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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.

Myanmar government is ready to cooperate with any country, organization and person who desire the interests of Myanmar: Senior General

SOME powerful countries interfere in the internal affairs of small countries for various reasons to cause deterioration and disintegrating unity with the use of various ways and means, said Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at the Myanmar-Russia Friendship and Cooperation Forum in commemoration of the 75th Anniversary of founding the diplomatic relations between the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and the Russian Federation, at the Myanmar International Convention Centre-II in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

First, the Senior General and Ambassador of the Russian Federation to Myanmar Mr Nikolay Listopadov and party viewed round the documentary video and photos on friendly relations between Russia and Myanmar at the MICC-II.

Then, the video clip on friendly relations and cooperation between Myanmar and Russia in successive eras was presented.

Speaking on the occasion, the Senior General said that Russia and Myanmar will continue cooperation with each other as friendship countries and allied countries forever, and both



State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, Ambassador of the Russian Federation to Myanmar Mr Nikolay Listopadov and party view the documentary photos at the Myanmar-Russia Friendship and Cooperation Forum in marking the 75th Anniversary of the diplomatic relations between the two countries yesterday.

sides will focus on the further establishment of Russia-Myanmar friendship associations, ex-

change of goodwill visits of both governments and senior military officers, cooperation in trade and

economy, enhancement of tourism, cooperation in language and culture, further sending of

civilian and military scholarship students, development of human

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The fourth point of the Five-Point Road Map shapes national causes and political causes

The fourth point of the Five-Point Road Map was inserted that “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.” These will shape national causes and political causes. To do so, the peace process must be adopted.

(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)

Application for registration, political party establishment rights ongoing

THE State Administration Council released the Political Parties Registration Law 2023 as the State Administration Council Law No 15/2023 on 26 January for the formation of political parties in the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

The Union Election Commission released the rules for the registration of political parties through Notification No 10/2023 while Announcements No 2/2023 and 3/2023 regarding the right to establish and continue the establishment and registration of political parties were issued on 31 January 2023.

Under Section 25 of the Political Parties Registration Law, the Pa-O National Organization (PNO), which is desirous of organizing a political party, yesterday applied for permission to establish a political party under the law and rules, and the Union Election Commission is processing further verification. — MNA/KZL

Announcement regarding withdrawal of identity card for matriculation examination

- For the knowledge of students who have applied for permission to sit for the matriculation examination to be held from 8 to 18 March 2023, it is notified that:
 - The students who will sit for the exam in various exam centres in the regions/states have to withdraw the identity card with affixed photo and roll number starting from 20 February 2023 (Monday).
 - The students from basic education high schools, BEHS branch, affiliated BEHS and private high schools have to withdraw the identity card from the school heads of their respective schools.
 - The external students have to withdraw the identity card from the supervisors of the exam centres where they are to take the exam.
- If the students have difficulty withdrawing the identity card, they can directly contact the relevant school heads, exam centre supervisors, township education officers and the Department of Myanmar Examinations.

*Department of Myanmar Examinations
Dated – 15 February 2023*

Three-week course in packaging technology concludes



The documentary group photo at the course-concluding event.

THE international consultants gave theoretical lectures and practical training regarding packaging technology for three weeks through the Meikong-Lancang cooperation at the Post-harvest Technology Training Centre in Htonbo in

Patheingyi Township, Aungmyaythazan District in Mandalay Region from 26 January to 15 February 2023.

It is reported that the course improved the capacity of trainees in knowing state-of-the-art packaging

technologies, ideas to develop the centre, concepts of the projects to be conducted in the future, the requirements of private owners and farmers in fruit storage and other advantages. — GNLM

Public Notice for Elimination of Violence

- Declaring themselves to be “for the people”, the so-called CRPH, NUG and PDF terrorist groups are lawlessly killing Buddhist monks, civil servants including schoolteachers, and members of the general public, as well as looting and robbing.
- 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.
- 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.

2 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 16 February, total figure rises to 633,877

MYANMAR’S COVID-19 positive cases rose to **633,877** after **two** new cases were reported on 16 February 2023 according to the Ministry of Health. The total number of patients who have recovered from COVID-19 in the country reached **614,355**, including **two** new recoveries.

The death toll from COVID-19 in the country remained unchanged at **19,490** on 16-2-2023 with no new death reported from the pandemic. — MNA

Myanmar government is ready to cooperate with any country, ...

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resources, cooperation in humanitarian measures, and further improvement of international and regional relations.

In retrospect, Russia and Myanmar have been enhancing close relations between them based on mutual understanding, economic opportunity and strategic cooperation although the two countries are separated by oceans and continents in geographical conditions.

Russia was the sixth country Myanmar established diplomatic relations with. As they have been cementing diplomatic relations since 1948 when Myanmar regained independence, friendly relations between them have been flourishing.

The Declaration of Independence of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar mentions, “We shall be loyal to our independence and our State steadfastly as long as the world exists. As our country is independent, we shall follow the ethics the world’s independent countries fairly exercise. As we love our independence, we shall hold the independence of other countries in high regard. As we aspire to peace, we shall join hands with others like us to safeguard world peace. Let the whole world know our declaration”.

The declaration indicates the spirit of Myanmar citizens in adoring the independence, placing an emphasis on peace



State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing speaks on the occasion of the 75th Anniversary of the establishment of the diplomatic relations between the two countries yesterday.

and willingness to protect world peace.

Nowadays, some powerful countries interfere in the internal affairs of small countries for various reasons to cause deterioration and disintegrating unity with the use of various ways and means. On one hand, they pose pressure and intimidation, bullying and discrimination to small countries based on different concepts.

Especially, it is regrettable that those countries are constantly posing pressure and coercion to geopolitically important Myanmar to shape its situation as they like and to widen their influence, committing criticism, imposing sanctions and interfering in internal affairs.

Hence, the Senior Gen-

eral expressed his thanks to the Russian leaders and citizens for their standing with Myanmar as a good friend to overcome challenges based on negative views and attempts of the utter devastation being committed by some big countries.

Myanmar pledges to constantly focus on the enhancement of friendly relations and cooperation with Russia. Efforts will be made for the booming interests of both countries and friendly relations between the peoples of both countries.

Myanmar, which is a developing country, is initially exercising the democratic system, and actively cooperates with regional organizations including the UN and global countries despite facing many

challenges. Myanmar expects the UN would help the global countries become a prosperous global community with peace, harmony and justice.

The Senior General urged the Russian Federation to cooperate in bilateral relations, trading, tourism, culture and sports sectors and other sectors. Myanmar government is ready to cooperate with any country, organization or person who desires the interests of Myanmar.

Since the post-independence period, Myanmar has been exercising the five-point principles of peaceful co-existence steadfastly as well as the independent, active and non-aligned policy in enhancing relations with countries for ensuring global peace.

The Ambassador of the Russian Federation to Myanmar in his speech said that currently, both countries are striving for further promotion of friendly ties and investment. Cooperation is being enhanced in education, human resource development, sports and health sectors. Both countries initiate cooperation in measures on the peaceful use of nuclear energy. The Russian Federation always desires peace and stability and development of Myanmar and pledges to promote cooperation with Myanmar.

The Senior General and party enjoyed the song on Rossiya Vperod presented by vocalists from the Myawady Entertainment Troupe under the Directorate of Public Relations and Psychological Warfare.

The Senior General and the Russian Ambassador had documentary photos taken together with attendees.

Afterwards, the forum was presided over by U Ko Ko followed by discussions of U Khin Maung Zaw, Dr Naing Swe Oo and U Kyaw Lin Oo on current and future relations between Myanmar and Russia, and in the afternoon session, Dr Nanda Hmun, Dr Maung Thynn and U Ye Min Aung discussed the topic on Myanmar-Russia relations and benefits over Myanmar’s socio-economy.

