

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

Vol. IX, No. 314, 6th Waxing of Tabaung 1384 ME

www.gnlm.com.mm

Friday, 24 February 2023

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.

Exerted efforts are needed to accomplish the adopted future programmes and objectives: Senior General



State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing addresses the SAC meeting 2/2023 in Nay Pyi Taw on 23 February 2023.

THE State Administration Council held its meeting 2/2023 in the meeting hall of the office of the State Administration Council Chairman in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday afternoon, and State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing delivered a speech. Present at the meeting were: SAC Vice-Chair Deputy Prime Minister Vice-Senior

... State Administration Council is obliged to formulate the national-level policies and exert efforts to accomplish the future work programmes and the objectives.

General Soe Win, SAC Secretary Lt-Gen Aung Lin Dwe, Joint Secretary Lt-Gen Ye Win Oo, the SAC members and responsible officials.

Exerted efforts are needed to accomplish adopted future programmes and objectives

First, the SAC Chair PM delivered the opening speech. He said that it is the first meeting

after an extension for another six months for the state of emergency, that the meeting is aimed at discussing the political, economic and social matters which are to be carried out in the coming six months, that SAC is obliged to formulate the national-level policies and exert efforts to accomplish the future work programmes and the objectives,

SEE PAGE-3

INSIDE TODAY

NATIONAL

Elephant performance show held in Moscow for 75th Anniversary Myanmar-Russia Diplomatic Relations

PAGE-2

NATIONAL

Rakhine regional govt provides assistance in cash and kind to IDPs in Minbya township

PAGE-5

NATIONAL

51st Myanmar Health Research Congress continues its 4th day

PAGE-10

CURRENT AFFAIRS

Kawthoung border conducts trade volume worth US\$13.688 mln to Thailand

PAGE-11



Republic of the Union of Myanmar
State Administration Council
Order No 25/2023
5th Waxing of Tabaung 1384 ME
23 February 2023

Appointment and Duty Assignment of Ministers for
Region/State Governments

THE State Administration Council has appointed and assigned the following persons to the duties of Ministers for Natural Resources of Governments of Region/State against each of their names under Section 419 of the Constitution:

(1) U Shwe Zin

(2) Dr Aung Myat Kyaw Sein

Mandalay Region

Mon State

By Order,

Aung Lin Dwe
Lieutenant-General
Secretary
State Administration Council

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.

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 New National Democracy Party, which is desirous of organizing a political party, yesterday applied for permission to establish a political party under the law and rules, and Union Election Commission is processing further verification. — MNA/KZL

Elephant performance show held in Moscow for 75th Anniversary Myanmar-Russia Diplomatic Relations

IN marking the 75th Anniversary (Diamond Jubilee) of the establishment of the Myanmar-Russia diplomatic relations, the elephant performance show and the commemorative photo show were held at Grandpa Durov’s Corner Animal Theatre in Moscow, Russia, on 22 February and shows were conducted by the Embassy of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar in Moscow (Russia), the Russian government and Grandpa Durov’s Corner Animal Theatre.



Attendees and guests watch the performance of Myanmar’s elephants.

At the ceremony, Mr Sergey Cheremin, Minister of the Moscow City Government and Head of the Moscow City foreign economic and international relations department, U Lwin Oo, Ambassador of Myanmar to the Russian Federation, Nikolay Nozdrev, Director-General of the Third Asian Department (3AD) of Russian Foreign Ministry, and Mrs Natalia Durova, Art director of the Grandpa Durov’s Corner Theatre gave greeting speeches.



Afterwards, three Myanmar elephants, together with other young animals, entertained the audience with dance. The elephants are about ten years old and they were presented by Myanmar on 19 December 2018 marking the 70th anniversary of Myanmar-Russia diplomatic ties.

— MNA/MKKS

Notification released regarding relaxation of wearing face mask from rules of personal protection against Covid-19

1. The Ministry of Health has been changing disease prevention regulations based on the status of the disease since the beginning of the definition of Covid-19 as a fast-spreading disease.

2. Now, due to the increase in the coverage of the nationwide Covid-19 vaccination and the public’s cooperation in complying with the disease prevention rules, Covid-19 infection cases and deaths are decreasing significantly.

3. Therefore, the public should be informed and urged to wear facemasks in the following situations, among the rules of personal protection against Covid-19 that are being followed in daily life.

(a) When being in a densely populated area and in an enclosed area with poor ventilation (a situation where it is impossible to live three feet apart from one person).

(b) Travelling by vehicles used by the public, railways, ships, and planes.

(c) Visiting hospitals, health centres and nursing homes.

(d) Those who are at high risk of serious illness and death if infected with Covid-19, elderly people, people with high blood pressure,

heart disease, diabetes mellitus, chronic lung disease, cancer, cerebrovascular disease, asthma, people with a weak immune system, overweight person, people who have not been vaccinated against Covid-19 due to various reasons, People with general health problems

(e) People with Covid-19 disease and respiratory symptoms such as fever, stuffy nose, sneezing, coughing, and neck pain.

Ministry of Health

23-2-2023

Region/ State-wise industries will generate more job opportunities and reduce number of workers moving to cities

- Region/State-wise industries should be set up. Such activities will generate more job opportunities and reduce the number of workers moving to cities.
- Region/state-wise model farms should be set up. MSMEs can boost production in the respective areas through the use of raw materials produced by local farming industry. In this way they will support the local economy.

(The excerpt from the speech made by Chairman of State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at the meeting 8/2022 of the Union government on 1 November 2022)

Exerted efforts are needed to accomplish the adopted future programmes and objectives: Senior General

FROM PAGE-1

that the state of the emergency period has been extended for another six months as there does not prevail stability and peace for hundred per cent, thereby arising the need to restore the stability and peace to be able to hold the free and fair election and that the free and fair election is to be held across the nation in such a way that everybody will have the right to vote.

The Senior General went on to say that no nation around the world can hold an election in which hundred per cent of voters come to vote, that people have the right to decide as to whether they will vote or not, that it is, however, the duty of the government to make necessary arrangements to enable all people to vote, that the government is required to protect the voters against the threats and/or pressures and to ensure stability and peace at the time of voting.

He said that the country is not hundred per cent stable and peaceful because of the attacks made by certain EAOs and the PDF and that it is, therefore, necessary to continue to restore stability and peace to the country.

Preparations are underway to successfully hold the forthcoming election

Concerning the political parties, he said that there are many political parties, but only a handful of them can have won the parliamentary seats, that this situation is indicating that the political parties are rather weak in fulfilling the aspirations of the people and that they cannot win the love and trust of the voters. Therefore, the political parties cannot be said to represent the people and their regions. And those parties that have won the parliamentary seats are also found that they cannot represent the people from their constituent

“... On our part, we have laid down the objectives and the plans since the assumption of the duties, and now we have revised our objectives and future plans again to adapt to the latest situation. We have brought to the fore the security to ensure stability and peace across the nation.

cies very well by actively participating in the parliament because the parliament is dominated by a single party which has won a landslide victory in the election. To prevent such domination from occurring again, we have amended the Political Parties Registration Law. To enable the political parties to represent the people and to enable the indigenous people to have their own say in the parliament, we have decided to introduce the PR system. It is found that the political parties and the ethnic armed organizations are both willing to practise the PR system.

Regarding the voters' lists, the Ministry of Immigration and Population has the list of eligible voters while the Election Commission has also the voters' list. Plus, the General Administration Department also keeps the voters' list. Among these three lists, the list of the Immigration and Population Ministry is based on the census, so, their list can be the most accurate. According to the international standard, the census is to be conducted every ten years. We conducted our last census in 2014. With the passage of nine years, some data are needed to be confirmed again. The outbreak of the pandemic, the political instability caused by terrorism and the political conflicts have weakened the accuracy of

the data and information. Therefore, if we want the accuracy of the data, we need to conduct the census again in the first place. Then only, will the voters' list be accurate. This is the reason why I have demanded another six-month extension from the pro tem president. And as requested by the pro tem president, I have declared martial law in certain regions to restore stability and peace. On our part, we have laid down the objectives and the plans since the assumption of the duties, and now we have revised our objectives and future plans again to adapt to the latest situation. We have brought to the fore the security to ensure stability and peace across the nation. In this regard, I would like to tell the people from this meeting that declaration of the martial law in some regions

“... if those human resources who are engaged in agricultural activities and the livestock breeding businesses can be promoted, these businesses will be booming, thereby effectuating the socioeconomic development of the rural people who are the majority of our country.

and areas is not to restrict the people but to crack down on the activities of the terrorists who are damaging the interests of the local people.

Effectuation of national prosperity and ensuring food security

After security, our priority is given to the socioeconomic development of the people. To effectuate national prosperity and ensure food security, we are carrying out people-centred development activities. Obviously, national prosperity cannot be brought about if there does not prevail stability and peace. As for food security, we are now encouraging manufacturing based on agriculture and livestock breeding. The overwhelming majority of the rural people are living on farming and livestock breeding. Therefore, if agriculture and livestock breeding-based manufacturing and production can be successful, the socioeconomic life of the majority of the people will be developed. True, there was some level of economic difficulty in 2021 and 2022. No food shortage was seen despite the price hike. If the socioeconomic life of the people from basic strata can be promoted, the country will prosper. Our priority is given to the prosperity of the majority. This should be borne in your mind,

my council members, he said. The promotion of agriculture and livestock breeding activities will contribute towards the development of the border areas.

