FOCUS ON THE INTERESTS OF CONSUMERS IN THE SALE OF COOKING OIL

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THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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

1. Priority will be given to fully realizing peace, stability and rule of law throughout the Union to safeguard the socioeconomic life of the people.
2. People-centred development work that enhances socioeconomic well-being will be undertaken to ensure the country's prosperity and food security.
3. Processes will further continue to consolidate a genuine, disciplined multiparty democratic system and build a Union based on democracy and federalism.
4. Priority will be accorded to work aligned with the agreements set out in the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement, in order to achieve enduring peace for the entire nation.
5. Upon accomplishing the provisions of the state of emergency, free and fair multiparty democratic elections will be held in line with the 2008 Constitution, and further work will be undertaken to hand over State duties to the winning party in accordance with democratic standards.

Myanmar bags over US$15 mln in rice exports on 11-17 Feb

MYANMAR generated earnings of US$15.796 million from rice and broken rice exports during the week of 11 to 17 February 2023, according to the Ministry of Commerce's statistics.

Myanmar's seaborne rice exports to international trade partners amounted to $5.843 million from over 13,500 tonnes that week, with over 6,690 tonnes to Asian countries and about 6,800 tonnes to European Union member countries.

Myanmar sent 4,290 tonnes to the Philippines, about 2,080 tonnes to China, 250 tonnes to Malaysia and a small volume went to Viet Nam.

Myanmar conveyed about 1,000 tonnes to the Netherlands, over 2,000 to Turkiye, about 700 to Poland, 550 to Belgium, 500 to Italy, 475 to England and a small volume to other European countries.

That week, Myanmar exported over 4,060 tonnes of rice worth $1.58 million to China through border channels. More than 17,560 tonnes of rice were delivered to China by sea and border channels, with an estimated value of $7.423 million.

The export volume indicated a drastic decrease of over 9,000 tonnes from the last week.

Myanmar maritime trade saw 14,850 tonnes of broken rice exports valued at $5.623 million, with over 5,400 tonnes to EU countries, and about 9,440 to Asian countries. The majority of the broken rice was sent to Belgium (1,450 tonnes). The country exported 975 tonnes to the Netherlands, 450 to Italy and the remaining were shipped to other European countries. Over 9,360 tonnes of broken rice are shipped to China and 75 tonnes to Singapore.

On the other hand, over 7,410 tonnes of broken rice worth $2.75 million were exported via cross-border points that week, with over 6,700 tonnes flowing to China and over 710 tonnes to Thailand.

The overall broken rice exports through maritime and border trade routes were estimated at 22,260 tonnes valued at $8.373 million. The exports of rice and broken rice amounted to $15.796 million from 39,830 tonnes. — TWA/EM

Export rice bags are being loaded onto the overseas-going merchant vessel at Yangon Port. **FILE PHOTO.**

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Objectives of 78th Anniversary of Armed Forces Day

— To serve primary duties of Tatmadaw for successfully safeguarding Our Three Main National Causes, and protecting the State Constitution and shielding the genuine disciplined multiparty democratic system
— To emphasize agreements in the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) as much as possible for the restoration of the durable and perpetual peace across the nation as ceasing of armed conflicts is an actual requirement for realizing the multiparty democratic system
— To safeguard the national interest of the State, lives and property of people, and to put a strenuous effort on respective corners in times of natural disasters.
— To provide the necessary assistance by Tatmadaw for holding a free and fair multiparty democratic general election upon completion of undertakings in accord with the provisions of the state of emergency for the emergence of the Union based on democracy and federalism.

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
State Administration Council
Notification No 76/2023

12th Waxing of Tabaung 1384 ME
2 March 2023

THE Chairman of the State Administration Council has conferred religious titles on the following persons who significantly donated four kinds of alms to Buddhism to propagate and develop the Sasana.