The Union Minister for Information gave a concluding remark and vocalists from Myawady Entertainment Troupe presented the song Nedejda. — MNA/TTA



The Forum on Myanmar-Russia Friendship and Cooperation in commemorating the 75th Anniversary of the Myanmar-Russia diplomatic ties is in progress yesterday in Nay Pyi Taw.

Union Industry Minister receives delegation from Russian Federation

UNION Minister for Industry Dr Charlie Than received the Russian Federation delegation led by Mr Roman Siurin, head of the International Project Department of SMM Company yesterday afternoon at the ministry in Nay Pyi Taw.

The Union minister highlighted the collaboration of seaports, transport terminals, dockyards, equipment used in loading and unloading in industries, and SMM company's products. Both sides cordially exchanged views on cooperation in four major heavy industries of the Ministry of Industry and Russia's SMM Company.

The meeting was attended by Deputy Minister U Yin Maung Nyunt, managing directors, officials, and resident representative in Myanmar Mr Vladimir Kazadaev from the State Corporation "Rostec" of the Russian Federation. — MNA/TS

The delegation led by Mr Roman Siurin, head of the International Project Department SMM Company, calls on Union Industry Minister Dr Charlie Than yesterday.



Mekong-Lancang Cooperation Diplomatic Tour kicks off in Nay Pyi Taw

DIPLOMATS from Embassies of Mekong-Lancang Cooperation member countries arrived in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday for Mekong-Lancang Cooperation Diplomatic Tour. The tour has been organized by the Mekong-Lancang Cooperation National Coordination Unit at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the afternoon.

At the opening session, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs U Kyaw Myo Htut delivered the welcome remarks. The deputy minister mentioned that the purpose of the MLC Diplomatic Tour is not only to showcase the efforts made

by Myanmar under the Mekong-Lancang Cooperation but also to create an environment of cordial exchanges on information, best practices, views and ideas for strengthening of Mekong-Lancang Cooperation mechanism. He also affirmed that the working structure of MLC based on shared values of traditional friendship, mutual understanding, trust and confidence is the "key" to the MLC's

sustained success in delivering tangible benefits to the peoples of the Mekong-Lancang region.

The deputy minister expressed his gratitude to the People's Republic of China for granting 92 Special Fund Projects in various sectors with a total amount of approximately 27.4 million USD and appreciated the Chinese Embassy for cooperation and assistance to the National Coordination Unit of Myanmar. He also thanked Mekong countries for their help in the implementation process of MLC Special Fund projects.

Resources and Environmental Conservation, and the Ministry of Science and Technology gave presentations on their implementation process of the MLC Special Fund projects.

During the session, the diplomats from Mekong-Lancang Cooperation member countries exchanged their views on cooperation matters and the way forward under the Mekong-Lancang Cooperation.



Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs U Kyaw Myo Htut presents the Mekong-Lancang Cooperation Special Fund Projects in Myanmar yesterday.

After the presentation, the MLC delegations went on a study tour of the Agricultural Data Center which is one of the MLC Special Fund Projects being implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation.

Then, the MLC delegations visited the Uppatasanti Pagoda where they paid homage and made donations. They also visited the white elephants especially the newborn "Rattha Nandaka" near the pagoda and fed them.

In the evening, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs U Kyaw Myo Htut hosted the welcome dinner for the MLC delegations at M-Gallery Hotel. — MNA

Awareness-raising seminar on Fit and Proper directives issued by CBM held in Yangon

THE Central Bank of Myanmar organized an awareness-raising seminar on Fit and Proper directives issued by CBM, in Yangon yesterday.

The seminar is aimed at raising awareness for banks and non-banking financial institutions, mobile banking service providers, merchant acquiring services, licensed money transfer counters, stakeholders of money exchangers and companies' directors.

Speaking at the event, CBM Governor Daw Than Than Swe said CBM is implementing anti-money laundering and



The awareness-raising seminar on Fit and Proper directives released by CBM is in Progress yesterday in Yangon.

combating the financing of terrorism (AML/CFT) measures under the lead of the government by cooperating with the

departments concerned and private sectors. The Fit and Proper for banks and non-banking financial institutions are

preventive measures to curb the inflow of finances, property and profits from defendants in financial institutions. Efforts

should be made not to include those who commit money-laundering processes in the investment and capital in all financial institutions, businesses and vocational processes. It should also beef up preventive measures including investigation and reporting.

Then, officials reported on Fit and Proper directives for banking and non-banking financial institutions, those who run remittance services, foreign exchange, mobile banking and banks-led mobile banking services and merchant acquiring services. — MNA/KTZH

Discussion on promotion of Yunnan-Myanmar trade and economic cooperation held

TO foster trade and economic cooperation between Myanmar entrepreneurs and the Yunnan Province of the People's Republic of China, Director-General Mr Li Chenyang of the Commerce Department of People's Republic of China (Yunnan Province) and President U Aye Win of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry-UMFCCI had a discussion at the Wyndham Grand Hotel in Yangon on 15 February.

Director-General Mr Li Chenyang said that he would like to call for the establishment of relations between Yunnan and Myanmar entrepreneurs in order to promote Yunnan-Myanmar cooperation. He also pointed out that communication between traders, exchange of

information and intergovernmental cooperation are equally important.

UMFCCI President U Aye Win mentioned that there have been close economic relations between Myanmar and Yunnan Province for a long time, and it is time to re-promote border trade, as well as economic interaction and trade, which has decreased during the Covid-19 pandemic. The UMFCCI president suggested making border trade payments only through the banking system, assisting domestic entrepreneurs to understand better the registration process at GACC to promote exportation to China and making the process easy and smooth.

Economic and Commercial counsellor Mr Tan Shu from the Chinese Embassy in Yangon,



The UMFCCI holds discussion with the Commerce Department of People's Republic of China (Yunnan Province) on 15 February in Yangon.

Myanmar, UMFCCI Vice-President U Thaung Tin and Dr Myo Thet, Joint General Secretaries U Myo Thant, U Kyaw Dewa, U Ye Myint Maung and U Aung

Zeyar Lwin, Treasurer U Hla Oo, Joint Treasurer U Hla Myint Shwe, trade and finance officers from the Commerce Department of Yunnan Province,

businessmen and the general managers of the Yunnan Trade Group Development participated in the meeting. — Myo Min Thura/CT

Illegal timbers, fuel oil, industrial materials, electronics and vehicles confiscated



Seized illegal items in Mon State.

THE on-duty teams under the management of the Customs Department made inspections on 14 February.

Officials captured tiles that were not declared in the Import Declaration (ID) and three kinds of goods worth K41,456,394, including a grinding wheel without an import licence from two containers at the Myanmar Industrial Port Terminal container checkpoint and an Assy Pcb Thyatron Pulser (worth K7,770,000) that had arrived at Yangon International Airport (Import) over 60 days before the licence was

obtained. The action was taken under Customs procedures.

In addition, an on-duty team made inspections at the Mayanchaung permanent checkpoint in Mon State and seized three kinds of goods worth K10,404,816 including 15 cartons of rechargeable 60 W LED bulbs and 128 tiles that exceeded the Import Declaration (ID) from two tractor-heads and two trailers (approximately K230 million) heading to Yangon from Myawady. The action was taken under Customs procedures.

A combined team led by

Tatmadaw and Myanmar Police Force captured 810 gallons of illegal fuel oil worth K10,170,000 from four vehicles heading to Pasawng township from Bawlake township at the combined checkpoint in front of the Bawlake District General Administration Department in Kayah State. The action was taken under the Petroleum and Petroleum Products Law.

