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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.

SAC Chair Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing meets officers, other ranks and family members from Sittway Station



State Administration Council Chairman Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing addresses the meeting with Tatmadaw members and families from Sittway Station under the Western Command on 26 February 2023.

STATE Administration Council Chairman Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing met Tatmadaw members and families from Sittway Station under the Western Command yesterday afternoon.

Also present on the occasion were: Daw Kyu Kyu Hla, wife of the Senior General, Commander-in-Chief (Navy) Admiral Moe Aung and wife, Commander-in-Chief (Air) General Tun Aung and wife, high-ranking Tatmadaw officers from the Office of the Defence Services Command-

er-in-Chief and their wives, Western Command Commander Maj-Gen Htin Latt Oo and responsible officials and officers, other ranks and their family members from Sittway Station.

Political developments

First of all, the Senior General expressed his delight to have a chance to meet the army personnel and their family members. Then, he stressed the need for them all to be aware of the reason why Tatmadaw has to take the leading role in national politics. He explained in detail that the en-

tire mass of the indigenous people is desirous of the multi-party democracy, that Tatmadaw has performed whatever duties assigned to it during the periods of the two democratic governments, that the second democratic government is weak in management and administration with the result that the national development could not be effectuated well enough, thereby making the people lose belief in the election, that there has emerged no vote movement and that he himself has had to encourage the people to vote to be able to continue to

implement the multiparty democratic system.

The Senior General then discussed the matters that have cropped up for fear of losing the election on the part of the (ruling) party. He explained matters relating to the cheating of votes in the 2020 election, the refusal to explain the cheating of votes, the justification for the declaration of the emergency and the formulation of the policies and the objectives by the Tatmadaw to bring about the political, economic and social developments.

He then emphasizes the

need to learn lessons from the 2020 multiparty democratic election during which there took place cheatings. To ensure the accuracy of the voters' lists in the coming election, systematic arrangements are being made for conducting field trips to collect the household lists on the ground, the Senior General said. He has elaborated on how his government has been exerting sustained effort for development in political, economic and peace sectors amidst the difficult situation.

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Eighth 47-member State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee holds second-day session of 13th plenary meeting



The second day of the eighth 47-member State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee's 13th plenary meeting is in progress yesterday.

THE second-day session of the thirteenth plenary meeting of the 8th 47-member State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee was administrated at the Vijaya Mangala Dhamma Thabin of Thiri Mingala Kaba Aye Hill in Yangon yesterday morning.

Present at the occasion were members of the State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee led by Chairman Sayadaw Abhidhaja Maha Rattha Guru Abhidhaja Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotika Dr Bhaddanta Kumara Bhivamsa, Union Minister U Ko Ko of

the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture, the director-general of Religious Affairs Department and other officials of departments concerned.

State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee Chairman Dr Bhaddanta Kumara Bhivamsa

presided over the meeting and Joint Secretary Sayadaw Agga Maha Gandhavasaka Pandita Bhaddanta Sandavamsa Linkara Bhivamsa acted as the master of ceremonies.

At the meeting, Agga Maha Pandita Bhaddanta Vilasa Bhivamsa reported on Vinicchaya while Agga Maha Pandita Bhaddanta Koyandya on religious affairs and Agga Maha Pandita Dhamma Kahtika Bhahujahitadhara Bhaddanta Pannasiha Bhivamsa on educational matters conducted during the term of eighth Sangha Nayaka Committee (second subcommittee).

Then, the Sayadaws discussed on Vinicchaya and religious affairs and concluded the first session.

The Vinicchaya affairs, religious-related matters and educational matters were discussed by the Sayadaws at the second session on 1 pm.

Agga Maha Pandita Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Bhaddanta Sandavara Bhivamsa reported on Vinicchaya while Agga Maha Pandita Bhaddanta Kosala on religious affairs and Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Bhaddanta Acara on education matters conducted during the fifth term of eighth Sangha Nayaka Committee (second subcommittee).

Then, the Joint Secretary Agga Maha Gandhavasaka Pandita Bhaddanta Sandavamsa Linkara Bhivamsa sought approvals for reports of the eighth Sangha Nayaka Committee (second subcommittee) and concluded the meeting.

Disciples under the auspices of Kyaikkasan Wailuwun (Shwegyin) Monastery Sayadaw Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Bhaddanta Manita offered alms for the whole day to the State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee member Sayadaws who attended the ceremony yesterday. — MNA/CT

Illegal timbers, foodstuffs, consumer goods, industrial materials, motorbike spare parts and vehicles confiscated

EFFECTIVE measures are being taken to control and prevent illicit trade under the law with the supervision of the Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee. The combined team under the management of the Customs Department performed the following seizures on 24 February — four types of products including 400 cartons of Lactasoy without official documents (estimated value of K9.1 million) and a Higer express bus and a Yutong express bus used for transport (approximately K70 million) at the Mayanchaung permanent checkpoint, and two

products including single-side decorative laminate paper (6,900 kilogrammes) for which no import licence can be submitted (estimated value of K49,224,705), and 1,125 kg of Brake Lever and 200 kg of Brake Handle which were not declared in the import declaration (ID) (approximated value of K3,339,000) from two containers at the Asia World Container Inspection Gate. The actions were taken under Customs procedures.

Likewise, the inspection team led by the Forestry Department under the management of the Sagaing Region Anti-Illegal

Trade Special Task Force made inspections and impounded 8.124 tonnes of illegal timbers (approximately K1,218,660) in the Sonelamyang Creek near the Kalay-Tamu Road. The action was taken under the Forest Law.

On 25 February, a joint team carried out inspections at the Kawkareik (Tadakyoe) joint inspection checkpoint under the management of the Karen State Anti-Illegal Trade Special Task Force. A total of 25 Karat toilet commodes (estimated value K2.5 million) which were not declared in the import declaration (ID) were seized from a vehicle head-

ing from Myawaddy to Yangon, and the action was taken under Customs procedures.

Thus, a total of eight arrests with seizures worth approxi-

mately K135,382,365 were made on 24 and 25 February, according to the Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee. — MNA/CT



Confiscated illegal items.

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.

4 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 26 February, total figure rises to 633,911

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to **633,911** after **four** new cases were reported on 26 February 2023 according to the Ministry of Health.

The total number of patients who have recovered from COVID-19 in the country reached **614,397**, including **two** new recoveries.

The death toll from COVID-19 in the country remained unchanged **19,490** on 26-2-2023 with no new death reported from the pandemic.

The country has vaccinated **30,949,947** people aged 18 and above for COVID-19 vaccines and **6,833,509** people aged under 18 till 25 February 2023. —MNA

Necessary to preserve the languages and cultures of ethnic people as well as Myanmar literature, language and culture

THE Senior General urged relevant ministries to provide education, health, economic and transport facilities for ethnic people. Hence, relevant ministries need to cooperate with each other in work processes. It is necessary to preserve the languages and cultures of ethnic people as well as Myanmar literature, language and culture.

[Excerpts from the speech delivered by State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing to the third-day coordination meeting held on 10 August 2022 in regard to matters relating to the activities being carried out by the Union Government].

SAC Chair Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing meets officers, other ranks and family members from Sittway Station

FROM PAGE-1 Abidance by military discipline and obedience to order

Afterwards, the SAC Chairman Defence Services C-in-C stressed the point that Tatmadaw will always bring to the fore the national interest regardless of whoever is in power. Then he urged the attendees to develop their personal skills. On the part of the Tatmadaw, it will consistently conduct training courses at all levels for the soldiers to be able to develop their skills, he added.

Regarding military discipline, he said, "Discipline is the backbone of the Tatmadaw. Only when you obey the orders, you will become good soldiers. In the performance of national security and defence duties, obeying orders is of utmost importance. At the same time, abidance by discipline is essential, too."

Man matters most

In all cases, the human factor plays a determining role be it political, economic or social. This is the reason why people are required to always hone their skills on the whetstone. As the saying goes, we can shape our own destinies. As you have all been given training on the art of fighting, you are considered to possess combat skills.

On the part of the leaders, they must be fair and square in their treatment of their subordinates, free from favouritism. For the soldiers to win the battles, they must be strong enough. In this regard, the soldiers are needed to keep themselves fit, do physical exercises, eat healthy food, behaving properly. A sound mind in the sound body, it is said. For you to develop your



The Senior General comforts patients at the station hospital in Sittway yesterday.

social life, you need to have confidence in yourself, said the Senior General. He went on to say that the army personnel must be possessed with the esprit de corps, helping one another, learning from one another and also consulting among themselves.