Agga Maha Thiri Thudhamma Theingi title

1. Daw Kyu Kyu Hla, Zeyathiri Township, Nay Pyi Taw
2. Daw Kyaing Kyaing, Pobbathiri Township, Nay Pyi Taw
3. Daw Mya Mya San, Pobbathiri Township, Nay Pyi Taw
4. Daw Khin Khin Win, Pobbathiri Township, Nay Pyi Taw
5. Daw Khin Thet Htay, Zabuthiri Township, Nay Pyi Taw
6. Daw Than Than Nwe, Mayangon Township, Yangon Region
7. Daw Nang Shwe Hmon, Pobbathiri Township, Nay Pyi Taw

Sd/Min Aung Hlaing
Senior General
Chairman
State Administration Council

State Administration Council confers Thiri Pyanchi title, Wunna Kyawhtin title

THE State Administration Council of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar issued Notification 77/2023 on the 12th Waxing of Tabaung 1384 Myanmar era (2 March 2023). The notification mentioned that the State Administration Council Chairman has conferred Thiri Pyanchi titles on 17 persons and Wunna Kyawhtin titles on 37 persons for their excellent performance in discharging State duties on administration, economic and social affairs and development of the nation within 75 years after the country had regained independence. — GNLM

10 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 2 March, total figure rises to 633,935

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to 633,935 after 10 new cases were reported on 2 March 2023 according to the Ministry of Health.

The total number of patients who have recovered from COVID-19 in the country reached 614,401, including one new recovery.

The death toll from COVID-19 in the country remained unchanged at 19,490 on 2-3-2023 with no new death reported from the pandemic. —MNA

Cuttlefish, jellyfish with strong demand create proper job opportunities for locals

MYANMAR'S cuttlefish and jellyfish are in high demand in Thailand and the residents of Kawthoung, Myeik, Bokpyin and Dawei of the Taninthayi Region are achieving good job opportunities from cuttlefish and jellyfish exports.

The people catch the cuttlefish at night with electric lights as the living styles of cuttlefish are different in the sea. Currently, the fishermen catch jellyfish onshore in Bokpyin Township more than the amount of previous year. The cuttlefish season starts in November and ends in early June while the jellyfish season is from January to April. The cuttlefish prices are still higher than the prices of jellyfish.

"The squid and jellyfish from Myanmar's seas are exported to the wholesale centre of Thai's Ranong. We export frozen meat or dried meat. The cuttlefish and jellyfish create a proper economy for local fishermen. We have to use lights in capturing the cuttlefish and we have plans to reduce such activity while the country is making efforts to reduce the nature of catching with light. During such periods, only about 400 licenced cuttlefish fishing boats were allowed previously. When the other fish see the bright light, they also come near the net and it can be the cause of the reduction of fish and so we arrange to control the fish resources. The cuttlefish and jellyfish export create opportunities for marine workers and brings benefits to the country," said U Aung Nyi Toe, director of the Taninthayi Region Fisheries Department.

The picture shows one of the cuttlefish boats. Myanmar cuttlefish and jellyfish are transported to local hotels, restaurants and Shwe Padauk and Sanpya fish markets of Yangon and are also exported to Thailand. **PHOTO: KANU**

The cuttlefish and jellyfish are caught in Taninthayi and Ayeyawady Regions and Rakhine State. Thailand buys these two marine products most for their good taste. Myanmar cuttlefish fetches between 140-175 baht per kilogramme (K12,000-15,000) depending on their size. The dried cuttlefish fetches about K53,000 per kg and the price is higher over 30 baht per kg than the previous year.

The jellyfish is caught onshore of Bokpyin Township and the price is 90 Baht (over K7,500) per kg. Jellyfish are also exported to Thailand and some of them are exported as dried jellyfish. Myanmar cuttlefish and jellyfish are transported to local hotels, restaurants and Shwe Padauk and Sanpya fish markets of Yangon and are also exported to Thailand. Thailand produces canned cuttlefish and exports them to other countries. — Nyein Thu (MNA)/KTZH

Cooperate for promotion of socioeconomic lives of farmers and the farming sector

THE government has been fulfilling the need for agricultural water supply tasks constantly for the development of the agriculture sector, farmers are required to cooperate for promotion of socioeconomic lives of farmers and the farming sector in line with the term participatory irrigation management.