On 15 February, a total of 18.4286 tonnes of illegal teak and hardwood worth K5,135,470 was captured in Toungoo and Nattalin districts and the action was

taken under the Forest Law.

On 16 February, an on-duty team at the Kawkareik (Tadakyoe) combined checkpoint confiscated 50 cycle ceiling fans worth K2.5 million without official documents from a vehicle heading to Yangon from Myawady. The action was taken under Customs procedures.

Therefore, 14 arrests at the estimated value of K307,436,680 were made on three consecutive days from 14 to 16 February, according to the Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee. — MNA/MKKS

CURRENT
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Shwedagon to hold its
2611th Buddha Pujaniya
Tabaung festival

THE 2611th Buddha Pujaniya Tabaung festival will be held at Shwedagon Pagoda for ten days from 14 February to 5 March, according to the Pagoda Board of Trustees.

At 8 am on 24 February, 28 Buddha statues will be conveyed onto the pagoda platform for public obeisance. At 9 am, the Maha Pathana recitation by the monks from various monasteries will start.

In addition, the rice-offering ceremony to invited monks including Ovadacariya Sayadaws will be held on the evening of 4 March and the successful completion of Maha Pathana recitation will be celebrated on the morning of 5 March (the full moon day of Tabaung). – TWA/MKKS

Devotees are pictured at the Shwedagon 2608th Buddha Pujaniya Tabaung festival.



ID cards for matriculation exam to be
issued as from 20 Feb



Students are seen sitting for the 2022 matriculation exam.

ID cards for the matriculation exam can be taken out from 20 February, announced the Department of Myanmar Examinations. Students who will sit for the exam at respective exam centres of regions/ states have

to withdraw their ID cards from headmasters or headmistresses of respective schools, while external students may fetch their cards from respective supervisors of exam centres.

Students who have difficulties in withdrawing ID cards may directly contact township education officers or the Department of Myanmar Examinations.

In the 2022 matriculation examination, out of over 280,000 candidates, more than 130,000 students passed and the pass rate was 46.88 per cent, according to the Department of Myanmar Examinations. — TWA/MKKS

Japan offers jobs for over
600 Myanmar workers

ACCORDING to the 15 February statement of the Myanmar Embassy in Tokyo, Japan made job offers for more than 600 Myanmar workers.

The Myanmar Embassy said it received 246 demand letters for over 600 workers between 1 and 15 February and it already screened the facts about the companies that sent demand letters.

The Myanmar Embassy always verifies, through a labour supervision company, whether companies and factories recruiting Myanmar workers are legally established.—TWA/MKKS



The Myanmar Embassy in Tokyo, Japan.

Photo News

Car caught fire in Dagon
Myothit (East) Township

A car caught fire on Kanaung Minthagyi Road in Dagon Myothit Industrial Zone of Dagon Myothit (East) Township of Yangon Region at 4:30 am on 16 February. The fire was extinguished at 4:43 am after three fire engines of the township fire brigade arrived there. Htun Htun/ KTZH.

PHOTO: FSD



Photo News

Man pulled from car after he gets
stuck in car accident



A man who was trapped in the crashed car in Insein township of Yangon Region was rescued by Insein Township Fire Brigade members on 16 February. The victim was then sent to Insein General Hospital by Myat Kutho social welfare organization. Htun Htun/ GNLM/KTZH. (PHOTO: FSD)

LOCAL BUSINESS

Myanmar's watermelon supply to China exceeds demand

MYANMAR'S watermelon supply to China far outstripped demand, said Muse's fruit traders. Earlier, over 150 truckloads of watermelon and muskmelon per day were delivered to China through the Muse border. At present, the border saw an entry of about 70 trucks of watermelon and 30 trucks of muskmelons to China. Additionally, the prices stood at 4.6 Yuan per kilogramme for watermelon, 5.3 Yuan for Taiwan watermelon, 7.2 Yuan per kilo for muskmelon and 6.1 Yuan for seedless watermelon. In early February, tight inspections by Chinese Customs hindered truck transport. That being so, only 20-30 trucks were able to pass the checkpoint despite the delays and high prices of watermelon and muskmelon. Consequently, watermelon was sold out at the depots on the China side and more than 500 trucks queued in line on the Myanmar side. On 5 February, the trade channel was eased and around 100 trucks entered China. Those trucks struck on the Myanmar



Chinese merchants are seen viewing watermelons on the Sino-Myanmar border.

side were given the go-ahead in rotation for exports depending on demand, Muse fruit wholesale centre stated. Myanmar's watermelon and muskmelon are heavily reliant on the Chinese market. The traders grappled with China's strict virus policy. In 2021, the COVID-19 restrictions hindered Myanmar's

watermelon and muskmelon exports to China. Chinese Customs Regulation increased delay. Long delays of trucks caused harm to watermelon quality and only one in five trucks heading to China remained undamaged with quality watermelons. The traders are observing delivery time, price and profitability as they are perishable

fruit, while they are trying to explore new markets besides China. On 1 April, Nantaw and Sinphyu border posts were suspended in the wake of COVID-19 impacts. China has closed down the major border crossing Mang Wein from 30 March 2021 following the COVID-19 cases in Myanmar.

On 8 July 2021, the two-remaining border posts – Kyinsankyawt and Panseng – were suspended. As a result of this, the border trade between Myanmar and China was completely halted. Among the Sino-Myanmar border posts, the Kyinsankyawt border resumed operations on 26 November 2021. Trade activity at the Muse-Mang Wein border, which performed the majority of trade between Myanmar and China, resumed on 14 January 2023. Additionally, other goods except for agricultural products (watermelon, muskmelon), minerals and fisheries products are allowed to be sent to China through that border point. Additionally, Nantaw and Sinphyu borders, which are major border crossings, were reopened on 25 January 2023. At present, Myanmar daily delivers rice, broken rice, rubber, various beans and pulses, fishery products, chilli pepper and other food commodities to China through Kyinsankyawt by over 100 trucks. — NN/EM

Peanut prices stay high in domestic market



Myanmar shipped more than 18,000 kilogrammes worth US\$21.096 million to foreign markets through the border trade channels as of 3 February in the current financial year 2022-2023 since April 2022.

THE prices of peanuts continued to rise at K7,900 per viss (a viss equals 1.6 kilogrammes), according to the 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 fell to K4,700-5,750 per viss then. The prevailing prices move up to K6,000 -7,900 per viss. Strong demand in both domestic and external markets elevated the price, according to Mandalay commodity depot. Peanuts from various re-

gions is entering Mandalay commodity depots at present. Both Chinese traders and local oil millers are purchasing them in the competitive 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 2022 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 shipped more than 18,000 kilogrammes of peanut worth US\$21.096 million to foreign markets through the border trade channels as of 3 February in the current financial year 2022-2023 since April 2022. — NN/EM

Prices of fuel oil, gold and dollar on 16 February 2023

Fuel Oil Price (Yangon)

Octane 92	K2,165
Octane 95	K2,230
Diesel	K2,275
Premium Diesel	K2,355

All of the prices are based on per litre.

Gold Price

The reference price of high-purity gold set by YGEA	K2,167,700 per tical
High-purity gold in the gold market	K2,860,000 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.

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Don't bully customers with authority based on rank and position

SERVICE personnel are appointed by the relevant government which spends the State budget contributed by taxpayer people. Generally, people contribute to the service personnel with salaries and wages for their services.

As such, everybody can understand the service personnel are responsible for giving satisfactory services to the people. It is because those people spend their incomes, some amounts of which flow into the State budget the government manages. Moreover, those service personnel are appointed by the government which represents the people. As such, it means that the service personnel are appointed by the people with the fund of their incomes.