Additionally, Tatmadaw members are needed to be engaged in agriculture and livestock breeding activities on a manageable scale as the country is being faced with the price hike. As Myanmar abounds in natural resources, land and water resources, agriculture and livestock breeding businesses are the best way out. Although we have a big size of labour force, our people are not very hard working, resulting in our country lagging in development. That's why we are making efforts to boost production in this sector for national economic development. And this is the reason why Tatmadaw has



The wife of the Senior General provides foodstuffs to the patient at the station hospital yesterday.

emphasized manageable-scale agriculture and livestock breeding in all Tatmadaw regiments and units.

The need to provide quality education

Concerning the promotion of education, the Senior General

said that English language classes and computer classes are needed to be conducted in summer to enable the students to use their leisure hours beneficially. Additionally, the cultural training courses, he said, are also needed to open in summer. Tatmadaw members are needed

to develop their capacity and the arms and ordinances are also needed to upgrade to strengthen the Tatmadaw's capability.

Providing foodstuffs and cash awards

The SAC Chairman Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services presented foodstuffs for officers, other ranks and their families through the Western Command commander.

Next, the wife of the Senior General presented cash awards to the maternity and childcare association through the wife of the Western Command commander.

After the meeting, the Senior General and party greeted the attendees in a friendly manner, asked about their needs and

fulfilled them. Next, the Senior General, his wife and the party proceeded to the Tatmadaw Hospital in Sittway and asked after the health of the people, spoke words of encouragement and provided foodstuffs to them. — MNA

SAC Chairman PM Senior General Min Aung Hlaing pays homage to Lawkananda Pagoda in Sittway



The Senior General and his wife offer donations to the Nanda Yama Sayadaw.

The Senior General pays homage to Lawkananda Pagoda in Sittway yesterday.

CHAIRMAN of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, accompanied by SAC members, Rakhine State Chief Minister U Htein Lin, Western Command Commander Maj-Gen Htin Latt Oo and other officials, paid homage to Presiding Sayadaw Agga Maha Gandhavasaka Agga Maha Pandita Bhaddanta Nanda Thiri of Nanda Yama Pariyatti Monastery in Sittway Township of Rakhine State yesterday evening.

First, the Senior General and his wife paid respect to Sayadaw and reported on the health issue of Sayadaw and religious affairs. He also donated rice, cooking oil, offertories and cash donated by the families of Tatmadaw (army, navy, air).

Then, the Senior General and his wife, and their entourage went to Lawkananda Pagoda in Sittway Township.

First, the Senior General and party were welcomed by the pagoda board of trustees. Then, they paid homage to the pagoda and offered flowers, water and oil lights to the pagoda. The Senior General also signed the guest record book of the pagoda.

The Senior General and his wife presented cash donations for multiple renovations of the pagoda to the members of the pagoda board of trustees. Afterwards, the Senior General observed the renovation work of the pagoda and went round the pagoda by anti-clockwise procession. He also instructed the officials to conduct proper maintenance work for the strength of the pagoda.

The Senior General and wife and party also paid homage to the Sakka Muni Buddha image in Sakka Muni Theindaw (ordination hall) and offered flowers, water and oil lights to the Buddha image and presented cash donations for multiple renovations.

The Senior General also instructed the officials to conduct necessary renovations on the Sakka Muni Theindaw and the Sakka Muni Buddha Image in order that they are pleasant and beautiful. — MNA/KTZH

Agriculture and livestock-based MSMEs need to be successful for rural development: MoCRD Union Minister

UNION MINISTER for Cooperatives and Rural Development U Hla Moe arrived at the office of the Rural Road Development Department in Sittway, Rakhine State yesterday afternoon and met the staff in the meeting hall of the office.

During the meeting, the Union minister said that Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) based on agriculture and livestock must be successful in the development of rural areas in order to be self-sufficient in small-scale products locally as well as be able to export them abroad.

“We are working together to support technology and basic needs for the seeds and inputs needed for agriculture and livestock activities,” he said.

In such doing, four relevant departments should work together and meet with the local people to meet their development needs, and to try to successfully carry out emerald green projects which are run by the national economic promotion fund, he continued.

The Union minister ordered officials to follow the rules and staff regulations in the 2022-2023 fiscal year, to complete the work in a timely manner and with full quality.

Afterwards, the state departmental heads explained the status of implementations in Rakhine State according to the financial year, and the Union minister coordinated the necessary things and fulfilled the needs. — MNA/KZL



Union Minister U Hla Moe meets departmental personnel from the Rural Road Development Department in Sittway yesterday.

Judgements passed on 936 criminal cases, 1,997 civil cases: Union Supreme Court



General view of the office building of the Union Supreme Cort.

UNION Supreme Court passed judgements on 936 criminal cases and 1,997 civil cases including 153 cases from last year, from 1 January to 31 December 2022, according to Union Chief Justice U Htun Htun Oo.

He mentioned that when Union Supreme Court, regional

and state high courts, self-administered division high court and self-administered zones high courts held a videoconferencing coordination meeting on 23 February.

Similarly, regional and state high courts received 4,505 criminal cases and heard 4,662 cases (including the remaining

157 cases from last year) with judgements being given. A total of 4,355 civil cases were received (including 677 from the previous year) and 5,032 cases were heard with judgements being passed.

In addition, 169,421 criminal cases were received in township courts (including

20,489 from last year) and 189,910 cases were heard with judgements being given. A total of 19,514 civil cases were received (including 6,200 from the previous year) and judgements were passed on 25,714 cases.

Municipal courts (Nay Pyi Taw, Yangon and Mandalay) received 5,942 cases filed under

the Municipal Law and 6,175 cases (including 233 remaining cases from last year) were heard with judgements being given. A total of 45,547 traffic cases filed under the Vehicle Law were heard with judgements being passed in Traffic Courts in Nay Pyi Taw, Yangon and Mandalay. — TWA/KZW

Passport fee increased up to 1,250 Baht for Myanmar nationals in Thailand

THE Myanmar Embassy in Bangkok announced on 26 February that the fee for making a passport for Myanmar nationals in Thailand was raised to 1,250 Baht. Although the cost for a passport and OWIC card was 800 and 250 Baht before, the revised rates will cost 1,500 Baht (an increased fee of 1,250 Baht plus an OWIC card fee of 250 Baht) and will be able to apply on 1 March.

The Embassy of Myanmar announced that those whose information was collected by the mobile team at factories, workshops and construction companies will also have to pay the increased book fee of 1,500 Baht.

Almost one-third of the average annual income of Thailand's minimum wage is re-used for expenses of the pink card, CI book, work permit and visa to apply for legal residence and work permit



Myanmar nationals are seen queueing to get an appointment for passport renewals at the Myanmar Embassy in Bangkok, Thailand in March 2022.

in Thailand, according to a worker in Thailand.

The Thailand-Myanmar memorandum of understanding (MoU) system is used to allow people from Myanmar to legally travel to Thailand to work. Under the MoU system, one can get access to 2 years of visa and work permit each, and work in facto-

ries of Thailand, if they apply by registering at any official agency in Myanmar.

After the inconvenience of issuing tokens to renew passports in Thailand, the Myanmar Embassy in Bangkok announced on 7 January that they have successfully issued tokens to more than 6,000 people. — TWA/CT

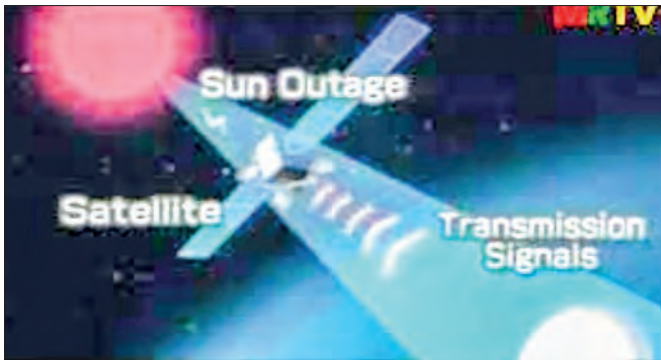
Sun Outage to cause interruption to TV signal between 6-17 March

THE Sun Outage can cause interruptions in TV services for a few minutes between 6 and 17 March.

People may experience some degree of television interference due to sun outages, which are caused by a phenomenon known as "solar satellite interference when the satellite is aligned with TVRO.

The Sun Outages occur yearly and the signal will be lost between one to 18 minutes from 6 to 17 March this year. They happen in March, September and October annually.

During the Sun Outage, the duration of tv signal outages will be different depending on the satellite, TVRO and locations. Therefore, the TV Channels and radio programmes of MRTV broadcasted via Thaicom-6 satellite can be disrupted during the Sun Outage. — TWA/KTZH



MRTV broadcasts the phenomenon of Sun Outage and the satellite.