(The excerpt from the speech made by Chairman of State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at the meeting on the enhancement of the agriculture sector and socioeconomic life of farmers by Participatory Irrigation Management on 26 August 2022)

Union Health Minister meets Minister of Ayush & Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways of India

UNION Health Minister Dr Thet Khaing Win, currently in India, received a delegation led by Shri Sarbanada Sonowal, Minister of Ayush & Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways, yesterday evening in Guwahati, India.

Both sides frankly discussed and exchanged views on cooperation between the two countries in the development of the traditional medicine sector, teaching from Indian traditional medicine practitioners at the University of Traditional Medicine (Mandalay), exchange of knowledge scholars from India in annual conferences of Traditional Medicine Practitioners in Myanmar, traditional medicine research paper reading sessions, mutual study tours of traditional medicine experts from both countries, scientific research on traditional medicines, and exportation of high-quality traditional medicinal raw materials.

In the evening, the Union minister and delegation members enjoyed a dinner hosted by the Ministry of Ayush, India. — MNA/TS

Union Minister Dr Thet Khaing Win poses for the documentary group photo at the meeting in India yesterday.

UMFCCI, MJC hold meeting on human resources, private sector development

REPUBLIC of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry-UMFCCI President U Aye Win received Senior Representative Mr Ono Shotaro of JICA Myanmar Office and Chief Advisor Mr Kunihiro Yamauchi to Myanmar-Japan Centre (MJC) to discuss the development of human resources and private sector in Yangon Region on 1 March.

UMFCCI President U Aye Win receives Mr Ono Shotaro, Senior Representative of JICA Myanmar Office and MJC Chief Advisor Mr Kunihiro Yamauchi on 1 March in Yangon.

Speaking at the meeting, the MJC chief advisor said the centre is one of the projects provided by JICA for Private Sector Development and is also established with the participation of UMFCCI. The MJC is now 10 years old and it conducts Business Courses for the private sector. The duration of the centre will finish due on 31 March and the two sides agreed to extend for further three years. The Young Leader Programmes will be prioritized during the extended period.

Then, the UMFCCI president said the MJC supported not only the business community but also the young people by launching training courses. It is known that the intention of the Japanese government is to provide human resources development. UMFCCI will keep maintaining its achievements and cooperating with MJC.

Also present at the meeting were UMFCCI vice-presidents, joint general secretary U Kyaw Deva, Daw Thuzar Win and other relevant officials. — Myo Min Thura/KTZH

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News and Periodicals Enterprise

8th State Sangha Central Working Committee concludes 5th meeting

The concluding ceremony of the fifth meeting of the Eighth State Sangha Central Working Committee is in progress yesterday.

THE third day of the fifth meeting of the Eighth State Sangha Central Working Committee was held at the Maha Pasana Cave on Thiri Mingala Kaba Aye Hill in Mayangon Township of Yangon Region yesterday.

The meeting was attended by State Ovadacariya Sayadaws, State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee member Sayadaws, State Sangha Central Working Committee member Sayadaws, and other officials of relevant departments.

Secretary Sayadaw Agga Maha Pandita Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Dr Bhaddanta Candhima Bhivamsa presided over the meeting on behalf of the Committee Chairman Sayadaw Abhidhaja Maha Ratha Guru Abhidhaja Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotika Dr Bhaddanta Kumara Bhivamsa and Joint Secretary Sayadaw Agga Maha Ganthavacaka Pandita Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Bhaddanta Pannadhaja acted as the master of ceremonies.

Afterwards, certificates of the State Vinaya Panel of Judges were presented to Sayadaws of the Separate State Vinaya Panel of Judges and the State Vinaya Panel of Judges.

Fifteen Ovadacariya Sayadaws, Secretary Sayadaw, and a representative each from region/state and Ganas signed the substitutions, decisions, confirmations, and records made at the fifth meeting of the 8th State Sangha Central Working Committee recorded in the Religious History Book.

After the processes, the Sayadaws concluded the meeting successfully. — MNA/KTZH

Consumer Protection Law (CPL), consumer rights hardly known domestically

Workers from Shwe Hnin Si Bakery, located at Aungnan Ward in Myitkyina, Kachin State, are pictured during the awareness talk on consumer protection.