If so, those service personnel need to give services to the people without bearing a grudge. Their primary duties are to help the people do any office works to be able to complete various processes. Hence, service personnel need to have politeness, show humble acts and provide hospitality and patience in serving the customers and people. They do not have any chance to show off their proudness and influence over the people by taking the authority entrusted for doing their work.

In fact, any ranks and positions are not persistent according to the teachings of the Lord Buddha. Anybody should not attach to their positions. So, any service personnel should not apply their departmental authority to pose pressure on the people and should not intentionally arrange difficulties in work processes as the people do not understand office procedures. If so, the people give bribes to those service personnel for seeking help for office procedures. So, corruption is born in bribery cases.

If anyone gives trouble to the people in office procedures based on their authority of relevant ranks and positions, they will have to carry their misdeeds and evil acts into their vicious circle. They have to bear regrettable events in their lives. Whenever they look back at their past events, they will see regrettable and sorrowful events. So, their souls never face peace. Hence, anyone has the chance to choose options for future lives as they like where they will go and how they will go.

Actually, not only service personnel but everybody needs to hold up the concept that they should give satisfactory service to others as much as they can. If so, it is sure that they will have to enjoy the delightedness and satisfaction over their good deeds or services. It is the best outcome for them. Whenever they look back on their experiences, they will see past satisfactory acts without deep regret.



Article in marking the 75th Anniversary of the Myanmar-Russia Diplomatic Ties Bozenenkov and Zonin - unforgettable icons in Myanmar-Russia friendship history

A Sports Fan



Coach German Zonin from Soviet Union.

WE should not forget Soviet (Russian) coaches Bozenenkov and Zonin of the past Myanmar national football team for their efforts to give guidance so as to revitalize the Myanmar football arena on the occasion of the 75th Anniversary of Myanmar-Russia diplomatic relations.

The government assigned foreign coaches starting from 1954 to improve Myanmar's football standard and for Myanmar's national football team to secure victories in international tournaments. England's Alex Weir was hired in April 1954, one month ahead of the second Asian Cup.

Afterwards, Yugoslavian coaches Milorad Mitrović and Marko Valok, Hungarian coach Kalmar, and Soviet (Russian) coaches Mikhail Bozenenkov and Zonin were also hired for the Myanmar national football team and the Myanmar Tatmadaw selected football team.

Coach Alex Weir of England emphasized the fitness of players from the Myanmar national football team but helped the team secure the bronze medal in the Philippines' Asian Cup in 1954. It was the first-ever prize for the Myanmar national football team in international tournaments.

After revoking the contract with Alex Weir of England, Milorad Mitrović from Yugoslavia was hired in 1957. In his tenure, the Myanmar national football team secured nothing victory in international tournaments.

The Myanmar Tatmadaw also

hired a Yugoslavian coach Marko Valok for Tatmadaw's selected football teams from 1959 to 1963. Marco emphasized discipline over the players and gave training on modern football techniques and fitness to the footballers.

The first-ever Soviet football coach who arrived in Myanmar was Bozenenkov. He served as the coach of the Myanmar national football team from 6 August 1961 to 17 March 1965. Bozenenkov was a top football player in the Soviet Union as well as an ex-player of ice hockey sport. After taking retirement from life as an athlete, he attended the football coaching course in which he passed at the high level.

Mikhail Bozenenkov took responsibility for giving training to Myanmar national football team bound for the 1961 Southeast Asian Peninsular Games and sent Myanmar team to the final of the football tournament. In the final match, Myanmar was defeated by Malaysia and consoled with the silver medal only.

Actually, Bozenenkov could train Myanmar footballers from the golden era of Myanmar football sport to have their skills brighter. Myanmar veteran footballer Maung Maung of the golden era of Myanmar football sport recounted his experiences related to the coach.

"Yugoslavian Mr Marko Valok who was a coach for the Myanmar Tatmadaw football team gave training to me to become a qualified footballer. Soviet football coach Bozenenkov polished me to become a skilful footballer. He was a doctorate holder in sports in the Soviet Union and participated in the Russian national football team. So, he was perfect. Among foreign football coaches who arrived in Myanmar, Bozenenkov was the best, I think. Mr Bozenenkov was skilful in football manoeuvres in the football sport," he said.

Likewise, Myanmar national football team's goalkeeper Khin Maung Tun possessed brilliant skills under the training of Bozenenkov and was selected as an Asian selected footballer.

Khin Maung Tun took training

on saving the volley kicks which came from various angles, saving the balls kicked from 25 yards distance in the back position at the goal mouth, sending the ball to his team players and saving the balls in the diving positions under the football techniques of coach Bozenenkov.

As a result, Myanmar's select-

Although he was chosen as Myanmar's selected volleyball player several times, Bozenenkov took him to football sport, more suitable for his profession. So, he gave up on the life of Myanmar's selected volleyball player.

After Soviet Coach Bozenenkov and Hungarian Coach Kalmar who contributed to training

Physical Education Committee hired him to take responsibility as a coach for the Myanmar national football team from September 1964 to September 1968. In his tenure, Zonin could post a milestone for the Myanmar national football team to clinch the title as Asian Champion in a golden era.

During the period of Zonin

in the Asian Cup in 1967 and the joint champion in the Merdeka Cup.

Modern sports techniques and training of tactful football skills of Soviet (Russian) coaches Bozenenkov and Zonin contributed much to the victories of the Myanmar football arena. So also, great chances to play friendly matches with top (Soviet) Russian football clubs gave invaluable international experiences to Myanmar football teams.

The FC Moscow Locomotive from the Soviet Union arrived in Myanmar and played a turn-up match with Myanmar national team on 5 December before the fourth quadruple football tournament in 1955. Such a club was the first-ever football club among the Socialist countries to play a football match in Myanmar. Hence, Myanmar sports fans saw the modern football techniques of the Soviet football team.

In March 1957, FC Dinamo Tbilisi (Georgia) played two turn-up matches with Myanmar national team. FC Dinamo trounced the Myanmar team with a 9-1 win in the first match. Due to utmost efforts, Myanmar was defeated by the guest team with a 4-5 result in the second match.

The FC CSKA Moscow, one of the top football clubs in Russia, arrived in Myanmar in December 1960 to play turn-up matches. In the first match, the Central Army FC crushed the Myanmar civilian selected team 3-0, the Tatmadaw's selected football team 5-2 in the second match and the Myanmar national football team 8-0 in the third match.



and Myanmar coach U Sein Hlaing, the Myanmar national football team secured the joint first prize in the 1965 Southeast Asian Peninsular Games, the gold medal in the 1966 Asian Cup, the gold medal in the Southeast Asian Peninsular Games and the second

for the Myanmar national team returned to their respective countries due to the completion of their assignments, another coach from Soviet Union German Semyonovich Zonin came to the Myanmar team.

Zonin was born in Kazam of Ukraine in 1926. Since childhood, he had been playing at the youth football teams and stepped up his career as a player and then coach at football clubs in Leningrad City. He attained a degree from the Leningrad Institute of Physical Culture in 1953 when he was 27. After that, he attained an MA degree in sports and an honorary coach degree. In 1964, he served as a lecturer at the football department of the Leningrad Institute of Physical Culture.

The Myanmar Sports and

In November 1961, FC Torpedo Moscow which was the champion in Russia held a turn-up match with Myanmar national football team and secured a 4-0 win.

The Ukrainian football team from the Soviet Union held friendly matches in Myanmar in November 1965. The Ukrainian team held a 1-1 draw with Myanmar national football team in the first match and won over the host 2-1 in the second match.