Anti-Narcotic Drug Measures Taken by State Administration Council During its Two-Year Tenure

By Aung Shin

AT the end of 2022, I read an online article stating that over 400 acres of opium poppy fields were destroyed and a total of 703 poppy farmers were arrested in India’s Manipur areas that share a 400-kilometre border with Myanmar. Among the arrestees, there reportedly included five chiefs of hill villages who had allowed the poppy plantations in their areas. Such action can be perceived as a message that the State Government of Manipur even takes action against the authorities who fail to stop opium poppy cultivation and are involved in such business.

The news article further states that illegal drugs from the Golden Triangle area, the tri-junction of Myanmar, Laos and Thailand borders, infamous for drug dealing, are coming into northeast India. Nevertheless, Myanmar, throughout successive governments, has exerted all efforts to emphasize anti-narcotic measures with great momentum to ensure the illegal drugs do not reach other neighbouring countries including itself.

History of Anti-Narcotic Drug Measures

In 1948 soon after Myanmar gained independence, opium and marijuana cultivation, production and dealings in Chin state were prohibited and controlled under the 1948 Chin Division Act. Afterwards, actions to control opium dealings had been accelerated by enacting the 1950 Opium Den Annihilation Act. Moreover, various operations were conducted from 1946 to 1960 against opium poppy cultivation, production and dealings which had become seriously larger with the arrival of intruding Kuomintang (KMT) troops in the eastern Shan state.

During the period from September 1975 to April 1988, Operation Moe Hein, Operation Nga Ye Pan (the hell flower), Operation Taung Yan Shin, Operation Taung Htake Pan and Operation Aung Moe Hein were conducted with the integrated efforts of the Tatmadaw, Myanmar Police Force and the people. Myanmar also conducted 28 special drug eradication operations from 2013 to 31 March 2020, including Operation 1511 which was conducted in cooperation with six MoU countries. Operation 1511 can be proudly seen as a successful operation with record-breaking seizures of illicit drugs in the combined efforts of the Tatmadaw, Myanmar Police Force and Anti-Narcotic Task Force. The seized narcotic drugs were worth K414 billion, including over 193 million stimulant tablets and 501 kilogrammes of ICE (crystal meth) and precursor chemicals used in making illicit drugs.

Seizures and Incinerations of Narcotics during the Tenure of State Administration Council

During the tenure of the State Administration Council-SAC, in accord with the guidance of the SAC Chairman, the Tatmadaw, Myanmar Police Force and the Anti-Narcotics Task Force have stepped up efforts to carry out illicit drug control activities. As a result, the events of burning and destroying narcotics, precursor chemicals and other related accessories confiscated in 2021 were held in Yangon, Mandalay and Taunggyi on 26 June 2021. In the events, a total of 62 items of seized narcotics and precursor chemicals worth over K1,068 billion (over US\$ 667 million) including over 3,870 kilogrammes of opium, over 2,562 kg of heroin, over 224 million stimulant tablets, over 14,080 kg of ICE (crystal meth), over 739 kg of marijuana, over 289 kg of Ketamine, over 12.5 tonnes of Caffeine as well as other 60 items of chemicals used in making illicit drugs were incinerated and destroyed.

Similarly, in 2022, a total of 79 items of seized narcotics and precursor chemicals worth over K1,188.82 billion (over US\$ 642.6 million) including over 2,654.89 kg of opium, over 1,940 kg of heroin, over 212 million stimulant tablets, over 23,653 kg of ICE (crystal meth), 1,205 kg of Kratom powder, over 709 kg of marijuana, over 2,024 kg of Ketamine, over 12 tonnes of Caffeine were incinerated and destroyed.

The minute statistics of the narcotic drugs and precursor chemicals incinerated on International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking during the State Administration Council as well as the narcotics confiscated yearly are shown in the table below. The overview of the table below shows that the total value of illicit drugs and related items seized from February 2022 to January 2023 has already surpassed the total value of the seizures from February 2021 to January 2022, over US\$27 million in amount. It obviously proves that the State Administration Council managed to speed up anti-narcotic measures in good momentum year by year.

Table Showing the Seizures of Narcotic Drugs in 2021 and 2022

SR.	ITEMS	2021 (From January to December)	2022 (From January to December)	WORTH (K million)
1.	OPIUM (kg)	2,508.64552	1,172.82891	3,681.47443
2.	HEROIN (kg)	2,544.108345	1,154.435467	3,698.543812
3.	STIMULANT tablets (tablet)	187,684,070.5	173,983,145	361,667,215.5
4.	ICE (Crystal Meth)	16,557.91373	20,482.24933	37,040.16306

5.	MARIJUANA (kg)	395.4805831	968.141415	1,363.621998
6.	KRATOM (kg)	3,125.61102	1,592.03817	4,717.64919
7.	KRATOM powder (kg)	1,096.919681	713.44818	1,810.367861
TOTAL worth (K million)		986,471.681	1,043,231.656	2,029,703.337 million
TOTAL worth (US\$ million)		469.748	496.777	966.525 million

Explanation: The total worth of narcotic drugs including other related drugs was calculated at the rate of K2,100 per USD.

Cooperation with International Community

In the efforts to tackle the problems of narcotic drugs, successive administrations of Myanmar managed to sign three Conventions related to narcotic drugs, enact relevant laws, form narcotic drug-control authorities, and also formulate narcotic elimination plans. The Central Committee for Drug Abuse Control (CCDAC) is now operating with 16 committee members and it forms regional committees for drug abuse control at the state/divisional, district, township, ward and village levels. The CCDAC has already drawn up and implemented a policy in line with the recommendations and outcomes of the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on the World Drug Problem (UNGASS).

Myanmar as a member of ASEAN is cooperating with other Member States in the activities of narcotic drug elimination through the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Drug Matters (AMMD), ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Drug Matters (ASOD), ASEAN Airport Interdiction Task Force (AAITF) Meeting, ASEAN Seaport Interdiction Task Force (ASITF) Meeting and ASEAN Drug Monitoring Network (ADMN) Meeting.

Myanmar participated in the ASEAN Cooperation Work Plan (2017-2019) to Tackle Illicit Drug Production and Trafficking in the Golden Triangle and currently, it is co-operating with other Member States in ASEAN Work Plan on Securing Communities Against Illicit Drugs 2016-2025. According to the outcomes of the first meeting of the BIMSTEC Joint Working Group on Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime held in New Delhi on 9 December 2004, Myanmar has been tasked with the BIMSTEC Sub-Group on Prevention of Illicit Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs, Psychotropic Substances and Precursor Chemicals. Myanmar is also publishing the BIMSTEC Annual Drug Report on behalf of BIMSTEC.

Myanmar is also cooperating, particularly in the areas of acquiring technologies and materials and information exchange, with international organizations such as the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the Australian Federal Police AFP, the Drug Enforcement Administration – DEA of the United States, China National Narcotics Control Commission (NNCC) and Office of the Narcotics Control Board (ONCB) of Thailand.

Notable drug seizure cases

Nearly all of the drug production and dealings in Myanmar are notably related to Ethnic Armed Organizations-EAOs. Following Myanmar’s political shift in 2021, the NUG/PDF terrorists are also associated with narcotic drugs. Moreover, it is aware that almost all arrested terrorists are found to be using narcotic drugs somehow.

The State Administration Council is taking all possible measures to seize the narcotic drugs entering Myanmar in various forms and take action against the drug dealers. Here, some notable drug seizure cases are highlighted as follows.

On 7 January 2022, authorities confiscated 635 kgs of ICE (crystal meth) which were hidden in the secret compartment below the body floor of a 12-wheeler Isuzu truck at the entrance of Hotint village near Loilem township. The truck was about to leave for Taunggyi city. Following further investigations, another 603 kgs of ICE (crystal meth) hidden in the secret compartment below the body floor of a 12-wheeler Isuzu truck were found and seized between Chokum and Mongpon on Loilem-Taunggyi Road.





On 5 April 2022, with the combined efforts of the Tatmadaw and Myanmar Police Force, 15 million stimulant tablets were found and confiscated in a six-wheeler Nissan Diesel truck. According to interrogation results of the arrested drug dealers, another 10 million stimulant tablets were also found and seized in the yard of Winthardu Kan housing, Shwepyitha township. Therefore, 25 million stimulant tablets in total were confiscated.

On 24 April 2022, when Tatmadaw personnel together with Myanmar Police Force members raided a house (No. wa-ka-kha-265) in the Weinkyauk ward of Tachilek township, 10 people including the house owner Phay Thet Han were apprehended along with one M-16 rifle with a magazine, two revolvers, one pistol with a magazine, one gas gun with a magazine, one airgun, 19 rounds of 9 mm bullets, nine rounds of 5.56 mm bullets, three rounds of 9-bolt bullets. Moreover, 12.55 million stimulant tablets, 1.5 kgs of Ketamine, 159 Ecstasy tablets, one machine used for packing heroin and steel blander were also found and confiscated in another house (No. wa-ka-kha-249) belonging to the offender Phay Thet Han.