Regarding rice supply, some regions and states are self-sufficient. At the national level, rice sufficiency is 142 per cent. The regions which are not self-sufficient are needed to boost per acre yield while those which are already self-sufficient are needed to think of exporting the surplus rice. The land should be reclaimed if there is not enough cultivable land. More importantly, per-acre yield should be boosted.

Promoting quality education and quality human resources

Concerning promoting the quality of human resources, the Senior General said that if the human resources that are engaged in agricultural activities and the livestock breeding businesses can be promoted, these businesses will be booming, thereby effectuating the socioeconomic development of the rural people who are the majority of our country. This is the reason why the agriculture and livestock breeding academies and training schools are being upgraded to provide quality education to the students, who will be engaged in these businesses.

Regarding education, basic education schools have been reopened but some cannot be back to school for lack of security or economic reasons. We want them all back to school in the coming academic year. During our tenure, more and more agricultural and livestock breeding institutes have been opened in 50 districts. There will also be more technical schools. Only when we can bring about the educational development of the students will the nation be developed.

SEE PAGE-4

SAC Member DPM Union Defence Minister General Mya Tun Oo inspects sunflower fields, factories in Kalay and Sagaing



STATE Administration Council Member Deputy Prime Minister Union Minister for Defence General Mya Tun Oo accompanied by SAC Member Dr Hmu Htan, Union ministers, the Sagaing Region chief minister, the North-West Command commander, deputy ministers and officials inspected sunflower fields grown by farmers in Phaungkuu Village, Inntaigyi Village-Tract, Kalay Township, yesterday morning.

The Deputy Prime Minister coordinated with the officials on the farmers' presentations and presented pesticide bottles and

SAC Member Deputy Prime Minister Union Defence Minister General Mya Tun Oo is pictured during inspection tours.

sunflower seeds to the farmers.

Next, they inspected the construction status of Phaungseik Road in Phaungkuu Village, Inntaigyi Village-Tract, Kalay Township, and coordinated the necessary matters.

In the afternoon, they arrived at the Thuta Thuka Fertilizer Factory in Padamyar Industrial Zone in Sagaing, and observed the production process of Zarmani compound fertilizer.

The State Administration Council Member Deputy Prime Minister Union Minister for Defence and party met regional, district and township level departmental staff, education, and health officials and cordially greeted the attendees and presented sports equipment and foodstuffs. — MNA/KZL

24th coord meeting of Union Supreme Court with Region/State High Courts, Self-Administered Division Court, Self-Administered Zone Courts and District Courts held online

THE 24th coordination meeting of the Union Supreme Court with Region/State High Courts, Self-Administered Division Court, Self-Administered Zone Court and District Court was held via video conferencing at the Union Supreme Court in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

First, Union Chief Justice U Htun Htun Oo said it should examine the cases as per the law without taking bribes and delays. The court-led mediation system supports the hearing of civil suits and the clients can get a chance to solve the prosecuted cases. And so, the court should make effort for a civil suit transfer and the arrival of defendants of both sides. It also should follow the provisions of law and procedures

of the country for dispensing justice regarding money-laundering cases. It also needs to be aware of security for confidential documents and information. It should make efforts to meet the goals of the first-year work plan (2023) of the Judicial Strategic Plan (2023-2027).

Between 1 January and 31 December 2022, the Union Supreme Court received 1,076 criminal cases and it resolved 936 cases while there were 1,844 civil suits (including 153 cases of the previous year) and 1,997 cases were resolved. Region/State High Courts received 4,505 criminal cases and resolved 4,662 cases (including 157 cases of previous cases) and they completed 5,032 civil suits (including 677 civil suits of previ-



The 24th coordination meeting between the Union Supreme Court and Region/State High Courts, Self-Administered Division Court, Self-Administered Zone Courts and District Courts is in progress online.

ous years) among 4,355 civil suits. The Self-Administered Division Court, Self-Administered Zone Court and District Court received 28,272 criminal cases and examined 29,321 cases (including 1,049

cases of the previous year) and they completed 27,866 civil cases (including 438 cases of the previous year) out of 27,428 civil suits.

There were 169,421 criminal cases at the Township Courts and

189,910 cases (including 20,489 cases of the previous year) were resolved. They also received 19,514 civil suits and resolved 25,714 civil suits (including 6,200 cases from the previous year).

The Juvenile Court (Yangon and Mandalay) had 385 cases under Child Law and resolved 395 cases (including 10 cases from the previous year). The Municipal Court (Nay Pyi Taw, Yangon and Mandalay) completed 6,175 cases (including 233 cases from the previous year) out of 5,942 cases under the Municipal Law.

The Motor Vehicle Court (Nay Pyi Taw, Yangon and Mandalay) heard 45,547 traffic rule violations. The meeting will be held from 23 to 25 February. — MNA/KTZH

Exerted efforts are needed to accomplish the adopted ...

FROM PAGE-3
Building the Union based on democracy and federalism

In third place, we are building the Union based on democracy and federalism as declared in our objectives. In this regard, the executive power will be delegated to all states and regions in an appropriate manner because the federalism is sharing the power. Regarding federal rights, there are Tables 1, 2, 3 and 5 under the Constitution, which have prescribed fully the right to legislation depending on the level. During our time, we will do our utmost to implement as much as possible the sharing of the powers. We aim to tread on the multiparty democracy path.

At this juncture, the political parties play a pivotal role, and so, we have amended the political parties' registration law.

Efforts to achieve durable peace across the nation

Relating to achieving peace across the nation, we are moving forward as agreed in the NCA – Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement. As the 2008 Constitution has been passed by holding a national referendum, the NCA is a commitment made between the government and the EAOs with the international organizations acting as the witnesses. Thus, peace is being sought on the basis of the 2008 Constitution and the NCA. And positive results have

been achieved in discussions with the EAOs. We will continue to make sustained efforts to achieve peace across the nation. This peace process is our fourth task.

Finally, we will convene the election in a free and fair manner and hand over the power to the party that wins the election. In this regard, we need to learn lessons from the 2015 election which was a failure because of vote cheating and the exertion of undue influence by the ruling government. Additionally, there were cases of threatening and giving of pressure on the voters. We also need to enable the indigenous people to win seats in the parliament. Therefore, we need to give enough time to the

political parties. Learning from the 2015 election, we must make an all-out effort to hold a free and fair election free from cheating and fraud. In this regard, we need some more time to ensure the accuracy of the voters' list.

Maintaining international relations

Regarding international relations, we need to maintain good ties with regional groupings and the UN and the neighbouring nations. Nonetheless, we have to safeguard our national sovereignty and protect our national interests. And when it comes to holding the election, this is also our own internal affair.

The Senior General under-

scored the motto: "Keep Moving Forward to Achieve Our Goal".

Next, the council members discussed matters relating to stability, peace, salaries of the teachers appointed and assigned in the areas of the indigenous races, scrutiny of online payment, health, education and human resources development.

Then, the SAC Chair replied to the discussions followed by the SAC Vice-Chair DPM Vice-Senior General Soe Win. Afterwards, the Senior General delivered the closing speech. He emphasized that the Council Members should be careful of their behaviours and speeches because they belong to the highest level organization. —MNA

SAC member, MoEA Union Minister meet staff of affiliated departments in Chin State

STATE Administration Council member Dr Hmu Htan and Union Minister for Ethnic Affairs Jeng Phang Naw Taung met the staff who are serving duties at the Chin State Directorate Office of the Ministry of Ethnic Affairs together with Chin State Ethnic Affairs Minister U Sein Tun Hla in Haka Township on 21 February.

During the meeting, SAC member Dr Hmu Htan said the non-disintegration of national solidarity plays a key role among our three main national causes. The Ministry of Ethnic Affairs is working in that sector. Currently, it should strengthen the national solidarity in Chin State and the entire nation can see progress through national unity.

It is necessary to live without hatred among the ethnic people. As every religion emphasizes love and the staff

should have goodwill and kindness towards the ethnic people and work together with other departmental staff in addition to their coworkers while serving duties in Chin State.

Then, the officials of the Department of Ethnic Literature and Culture and the Department of Protection of Ethnic Rights reported on undertaking the tasks.

Chin State Ethnic Affairs Minister U Sein Tun Hla explained ethnic affairs and the progress of works and the director-general of the Department of Protection of Ethnic Rights coordinated the discussion.

Then, Union Minister Jeng Phang Naw Taung called on the participants to support in promoting the ethnic language, literature, arts, cultural heritage, tradition and culture and national characteristics and socioeconomic of ethnic people, to



SAC Member Dr Hmu Htan and Union Minister Jeng Phang Naw Taung present cash assistance for the ethnic literature and cultural groups in Chin State.

work in line with the rules and regulations of civil services, to understand the national tasks, five-point roadmap and 12 objectives in serving duties from the respective sectors and to

spend the State fund effectively as per the financial rules and directives and to take care of the welfare of the staff and their health.