FC Zenit, a top football club in the Soviet, held friendly matches in Myanmar in November 1966. The guest team could not win over Myanmar. Both teams ended at a goalless draw in the first match, and the Myanmar national football team beat the guest 2-0 in the second match.

In 1967, Myanmar's selected youth team toured Russia and East Germany on its trip to Europe to play friendly matches. In Russia, Myanmar lost to two state-level football teams 0-1 each but played a 2-2 draw with the Russian youth team which was the champion in Europe.

Thanks to embracing valuable experiences of playing with the top football clubs from Soviet (Russia) one after another, the Myanmar national football team and the Myanmar youth selected team could post the milestones on their golden chronicles in playing with South Korean, Iranian and Israeli teams which are now powerhouses in the football arena of Asia and regional counterpart teams with utmost

efforts.

Moreover, Soviet (Russian) coaches Bozenenkov and Zonin paved the way for the success of the Myanmar national football team to be able to secure victories in international tournaments. Likewise, the books on football techniques and technologies compiled by those Soviet coaches contributed much to the improvement of the Myanmar football standard.

At a time when books on sports techniques in Myanmar version were very rare, Saya Maung Tin Mya translated the book on football techniques in the Russian language written by Soviet (Russian) coach Bozenenkov and published it. Moreover, the book on football techniques compiled by Soviet (Russian) coach Zonin was also translated by Saya Maung Tin Mya into the Myanmar language, and it was published with the title "Football tactics of Russian football coach Zonin".

The football techniques of Zonin featured football tactics, training for manoeuvres, characters of modern football sport, teamwork and individual efforts, tussling, carrying and passing the balls, destroying the balls, individual competitiveness, attack tactics, defensive tactics, partnership playing tactics and techniques, manoeuvres, track and field sports, separate duties of football clubs and appendix in 15 chapters.

As such, the article was created to honour Soviet (Russian) coaches Mr Bozenenkov and Mr Zonin who strived for improving Myanmar's football standard and setting a golden milestone in Myanmar football arena as a gesture of honouring the 75th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Myanmar and the Russian Federation.

Reference:
Outstanding sports athletes of Myanmar written by Maung Ye Win
Asian football and Myanmar stars by Baho Thein Hsaung
Translated



A news item welcoming the victorious Myanmar National Football Team in the Hanthawady newspaper on 22 May 1968.

SCI/ENVIRON
WORLD

In Canada, world’s largest ice rink may not open

THE Canadian capital’s iconic Rideau Canal Skateway — the largest outdoor rink in the world and a UNESCO heritage site — may not open this winter for the first time in five decades, due to a lack of ice.

Ottawa is in the grips of its third-warmest winter ever recorded, according to Environment Canada, with temperatures hovering just below freezing through most of December and January.

And they’re now forecast to climb.

“Mother Nature has presented us with a big challenge this year,” Bruce Devine, National Capital Commission senior manager responsible for the skateway, told AFP.

“Mild temperatures have made it difficult to make good, solid ice that can support the weight of our equipment and skaters,” he said.

For the canal to freeze up, temperatures must hold steady at -10 to -20 degrees Celsius



The Rideau Canal Skateway in Ottawa, Canada is the world’s largest outdoor skating rink. **PHOTO: AFP**

(14 to 16 Farenheit) for almost two weeks.

“Currently in several spots the ice is porous and of not very good quality,” he said.

Although he remains optimistic for what would be the latest opening on record, others worry the skateway might not open at all this year.

A brief cold spell is forecast to be coming. “The weath-

er will be more conducive (for skating) next week,” according to meteorologist Peter Kimbell. “But will it be enough, I don’t know.”

‘Got skates for Christmas’

Chantal Dussiaume, 57, was pessimistic as she eyed ice conditions: “I got skates for Christmas, so it is a big disappointment.”—AFP

Sinkholes sow fear in former Polish mining town



This aerial view from 7 February 2023 shows the empty spot at the local cemetery where the ground collapsed in September swallowing dozens of graves in Trzebinia. **PHOTO: AFP**

“NO one knows where the next one will strike. We’re sitting on a ticking time bomb,” said Mateusz Krol, a local community leader.

Two decades after the local coal mine closed, residents in a southern Polish town live in fear that the ground will collapse un-

der their feet after 20 sinkholes appeared in the past two years.

Five craters have emerged this year alone in pockmarked Trzebinia. Five months ago, a huge hole swallowed up tombs at the cemetery. “No one knows where the next one will strike.

Eco-friendly mud houses make comeback in Hungary

THEY were long derided as old-fashioned symbols of grinding poverty, but mud and straw houses are making a comeback in Hungary as a low-cost, eco-friendly alternative to concrete.

Master builder Janos Gaspar, who renovates earth houses, is worked off his feet.

“I’m booked up for three years. Interest is sky-high,” the 48-year-old—who has built more than 200 clay houses — told AFP.

Known as rammed earth construction, the practice dates to Neolithic times.

And it is seeing a revival thanks to its tiny ecological footprint and energy efficiency.

Locally accessible materi-

als is the basis of what Gaspar’s architect colleague Adam Bihari calls “natural architecture”.

“Hungarians knew how to build houses from what they had to hand or under their feet,” said the bespectacled Bihari as a clay brick wall was plastered with mud in the town of Acs in north-west Hungary.

“This wall was made 100 years ago, and should be around for another 100,” said Bihari.

‘Material of future’

In contrast to concrete, which accounts for about eight per cent of global CO2 emissions, “it eventually disintegrates naturally, leaving no artificial waste behind,” he said.—AFP



Clay’s thermal properties make it ideal for Hungary’s fluctuating climate of hot summers and cold winters. **PHOTO: AFP**

NEWS IN BRIEF

Sun sets waterfall ablaze in Yosemite ‘firefall’

A spectacular “firefall” wowed nature-watchers in California’s Yosemite National Park on Wednesday, with the setting sun lighting up a waterfall like a ribbon of fire. For just a couple of weeks every year the last rays of daylight hit Horsetail Falls, appearing to set the water alight like a river of lava gushing down a mountainside. The phenomenon, which lasts just a few minutes at sundown and which draws tourists from across the country, relies on a rare combination of perfect conditions.

“When the sun drops at the exact right angle, it reflects upon El Capitan,” Yosemite National Park Public Affairs Officer Scott Gediman told AFP. “It’s a combination of the sun reflecting on the water, clear skies, water flowing. If all of that comes together, it’s magical.” California, along with much of the western United States, is in the grip of a years-long drought that has badly depleted its rivers. But bountiful downpours that started the year — causing deadly flooding in some places — have left the state in much better shape and watercourses are flowing.—AFP

HEALTH/PANDEMIC WORLD

Experts concerned over “extremely dangerous” chemical contamination after Ohio train derailment



Smoke rises from a derailed cargo train in East Palestine, Ohio on 4 February 2023. **PHOTO: DUSTIN FRANZ/AFP**

US experts have expressed grave concerns over the damage by fires and chemical contamination to people and the environment following a disastrous train derailment in the US state of Ohio.

On 3 February a train carrying vinyl chloride, a dangerous colourless gas, derailed in East Palestine of Ohio, near the border with Pennsylvania. About 50 cars crushed onto each other.

Many of them contained hazardous chemicals including butyl acrylate and vinyl chloride, which were among the combustible liquids that authorities feared could set off a major explosion.

On 6 February authorities allowed Norfolk Southern, the transportation company operating the train, to run so-called “controlled explosion” of the hazardous chemicals, which caused a large plume of black smoke.