On 17 June 2022, 88 kgs of heroin were also seized on a six-wheeler Canter truck which left Tangyan for Lashio near a metal refinery factory in Lashio on Lashio-Tangyan Highway.



On 20 June 2022, authorities seized 1,700 kgs of ICE (crystal meth), 300 kgs of Ketamine, 41 punch tablet moulds and 19 press tablet mould plates that were hidden in a secret place in the middle compartment of a 12-wheeler oil bowser which left Yangon for Kyaikto.



On 25 July 2022, authorities again seized 14,500 kgs of Theophylline anhydrous powder inside No (6) room of warehouse in No. (ma-wa/535) yard on Mant Wane (2) street, Mant Wane area, Somsaw ward, Muse township. According to interrogation results of the arrested drug dealers, 3,000 kgs of Ammonium Nitrate and 2,000 kgs of Copper Sulfate were found in the garage belonging to Shwe Chinthae (golden lion) Company located in unit No. (H-247/1), 138th St x 139th St, 51st rd, (I) ward, Pyigyitagon township of Mandalay region.



On 8 October 2022, authorities seized 1,500 kgs of ICE (crystal meth) and one kg of Ketamine carried on a six-wheeler DONGFENG truck near the entrance of Sinsargon village in Mogok township. The truck was on the way to PyinOoLwin town.



On 22 November 2022, authorities confiscated another 2,000 kgs of Ice on a Lifan six-wheeler truck leaving Thamanya village for Myawady town at the Dadarkyo security checkpoint in Kawkareik township.

On review of such drug seizure cases and statistics, we can clearly witness that the State Administration Council is taking all possible measures with great momentum to eradicate narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. Now let me draw a conclusion by saying that the relentless efforts of the State Administration Council to eradicate narcotic drugs with the synergy and concerted endeavours of the Tatmadaw and other anti-narcotic drug partner organizations including the Myanmar Police Forces under the guidance of the State Administration Council Chairman will be inscribed in the drug eradication history of Myanmar.

Note: The monthly seizures of narcotic drugs in detail during the tenure of the State Administration Council can be seen at <https://infosheet.org.mm/mm/node/4199>.



Take care of monetary swindlers who committed crimes online

RELEVANT service organizations and authorities warned the people that some cases recently happened in drawing cash from the bank accounts opened at some relevant banks in unscrupulous ways through communication networks.

As such, those authorities informed the people as well as bank users about acts of offenders who pretended the service personnel of some banks to lure the bank account owners into taking data of the accounts through online service and then taking hundreds of thousands of cash.

In this regard, various types of media focusing on the interests of the people mentioned the monetary swindling cases in various forms. Those offenders expressed the photos of actual staff members from private banks so as to commit swindling cases.

Hence, all people need to accumulate general knowledge about monetary affairs and online services as well as swindling cases based online in addition to information technology. Moreover, they have to follow warnings issued by relevant organizations and authorities, take care of information about crimes based on the online platform, and strictly save their own profiles so as to overcome online dangers and challenges.

As a consequence, such kinds of acts can cause a domino effect on other businesses and then may cause an economic crisis.

In swindling acts online, those offenders use official logos, photos, and documents from official businesses as pretending bank staff, microfinance operators, and other businesspersons to win the trust of innocent people. Most of the victims did not have adequate knowledge about online media and information technology. As such, all people need to take lessons from the past events of money swindling cases that happened online and they should not give data and profiles related to their monetary affairs and banking accounts to others.

Hence, all people need to accumulate general knowledge about monetary affairs and online services as well as swindling cases based online in addition to information technology. Moreover, they have to follow warnings issued by relevant organizations and authorities, take care of information about crimes based on the online platform, and strictly save their own profiles so as to overcome online dangers and challenges.

As such, those authorities informed the people as well as bank users about acts of offenders who pretended the service personnel of some banks to lure the bank account owners into taking data of the accounts through online service and then taking hundreds of thousands of cash.

In some cases, those swindlers issued pretended announcements to disburse loans for small and medium-scale enterprises, businesses, and agricultural loans for farmers but they first demand a transfer of guarantee fees for loans from the victims. In some cases, the offenders demand expenditure or service charges from the winners in lucky draws. Moreover, some unscrupulous persons lure the victims to invest capital in online businesses with the incentive of monthly interest or income.

These acts can be defined as breaking the law as well as manipulating innocent people. Their inhumane acts can shake the relevant business arena, especially the banking service arena on which the people as well as banking users rely.

Japanese ski resorts get profits and struggle from foreign skiers

By Suzuka YOSHIDA

JAPAN is now in the coldest season, the height of winter. Many skiers from overseas are coming to Japan this year due to a lot of snow and the removal of entry restrictions due to COVID-19. Professional skiers, beginners, snowboarders, and many other people come to enjoy the snow. This is because Japan has a reputation for having the best snow quality in the world. On the other hand, it causes troublesome things.

Attractive snow quality, slopes and environment

Japan has some of the best ski resorts in the world. In particular, Hokkaido and Nagano prefectures, where the Olympic Games were held in the past, have many fascinating ski resorts with well-equipped facilities



Yellow and black coloured boundary sign poles mark the ski area boundary beyond these markings outside the controlled area. The above photo is taken at Hakuba Happo-One in Nagano prefecture

such as ski lifts and plenty of powder snow. Skiers from overseas come from faraway places such as Europe, Australia, and North America to visit such ski resorts. Some are professional skiers, while others are new to snow. Japan's ski resorts seem attractive enough to cater to the needs of various types of skiers.

Its appeal can be seen in media reports.

First of all, the quality and amount of snow in Japan are at the highest level in the world.

Secondly, there are various courses to satisfy their challenging and adventurous spirit.

Thirdly, the public transportation system is well-developed, and access costs are low because you can get there by taking a train from the airport without having to drive your

own car.

Fourth, hotels and food are cheap. Have attractions nearby. Lastly, it is safe.

In other words, not only is the snow quality itself attractive, but the surrounding conditions such as access and prices are also good. Although it takes more than ten hours by plane to Europe, Australia, and North America, you can enjoy all other multiple attractions with snow, and the low cost of living makes the environment suitable for long-term stays.

Many skiers enter restricted areas in search of powder snow

Ski resorts used by skiers and snowboarders can be broadly divided into three categories.

As the first category, general skiers use an area called the ski resort management area. As shown in the illustration, there are several courses on one mountain. Ski resort managers set courses with different degrees of difficulty based on the topography and angles, and perform maintenance such as hardening the snow so that it does not rise, adjusting the thickness, and so on. For example, when a tree is covered with snow, the skier may crash into the tree without noticing it, so the course is trodden in advance to avoid it. In this way, the administrator prevents skier accidents.

The second category is the area known as the backcountry or out-of-control zone. Al-

though the ski resort does not manage it, advanced skiers prefer backcountry skiing because they can ski at their own risk. As long as you make sure they have plenty of experience and emergency equipment, they can glide through untouched areas as mountain climbers. The feeling of gliding down the steep slopes of the snowy mountains while stirring up the snow is like having the whole mountain all to yourself, and it's exhilarating.

The third category is areas known as closed or no-slip areas because they are prone to avalanches or accidents because of the steep slopes. If you try to enter there, there are ropes stretched and sticks inserted, but there are also "strong people" who enter this area because they can't overcome their adventurous spirit. They are sometimes lost, dead or missing.

Skiers who do not understand the danger of secondary disasters in rescue teams

Unfortunately, there were eight serious accidents in January and February this season. One of the dead was an American professional skier and Olympic gold medalist. Rather than being in distress, he died in an accident after being caught in an avalanche.

There have been many accidents, both in prohibited areas and backcountry skiing. Each time, the rescue team must go out at the risk of a secondary

disaster. A ski resort got angry at the number of rescue requests and decided to claim the cost of the rescue from the victims.

For example, the costs for rescue are specifically defined as follows:

Article 21: The Company receives requests for search and rescue from users who have been out to the backcountry or closed areas (hereinafter referred to as "victims"), and the families, friends and acquaintances of the victims. When conducting search and rescue activities for a victim, we will charge the victim for the following expenses.

- (1) Search and rescue personnel: 20,000 yen (per hour)
- (2) Logistics support personnel: 10,000 yen (per hour)
- (3) One Headquarters support staff: 10,000 yen (per hour)
- (4) One groomed snow vehicle: 50,000 yen (per hour)
- (5) 1 snowmobile: 10,000 yen (per hour)
- (6) Actual meal cost
- (7) Other expenses incurred depending on the search and rescue situation will be billed separately.