SAC member Dr Hmu

Htan and the Union minister presented cash assistance for the ethnic literature and cultural groups in Chin State to promote literature and cultural affairs. —MNA/KTZH



Union Minister U Ko Ko Hlaing and the Kuwaiti ambassador cut the ceremonial cake at the event yesterday.

MoIC Union Minister attends reception for Kuwait's 62nd National Day and 32nd Independence Day

A reception to mark Kuwait's 62nd National Day and 32nd Independence Day was held at Lotte Hotel in Yangon yesterday evening.

Union Minister for International Cooperation U Ko Ko Hlaing, Yangon Region Chief Minister U Soe Thein, Minister U Bo Htay for Yangon City

Development, ambassadors and charge d'affaires from foreign embassies in Yangon, UN resident representatives and invitees were present on the occasion.

The ceremony was first inaugurated with national anthems of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and Kuwait.

Next, Union Minister U Ko Ko Hlaing and Ambassador Mr Mubarak M A Aladwani of Kuwait to Myanmar cut the commemorative cake and took documentary group photos with attendees.

Then, the Kuwaiti ambassador hosted an honorary dinner. — MNA/TS

Rakhine regional govt provides assistance in cash and kind to IDPs in Minbya township

OFFICIALS from the Rakhine government provided cash assistance and various kinds of consumer goods to IDPs from seven village-tracts, nine villages and two downtown wards in Minbya township, who have temporarily stayed in IDPs camps and have to return to their homes, at the Yarmaung hall in Minbya township yesterday morning.

At the ceremony, station commander Col Kyaw Min Tun gave away K294 million provided by the Rakhine State government for 588 households, the chair-

man of MraukU district administration body K58.8 million, the township administration body K21.087 million and the staff officer of MraukU District Disaster Management Department 588 jerrycans including 17 kinds of consumer goods to the representatives of IDPs.

Afterwards, station commander Col Kyaw Min Tun encouraged the IDPs and the members of the Tatmadaw and Myanmar Police Force and government employees transported the IDPs to their homes. — Thein Nu Aung (IPRD)/MKKS



MoFA Union Minister virtually meets officials, Charge d'affaires of Myanmar Embassies, Permanent Representative Offices in America Zone, Europe Zone, Middle East, Africa Zone



UNION Minister for Foreign Affairs U Than Swe met heads and charge d'affaires of Myanmar Embassies and Permanent Representative Offices in the America Zone, Europe Zone, Middle East and Africa Zone via videoconferencing yesterday.

Speaking at the meeting, the Union minister said the heads of embassies should work hard for the interests of the country and people despite

the challenges in serving duties. They should focus on covering true information while eradicating the misinformation of insurgent media outlets. They should carry out the tasks openly based on the truth without damaging friendly relations.

He also pointed out the need to have loyalty to the country by following the rules and regulations of the civil servants. He continued that civil serv-

ants should not participate in political affairs. They should not misuse their authority either and should work honestly and have mutual respect among officials of embassies and staff.

He urged all to work in unity and harmony while striving for capacity building.

The meeting was attended by Deputy Minister U Kyaw Myo Htut and Directors-General. – MNA/KTZH

Myanmar delegation attends 6th Meeting of High-Level Task Force on ASEAN Community's Post-2025 Vision (HLTF-ACV)



The documentary group photo of the meeting held from 20 to 21 February 2023 in Indonesia.

THE 6th meeting of the High-Level Task Force on ASEAN Community's Post-2025 Vision (6th HLTF-ACV) was held in Grand Hyatt Hotel, Jakarta, Indonesia from 20 to 21 February 2023.

The meeting was co-chaired by Indonesia and Ma-

laysia, and attended by Eminent Persons, High-Level Representatives and Delegates from ASEAN Member States and Deputy Secretary-General for ASEAN Political and Security Community. The Myanmar delegation led by Dr Wah Wah

Maung, Deputy Minister for the Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations and Eminent Person of Myanmar to HLTF-ACV accompanied by Permanent Representative of Myanmar to ASEAN U Aung Myo Myint and officials from

the Ministry of Foreign Affairs attended the meeting.

The meeting discussed matters pertaining to the development of the Core Elements of ASEAN Community's Post-2025 Vision, the Modalities for Stakeholders' Consultation, participation of the Timor Leste as an observer country to the next HLTF meeting, the HLTF Work plan for 2023 and HLTF's progress report and recommendations to submit the ASEAN Leaders at the 43rd ASEAN Summit to be held in May 2023. Furthermore, the High-Level Task Force also had an interface meeting with the Executive Directors of the ASEAN Foundation and the ASEAN Institute for Peace and Reconciliation to exchange view on drafting the ASEAN Community's Post-2025 Vision.

At the meeting, the deputy

minister shared the view that the HLTF should consider the development gaps among ASEAN Member States in drafting the Post-2025 Vision, the vision should be a pragmatic approach which is necessary to assist people-centred development in the region and it is also pertinent to include the mid-term reviews to be able to assess, adapt and respond to the unpredictable future issues and challenges.

The establishment of the High-Level Task Force (HLTF) was agreed at the 38th and 39th ASEAN Summits which were held on 16 October 2022 with the aim of developing the ASEAN Community's Post-2025 Vision. The High-Level Task Force is composed of Eminent Persons and High-Level Representatives from ASEAN Member States. – MNA

Association of Anti-Illegal Plagiarism of Artworks holds coord meeting 1/2023

THE coordinating meeting of the Association of Anti-Illegal Plagiarism of Artworks (1/2023) took place at the meeting hall of the Ministry of Information in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

The meeting was attended by Association of Anti-Illegal Plagiarism of Artworks Chairman Deputy Information Minister U Ye Tint, the secretary, members and the joint secretary, and some members participated in the meeting via videoconferencing.

Firstly, the Deputy Minister said that films, videos and dramas

are being shown through online platforms with the advancement of digital technology nowadays. Even though there are legitimate broadcasts, some steal original works and illegally display them online for their own profit and establish gambling-based platforms and sexual entertainment sectors. Such illegal activities are increasing day by day, thus it is necessary to take preventive measures as soon as possible. It is also required to take action on channels, websites and Facebook pages that are illegally showing

and selling domestic and foreign movies. If no action is taken, serious copyright violations may occur in the future, as well as other illegal business activities.

Therefore, the members need to work together to implement the procedures to be done in order to effectively take action against the illegal plagiarism and distribution of movies online, he added.

Then, a member presented about the illegal distribution of artworks through online platforms. Afterwards, attendees



The coordination meeting of the Association of Anti-Illegal Plagiarism of Artworks is in progress in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

discussed the prevention process related to illegal plagiarism and distribution. The chairman gave his concluding remark after discussing the presentations. — MNA/CT

Children Targeted by CRPH, NUG and PDF Terrorists

By Min Khant

A news report horrified the people on 15 February 2023, as the so-called PDF terrorists, subordinates of CRPH and NUG declared as terrorist groups launched a remote mine attack on a school bus getting one female student killed and 10 others injured. The students were on their way back home after sitting exams at school in Ayadaw township of Sagaing region.

That was undeniably an atrocious act of terrorism deliberately targeting the students since that was the remote-mine attack on a school bus running on its route at a routine time in school days. Everyone is overcome with grief seeing the photos of the casualties of innocent students in white-and-green-coloured school uniforms. Every father and mother, in the shoes of the victims’ families, is totally disgusted at the way the terrorists behaved towards the innocent children.



Children injured in the remote-mine attack of so-called PDF terrorists.

Reviewing the atrocious incident, that was an obvious attack on the education of the children who are the future of the Nation, the dream and hope of their parents, besides an act of terrorism targeting the children who are apolitical. How the international community would respond to this? They should consider whether they ought to continue abetting and supporting PDF terrorists who are audaciously killing people in cold blood and the NUG group that is masterminding the acts of terrorism according to undeniable evidence.

Children are the future of a Nation and a society, and the precious jewels as well. The minors are usually under special care and control of their parents, relatives, guardians, Government and relevant societies as they do not possess the experience and physical and mental development to protect themselves compared to the adults. Therefore, every country set laws and regulations to legally protect children from dangers and their rights.

According to International Law, every law to protect non-combatants generally covers children in the terms of general protection. Moreover, many other rights-related laws including the Geneva Declaration of the Rights of the Child adopted in 1924 and the Declaration of the Rights of the Child adopted in 1959 have protected the rights of children.

As child rights are generally protected in peacetime, there are also many other legislations especially protecting the rights of the child in wartime or armed conflicts. The Article 77 of Additional Protocol I of the Geneva Conventions adopted in 1977 states, ‘Children shall be the object of special respect and shall be protected against any form of indecent assault. The Parties to the conflict shall provide them with the care and aid they require, whether because of their age or for any other reason.’ The Additional Protocol II relating to the protection of victims of non-international armed conflicts prescribes more minute provisions with regard to the protection of children.