THERE are very few people in the country who are well aware of the Consumer Protection Law (CPL) and consumer rights, said Myanmar Consumer Protection Commission-MCPC Chair Union Commerce Minister U Aung Naing Oo at the meeting of MCPC 1/2023 on 1 March.

"In particular, consumers have the rights to explain, complain and remedy their losses under the CPR and consumer rights provided by the law, and people rarely know about it," the Union minister added.

In carrying out consumer protection activities, consumer complaint and redress process, market surveillance procedures and procedures for recalling and banning harmful goods or services from the market have been published.

The Union minister directed all those concerned to carry out innovative and wide-ranging programmes that can be of interest to consumers in the regions and states, as per the theme of World Consumer Rights Day which falls on 15 March 2023 "Clean Energy Transitions". — TWA/CT

Trade Mark Ads Call 09251022355,09974424848

Circular train runs 30 plies per day on Yangon-Insein route

THE circular train is running on the Yangon-Insein route, part of the Yangon circular trip, thirty plies a day, according to the Myanma Railways (MR).

Myanma Railways used to run 215 times a day with nine RBE train coaches and 14 large coaches for 38 stations around Yangon and 17 suburban stations. The daily number of passengers using the circular train was about 85,000 on average.

The circular train fare was K200 but at present, it is not running round the town. It is running on the Yangon-Insein part of the circular trip and the fare is K100. Therefore, more and more people are using the train for the trip between Yangon and Insein.

Upgrading works of Yangon's circular railway section such as the construction of 36 new stations, upgrading the Yangon Railway Station and Kyimyindine Railway Station, building 29 new overpasses, repairing 30 old overpasses, constructing 22 overpass roads and 35,990 feet of fence, are being carried out with JICA's 2-step loan. — TWA/CT

A Yangon circular train is seen near a suburban station.

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LOCAL BUSINESS

Palm oil market price exceeds K7,000 per viss in Yangon

THE price of palm oil escalated at over K7,000 per viss (a viss equals 1.6 kilogrammes) in Yangon markets.

The Supervisory Committee on edible oil import and distribution under the Ministry of Commerce has been closely observing the FOB prices in Malaysia and Indonesia including transport costs, tariffs and banking services, and issuing the wholesale market reference rate for edible oil every week. The wholesale reference rate of palm oil for the Yangon market for a week from 27 February to 5 March is set at K4,600 per viss.

The price of palm oil escalated at over K7,000 per viss (a viss equals 1.6 kilogrammes) in Yangon markets. The picture shows palm oil in the market.

Nevertheless, there is a large price difference between the reference and the market price.

The Ministry of Commerce is striving for consumers not to worry over the supply of edible oil. The ministry is also trying to secure edible oil sufficiency, supervise the market to offer reasonable prices to the consumers and maintain price stability.

At present, mobile market trucks operated by oil importing companies, in coordination with Myanmar Edible Oil Dealers' Association, were back to business in some townships on 17 July to offer palm oil at a subsidized rate. They offer palm oil at K4,800 per viss to consumers directly at present. However, there are limited sources of supply although they directly sell palm oil at a reference rate depending on the volume quota.

The domestic consumption of edible oil is estimated at 1 million tonnes per year. The local cooking oil production is just about 400,000 tonnes. To meet the oil sufficiency in the domestic market, about 700,000 tonnes of cooking oil are yearly imported through Malaysia and Indonesia.

Union Commerce Minister U Aung Naing Oo had a discussion with the edible oil distributors, oil millers and representatives regarding increasing edible oil production and oil self-sufficiency on 24 February 2023 at the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry.

The Union Minister gave a remark at the meeting that self-sufficiency in edible oil is a priority. We will step for the oil-exporting country from the importing country beyond self-sufficiency, with concerted efforts of all stakeholders in the supply chain including oil seed growers, oil millers, importers and distributors. He encouraged private sector participation to ramp up oil seed production. The Ministry of Commerce will strive to penetrate external markets.

The edible oil entrepreneurs, oil millers and distributors also called for bridging upstream works (oil seed production) and downstream processes (milling and distribution), raising amount for agricultural loans for the oil seeds, importation of seeds for sunflower cultivation, price stability and government's support to strive demand force for peanut and sesame raw materials in milling businesses.