“The controlled burn sent massive quantities of black carbon into the air as well as uncombusted fumes. Black carbon alone kills one out of eight people prematurely world wide. This incident simply contributes to that along with many other sources,” Jay H. Jones, professor of biology and biochemistry at the University of La Verne, told Xinhua in an interview on Tuesday.

“The result was destruction and possible ecological death, immediate and chronic,” said Evaggelos Vallianatos, a historian and an ecopolitical theorist.

According to the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), about 20 rail cars were reported to have been carrying hazardous materials. Vinyl chloride, butyl acrylate, ethylhexyl acrylate and ethylene glycol monobutyl ethers were released to the air, surface soil and surface waters, the EPA said.—Xinhua

Most baby formula health claims not backed by science: study

THE vast majority of health claims used to advertise baby formula worldwide are not supported by rigorous scientific evidence, a study said Thursday, leading researchers to urge the breast milk substitutes be sold in plain packaging.

The study comes a week after a group of doctors and scientists called for a regulatory crackdown on the \$55-billion formula industry for “predatory” marketing which they said exploits the fears of new parents to convince them not to breastfeed.

Breastfeeding is widely recognized to have huge health benefits for babies. The World Health Organization and the US CDC recommend breastfeeding exclusively during the first six months of a newborn’s life.

However that recommendation is followed for less than half of infants globally, according to the WHO. Daniel Munblit, an honorary senior lecturer at Imperial College London and

an author of the new study, said researchers were not on a “crusade” against infant formula, which should remain an option for mothers who cannot or choose not to breastfeed. “But we are very much against inappropriate infant formula marketing, which provides misleading claims not backed up by solid evidence,” Munblit told AFP. Munblit and an

international team of researchers looked at the health claims made for 608 products on the websites of infant formula companies in 15 countries, including the United States, India, Britain and Nigeria. The most common claims were that formula supports brain development, strengthens immune systems and more broadly helps growth.—AFP



The most common claims were that formula supports brain development, strengthens immune systems and helps growth. **PHOTO: PEXELS**

‘No toilets’: Hygiene nightmare in Türkiye’s quake ruins

SEDEF’S relief at surviving Türkiye’s deadly earthquake is quickly giving way to fears she could succumb to diseases that threaten to take hold across shattered regions now devoid of basics including toilets.

Last week’s tragedy killed nearly 40,000 people across swathes of southeast Türkiye and northwest Syria, becoming the area’s deadliest natural disaster in centuries.

Erasing entire towns, it displaced millions of people and left millions more who stayed behind living in rubble, huddling around bonfires in the freezing weather and facing shortages of medicine.

Few buildings have survived unscathed, and amenities such as toilets and showers all but vanished when the first tremor struck before dawn on 6 February. —Xinhua



A woman stands in the rubble hoping for her relatives to be found by rescuers in Hatay, Türkiye, on 13 February 2023. **PHOTO: BULENT KILIC / AFP**

Bolivia on alert as 26 die from dengue fever

BOLIVIA has recorded 26 deaths from dengue fever this year, with the outbreak pushing the health service in the eastern Santa Cruz region to the brink of collapse, the government said on Wednesday.

“The cumulative number of dengue cases in Bolivia has reached 6,825... with 26 deaths,” the health ministry said in a statement.

Of those cases, 5,225 have been in Santa Cruz, the most populous region in the South American country. The number of cases has risen sharply in Santa Cruz in recent days, ramping up pressure on hospi-

tals. “You want to check a hospital patient and another much more serious case arrives. We lack hands (staff), the 12 beds we have in the two rooms are full,” Milka Caceres, the emergency chief at the Mario Ortiz children’s hospital, told Red Uno television station.

“We have a critical situation,” added Caceres. The alarm bells sounded at the beginning of this week when the parents of three babies aged between one and five months, reported they had died with dengue symptoms but that they had been unable to access the hospital due to a lack of space.—AFP

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Dated: 17 February 2023

US blowing up Nord Stream pipelines
“economic war” against European allies: Swedish expert



A helicopter flies over the Nordstream gas pipeline terminal prior to an inaugural ceremony for the first of Nord Stream’s twin 1,224 kilometre gas pipeline through the Baltic Sea, in Lubmin, Germany. 8 November 2011. PHOTO: AFP

THE truth that the US Navy was involved in the Nord Stream pipelines explosions last year, as discovered by American investigative journalist Seymour Hersh, was an “economic war” against its submissive allies in Europe, a Swedish expert has said.

“Nord Stream (was) of course blown up by the US and NATO (the North Atlantic Treaty Organization) allies,” said Jan Oberg, director of the Transnational Foundation for Peace and Future Research, in a recent interview with Xinhua.

Hersh, a Pulitzer Prize winner, said the US Navy divers, operating under the cover of a widely publicized mid-summer NATO exercise known as BALTOPS 22, planted the remotely triggered explosives last June in cooperation with Norway, which destroyed three of the four Nord Stream pipelines three months later.—Xinhua

Air India to buy 250 Airbus planes in 'historic' deal



Air India will buy 250 Airbus planes in a deal aimed at transforming the former national carrier. PHOTO: AFP/FILE

AIR India will buy 250 Airbus planes in a deal aimed at transforming the former national carrier, it said Tuesday, after decades as a monumental burden on the public purse. The airline's first new aircraft purchase since 2006 is part of an ambitious plan to return to profitability in the world's third-biggest air transport market. It has signed a letter of intent to buy 210 narrow-body A320neo jets and 40 long-haul A350 aircraft — with an unspecified number of options for more — as it plots to capture domestic market share and turn Indian airports into global travel hubs.—ANI

Japan's rural post offices host unmanned shops to help seniors



Kimi Oda (R), a nearby resident, chats outside with postmaster Kohei Nakada in January 2023 at the Nyushita Post Office, which hosts an unmanned retail space, in Misato, Miyazaki Prefecture, southwestern Japan. **PHOTO: KYODO**

AS Japan continues to experience a population drain in rural areas, many post offices have

begun hosting unmanned retail spaces inside their facilities to support seniors who cannot travel long distances to shop. Some 3,000 of the about 24,000 post offices nationwide have embraced the service, stocking vegetables, daily necessities and other items. Post offices must apply to Japan Post Co to get display racks, while local shops supply products, arrange displays and later collect the payments. The sellers pay a monthly fee of 4,400 yen (\$33.00) to lease the space.—Kyodo

OPEC raises world oil demand forecast as China reopens

OPEC raised its world oil demand forecast for 2023 on Tuesday after top consumer China lifted its zero-Covid policy. The Saudi-led oil cartel expects demand to grow by 2.3 million barrels per day to an average of 101.87 million barrels per day this year. This is 100,000 a day more than the previous estimate, which was already above pre-Covid levels. “Key to oil demand growth in 2023 will be the return of China from its mandated mobility restrictions and the ef-

fect this will have on the country, the region and the world,” OPEC said in its monthly market report. After almost three years of stringent health restrictions, Beijing in December abruptly ended the zero-Covid policy that had battered the economy and caused widespread protests. —AFP



Photo taken on 28 June 2021 shows the industrial estate of Saudi oil giant Aramco in Dammam, Saudi Arabia. **PHOTO: XINHUA/HU GUAN**

Canada, Mexico reach arrangement for trade of organic food

THE Canadian Food Inspection Agency announced Wednesday that Canada and Mexico have reached an arrangement for trade of organic food, recognizing the two national organic systems as equivalent. The arrangement will give Canadian families, shopping for organic food, more choices that meet the country's requirements and expand market access for the Canadian organic industry, the agency said in a statement. The Canada-Mexico Organic Equivalency Arrangement, which came into effect on 15 February 2023, will allow products certified under the Canada Organic Regime or the Mexican organic system to be sold and labelled as organic in both countries, the statement said. According to the statement, the arrangement applies to agricultural and processed products of plant origin grown or produced within either country, livestock and livestock products produced in Canada, and organic products whose final processing or packaging occurs within either country. —Xinhua