Source: Hakuba Happoone Ski Resort Terms and Conditions <https://www.happo-one.jp/wp2019/wp-content/themes/happo-one2020/img/gelände/rule/agreement.pdf>

One of the few resorts in developed countries

Not many industrialized countries have resort areas. In particular, there are few winter



Map of Ski Trail at Hakuba Happo-One in Nagano prefecture where The Olympic Games 1999 was held. Nineteen slopes/courses are included in.

resorts. Although there are resort areas in developing countries where prices are low, there are risks for tourists in terms of security and other factors. In that respect, Japan has tourism resources such as undulating nature, history, and culture, and the recent depreciation of the yen has made it an easy-to-stay resort area. It attracts many foreign tourists.

However, I think it is more

correct to see the adventurous spirit of foreigners as "challengers" beyond the assumption of Japanese people. The more they are said "prohibition", the more they have a "challenger spirit" towards it. Foreign skiers are no longer content with backcountry skiing and see "no-slip areas" as synonymous with mere backcountry areas. Can the Japanese administrative body really regulate them?

It presents the appearance of a "battle" with foreign challenger spirits. Source: <https://www.happo-one.jp/en/gelände/> <https://sangakujiro.com/youtube.com/watch?v=X8Zp50-S0YpA> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b3WkaBRGqgs> (movie of Olympic course II)

Covid-19 pandemic made 1.6 mln youth idle in Pakistan: World Bank report

AS per a new report by the World Bank on the impact of Covid-19 on South Asia's youth, 1.6 million youths are idle alone in Pakistan, reported The News International.

The COVID-19 pandemic that gripped the world some three years ago has left millions of youth idle.

The first comprehensive analysis of post-pandemic global data, "Collapse and Recovery: How Covid Eroded Human Cap-

ital and What to Do About It" was released on Thursday.

School enrolment percentages

It cites a drastic change in the school enrolment percentages in Pakistan before and after the pandemic.

A study finds that preschool enrolment in Pakistan dropped by over 15 percentage points by end of 2021 in the post-pandemic era,

reported The News International.

As per the report, the enrolment among Pakistani children between the ages of six and 14 dropped by six percentage points once schools reopened, and 7.6 million children in the country alone have dropped out of school.

The report presents global data on the pandemic's impact on young people at key developmental stages: early childhood (0-5 years), school age (6-14 years),

and youth (15-24 years). It finds that in South Asia, today's students could lose up to 14.4 per cent of their future earnings due to Covid-19-induced education loss.

In South Asia, between 1 April 2020, and 31 March 2022, schools were fully or partially closed for 83 per cent of the time, significantly longer than the global average of schools being closed for 52 per cent of that same period, reported

The News International.

Among school-aged children, on average, for every 30 days of school closures, students lost about 32 days of learning.

Ineffective remote learning measures

This is because school closures and ineffective remote learning measures caused students to miss out on learning and to also forget what they had

already learned.

As a result, learning poverty -- already 60 per cent before the pandemic -- has increased further, with an estimated 78 per cent of 10-year-olds in South Asia unable to read and understand a simple written text, reported The News International.

The press statement also quoted World Bank Vice-President for South Asia Martin Raiser as saying, "The pandemic shut

down schools, decimated jobs, and plunged vulnerable families into crisis, pushing millions of South Asia's children and young people off-track and depriving them of opportunities to flourish."

While in the case of Pakistan, when the post and pre-pandemic learning levels were put in comparison, the children from the poorest households were falling further behind in math as compared to children from the wealth-

iest households.

The World Bank warned that COVID-19-like calamities result in a decline in both human capital levels and subsequent rates of accumulation, reported The News International.

Moreover, lifetime earnings and economic growth will witness a decades-long downfall if the said losses are left unaddressed, ultimately causing a spike in inequality. —ANI

LOCAL BUSINESS

Palm oil price rises to K7,400 per viss

IN the Yangon oil market on 21 February 2023, the wholesale price of palm oil per viss was K7,100. The price escalated to K7,200 per viss on 23 February and K7,400 per viss on 25 February. The wholesale price of palm oil in the Nyaungpinlay market was set at K7,500 per viss, Ko Swe Win, an oil dealer, told the Global New Light of Myanmar (GNLM).

In the Myingyan oil market, palm oil was priced at K7,400 per viss on 21 and 22 February, K7,500 per viss on 23 February and K7,600 per viss on 25 February, an oil trader from Myingyan stated.

The Yangon wholesale reference price of palm oil per viss was only K4,470 from 20 to 26 February. The price dropped by K20 per viss compared to the previous week. Within 42 days from 16 January to 26 February, the wholesale reference price stood at K4,490 per viss at maximum and K4,430 per viss at minimum. Therefore, the reference price has only shifted by K60 per viss in the past month and a half.

Authorities notified the reference price every Monday, according to the changes in price and foreign markets. The notification stated that actions will

be taken under the Important Goods and Services Act if any fraudulent activities are carried out for the purpose of manipulating market prices.

However, the retail price of the external market surpassed the weekly reference wholesale price by around K5,500 per viss in mid-August.

The retail price exceeded K3,000 per viss than the reference wholesale price on 25 February 2023, according to the price list data on social media in addition to the oil traders.

The wholesale price of the external market has been around one time higher than the



Palm oil in the market.

reference wholesale price for more than half a year, benefiting oil hoarders.

The weekly notified wholesale reference price has little effect on consumers and oil dealers, and only those who

keep palm oil in their hands still benefit greatly. Consumers said that as the price of rice which has been in high price like palm oil decreased, they want the palm oil price to drop as well. — TWA/CT

Mandalay market sees fresh arrivals of pigeon peas at favourable price



Merchants are seen evaluating beans and pulses in the Mandalay market.

ACCORDING to traders in Mandalay, the market has been flooded with a new harvest of pigeon peas from various regions and states during this year's bean season. These peas have received a good price due to their high quality and yield, which can be attributed to favourable weather conditions.

Compared to the same period last year, the price of pigeon peas has significantly increased. For instance, three baskets of pigeon peas fetched K135,000 last year, while three baskets can now

be sold for K210,000, according to U Soe Win Myint of the Soe Win Myint Depot in Mandalay.

Pigeon peas are not a popular food item among Myanmar people, and their taste and lack of pesticides make them particularly attractive to Indian consumers. Myanmar exports nearly all of the pigeon peas it produces each year, with India being the main buyer. Additionally, Nepal, Bangladesh, and Pakistan also regularly purchase Myanmar's pigeon peas.

This year, India's demand for

pigeon peas has been particularly high, which has resulted in an unprecedented increase in their price. In Yangon, the price of pigeon peas has reached K2,124,000 per tonne. Pigeon peas are cultivated only once a year and are grown in Mandalay, Magway, and Sagaing regions, as well as Chin, Kayah, and Shan states in Myanmar. The purchase of pigeon peas by India is facilitated by a contract between the governments of Myanmar and India. — Min Htet Aung (Mandalay Sub-Printing House)/KZL

65% of income from rice exports via border to be exchanged at CBM reference rate

THE Trade Department under the Ministry of Commerce notified on 23 February that 65 per cent of income from rice export through the border area has to be exchanged at the reference rate (K2,100) set by the Central Bank of Myanmar.

Earlier, exporters were allowed to use the whole export income (foreign currency) and did not need to convert them into Kyat at the CBM's reference rate.

This action will come into force for all rice and rice products exports starting from 1 March 2023 to affect export items equally, the Trade Department notified.

As per the notification released by the CBM on 5 August 2022, as per the US dollar policy, 65 per cent of earnings must be exchanged to local currency at the CBM's reference foreign exchange rate, while exporters can use 35 per cent of export earnings or transfer or sell them on to Authorized Dealers or others with an over-the-counter rate, as per the statement of the CBM dated 16 August.

Nonetheless, as per the meeting 66/2022 of the Foreign Exchange Supervisory

Committee, export earnings of some items can be made in Chinese Yuan and Thai Baht in addition to the US dollar.

On 14 December 2021, the Central Bank of Myanmar released a notification that Yuan/Kyat cross-currency settlement in the bilateral transaction was officially allowed in the border areas between Myanmar and China to boost the bilateral cross-border trade, facilitate the trading and bilateral transaction, increase the use of domestic currency following the objectives of the ASEAN Financial Integration.

Nonetheless, the directive released on 30 June said that transactions for the exports of agricultural products including corn, rice, bean and oil crops are to be made in dollars instead of Yuan-Kyat/Baht-Kyat. Also, 65 per cent of export income must be converted into local currency at the reference exchange rate of the CBM.

At present, the dollar was valued at over K2,860 in the informal FX market, indicating a large gap in the exchange rate against the reference rate of K2,100, traders said. — NN/EM

Exercise is more effective than medication in managing mental health: Study

A new study suggests that physical activity is 1.5 times more effective than psychotherapy or the leading drugs in treating depression, according to experts at the University of South Australia.