Myanmar has already enacted ‘The Child Rights Law’ on 23 July 2019. The law prescribes Chapter XVI ‘Protection of Children from Violence’ protecting the child from physical violence, psychological violence or sexual violence. Moreover, the Chapter XVII of ‘Children and Armed Conflict’ also includes a clause urging all parties concerned to treat all children associated with, affected by or displaced by armed conflict as victims by considering the best interests of children to be paramount.

Our country and international community provide the children with legal protections to ensure they are in good care and not to get them involved in armed conflicts. In Myanmar, nevertheless, the PDF terrorists, subordinates of CRPH and NUG groups, are mercilessly killing the whole family including children and babies under the pretext of not supporting them. Besides, they are also having the children take part in terrorist bomb attacks. The people are witnessing and hearing about the gruesome and horrifying incidents.

So far, 143 children have been killed while 392 others injured due to the terrorist attacks of CRPH and NUG declared as terrorist groups and their subordinates so-called PDF terrorists. Statistics say the Sagaing region holds the highest number of child deaths in terrorist attacks followed by the Magway region. The majority of the child victims were killed in the incidents of murdering a whole family of alleged informers for having different political colours; explosions of IEDs planted by terrorists; reckless test firing weapons into villages by so-called PDF terrorists; arson attacks on villages and dropping bombs wantonly using drones. These included other certain incidents in which children were killed for getting used as pawns in terrorist attacks of so-called PDF terrorists.

Table showing the deaths of children killed by CRHP and NUG Declared as Terrorist Groups and So-called PDF terrorists from 1 February 2021 to 11 February 2023

Sr.	Region/State	Child deaths		Total	Injured Children		Total
		Male	Female		Male	Female	
1	Nay Pyi Taw				2		2
2	Kachin State	4		4	12	5	17
3	Kayah State				2	5	7
4	Kayin State		1	1	12	7	19
5	Chin State	1		1	3	3	6
6	Sagaing Region	42	24	66	69	49	118
7	Taninthayi Region	3	3	6	13	3	16
8	Bago Region	3	7	10	22	12	34
9	Magway Region	15	6	21	15	14	29
10	Mandalay Region	8	9	17	38	11	49
11	Mon State	2	2	4	8	11	19
12	Rakhine State		2	2	2		2
13	Yangon Region	3	4	7	24	17	41
14	Shan State	2		2	18	13	31
15	Ayeyawady Region		2	2	1	1	2
	Total	83	60	143	241	151	392

From such incidents, some particular ones will be extracted and reported in summary to let on to the people and international community. On 11 February 2023, so-called PDF terrorists killed seven family members of a village administrator U Myint Aung including his wife, daughters and grandchildren in Nyaung Shin Gon village, Palauk township of Taninthayi region. The killed victims included 17-year-old boy Nay Htet Thein, 16-year-old boy Zayyar Aung, 13-year-old boy Soe Min Paing, 9-year-old girl May Zin Phyu and a one-year-old baby boy who was yet to be named. The terrorists brutally killed a whole family without leaving a babe in their arms for merely their grandfather was the village administrator.

Similarly, PDF terrorists also massacred a whole family of eight including U Kyaw Hlaing, 65 (selling bamboo and logs) in Nga Myaung village, Kanbalu township of Sagaing region on 14 January 2023. Out of the victims, six-year-old boy Khant Zayyar Myo, 11-year-old girl Theint Shwe Bon San and 15-year-old girl Su Myat San were just minors. As a notable fact, the family of U Kyaw Hlaing were supporters of the NLD party, and however, they were killed with a reason for not providing cash assistance to them although the victim’s family had earned a good income from their business of selling bamboo and logs. It is also possible that the victim’s family probably provided cash assistance to the terrorists before and stopped doing so later as they no more believed in the terrorism of PDFs. Anyhow, the above-mentioned incident is strong evidence indicating that the CRPH and NUG declared as terrorist groups and their subordinates of so-called PDF terrorists are brutally killing everyone including children if they do not support and provide money to them regardless of political colours.

OPINION

Be healthy, fit and educated for a new nation

ALL citizens are to try hard to be healthy and fit in their lives. If so, they will have expectant longevity in convenient daily life free from major diseases. Only when they themselves are healthy and fit will they have to accumulate knowledge and techniques on how to manage the health and fitness of their new generations.

Health and education are essential for all human beings. Learning education comprising school education and pursuing general knowledge from all arenas are important for the careers of all people. To be able to learn educational subjects, everybody must be healthy as well as have socioeconomic life. If someone has adequate health and socioeconomic status, the person will have the chance to conveniently learn and study any subjects.

Actually, the living standard of society can be uplifted by the strength of the people who are healthy, fit and educated. In order to uplift the social system, the country needs to strive to boom the economy. To do so, it is necessary to create chances for the youths to learn school education as well as techniques. So, students need to complete at least the KG+9 scheme. If they have skills in the KG+9 scheme, they will be capable of learning vocational training.

At the same time, sports festivals at basic and higher education levels are organized for students to have sports skills and good health conditions. Results from these measures will be brought to the lives of student youths at present, to the adults and then to the senior citizens. At that time, they will understand the value of accumulating knowledge and education as well as the capability of health conditions.

Actually, the living standard of society can be uplifted by the strength of the people who are healthy, fit and educated. In order to uplift the social system, the country needs to strive to boom the economy. To do so, it is necessary to create chances for the youths to learn school education as well as techniques. So, students need to complete at least the KG+9 scheme. If they have skills in the KG+9 scheme, they will be capable of learning vocational training.

As the government has decided to put investments in the education sector, arrangements are being made to open agriculture and livestock breeding schools affiliated with the basic education high schools in 50 districts for sharing education, knowledge and techniques with the students.

As a Myanmar saying goes: Command your man and do it yourself, all Myanmar people are to build their society to be able to turn out healthy, fit and educated youths on whom can be relied for shaping a better future for the nation.

■

Consumer and Occupational Frauds in Myanmar

By U AC

FRAUD is simply wrongful or criminal deception intended to result in financial or personal gain. In general, there are two types of fraud; consumer and occupational. Both are extremely common in the country.

Consumer frauds relate to cheating the mass consumers or the general public, whereas occupational frauds relate to defrauding the organization using one's occupation or position.

Common Consumer Frauds

Typical consumer frauds in the world include advance fees fraud aka Nigerian fraud, banking relating frauds such as stolen passwords and IDs or fake signatures and identity theft which is common in developed countries.

In Myanmar, maybe due to a lack of education and analytical skills, Ponzi or pyramid schemes, and fraudulent investment op-

portunities still occupy the top three list together with advance fee fraud. As recent as less than six months ago, millions of US\$ worth of funds were swindled from Myanmar by one company operating as an investment outfit in Singapore (run by Myanmar criminals) and one named Yangon Times Investment. People were promised returns between 5-10 per cent per month and they believed in this Facebook scam.

Yet, potential frauds are still ongoing starting from gold savings schemes, where you really do not know when the goldsmith shop would disappear into thin air; to selling lotteries from Thailand and Singapore, where the seller just sends you a copy of the ticket (she keeps the original), after collecting the money. How gullible Myanmar people are!

Occupational Frauds

Typical occupation frauds

include asset misappropriation, corruption and fraud in reporting. Occupational fraud occurs in most organizations here, be it the government or commercial entities. The former is more common in business organizations and the latter two more so in the public sector.

Inventory, cash collections, expense claims, cash handling and safekeeping are typical areas that companies have to be extra careful of here. Even pairing the staff might not necessarily provide sufficient control to prevent fraud. The two staff has to be at the same level and each of them must be willing to report the other for potential lapses.

As with most developing countries, corruption is also common within the public sector, from under-table payments to bribery to blatantly asking for handouts. Then there is the manipulation of statistics to satisfy



Typical consumer frauds in the world include advance fees fraud aka Nigerian fraud, banking relating frauds such as stolen passwords and IDs or fake signatures and identity theft which is common in developed countries. **ILLUSTRATION: FOR REPRESENTATIONAL PURPOSE ONLY/FREEPIK**

the authority above, to the detriment of the top unable to have a factual view of the genuine state

of affairs.

Why do these frauds hap-

pen?

In order for occupational fraud to occur, the three angles of the fraud triangle must be complete: non-shareable pressure, opportunity and rationalization. If anyone of them is missing you will not have a fraud. So, our duty as the heads of organizations would be to ensure that controls and monitoring mechanisms are in place, to consistently ensure that one of the legs of this tripod is always missing. Then you would be safe.

For consumer fraud, as long as there are bad people out there (the world is 50 per cent good and 50 per cent bad), there would be people attempting to defraud others for easy money. In Myanmar, a gullible population, lack of education and donation orientation are continuing to contribute to the widespread occurrence of fraud. Adding to that flame are lack of reach for law enforcement, lack of severity of punishment and lack of the

punishment publicity, all three are not helping deter new criminals from committing the same crimes.

How do we prevent fraud?

There is a whole series of books written about preventing occupational fraud. Prevention is the best solution. Prevention is done by putting in place a number of internal controls within the organizations. In a high-power distance culture like in Myanmar, one cannot assume that fraud by a manager or supervisor will get reported by a junior staff, even though the staff may have witnessed it and knew it was wrong. When wages are low, even a little overclaim in expenses may make a difference to the income. One has to be aware of that too.