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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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Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

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

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.
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Sr.	Trade Name	Active Ingredient	Registration No.
1.	Zarlofos 10 EC	Quizalofop-P-ethyl 100g/l EC	P2022-5793
2.	Escape 20 WP	Bispyribac-sodium 20% WP	P2022-5583
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1.	Ema Do	Idol Ema Do	Emamectin Benzoate 2% + Indoxacarb 16% SC	P 2022- 5661

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1	Paung Master	Bispyribac-sodium 20 % WP	Herbicide	P 2018-4093
2	Paung Star 70 WP	Fenoxaprop-P-ethyl 13% + Pyrazosulfuron-ethyl 7% + Quinclorac 50 % WP	Herbicide	P 2018-4102
3	Hmoe Bayin 400 SC	Azoxystrobin 25 % + Difenconazole 15 % SC	Fungicide	P 2018-4156
4	Hmoe Star 85 WP	Copper Oxychloride 85 % WP	Fungicide	P 2018-4157

WORLD: TOP HEADLINES

China to take countermeasures against U.S. entities undermining China’s sovereignty, security: spokesperson

CHINA will take countermeasures in accordance with the law against relevant US entities that have undermined China’s sovereignty and security in response to US sanctions on Chinese companies and institutions, a Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson said here Wednesday.

Spokesperson Wang Wenbin told a daily news briefing that the entry of a Chinese civilian unmanned airship into the US airspace is an entirely unintended, unexpected and isolated event caused by force majeure, and that the Chinese side has repeatedly communicated this to the US side.

However, the United States overreacted by abusing the use of force and escalating the situation, Wang said, adding that the United States used the incident as an excuse to impose illegal sanctions over Chinese companies and institutions.—Xinhua

Kurdish protest disrupts European Parliament

AROUND a dozen Kurdish activists launched a protest on Wednesday in the European Parliament on the 24th anniversary of Türkiye arrest of their leader Abdullah Ocalan.

The debate session was halted for three hours and MEPs left the chamber as the protesters brandished banners bearing Ocalan’s image and shouted slogans hostile to Türkiye President Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

“They are pro-PKK activists,” MEP Bernard Guetta told AFP, referring to the Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK), banned in Türkiye and blacklisted as a terror organisation in the EU.

The French centrist said the protesters were on an upper deck above the Strasbourg chamber, some sitting on a balustrade and dangling their legs above the parliament’s floor.—AFP

GSDF, US Marines start large-scale joint drills in southwest Japan

THE Japanese Ground Self-Defence Force and US Marine Corps on Thursday kicked off monthlong, large-scale joint drills in southwestern Japan, demonstrating the response capabilities of the bilateral alliance amid China’s growing military presence in nearby waters.

The annual exercise is being held outside the US state of California for the first time since its launch in 2006, with around 1,700 personnel in total set to participate in the latest drills, according to the GSDF.

The exercise, dubbed “Iron Fist”, includes simulation training that involves defending and recapturing remote islands by utilizing amphibious vehicles and Osprey tilt-rotor aircraft. The drills are scheduled to continue through 12 March.

On Thursday, the opening ceremony took place at the GSDF’s Hijudai Maneuver Area in Oita Prefecture, at-



US Marine Corps personnel during training in the Northern Training Area in Okinawa Prefecture in February 2022. PHOTO: KYODO /FILE

tended by officers from the two countries. Drills will also take place in the area. Tokunoshima and Kikaijima islands in Kagoshima Prefecture and the Okinawa main island in southern Japan are also among the planned sites for the exercise.

At a meeting in Hawaii last

April, Japanese Self-Defence Forces and US military leaders decided to change the location for the exercise in 2023 from California to areas west of the International Date Line, apparently with Beijing’s maritime assertiveness in the Indo-Pacific region in mind.—Kyodo

RUSSIA-UKRAINE CONFLICT

UN appeals for US\$5.6 billion to help millions affected by conflict

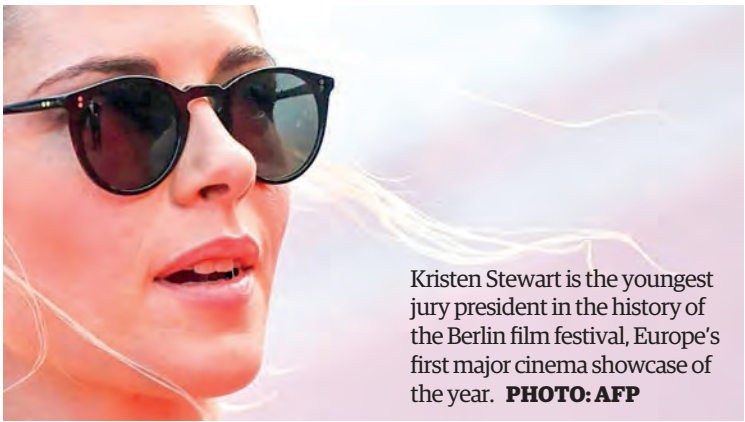
WITH the full-scale war in Ukraine about to enter its second year, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) on Wednesday (local time) jointly appealed for US\$5.6 billion to ease the plight of millions of people affected.

Humanitarian funding is needed to continue supporting lifesaving aid convoy deliveries to communities on the front line, “into areas of great danger and difficulty and priority needs”, said Martin Griffiths, OCHA Head.—ANI



Humanitarian funding is needed to continue supporting lifesaving aid convoy deliveries to communities on the front line, “into areas of great danger and difficulty and priority needs”, said Martin Griffiths, OCHA Head. PHOTO: DMITRY SEREBRYAKOV /AFP /FILE

Berlin film fest opens with spotlight on Iran and Ukraine



Kristen Stewart is the youngest jury president in the history of the Berlin film festival, Europe’s first major cinema showcase of the year. PHOTO: AFP

THE Berlinale, Europe’s first major film festival of the year, opens Thursday with a comedy starring Anne Hathaway, Marisa Tomei and Peter Dinklage

ahead of a packed programme spotlighting Iran and Ukraine.

The 73rd annual festival, which traditionally has the strongest political focus of the

three big European cinema showcases, will mark the Russian invasion’s first anniversary as well as anti-regime protests in Iran with new feature films and documentaries.

A series of special events is planned including panel discussions and red-carpet protests in “solidarity” with the people of Iran and Ukraine.

The festival’s artistic director Carlo Chatrian said the Berlinale would be a celebration of the “catalysing and revolutionary notion of cinema which unites even when it divides”.—AFP

Ukraine president eager to join G-7 online summit on 24 February: source

UKRAINIAN President Volodymyr Zelenskyy is eager to participate in a Group of Seven summit online on 24 February the first anniversary of Russia’s invasion of the country, a Japanese government source said Thursday.

Prime Minister Fumio Kishida has invited Zelenskyy to the video summit, the source said. During the gathering, the G-7 leaders are expected to confirm their unity in tackling Russia’s aggression against its neighbour.—Kyodo

Israel broadens law to strip ‘terror’ convicts of citizenship

ISRAEL expanded Wednesday its policy of stripping citizenship over “terrorism” offences, with parliament announcing lawmakers had passed legislation targeting those who receive funds from the Palestinian Authority.

The bill, which passed with 94 votes in favour and 10 against in the Knesset, also paves the way for Israel to expel people from the country or annexed east Jerusalem.