Published in the British Journal of Sports Medicine, the review is the most comprehensive to date, encompassing 97 reviews, 1,039 trials and 128,119 participants. It shows that physical activity is extremely beneficial for improving symptoms of depression, anxiety, and distress.

Specifically, the review showed that exercise interventions that were 12 weeks or shorter were most the effective at reducing mental health symptoms, highlighting the speed at which physical activity can make a change.

The largest benefits were seen among people with depression, pregnant and postpartum women, healthy individuals, and people diagnosed with HIV or kidney disease.

According to the World Health Organization, one in every eight people worldwide (970 million people) live with a mental disorder. Poor mental health costs the world economy approximately \$2.5 trillion each year, a cost projected to rise to \$6 trillion by 2030. In Australia, an estimated one in five people (aged 16-85) have experienced a mental disorder in the past 12 months.

Lead UniSA researcher, Dr Ben Singh, says physical activity must be prioritized to better manage the growing cases of mental health conditions. —ANI



A new study suggests that physical activity is 1.5 times more effective than psychotherapy or the leading drugs in treating depression, according to experts at the University of South Australia. **PHOTO: REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE/ AFP**

New study shows COVID-19 vaccination linked to fewer cardiac events



A health worker administers a COVID-19 vaccine shot to a local in Los Angeles, the United States, on 17 December 2022. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

NEW research suggests that vaccination against COVID-19 is associated with fewer heart

attacks, strokes, and other cardiovascular issues among people who were infected with

SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19.

The study, published Monday in the Journal of the American College of Cardiology, is the first to examine both full and partial vaccination and the link to major adverse cardiac events (MACE) in the United States. Researchers from the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai used the US National COVID Cohort Collaborative database.

The study included 1,934,294 patients, 217,843 of whom received mRNA vaccine formulations by Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna or viral vector technology by Johnson & Johnson. —Xinhua

NEWS IN BRIEF

US medical transport plane crashes in Nevada, leaving five dead

A medical transport plane crashed in the western US state of Nevada, killing all five on board, its operator said Saturday.

The plane went off radar Friday night outside the arid town of Stagecoach, near Nevada's border with California, REMSA Health said in a statement. "We are heartbroken to report that we have now received confirmation from Central Lyon County Fire Department that none of the five people on board survived," the statement said.

In addition to the pilot, the plane was carrying a nurse, a paramedic, a patient and a patient's family member, REMSA Health noted.

While the circumstances around the crash have yet to be confirmed, it occurred as a major winter storm pummels the US west coast, delivering feet of snow in the high mountains and even blanketing usually warm areas in southern California.

Almost 100,000 customers in California were without power Saturday evening, according to the PowerOutage.us tracker.

Major roads were also closed as ice and snow made them impassable, including sections of Interstate 5, the main north-south highway that connects Mexico, California, the Pacific Northwest and Canada. —AFP

Bio Asia 2023 summit: This Made in India machine can measure your health parameters in public

A Hyderabad-based medical technology manufacturer company Pulse Active Stations Network has come up with a machine called 'Pulse Active Network' which can perform basic health checkups in public. The

Made-in-Hyderabad product was displayed at Bio Asia 2023 summit in Hyderabad on Saturday.

Pulse Active Station is a machine that can measure BMI and other health parameters in public. The company has planned to

place these machines in different public places including hospitals, bus stations, and metro stations.

Speaking on the occasion Joginder Tanikella, Founder and CEO of Pulse Active Stations Network said "This is the pulse active

station. It is a smart health kiosk. Everyone might remember the Rs.1 weighing machine which used to be there in public places. This is a more modern and advanced version of the machine. The idea is that you should be

able to get a basic health screening within 1 to 3 minutes in any public place such as the railway station, metro station, bus stand, hospital, clinic, or any other place. We have different tests here. —ANI

ECONOMY WORLD

Calls grow for G-7 chair Japan to focus on issues other than Ukraine



Japan could also play a leading role in the international community by advocating and investing in decarbonization technology, analysts said. **PHOTO: KYODO/FILE**

AFTER hosting a Group of Seven online summit on the first anniversary of the Ukraine crisis, Japan, the G-7 chair in 2023, faces growing expectations from other members and international organizations to increase focus on other global issues by leveraging its strengths in non-military areas.

Japan, for example, could contribute toward promoting universal healthcare coverage to other countries by offering expertise on its own system, as the Asian nation has provided

public medical insurance for all its citizens since 1961, analysts said.

With the World Health Organization calling on the G-7 to phase out their reliance on fossil fuels to curtail global warming and pollution, Japan could also play a leading role in the international community by advocating and investing in decarbonization technology, they added.

Japan, meanwhile, has been urged to explain to its G-7 counterparts its plan to dis-

charge treated water from its crippled nuclear power plant in Fukushima Prefecture into the Pacific Ocean, a decision which has been met with strong resistance from some neighbouring nations.

Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, who represents a constituency in Hiroshima as a lawmaker, is scheduled to host the in-person G-7 summit for three days from 19 May in the western Japan city that was devastated by a US atomic bomb in August 1945.

Kishida has been “keen to pitch his vision of a world without nuclear weapons” amid mounting fears that Russia may deploy one in its war against Ukraine, but there are “many other issues that should also be discussed at the G-7 summit,” a source close to him said.

“In thinking seriously about what Japan can and should do for the international community as the G-7 presidency, the prime minister needs to take the initiative and combat global challenges this year,” said the source. —Kyodo

Germany’s Scholz in India to press on EU trade deal

GERMAN Chancellor Olaf Scholz visited India on Saturday seeking to deepen business and defence ties between the two major economies and jumpstart progress on an EU trade deal despite differences over Ukraine.

“We want to further strengthen our bilateral relationship with India and our cooperation on global issues, such as mitigating climate change and transforming our economies in a just, green and sustainable way,” Scholz told the Times of India in an interview.

“There is huge potential for intensified cooperation, in sectors such as renewables, hydrogen, mobility, pharma, digital economy, and many more,” Scholz told the paper.

Scholz, accompanied by executives from big German firms like Siemens, met Prime



Scholz, accompanied by executives from big German firms like Siemens, met Prime Minister Narendra Modi in New Delhi and was due to head to Bengaluru to visit German software firms including SAP. **PHOTO: AFP**

Minister Narendra Modi in New Delhi and was due to head to Bengaluru to visit German software firms including SAP.

Officials said Scholz would press for progress towards a trade deal between the Europe-

an Union and India that has long been held up by disagreements on tariffs and access for Indian workers to Europe.

A German official in Berlin said the two sides remain “quite some distance apart”. —AFP

Macron warns EU-South America deal hinges on environment

FRENCH President Emmanuel Macron said Saturday that a long-delayed trade deal between the EU and four Latin American nations “is not possible” if they do not follow European environmental policies.

The EU in 2019 reached a trade deal with the Mercosur bloc, comprising Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay, after 20 years of negotiations.

However, the deal has yet to be ratified, with concerns over Brazil’s environmental record under former president Jair Bolsonaro a major concern. It has also sparked concern among the ecological and

agricultural sectors in Europe.

The EU has sought to reset relations with Brazil after the return to office of President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, who in January called for the deal to be urgently ratified.

France has been the most outspoken EU nation against the hard-fought deal.

“A deal with countries of the Latin American continent is not possible if they don’t respect the Paris (climate) accords as we do, and if they don’t respect the same environmental and sanitary obligations that we impose on our producers,” said Macron. —AFP



Indigenous people from various tribes taking part in the Terra Livre Indigenous Camp protest against Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro in front of the National Congress in Brasilia, on 13 April 2022. **PHOTO: SERGIO LIMA/AFP**

History says Fed can’t tame inflation without recession: report

THERE is no recent precedent for a central bank successfully defeating inflation without “substantial economic sacrifice or recession,” said a report presented Friday to Federal Reserve policymakers.

The report, prepared in connection with a seminar organized by the University of Chicago’s Booth School of Business, came after fresh US pricing data suggested the Fed’s aggressive moves thus far have been only partially successful.

The Booth analysis suggested a potentially rocky future for the US economy, which has thus far shown resilience despite aggressive Fed actions to counter inflation.

Citing historical “disinflation” cases dating back to 1950 in major economies, the report concluded that central banks “are likely to be hard pressed to achieve their disinflationary goals without significant sacrifice in economic activity.”

The analysis, prepared by a team of academic and corporate economists, identified parallels between the current climate and that of the late 1970s when former Fed Chair Paul Volcker radically increased interest rates to counter soaring inflation.