Tough penalties are another way to deter fraud, be it occupational or consumer. Weak or little punishment just encourages others to venture into dipping one's toes into similar frauds.

We must be mindful to watch out for fraud red flags, nonetheless. From change in spending habits and change in office behaviour to knowing your staff's bad habits might come a long way in determining who to trust and who to chuck. For consumer fraud, the premise is simple; if the deal is too good to be true, it probably is not! However great a company is it would be hard-pressed to pay even three per cent monthly (let alone 5-10 per cent advertised) payoff to investors even for a year. Three per cent per month means at least 36 per cent per annum, in dividends. Then the company must be growing at around 50 per cent at profit level. If there exists such a company, the company would be larger than the economy of the country within one generation's lifetime, knowing that the country's economy only grows only 3-5 per cent per annum. How would that be even remotely possible! ■

Study finds psychological stress hinders performance, even for Olympic athletes

The World Archery Federation, in collaboration with Panasonic, measured athletes' heart rates using high-frame-rate cameras that are designed to detect skin reflectance and can determine a person's heart rate 96 per cent as accurately as a pulse oximeter or electrocardiogram.



South Korea's An San competes in the women's individual eliminations during the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games at Yumenoshima Park Archery Field in Tokyo on 30 July 2021. **PHOTO: REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE/ADEK BERRY / AFP**

IN addition to taking place during the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2020 Tokyo Olympics were the first sporting occasion to measure and broadcast athletes' heart rates as Olympic gold-winning archers competed.

An examination of these biometric data, published in Psychological Science by Yunfeng Lu (Nanjing University) and Songfa Zhong (National University of Singapore, New York University Abu Dhabi), offered empirical confirmation of what sports fans have long suspected: When athletes are under pressure, their performance suffers.

Real-time heart rate

"We found that high contactless real-time heart rate is associated with poor performance," said Lu and Zhong in an interview. "This suggests

that even the best professional athletes are negatively influenced by psychological stress, even though they are generally well trained to cope with pressure."

Olympic archery includes several types of individual and team-based competitions, but for this study, Lu and Zhong focused on within-gender individual competitions for which heart-rate data were available. During these competitions, the heart rates of 122 male and female archers were broadcast as they took 2,247 shots.

A set number of arrows

During each match, individual archers shot a set number of arrows at a target, with a 20-s time limit for each shot. Archers could earn a maximum of 10 points for a perfect bulls-eye

shot, with points decreasing the farther an arrow landed from the centre of the target.

Lu and Zhong found that athletes whose heart rates were higher before taking a shot consistently scored lower on those shots. While archers' age and gender were not found to significantly influence the relationship between stress and performance, a number of factors related to the nature of the competition did.

Increased heart rate was more likely to reduce the performance of lower-ranking archers and of all archers who shot second in a match or who had a lower score than their opponent at that point in the match. There was also a stronger relationship between stress and performance closer to the end of

each match, possibly due to the increase in pressure as athletes progressed in the competition, the authors wrote.

Training to manage stress

"Elite athletes usually receive training to manage stress, but our results suggest that they continue to be subject to the influence of stress," wrote Lu and Zhong.

In addition to offering evidence for the link between stress and performance in a real-life setting, this research demonstrates that heart rate captured by high-frame-rate cameras can serve as a reliable source of biometric data, according to Lu and Zhong, particularly in situations like the COVID-19 pandemic in which researchers and participants may be unable to meet in per-

son. "This method could become increasingly important in diverse settings, ranging from sports and business to mental health and medicine," the researchers wrote. "In this regard, our study can be viewed as a proof of concept by showing that contactless real-time heart rates captured psychological stress."

In future work, this technology could be used to observe how stress influences athletic performance across different sports, Lu and Zhong said. The researchers would also like to further investigate how contactless real-time heart rate can be incorporated into behavioural studies in laboratory and field settings.

SOURCE: ANI

Children Targeted by CRPH, NUG and PDF Terrorists

FROM PAGE-7



Mass killing of a whole family including children in Nga Myaung village.

On 19 May 2021, so-called PDF terrorists brutally killed village administrator U Soe Nyunt, his wife Ma Tin Mar Soe, and also their three-year-old son Swan Htet Aung at their house in Shwe Pauk Pin village, Myaung township of Sagaing region. There are many similar incidents in which families of village/ward administrators including children were mercilessly killed. The terrorists are massacring all family members including babes in arms if their father or grandfather is a ward/village administrator. So, take serious consideration whether that is a good reason enough for the mass killing of the whole family.

Likewise, so-called PDF terrorists brutally massacred a whole family of six including U Ye Myint, 57 in Kyigon village of Taze township on 23 September 2023. They were killed with a reason for the family of a police force member. Among the killed victims of U Ye Myint's granddaughters, Nu Nu Khaing and Chaw Su Hlaing, were just teenagers around 18 and the youngest one Kyawt Hmu Kay Thwal was merely four years old. Being the family of a police force member, all of them including underage girls were mercilessly killed.

An IED explosion took place at the entrance of the township football stadium located on the right side of Pyinma street of Chauk township, Magway region on 8 February 2023. The IED blast left gruesome deaths of 7-year-old boy Moe Yan Ko, and 11-year-old boy Win Naing Min. According to the accounts of witnesses, the blast reportedly occurred from a plastic bag carried together by the boys. The children were paid and used by CRPH and NUG declared as terrorist groups and their subordinates of PDF terrorists to blast the public stadium. This incident happened identically with the threatening words of Zaw Wai Soe from NUG declared as a terrorist group, 'Don't open the small bags, if you do, it will end up your life.'

Observing such incidents, so-called PDF terrorists are killing people with different political colours, civil servants and others, with the same political colours, who do not support them. In doing such crimes, it is obvious that they are even killing children who are totally innocent. As the cause of the horrendous incidents, so-called PDF terrorist groups are committing such crimes on the ground as per the instructions and instigations of NUG declared as a terrorist group. There are plenty of undeniable evidence and records of their crimes. Such evidence is repeatedly informed to international organizations and international police forces and described in news reports as well so that the world knows about them.

Sadly, some countries are using various means not to spread the news reports about the heinous crimes of murders committed by CRPH and NUG declared as terrorist groups and their subordinates so-called PDF terrorists on the pages of world-known media outlets and also engaging with the NUG and NUG terrorist group indirectly abetting the terrorism. CRPH and NUG were declared as terrorist groups and PDF terrorists on the pretext of revolution are intentionally killing and murdering unarmed civilians (non-combatants) who do not support their acts of terrorism even without sympathizing with the children. Regardless of the various definitions of 'terrorism' and 'acts of terrorism' in the world, such brutal and inhumane killings of CRPH and NUG declared as terrorist groups and their subordinate PDF terrorists today are undeniable acts of terrorism intolerable and morally unacceptable to any world society and organization. That is the message I want to deliver again to every individual, organization and country that is engaging with the CRPH and NUG declared as terrorist groups.

Such horrendous incidents in which children were brutally terrorized, attacked and killed were the serious felonies committed by so-called PDF terrorists under the instructions of CRPH and NUG declared as terrorist groups with the dogma 'Everyone who differs from my attitude is my enemy'. The Government and the Tatmadaw, which are fully responsible to protect the entire population, are taking all possible security measures to protect the people from the dangers of terrorism in conformity with International Law and domestic laws. To draw a conclusion, certain countries and international organizations that are providing financial support to and engaging directly or indirectly with terrorist groups with political reason, should seriously reason and consider the dogma of utter devastation and the acts of terrorism of CRPH and NUG declared as terrorists and so-called PDF terrorists who are killing people including even babes in arms.

Reference

- Geneva Convention IV 1949, Additional I and II 1977, Geneva Declaration of the Rights of Child 1924, Declaration of the Rights of Child 1959.
- Republic of the Union of Myanmar, The Child Rights Law, 2019.

Two new cases of COVID-19 reported on 23 February, total figure reaches 633,905

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases recorded 633,905 after two new cases were reported on 23 February 2023 according to the Ministry of Health. The total number of patients who have recovered from COVID-19 in the country reached 614,375, including one new recovery.

The death toll from COVID-19 in the country remained unchanged at 19,490 on 23-2-2023 with no new death reported from the pandemic. — MNA

51st Myanmar Health Research Congress continues its 4th day

THE fourth-day session of the 51st Myanmar Health Research Congress organized by the Ministry of Health was held at the Department of Medical Research in Yangon yesterday.

The review of the current situation on human resources for health based on the success of a quality universal healthcare system in Myanmar by 2030, identification of strategies and commitments were discussed under the topic "Myanmar Health Workforce for the SDG and 2030 UHC Targets: Situational Analysis, Strategies and Commitments".

The director-general of the Department of Human Resources for Health discussed the leading role of the department in the development of human resources



The fourth-day session of the 51st Myanmar Health Research Congress is in progress yesterday.

es for health, cooperation with international organizations and commitments, and the status of implementation of the quality assurance system in universities and schools. Queries and suggestions raised by professors and scholars were also responded to and discussed.