A rights group said the move was “in violation of international law”, while Israeli Prime Minis-

ter Benjamin Netanyahu hailed it on Twitter as “our answer to terrorism”. A statement from parliament said lawmakers had approved “the revocation of citizenship or residency of a terrorist operative who receives compensation (from the PA) for committing an act of terrorism”.

The Palestinian Authority gives stipends to numerous families of prisoners, or detainees themselves, including those convicted of killing Israelis.

Israel says making payments to the families of attack-



The bill targeting those who receive funds from the Palestinian Authority was passed in the Israeli parliament with 94 votes in favour and 10 against. PHOTO: AHMAD GHARABLI / AFP/FILE

ers encourages further violence, but for some Palestinians such payments are a key source of income. Adalah, an organization

that advocates for Palestinians’ rights in Israel, said the law “not only creates an additional avenue for the revocation of

the citizenship of residency of Palestinians... under the Israeli regime, but also facilitates their expulsion”.—AFP

WORLD: TOP HEADLINES

NATO chief urges bigger defence budgets

THE member states of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) should commit to spending at least two per cent of their gross domestic product (GDP) on defence by next year, the alliance’s Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg said on Wednesday.

He was addressing journalists following a NATO defence ministers’ meeting here to address key issues for their security.

“More countries are now spending at least two percent of their GDP on defense. And 2022 was the eighth consecutive year of increased defense spending by European allies and Canada. With an additional investment of \$350 billion, this trend is expected to continue this year. But more needs to be done,” he said.—Xinhua

Nicaragua yanks citizenship from 94 more dissidents

A Nicaraguan court under President Daniel Ortega stripped the citizenship from 94 exiled dissidents and declared them to be “traitors to the fatherland”, drawing sharp criticism from a regional UN watchdog agency. Among the dissidents is perhaps Nicaragua’s most acclaimed living author, Sergio Ramirez, who once served as vice-president under Ortega, who has been widely accused of authoritarianism.—AFP

US says Iran-based Saif al-Adel is new al Qaeda chief



This combination of two file images created on 2 August 2022 shows al-Qaeda leader Osama Bin Laden (left) in an undated file picture obtained on 8 August 1998, and his successor Ayman al-Zawahiri in a file image from video released on 8 June 2011 by Al-Qaeda’s media arm as-Sahab.

PHOTO: SITE INTELLIGENCE GROUP/AFP /FILE

SAIF al-Adel, an Iran-based Egyptian, has become the head

of Al-Qaeda following the July 2022 death of Ayman al-Zawahiri,

the US State Department said Wednesday.

“Our assessment aligns with that of the UN — that al-Qaeda’s new de facto leader Saif al-Adel is based in Iran,” a state department spokesperson said.

The United Nations report released Tuesday said that the predominant view of member states is that Adel is now the group’s leader, “representing continuity for now”.

But the group has not formally declared him “emir” because of sensitivity to the concerns of the Taliban authorities in Afghanistan, who haven’t wanted to acknowledge that Zawahiri was killed by a US rocket in a home in Kabul last year, according to the UN report.—AFP



Thousands of Colombians protested Wednesday against healthcare reforms proposed by the country’s first-ever leftist president Gustavo Petro, and an amnesty proposed for members of armed groups in his quest for “total peace”. PHOTO: AFP

Thousands protest against Colombian president’s reform plans

THOUSANDS of Colombians protested Wednesday against healthcare reforms proposed by the country’s first-ever leftist president Gustavo Petro, and an amnesty proposed for members of armed groups in his quest for “total peace”. Dressed in white and waving the Colombian flag, rivers of people marched in Bogota, Medellin, Cali and other cities chanting: “No more Petro”.

Petro came to power last August with a raft of proposals to reform healthcare, pensions and the prison system.

His government has also floated the idea of giving criminals immunity in exchange for laying down arms, similar to con-

cessions made to FARC guerrillas in negotiations that led to a peace accord in 2016 but not an end to violence. Protesters who likened Petro to Venezuela’s deceased socialist leader Hugo Chavez, are against the health sector reforms outlined in legislative proposals the president has presented to Congress.—AFP



MFF plans to hold Futsal League in new format

THE Myanmar Football Federation's Futsal and Beach Football Committee will hold the 2023 Futsal League 1 tournament, which will start on 26 February, in a new format.

The futsal league, which has not been held for a few years, will be held again this year, and in order to apply the promotion and relegation system this season, the League 2 tournament will be introduced for the first time in addition to the League 1 tournament.

The 2023 MFF Futsal League 1 tournament will be held with a total of 10 teams in two rounds.

The Myanmar Football Federation will not consider the team with the highest position as the champion team after two rounds of the competition for the

championship, but three teams ranked first to third will have to play another play-off match for the championship title.

In order to make the competition more intense, it will be held in the same way as the futsal league is held in countries such as Iran and Japan.

The team with the better ranking after two rounds will have more chances. After two rounds, the top-ranked team will start playing in the play-off final stage, and the second and third-ranked teams will start playing in the play-off semi-final stage.

When the second- and third-ranked teams meet, if the second-ranked team wins the first game, they will qualify for the finals without having to play two more games, but if the third-

ranked team wins, they will have to play the next game again.

The final stage will also be played in three games, but if the first-place team wins the first game, they will be the champion without having to play another game, and the team participating in the semi-final stage can win the championship only if they win two games.

The 2023 Futsal League 1 tournament will take place from 26 February to 25 May.

VUC team, including the current champion MIU team, MFF U-18 Team, Winner Soccer Team, Dream Team FC, AMM Brothers Team, Futsal Chit Thu Team, AKG Team, Futsal 19 Team and Generations Team will compete in the tourney.

— Ko Nyi Lay/KZL

Paris chief organizer says external decisions shouldn't harm athletes



The 'Phryges' toys represent the mascot of the Paris 2024 Olympic Games. PHOTO: FRANCK /AFP/FILE

THE president of the 2024 Paris Olympics organising committee on Friday said athletes should not "suffer" from decisions they do not control amid an escalating row over allowing Russians and Belarusians to compete.

The issue has divided opinion since Russia invaded Ukraine last February and used Belarusian territory to launch its offensive. That led to bans from several major sporting events.

The International Olympic

Committee (IOC) last week said it was examining a "pathway" to allow Russians to participate in Paris, probably as neutral athletes rather than under their national flag, a position backed by the United States on Thursday.

But Kyiv has called for a complete ban on Russian participation, with a Ukrainian presidential aide accusing the IOC of being a "promoter of war".

The head of the Russian Olympic Committee has de-

manded his athletes be able to compete without restrictions, but the IOC said some sanctions against the country's athletes would continue.

Tony Estanguet, head of the Paris Olympics organising committee, on Friday said many athletes were "not involved at all in these decisions right now and, personally, I think they shouldn't suffer the consequences of decisions that don't concern them".—Xinhua

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.

Conte set for more time away from Tottenham

TOTTENHAM manager Antonio Conte is set for another spell away from the touchline to recover from gallbladder surgery.

The Italian has remained in his homeland after taking charge of Spurs' 1-0 defeat to AC Milan in the Champions League on Tuesday.

Conte had returned to the bench for Saturday's 4-1 defeat at Leicester after undergoing surgery on 1 February.

"Following a routine post-operation check in Italy yesterday, Antonio Conte will remain at his family home to

further and fully recover from his recent gallbladder surgery," a Tottenham statement said on Thursday.

"Health is the most important consideration and everyone at the club wishes him well. Cristian Stellini will assume first-team responsibility."

Assistant boss Stellini took charge of a 1-0 win over Manchester City earlier this month with Conte providing input from Italy. Spurs, who sit fifth in the Premier League, host West Ham in a London derby on Sunday.—AFP