As with the earlier period, the Fed in the recent episode also “fell behind the curve”, the report said. —AFP

RCEP helps more ASEAN agricultural products enter Chinese market

THANKS to reduced tariffs under the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), fruits and other agricultural products from Southeast Asian countries can now reach China faster and at lower prices.

The RCEP, the world's largest free trade deal comprising 10 Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) countries, as well as China, Japan, the Republic of Korea (ROK), Australia and New Zealand, entered into force on 1 January 2022.

In 2022, Vietnamese passion fruit and durian were allowed to enter the Chinese market.

A company in Viet Nam, which is mainly engaged in planting and processing durian and other



Visitors are seen at the 19th China-ASEAN Expo in Nanning, south China's Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, 19 September 2022. PHOTO: LU BOAN /XINHUA

fruits, has expanded its production, signed a new contract for 3,000 hectares of durian orchards, and built new factories.

South China's Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region has become an important window for

exchanges and cooperation between China and ASEAN countries.

Thanks to China-ASEAN economic and trade exchanges in recent years, the TWT Supply Chain Management Co, Ltd in Guangxi has grown

into a one-stop supply chain service provider, covering over 50 Chinese cities and several ASEAN countries. The company has embraced more business opportunities since the RCEP deal went into effect.—Xinhua

Qatari businesswoman sparkles among jewellery giants at Doha show

A Qatari businesswoman has turned heads at the Doha Jewellery and Watches Exhibition, pitting herself against giants of the industry while also bucking trends in the conservative country.

Noora al-Ansari — a Qatari woman running her own company and dealing with customers herself — is a rarity in the wealthy Gulf state, where a growing number of women

work but few have made their name in business.

Since opening her first Papillon store in the capital Doha, she said customers have been curious about her nationality.

“When women saw me standing in Papillon, they were wondering whether I was Qatari or not,” she told AFP, her exhibition stand flanked by household names of the jewellery world. —AFP



Jewellers arrange their stand at the Doha Jewellery and Watches Exhibition. PHOTO: AFP

Foreign cruise ships' arrivals in Japan to near pre-COVID level



Photo shows an international cruise ship docked at the Port of Niigata in October 2019. PHOTO: NIIGATA CITY /KYODO

ARRIVALS of foreign-operated cruise ships to Japan are set to near the level seen before the coronavirus pandemic when their dockings to the country resume in March after a three-year hiatus, a Kyodo

News survey showed Sunday.

Out of 42 major ports, a total of 89 arrivals are scheduled in March at 23 ports across 22 prefectures, while discussions by local governments and ship op-

erators are progressing for arrivals at other ports, the survey showed. Before the pandemic in March 2019, Japan saw 125 dockings at the 42 ports. The recovery apparently reflects tourism promotion by local munic-

ipalities in Japan, as well as China's suspending reception of international cruisers.

Out of 2.15 million who visited Japan on cruise ships in 2019, 80 per cent were from China. Those visitors from around the world spent 80.5 billion yen (\$590 million) during their stay in Japan, according to the Japan Tourism Agency.

The Kyodo News surveyed 42 ports across 32 prefectures that received large cruise ships in 2019.

Japan has suspended dockings of foreign cruise ships since March 2020 following mass infections on the Diamond Princess cruise ship, which caused thousands to be quarantined in Yokohama in February 2020 and left 13 of the over 700 infected crew and passengers dead. —Kyodo

MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY HOLIDAY NOTICE

AS the wharves, warehouses and chellan Offices of Yangon Port will be closed on the 2nd MARCH 2023 (Peasant's Day) and 5th MARCH 2023 (Fullmoon Day of Taboung), Loading, Unloading and delivery for Goods will be received on Payment as Holiday Fees.

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V HANSA HARBURG VOY.NO. (306W)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V HANSA HARBURG VOY.NO. (306W) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 27-2-2023 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of MITT/MIP where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: 2301185

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S SEALAND MAERSK ASIA PTE LTD

GLOBAL
AFFAIRS

WORLD: TOP HEADLINES

Sri Lanka to launch mobile app to protect tourists

SRI Lanka is to launch a mobile app from 1 March to protect tourists, Tourism Minister Harin Fernando said on Saturday.



Dancers perform during a cultural dance show to promote tourism in Colombo, Sri Lanka, on 17 January 2023. **PHOTO: AJITH PERERA/XINHUA**

urday.

The minister, addressing an event in Colombo, said this is one of the best mobile applications in the region for tourist safety. He said the app can be operated in seven languages.

The mobile app will register all three-wheelers and a barcode will be displayed on the vehicle for foreign tourists to scan, the minister said.

Once a tourist reports an incident by scanning the barcode, police and tourism officials would take action, he said.

The ministry will operate a 24-hour active call centre to support the app, he said.

The police can also monitor the app and take appropriate action in the event of any incidents that inconvenience or endanger tourists. —Xinhua

US papers drop 'Dilbert' after creator's racist remarks

MANY US newspapers have decided to no longer publish the popular "Dilbert" comic strip, after its creator posted a racist video earlier this week calling Black people a "hate group".

Scott Adams, who rose to fame in the 1990s with his satirical take on white-collar office life, has increasingly stoked controversy with his views on social issues.

But in a video posted on Wednesday, Adams took issue with a recent poll conducted by conservative-leaning Rasmussen Reports, whose results show that a small majority of Black respondents agreed with the statement, "It's okay to be white".

"That's a hate group and I don't want anything to do with



Dilbert is a fictional character and the main character and protagonist of the comic strip of the same name, created by Scott Adams. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

it," he said.

"Based on the current way things are going, the best advice I would give to white people is to get the hell away from Black people."

The USA TODAY Network,

which operates hundreds of papers across the United States, said Friday evening that it "will no longer publish the Dilbert comic due to recent discriminatory comments by its creator". —AFP

RUSSIA-UKRAINE CONFLICT

Ukraine not arena for fights between major countries: Chinese envoy

A Chinese envoy on Friday called for a resumption of non-conditional talks between Russia and Ukraine, stressing that Ukraine is not "an arena for fights between major countries".

"We call on Russia and Ukraine to resume negotiations without any preconditions," said Dai Bing, charge d'affaires of China's permanent mission to the United Nations, while addressing a high-level UN Security Council briefing on Ukraine.

"Ukraine is not an arena for fights between major countries. No one should seek to benefit from the conflict at the cost of the Ukrainian people," he said.

The security of one country should not be pursued at the expense of others. Strengthening or even expanding military blocs will only undermine regional security and will never bring about peace, he said.

Russia, Ukraine and European countries are neighbours that cannot be physically moved away. To realize lasting peace



A demonstrator holds a slogan during the anti-war rally in Washington, DC, the United States, 19 February 2023. **PHOTO: LIU JIE/XINHUA**

and stability in Europe, the Cold War mentality and bloc confrontation must be abandoned, and the legitimate security concerns of all countries must be taken seriously and addressed properly, so as to build a balanced, effective and sustainable regional security architecture, said Dai.

The envoy said China is ready to continue to play a responsible and constructive role in resolving the Ukraine crisis.

China issued earlier Friday a paper stating its position on the political settlement of the Ukraine crisis, he said. "We have always taken an objective and impartial stance based on the merits of the issue." Dai stressed that when handling and solving international disputes, universally recognized international law, including the purposes and principles of the UN Charter, must be upheld. —AFP

Polish group says Russia stopped oil pipeline deliveries

POLISH energy group PKN Orlen announced on Saturday that it had stopped receiving Russian oil through the Druzhba pipeline, which under its last contract accounted for 10 per cent of Orlen's needs.

"Deliveries through the Druzhba pipeline towards Poland were stopped by the Russian side," the Polish company

said in a statement to AFP.

Orlen said the move would not impact supply to Polish clients and that all oil deliveries would now come by sea.

Until now, PKN Orlen had imported about 10 per cent of its oil needs through the pipeline from Russia and the rest from other countries through maritime routes. —AFP

Blinken eyes US inroads in Central Asia as Ukraine rattles nerves

Secretary of State Antony Blinken is heading to Central Asia hoping that greater US engagement will reassure former Soviet republics rattled by the Ukraine war, although Russia's historic clout limits the extent of cooperation.

Days after the anniversary of the Ukraine invasion, the top US diplomat will hold talks Tuesday in Kazakhstan and then Uzbekistan and meet

jointly with foreign ministers of all five ex-Soviet Central Asian states in Kazakhstan's capital Astana.

Donald Lu, the top US diplomat for South and Central Asia, said the United States was realistic that the five nations were not going to end their relationships with Russia or their other giant neighbour, China, which has been boosting its own presence. —AFP



The Vatican announced its own preliminary investigation into Ricard last November. **PHOTO: AFP**

French prosecutors drop ‘sexual assault’ probe into cardinal

FRENCH prosecutors said Saturday they had closed an investigation launched into a cardinal who admitted sexually assaulting a 13-year-old girl because the statute of limitations had expired, sparking anger among campaigners.