In the afternoon, a paper reading session was held where researchers presented a total of 11 research papers and attendees put forward their suggestions. — MNA/TS

Weekly Update Prices of Bayintnaung Commodity Market

FROM 15 to 22 February 2023, the price of onion, sugar, palm oil and chilli pepper soared and the rice price decreased.

Onion

Onions from various regions weighing 150,000 visses arrived at the Bayintnaung Market on 22 February and prices rose again.

On that day, the wholesale prices of onion from the Seik-phyu, Myingyan and Myittha areas were K1,350, K1,400 and K1,650 per viss respectively.

Meanwhile, the Pakokku market received 15,768 visses of onion, and the highest price per viss was K1,100 for the Yaw onion variety and K1,050 for the Salay onion variety.

Myittha onion fetched the highest price of K1,450 per viss in the Mandalay market. On 21 February, 10,000 visses of onion entered the Myingyan market, and the price ranged between K500 and K1,200 per viss.

Garlic

At the Yangon market on 2 February, the wholesale prices of onion from Aungban (Shan State) were set at K4,550 per viss for the Special 3 variety, K4,750 per viss for the Special 4 variety, K4,950 per viss for the Special 5 variety and K3,550 per viss for Kyukok onion.

Potato

The wholesale price of potatoes from Sinphyukyun stood at K1,200-K1,700 per viss in the Yangon market on 22 February. Potatoes from Bhamo and Chinese potatoes were traded at K1,950 and K2,100 per viss respectively.

Chilli pepper

The price of new Panye and Myarni long chilli peppers rose again from K9,000/K9,500 per viss to K10,000 per viss on 22 February.

Likewise, Moehtaung chilli peppers from Yayle (Maubin) area were sold at K10,500 per viss, while Pyawbwe Moehtaung chilli peppers were valued at K11,000 per viss and Sinphyukyun bell peppers at K14,500-K15,500 per viss.

Rice

A bag of low-grade rice decreased by K2,000 and the rise in the price of new Pawsan rice varieties has stopped. The price of new low-grade rice cultivated in a double-cropping system, which has skyrocketed to K57,000 per bag, declined back to K55,000 per bag on 22 February. The price of a bag of new 90-day low-grade rice has dropped from K60,000 to K58,000.

The highest price of a bag of new Pawsan rice was K71,000 for the Bokalay rice variety, K73,000 for the Pyapon rice variety, K76,000 for the Myaungmya rice variety and K87,000 for the Shwebo rice variety.

Palm oil

Between 20 and 26 February, the wholesale reference price of palm oil in Yangon was K4,470 per viss, dropping by K20 per viss compared to the previous week.

However, the retail price of palm oil soared again to K7,100 per viss in the Yangon oil market on 22 February. In some regions, oil dealers who have palm oil re-sold it with the retail price of K7,000 per viss on 22 February, saving freight charges and labour costs rather than buying and selling through Yangon. — TWA/CT

Kawthoung border conducts trade volume worth US\$13.688 mln to Thailand



A vessel is pictured loading goods at Kawthoung port.

FROM 1 to 21 February, trade volume between Myanmar and Thailand at the Kawthoung border registered US\$13.688 million, according to statistics of the Ministry of Commerce.

The trade post has managed to export 12,841 tonnes of goods worth US\$11.98 million and import 5,646.17 tonnes of goods valued \$1.688 million,

totalling \$13.688 million worth trade volume.

Between 1 and 29 January, Myanmar earned \$19.663 million from exports and \$0.847 million from imports, the total trade value of \$20.51 million. The Ministry of Commerce announced that millions of dollars were pocketed due to the main export of fishery products through the

FOB system.

The most export products are variety of fish, oil-palm and nipa palm. The most import goods are gasoline, diesel, cassava powder, hydrogen peroxide, sodium carbonate, salt, ice box, silicon, charcoal powder, quicklime powder, various goods, battery, oil-palm seeds and bird nests. — TWA/CT

Myanmar spends over US\$1 bln on iron and steel imports every year

ABOUT 2 million tonnes of iron and steel are yearly imported into the country so there is an outflow of funds worth more than US\$1 billion every year, Union Minister Dr Charlie Than of the Ministry of Industry.

He gave a remark at the workshop held on 2 February regarding iron ore mining sites in Myanmar and iron and steel manufacturing processes that Myanmar has a requirement of about 2.5 million tonnes of iron and steel consumption per year. The domestic production is estimated at 1 million tonnes. Therefore, about

2 million tonnes are brought into the country. Myanmar is rich in minerals so it needs to ramp up production to meet the self-sufficiency of iron and steel. This way, the production technology will be improved, he added.

Myanmar's iron and steel production businesses are way behind in technology and cannot keep up with the neighbouring countries. The policies of iron and steel are required to appraise the quality of imported iron and steel and locally produced ones. The Union minister said that policies will be

laid down, in cooperation with the experts, to come up with effective and appropriate methods regarding the extraction of iron from iron ore, mining sites, availability of related minerals, energy and fuel support.

There is one state-owned iron and steel factory under the Ministry of Defence, two under the Ministry of Industry and three under the Myanmar Economic Corporation and there are privately owned 362 iron smelting workshops registered with the Department of Industrial Supervision and Inspection. — TWA/EM

YESC limits power usage for businesses during matriculation exam period

DURING the time of 2023 matriculation examination from 1 to 20 March, the power production will be increased for students to be able to study at night. Thus, Yangon Electricity Supply Corporation-YESC stated industries and businesses do not use electricity between 5 pm and 10 pm. If power generation and consumption are not balanced, power outages may occur. Therefore, the businesses and industries in the wards and villages have been notified not to work using electricity between 5 pm and 10 pm from 1 to 20 March.

YESC has announced that if it is found that businesses and industries operate by using electricity during the stipulated time, action will be taken against them according to the administrative rules and regulations. — TWA/CT



The 33/11 KV (5) MBA Dauntgyi Substation in Thongwa Township, Yangon Region.

US Supreme Court treads carefully on landmark tech law



People line up outside the US Supreme Court in hopes of getting a seat in the public gallery for the Big Tech - Section 230 case. PHOTO: AFP

THE US Supreme Court on Tuesday heard arguments in a landmark case that could transform the internet by scrapping decades-old legal protections for tech companies, but gave no indication that a clear majority would opt to rework the law.

In a two-and-a-half-hour session, the nine justices targeted their questions on better understanding the so-called Section 230, a US law that was signed in 1996 at the dawn of the internet era and before the creation of Google.

The justices did acknowl-

edge that the legal shield was probably no longer fit for purpose given the leaps and bounds made by the online world since the law was drafted -- but added that they might not be the best suited to fix it.

"We're in a predicament here because this is a statute that was written at a different time when the internet was completely different," said Justice Elena Kagan, indicating the complexity of the case put before them.

"We're a court, we really don't know about these things.

These are not like the nine greatest experts on the internet," she added.

Section 230 currently gives internet platforms blanket immunity from any content that comes from a third party and, crucially for the day's case, even if it is pushed out as a recommendation by the website.

Specifically targeted in the case is YouTube's recommendation algorithm that decides what videos a user might want to view next, based on their previous choices and profile.—AFP

Hong Kong unveils US\$97 billion post-pandemic budget

HONG Kong's finance chief unveiled a HK\$761 billion (US\$97 billion) budget on Wednesday, plunging into the coffers to pay for the recession-hit city's post-Covid recovery.

Hoping to kickstart the finance centre's economy, Finance Secretary Paul Chan announced tax cuts and more consumer spending vouchers.

Hong Kong's leaders are keen to resuscitate its fortunes after posting recessions in three of the past four years -- a tumultuous period that saw the economy battered by protests, virus controls and Beijing's authoritarian crackdown.

While rival financial hubs reopened to the world long ago, Hong Kong only fully emerged from pandemic isolation earlier this month when it restored

its border with mainland China, its main economic pipeline.

"Our economy is at the early recovery stage, and members of the public as well as a large number of enterprises are still weighed down by tremendous pressure and require support," Chan told legislators while announcing his 2023/24 budget.

The latest blueprint for reversing the downturn allocates HK\$5,000 (US\$637) handouts for more than six million people, half last year's amount as Chan is under pressure to rein in fiscal spending.

Other measures include salary tax breaks, welfare allowances and a "Happy Hong Kong" campaign aimed at making the city more enjoyable with food fairs.—AFP



Hong Kong's leaders are keen to resuscitate the city's fortunes after posting recessions three of the past four years. People visit the Avenue of Stars by the Victoria Harbor in Hong Kong, south China, 18 May 2022. PHOTO: LO PING FAI / XINHUA

Tanzania approves controversial \$3.5 billion oil pipeline

TANZANIA'S government gave its approval on Tuesday for the construction of a \$3.5 billion crude oil pipeline despite human rights and environmental concerns about the mega-project.

The 1,443-kilometre (900-mile) pipeline will transport crude from vast oilfields being developed in Lake Albert in northwestern Uganda to a Tanzanian port on the Indian Ocean for delivery to international markets.

Uganda's first oil is expected to flow in 2025 -- almost two decades after reserves were discovered in one of the world's most biodiverse regions.

