker and Moukailou for central defender positions. Both of them are from the Ivory Coast.

"A 27-year-old striker who can play with both of his feet has last played in Ivory Coast's foot-

ball club, Athletic club.

"In addition to that, they have South East Asia experiences as in Viet Nam and gets along with Myanmar players within a relatively short period of time.

"Another player is Moukailou. A 31-year-old central defender has played in Yadanabon, Yangon United, Ayeyawady United and Hanthawady United and knows in and out of Myanmar National League. He has got two MNL Champions as well. "Usually, he is a great player when it comes to sticking with rules and following

coach's advice but he won't be hesitant to make an aggressive play when there is in need.

"His experiences and empowered playstyle will be of great help in a Championship journey which Shan United has intended to build", Shan United stated.

Right now, Shan United has recruited 31 players, including three foreign players for upcoming 2023 football season. The team officials said that they will announce all those players in a few upcoming days. — KZL

Moscow says calls to ban Russians from Olympics 'unacceptable': agencies

THE Russian sports minister said Saturday that Ukraine's call to ban Russian athletes from the 2024 Paris Olympics, which gathered support from several countries, was "unacceptable".

"The attempt to dictate the conditions of athletes' participation in international competitions is absolutely unacceptable," sports minister Oleg Matytsin was cited as saying by Russian state-run news agencies.

"We see a blatant desire to destroy the unity of international sport and the international Olympic movement." Ukraine has reacted furiously to the International Olympic Committee's announcement last month that



Ukraine has called for Russian athletes to be banned from the Paris Olympics. PHOTO: AFP

it was exploring a "pathway" to allow Russian and Belarusian competitors to take part in the Paris Games, under a neutral flag. The International Olympic

Committee's President Thomas Bach has described Ukraine's calls for a boycott of the Games as contrary to the "principles we stand for".—AFP

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar State Administration Council: Twelve 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 prioritize 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.
- (d) To ensure peace, stability, rule of law, and the safe and smooth functioning of transport networks across the Union.

2. Economic affairs

- (a) To enhance development based on agriculture and livestock using modern production techniques and to 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 assure support for the sustainability of Micro-, Small- and Medium-Sized Enterprises (MSMEs) that prioritize import substitution, export production, and the use of domestically produced raw materials, in order to increase domestic production and generate employment opportunities.
- (d) To advance the socioeconomic life of the people, in order to ensure the country's prosperity and food security.

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 people and preserve and safeguard their faiths, beliefs, culture, and characteristics of patriotic nationalism.
- (c) To strengthen basic health care in order to achieve the emergence of a health system that enhances the longevity and health of the entire nation.
- (d) To comprehensively promote the education sector to make it capable of producing the human resources necessary for building a modern, developed, and progressive democratic nation.

Volkanovski 'ain't scared' ahead of blockbuster UFC title bout

Islam Makhachev (left) will defend his UFC lightweight title in Perth. PHOTO: AFP

ALEXANDER Volkanovski has vowed "I ain't scared" as he prepares to step up a level and collide with Islam Makhachev in a blockbuster champion-v-champion UFC 284 bout in Perth on Sunday.

The Australian featherweight (145 pounds) title holder has moved up a division to challenge the Russian lightweight (155 pounds) kingpin, and in front of 15,000 home fans he fancies his chances.

"I ain't scared of a challenge, I know I can rise to the occasion," said the 34-year-old, who is on a 22-fight win streak that has cemented his standing as the top pound-for-pound talent in the Ultimate Fighting Championship.

"I know it's going to make me better and that's what people remember. He'll sit there and say I'm crazy for stepping up and all that, I think that's weak looking at it that way.

"I think you should challenge yourself. You should put yourself in these positions. Don't look at what might happen if things go wrong. Let's look at what happens if things go right."

Volkanovski, a former boxer and rugby league player, is attempting to become only the fifth two-weight mixed martial arts champion. He weighed in at 154.5 pounds on Saturday.

Makhachev, the number-two ranked pound-for-pound fighter, came in at exactly 155 pounds for his first title defence since dethroning Brazil's Charles Oliveira via a second-round submission at Abu Dhabi in October.—AFP