The probe was launched in November last year after a statement by Jean-Pierre Ricard, a retired bishop made a cardinal by pope Benedict XVI

in 2006.

But Marseille prosecutor Dominique Laurens told AFP: “The case was closed due to the statute of limitations.”

The most serious sexual offences in France, such as rape, usually have a statute of limitations of 30 years.

Ricard, now 78, said in a letter last year to the church hierarchy that he had “behaved in a reprehensible way” towards

a young girl 35 years ago.

Taken into custody on 2 February, he told investigators he had “kissed” the girl, who he said had been about 13 years old. He had also embraced her and “caressed her over her clothes”, but “there was no sexual intercourse”, he added.

The victim told investigators the assaults had happened over a three-year period. —AFP

Jordan to host Israeli-Palestinian talks as violence spirals

JORDAN is to host a “political-security” meeting between Israel and the Palestinians on Sunday to try to restore calm in the occupied territories after deadly violence, a government official said.

The meeting to be held in the Red Sea resort of Aqaba will also be attended by United States and Egyptian representatives.

It aims at “building trust” between Israel and the Palestinians, the official told

AFP on Saturday, speaking on condition of anonymity.

The head of Israel’s Shin Bet domestic security agency, Ronen Bar, will be part of the Israeli delegation, a security source told AFP.

As the talks come after 11 Palestinians were killed in a gun battle on Wednesday when Israeli troops raided the West Bank city of Nablus, the Palestinian leadership’s decision to attend the Jordan meeting drew criticism from other factions. —AFP

Trade resumes as key Afghan border crossing with Pakistan reopens



In this photo taken on 2 February 2023, a Pakistan border policeman is pictured from the zero point Torkham border crossing between Afghanistan and Pakistan, in Nangarhar province, Afghanistan. **PHOTO: AFP**

G20 Finance Ministers, Central Bank Governors conclude meeting with chair’s summary

THE G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors on Saturday reiterated their commitment to enhancing international policy cooperation and steering the global economy towards securing strong, sustainable, balanced and inclusive growth.

They also stressed on the need for well-calibrated monetary, fiscal, financial, and

structural policies to promote growth and maintain macroeconomic as well as financial stability globally.

Besides, they recognized the urgency to address debt vulnerabilities in low and middle-income countries, and declared that strengthening multilateral coordination by official bilateral and private creditors was needed. —Xinhua



India’s Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman (C) addresses a press conference in Bengaluru. **PHOTO: AFP**

VITAL trade resumed at a key border crossing between Afghanistan and Pakistan on Saturday as their busiest trading waypoint reopened almost a week after being shut by Taliban authorities.

Relations between the countries have soured since the Taliban took power in Afghanistan in 2021, with Islamabad accusing its neighbour of harbouring militants that have carried out strikes on its soil — a charge Kabul denies.

There have been frequent checkpoint closures and flare-ups of violence along the mostly mountainous dividing line splitting the two nations, which no Afghan government has ever recognized.

The Torkham border cross-

ing was reopened at 6 am (0130 GMT) on Saturday, Afghan customs official Muslim Khaksar said at the site in Afghanistan’s eastern Nangarhar province.

“The border is now open from both sides for civilians as well as for traders,” he said.

“Trucks carrying rice, cement, construction material, medicines and other edibles were sent to Afghanistan,” a Pakistani customs official said, adding that lorries loaded with coal, vegetables and fruit had travelled the other way.

But around 1,400 trucks on the Pakistan side were still waiting to cross into Afghanistan as a backlog is cleared, he added.

Hundreds of people from both countries passed through

the crossing on Saturday after being stranded for days, an AFP correspondent reported from the frontier.

“I was stranded here for five to six days with my sick mother,” Haroon, a resident of the Afghan city of Kunduz, told AFP before entering Pakistan with his ailing parent.

“There are thousands of patients like my mother waiting to go to Pakistan for treatment. The border must always remain open, it will help patients and also boost trade.”

The crossing was closed last Sunday by Afghan authorities, who objected to what they said were new documentation rules restricting people assisting medical patients from entering Pakistan. —AFP



SPORT

Myanmar-Thailand Traditional Lethwei competition to be held in March for five days



Lethwei star fighters will compete in the Myanmar-Thailand Traditional Lethwei to be held from 1 to 5 March in Kyainn Village, Hlaing Bwe Township, Kayin State. PHOTO: BALA SOE

MYANMAR-THAILAND Traditional Lethwei (Myanma traditional boxing) competition will be held from 1 to 5 March to mark the Pyi Thar Lin Aye pagoda event in Kyar Inn Village, Hlaing-bwe Township, Kayin State.

The Lethwei tournament will include a five-round challenge, Aung Lan fight, a special fight, and new generation fights, including Myanmar-Thai matches, and will be broadcasted live on 360 Sports Facebook and YouTube Channel.

As an opening fight on 1 March, Shwe Win will take on Kyaw Naing Lin, Thet Paing Aung will face Thway Yine Lay, Aung Htet Hein will face Ye Thway Aung and Ba Hein will face Aphoe Thway.

On 2 March, Dawna Thway will face Si Toe, Thet Lu will fight against Kyauk Yine, Moe Myint

Kyaw will take on Min Ko Naing, Shan Tauk will face Ye Thway, Zwe Lin Aung will take on Doe Lay, Soe Naung Oo will take on Htet Naing Aung, Than Thar Theink will take on Nang Broe (Thailand), Saw Htoo Aung will face Bancharso (Thailand), while Saw Min Aung will meet Falanu (Thailand).

On 3 March, Dawna Kyaw Kyaw will take on Kayin Lay, Aung Min Tun will face Aung Zaw Hein, Saw Yay Htoo will take on Ka Nyaw Kwar, Lin Naing will fight with Ye Thway Ni, and Thway Thit Aung will meet Thway Thit Maung, Helin will face Aung Maing, Saw Min Min will take on Fasli (Thailand), while Shue Kalien Min will fight against Fai Tai (Thailand).

On 4 March, Chit Wine Wine will face Moe Hein, Hlaing Htet Aung will take on Thein Soe, Gab-

ar Shar will fight against Saw Mya Lin, while Kyar Paung meets Kyal Lin Aung, and Aung Khaing will face Wa Gyi, and Thaw Nay Htoo will take on Fe Sit Matt (Thailand) and Almwe (Nagar Min) will take on Kawnanphar (Thailand) and Shwe Yar Mhan will face Deedoke (Thailand).

On the last day of the competition on 5 March, Kyaw Swar Win will fight with Farnmechai (Thailand), Thway Thit Win Hlaing will face Farsula (Thailand) as a main bout while Thway Lin Htet will take on Kyel Sin Tun. Saw June will face Min Kyaw Sa, Tauk Shar will take on Aung Hein, Moe Htet Aung meets Hein Tun Aung, Naket Min will fight against Ko Nine and Daw Na Boma will take on Kolasel (Thailand), while Nay Htoo Htoo will fight with Tun Min Aung from Tun Tun Min's Club. — Bala Soe/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.

Kirk seizes two-shot lead at US PGA Honda Classic

CHRIS Kirk fired six birdies in a four-under-par 66 on Saturday to take a two-shot lead in the Honda Classic, where he's chasing his first US PGA Tour title in eight seasons.

Kirk followed up a sizzling second-round 62 with a solid effort on the par-70 PGA National course in Palm Beach Gardens, Florida, putting himself in good position to strike for a fifth title, but his first since Colonial in 2015. — AFP

Messi, Mbappe and Benzema up for FIFA Best award

JUST like in the World Cup final, Paris Saint-Germain teammates Lionel Messi and Kylian Mbappe go up against one another for The Best FIFA Men's Player prize for 2022 on Monday, with Ballon d'Or Karim Benzema the other contender.

The ceremony takes place in Paris, and Messi appears as the favourite to add another individual gong to his collection after leading Argentina to glory over Mbappe's France in that epic encounter in Qatar. Messi has won the Ballon d'Or seven

times and claimed the FIFA award — inaugurated in 2016 following FIFA's split with Ballon d'Or organizers France Football — once in 2019. In the last two years Messi has made the podium as Robert Lewandowski has won the title, but the 35-year-old's career-crowning World Cup triumph was the defining moment of 2022. The winner is decided by a jury comprised of the coach and captain of every men's national team and one journalist from each country, but fans can also vote. — AFP



This combination of file photos shows France's forward 10 Kylian Mbappe (L) in Al-Wakrah, south of Doha on 22 November; and Argentina's forward 10 Lionel Messi in Lusail, north of Doha on 26 November. PHOTO: AFP/FILE