The pipeline required approval from both countries, and last month Uganda issued a licence to the project operator, the East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP).

"This construction approval marks another step forward to EACOP as it allows commencement of the main construction activities in Tanzania, upon completion of the ongoing land ac-



Drilling at the Kingfisher oilfields in Uganda was launched in late January. PHOTO: AFP/FILE

cess process," EACOP Tanzania general manager Wendy Brown said at a function to receive the approval certificate.

The \$10 billion oilfields and pipeline project are being jointly developed by France's TotalEnergies, the China National Offshore Oil Corporation (CNOOC), along with the state oil companies of Uganda and Tanzania.

It has been hailed as an economic boon for both East African

countries, where many live in poverty.

But it has run into strong opposition from rights and environmental campaigners who say it threatens the region's fragile ecosystem and the livelihoods of tens of thousands of people.

Brown said about 13,000 households affected along the pipeline's route, including four per cent of whom have been displaced, have been compensated. —AFP

Chinese-owned British Steel says plans 260 job cuts

BRITISH Steel plans to cut up to 260 jobs in Britain after being hit by soaring energy costs, the Chinese-owned group announced Wednesday. The company said its energy costs last year increased

by £190 million (\$230 million).

"Decisive action is required because of the unprecedented rise in operating costs, surging inflation and the need to improve environmental performance," it

said in a statement. British Steel said it plans to shut coke ovens at its Scunthorpe plant, northern England, which would help the group to also "build a green and sustainable future".—AFP

Glico opens largest “Pocky” plant in Indonesia, targeting Asia, US



Undated photo shows products being packed in boxes at Ezaki Glico Co’s new factory for its “Pocky” chocolate snack in Indonesia’s West Java Province **PHOTO: EZAKI GLICO CO. / KYODO**

JAPANESE confectioner Ezaki Glico Co has opened in Indonesia what it calls its largest-ever factory for its mainstay “Pocky” chocolate snack, aiming to supply the growing Southeast Asian market as well as North America.

Indonesia will be Glico’s “new growth engine”

as it is the most populous country in Southeast Asia and the fourth in the world with a rising middle-class population, Asia Pacific Chief Operating Officer Hideaki Nagahisa said Thursday as the company invited media to tour the plant that began production in November. “With ad-

vanced technology at Glico Manufacturing Indonesia, now our largest factory, along with our Thailand factory, we are sure we could meet the demand today and in the future, be it in the Indonesian market, Southeast Asia and North America,” the official also said. —Kyodo

Game on: Sony re-enters VR headset fray

CONSUMER tech giant Sony is launching a virtual reality (VR) headset for its PlayStation on Wednesday, six and a half years after its last attempt to crack a market that is still struggling to gain a widespread public following.

The devices have periodically generated huge excitement in the geekier fringes of the tech and business spheres, with Facebook’s \$2 billion takeover of the start-up Oculus in 2014 sparking a mini-boom.

And media reports have swirled that Apple is about to unveil its own version, a move feverishly anticipated by fans of the

brand.

But VR headset makers do not yet shift enough units to sustain the hype.

Fewer than 10 million shipped worldwide in 2022, all brands combined, according to CSC Insights. By comparison,

Sony claims to have sold 30 million PlayStation 5 consoles last year.

And for now, VR headsets are expensive and the fast-developing technology gets dated quickly.

But that has not put Sony off.—AFP



Sony’s first virtual reality headset remained a niche product for the brand. **PHOTO: AFP**

Airports in Shanghai see strong rebound in passenger throughput

TWO airports in the Chinese financial hub Shanghai saw marked increases in passenger throughput in January, thanks to China’s optimized COVID response and entry-exit policies, the Shanghai Customs said Thursday.

In January, the passenger throughput

at Shanghai Hongqiao International Airport exceeded 2.6 million, up 37.5 per cent year on year. Meanwhile, Shanghai Pudong International Airport handled over 2.8 million passenger trips, an increase of 34.2 per cent from a year ago. —Xinhua

TRADEMARK CAUTION

Rothmans of Pall Mall Limited, a company formed and existing under the laws of Switzerland, and having its registered office at Route de France 17, Boncourt, CH-2926, Switzerland hereby declares that the Company is the Owner and Sole proprietor of the following Trademark:



The above Trademark is used in respect of "Cigarettes; tobacco, raw or manufactured; roll your own tobacco; pipe tobacco; tobacco products; tobacco substitutes (not for medical purposes); cigars; cigarillos; cigarette lighters for smokers; cigar lighters for smokers; matches; smokers’ articles; cigarette paper; cigarette tubes; cigarette filters; pocket apparatus for rolling cigarettes; hand held machines for injecting tobacco into paper tubes; electronic cigarettes; liquids for electronic cigarettes; tobacco products for the purpose of being heated." in **Class 34**.

Any fraudulent imitation or unauthorized use of the above Trademark or other infringements whatsoever thereto will be dealt with according to law.

Daw Aye Tha Zin Myo (H.G.P)
For **Rothmans of Pall Mall Limited**
c/o **Baker & McKenzie Limited**
Suite 28, Level 14, Junction City Tower,
No.3/A Bogyoke Aung San Road,
Pabedan Township, Yangon, Myanmar.
Dated: **24 February 2023**

TRADEMARK CAUTION

British American Tobacco (Brands) Inc., a company formed and existing under the laws of United States of America, and having its registered office at 251 Little Falls Drive Suite 100, Wilmington DE 19808-1674, United States of America hereby declares that the Company is the Owner and Sole proprietor of the following Trademarks:



The above Trademarks are used in respect of "Cigarettes; tobacco, raw or manufactured; roll your own tobacco; pipe tobacco; tobacco products; tobacco substitutes (not for medical purposes); cigars; cigarillos; cigarette lighters for smokers; cigar lighters for smokers; matches; smokers’ articles; cigarette paper; cigarette tubes; cigarette filters; pocket apparatus for rolling cigarettes; hand held machines for injecting tobacco into paper tubes; electronic cigarettes; liquids for electronic cigarettes; tobacco products for the purpose of being heated." in **Class 34**.

Any fraudulent imitation or unauthorized use of the above Trademarks or other infringements whatsoever thereto will be dealt with according to law.

Daw Aye Tha Zin Myo (H.G.P)
For **British American Tobacco (Brands) Inc.**
c/o **Baker & McKenzie Limited**
Suite 28, Level 14, Junction City Tower,
No.3/A Bogyoke Aung San Road,
Pabedan Township, Yangon, Myanmar.
Dated: **24 February 2023**

GLOBAL
AFFAIRS

RUSSIA-UKRAINE CONFLICT

Japan emperor expresses sorrow at world suffering, prays for peace

EMPEROR Naruhito, on the occasion of his 63rd birthday Thursday, expressed deep sorrow at the suffering of people in conflicts around the globe and offered prayers for peace in Japan and the rest of the world.

While the agency in charge of the imperial family's affairs has been considering a new approach to public relations, potentially including the use of social media, the emperor acknowledged the need to send out information "in a manner that is easy to understand".

"I strongly feel the impor-

tance of thinking beyond one's own country to engage in dialogue to overcome differences and cooperate in solving problems," the emperor told a press conference held at the Imperial Palace ahead of his birthday and as Friday marks one year since the start of Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

"Each of us is being asked once again what we can do to realize a peaceful world," he added.

Regarding his 30th wedding anniversary this June, the emperor said he and Empress Masako "have come this far by

sharing our joys and sorrows".

The empress "is an important presence who supports me in daily life and someone with whom I can talk regarding both public and private matters," he said. On ways to improve information dissemination by the Imperial Household Agency, the emperor said, "It is also important to communicate information about the imperial family at the right time and in a manner that is easy to understand in order to build relationships of trust with the public through repeated exchanges."—Kyodo



Emperor Naruhito speaks at a press conference at the Imperial Palace in Tokyo on 21 February 2023, ahead of his 63rd birthday on 23 February. PHOTO: POOL/KYODO

Ukraine's agricultural output to drop this year over landmine contamination



July 2019, Krasne, Ukraine: Combine reloads wheat into the bunker for further transportation during the harvest. PHOTO: REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE/ ANATOLII STEPANOV /FAO

UKRAINE'S agricultural production will drop this year due to contamination of the farmland with landmines, the gov-

ernment-run Ukrinform news agency reported Wednesday, citing a senior official.

More than 2.6 million hectares of Ukraine's agricultural lands need to be cleared from unexploded ordnance, said Ukraine's First Deputy Prime Minister and Economy Minister Yulia Svyrydenko.

"The demining programme may take many years, but we must begin it now," Svyrydenko said.

At the same time, she emphasized that Ukraine is willing to extend the Black Sea grain deal and actively use the European routes to boost its grain exports.—Xinhua

Ukraine conflict pushes cost of living in Spain further

JUST like the rest of Europe, Spain is still suffering from rising food and fuel prices on the first anniversary of the Ukraine conflict.

The conflict affects the budgets of households throughout the country, despite the government's attempts to keep prices as low as possible.

According to the Spanish Statistical Office (INE), prices rose by 8.4 per cent in the country in 2022, peaking at 10.8 in July, almost three percentage points more than in February 2022, when the conflict broke out.

The price rises were mainly caused by the energy supply problems across Europe, which at the time was highly dependent on Russian gas and petroleum.

Spain and Portugal were able to negotiate the "Iberian exception" with the other member states of the European Union (EU), which protected them from the adverse effects of the rising gas prices as a relatively high proportion of their energy comes from renewable sources.—Xinhua

WORLD: TOP HEADLINES

Mexico lawmakers pass president's contentious electoral reform

MEXICAN lawmakers on Wednesday passed a controversial electoral reform championed by President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador that critics see as an attack on democracy ahead of key elections next year.

The proposal to reduce the size and budget of the independent agency that organizes elections was approved in the Senate by

72 votes in favour and 50 against.

The legislation now heads to the president for enactment, having already been voted through the lower house after various alterations.

The bill is a watered-down version of more radical reforms originally sought by Lopez Obrador that sparked mass street protests against a perceived at-



Demonstrators in Mexico City protest against the Mexican president's proposed electoral reform on 13 November 2022. PHOTO: AFP/FILE

tack on a key institution, the National Electoral Institute (INE), designed to safeguard elections from political tampering.—AFP

Gunman returns to Florida murder scene, kills reporter and child

A man suspected of killing a woman on Wednesday in Florida returned to the scene of the crime hours later and gunned down a television reporter and a nine-year-old girl, authorities said.

Orange County Sheriff John Mina said that a 19-year-old man, Keith Melvin Moses, had been taken into custody and was believed responsible for the shootings.—AFP

Georgia jailed ex-leader claims doctors trying to ‘kill’ him

GEORGIA'S jailed ex-president Mikheil Saakashvili on Wednesday accused state-appointed doctors of refusing to treat him and being part of an alleged conspiracy to “kill” him.

His claims came after doctors told journalists earlier Wednesday that his health was seriously deteriorating due to drastic weight loss.

In a statement posted on Facebook, Saakashvili said that state-appointed doctors had “refused to treat my underlying conditions” including “the poisoning by heavy metals” and anorexia.

He accused Georgia’s ruling party, pro-government media “and now the hospital” of being part of a “special operation to kill me, of which we are witnessing the final stage”.

Once a jovial, larger-than-life personality, Saakashvili has become a shadow of his former self, his lawyers and doctors say. He has lost nearly 50 kilogrammes



Saakashvili supporters rallied in his support earlier this week outside the prime minister's chancellery in Tbilisi. PHOTO: AFP

since his imprisonment in 2021.

The 55-year-old pro-Western reformer was arrested in 2021, days after secretly returning to the Caucasus country from exile.

He has been in hospital since last year after refusing food for 50 days to protest his detention, which rights groups say is politically motivated.

On Wednesday, the opposi-

tion politician's doctor, Tamar Davarashvili, told a news conference that Saakashvili could soon end up in intensive care.

“The patient's condition is becoming serious,” she said.

“His weight and body mass are extremely low,” she said, adding that the “next stage could be an intensive care unit”.

—AFP

11 Palestinians killed, dozens shot in Israel West Bank raid

AN Israeli army raid killed 11 Palestinians including a teenager Wednesday in Nablus, the Palestinian health ministry said, in the deadliest escalation in the occupied West Bank since 2005.

More than 80 Palestinians suffered gunshot wounds, the Palestinian ministry said, in what the Israeli army called a “counter-terrorism” operation,

spurring international concern and calls for calm.

Top Palestinian official Hussein Al Sheikh decried the incursion as a “massacre” and called for “international protection for our people”.

The Israeli army said the raid targeted militant suspects “in a hideout apartment” accused of shootings in the West Bank. It added troops came un-

der fire but suffered no casualties.

United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said “the situation in the occupied Palestinian territory is at its most combustible in years”, with tensions “sky high” as “the peace process remains stalled”.

“Our immediate priority must be to prevent further escalation, reduce tensions and restore calm,” Guterres told the UN Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People.

The death toll surpassed that of an Israeli army raid last month in Jenin, further north, which had been the deadliest West Bank operation since the second intifada, or Palestinian uprising, of 2000 to 2005.

The Israeli military said one of the wanted suspects who had fled the building was “neutralized”, along with two others who had opened fire at the property.— AFP



A Palestinian faces an Israeli military vehicle during a raid on the occupied West Bank city of Nablus. PHOTO: AFP

305 nominations for Nobel Peace Prize: institute

A total of 305 nominations have been submitted for this year's Nobel Peace Prize, the Nobel Institute said on Wednesday, remaining tight-lipped about the names on the list.

The nominations — fewer than the record 376 registered in 2016 — comprise 212 individuals and 93 organizations, the Oslo-based institute said on its website.

In line with Nobel statutes, the identity of the candidates is kept confidential for 50 years.

But those eligible to nominate — including former laureates, lawmakers and cabinet ministers from any country in the world, and some university professors — are free to reveal the name of the person or organization they have proposed.

Like last year, most of the names publicly disclosed so far are involved in the nearly year-long conflict that has been raging in Ukraine, or opponents

of Russian President Vladimir Putin.

They include Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky, his Turkish counterpart Recep Tayyip Erdogan, NATO chief Jens Stoltenberg and a Ukrainian group working to establish an international war crimes tribunal.

Others known to have been nominated are jailed Putin opponents — anti-corruption activist Alexei Navalny, who was the victim of a poisoning attack, journalist and political activist Vladimir Kara-Murza and the pro-democracy youth movement Vesna.

Also believed to be on the list this year are climate activists Greta Thunberg of Sweden and Vanessa Nakate of Uganda, Iranian women's activist Masih Alinejad and her anti-hijab movement My Stealthy Freedom, as well as the Salvation Army. —AFP



In 2022, the Nobel Peace Prize was shared by people and organizations representing the three nations at the centre of the war in Ukraine. PHOTO: AFP

WORLD: TOP HEADLINES

World Bank hopes to select new chief by May

THE World Bank said Wednesday it hopes to find a successor by early May to chief David Malpass, who has announced he will step down nearly a year early.

The Washington-based development lender will begin accepting candidate nominations on Thursday, a process that will run until 29 March. The bank says women candidates would be “strongly” encouraged. A shortlist of three candidates will then be issued, followed by “formal interviews... with the expectation of selecting the new president by early May 2023”.

By informal agreement, not cited in the statement, the president of the World Bank is typically an American, while the head of the International Monetary Fund is customarily a European.—AFP

Japan emperor expresses sorrow at world suffering, prays for peace

PAGE-14



SPORT

Asian qualifiers schedule released for Myanmar women's U-20 team



PHOTO: MFF

THE Myanmar Women's U-20 team will play against the Cambodian team as the opening match in the first stage of the Asian Women's U-20 qualifiers, which will be hosted by Cambodia.

The Pakistan women's team, which originally participated in Group G, withdrew, and only the host Cambodia, Myanmar and

Malaysia teams left.

The Myanmar national women's U-20 team will face Cambodia at 3:30 pm Myanmar Standard Time on 8 March, and the Malaysian team at 3:30 pm Myanmar Standard Time on 12 March.

Eight teams that won the first-round qualifiers will be divided into two groups and continue

to compete in the second-round qualifiers in June 2023.

Uzbekistan will host the 2024 Asian Women's U-20 Championship. First, second and third-place teams will qualify for the 2024 FIFA Women's U-20 World Cup.

Head coach Daw San San Thein will handle team Myanmar consisting of 30 players. — KZL

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.

UK football commentator John Motson dies



Football commentator John Motson has died at the age of 77. PHOTO: AFP/FILE

FAMED British football commentator John Motson, who had a distinguished 50-year career with the BBC, has died at the age of 77, his family announced on Thursday.

Motson, affectionally nicknamed "Motty", retired in 2018 after covering 29 FA Cup finals

and 10 World Cups.

"It is with great sadness we announce that John Motson OBE died peacefully in his sleep today (Thursday)," said a statement from Motson's family.

BBC director-general Tim Davie said: "John Motson was the voice of a footballing generation — steering us through the twists and turns of FA Cup runs, the highs and lows of World Cups and, of course, Saturday nights on Match of the Day.

"Like all the greats behind the mic, John had the right words, at the right time, for all the big moments." — AFP

De Jong's Barca decision vindicated ahead of Man United clash



Manchester United were keen to sign Frenkie De Jong (left) last summer. PHOTO: AFP

FRENKIE de Jong was heavily linked with a move to Manchester United last summer but the Barcelona midfielder resisted,

despite pressure on him from all angles to make the switch.

On Thursday he will lead Barca's midfield against the Red

Devils and his former Ajax coach Erik ten Hag at Old Trafford, where he might have played this season — safe in the knowledge his decision has been vindicated.

Ten Hag was keen on reuniting with the 25-year-old, while Barcelona's financial situation meant they would have been happy to get De Jong's wages off the books and bank a significant transfer fee. However De Jong was at home in the Catalan capital, even though his compatriot Ronald Koeman had been replaced in Barcelona's dugout by Xavi Hernandez, less convinced by the midfielder, signed in 2019 from Ajax for 75 million euros (\$80 million). — AFP