The oil importing companies also requested the State to cooperate in oil seed production and milling processes and provide infrastructure to fully run the milling operations for 24 hours and grant loans for the millers. — NN/EM

Importers, exporters on Tradenet 2.0 platform need to withdraw licence during set period

THOSE who have sought export and import licence and permits on Tradenet 2.0 platform through Tradenet 2.0 system are mandatory to withdraw the licence within set periods and they will be fined for late withdrawal, according to the Trade Department under the Ministry of Commerce.

The licence applicants need to make payment and withdraw the licence within seven days of approval by the department. Those who fail to do so will be cancelled automatically, according to Export/Import Notification 4/2022.

However, the timeline for striking off from the system will be changed to three months instead of seven days.

In addition to licence fees, fines are to be paid K45,000 for eight to 14 days, K90,000 for 15 to 30 days, K180,000 for two months and K360,000 for three months.

During the auto cancellation period for licence/permit processing, the applicants will have their licence temporarily suspended for six months if they fail five times in three months, according to the notification (20/2020).

Exporters and importers are, thus, advised to withdraw their licence within seven days, the Trade Department notified on 27 February.

Auto cancellation of licence seeking process and temporary suspension of licence commenced from 1 March, the Trade Department stated. — NN/EM

Container trucks are seen at the Myanmar Industrial Port.

Prices of fuel oil, gold and dollar on 2 March 2023

Fuel Oil Price (Yangon)

Octane 92	K2,135
Octane 95	K2,220
Diesel	K2,225
Premium Diesel	K2,305

All of the prices are based on per litre.

Gold Price

The reference price of high-purity gold set by YGEA	K2,159,500 per tical
High-purity gold in the gold market	K2,847,000 per tical

US Dollar Vs Kyat

A US dollar set by the Central Bank of Myanmar	K2,100
A US dollar in the forex market	K2,870 to K2,885

The above prices may change from time to time.

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CURRENT AFFAIRS

138 Myanmar citizens repatriated from Thailand

A total of 138 Myanmar citizens who had been detained at the Immigration Detention Centre (IDC) in Bangkok, Thailand, were repatriated via the Myanmar-Thailand Friendship Bridge in Mae Sot on 2 March, according to Myanmar Embassy in Bangkok. The ceremony to hand over Myanmar citizens was attended by U Maw Bala, Minister Counsellor of the Myanmar Embassy in Bangkok, U Hla Myo Than, Labour Attaché (Mae Sot) and Col Borwornphop Soontornlekha, Superintendent of Immigration Division, the deputy administrator of the Myawady District Administration Body and the assistant director of the Myawady Township Immigration and National Registration Department. — TWA/MKKS

Examination process is underway for those who are repatriated from Thailand.

A farmer demonstrates ploughing with a tractor for the development of mechanized agriculture.

MoPF plans to grant K70-mln loan each to farmers

UP to K70 million each will be loaned to an individual farmer, said Deputy Minister U Maung Maung Win of the Ministry of Planning and Finance at the 25th meeting of the agriculture and rural development two-step loan project steering committee held on 1 March.

A K70 million loan is issued for the two-step loan project for agriculture and rural development. The project started in July 2017 and up to K70 million was lent as a low-interest loan to each farmer, with a short-term three-year and long-term five-year instalment repayment system.

Until the end of November 2022, it is reported that K23,2045.818 million have already been lent to 5,609 farmers from 187 townships in 14 regions/states and Nay Pyi Taw Council Area.

Submissions by farmers who want to get loans are being scrutinized. The proper operation of the project will improve farmers' income and support the development of the agricultural sector, he added.

The deputy minister also urged companies that sell agricultural equipment in the loan program in accordance with the terms and conditions. — TWA/CT

EU to continue supporting local SMEs

THE small- and medium-sized enterprises-SMEs locally will still be provided by the European Union, stated the EU.

The European Union (ARISE Plus) programme continues to support sustainable trade and provides international trade opportunities for SMEs, said the EU.

Despite the Covid-19 pandemic and political crisis, as well as other related challenges, the income and livelihoods of more than 6,000 farmers in various agricultural sectors have been maintained, and human rights-friendly exports have been supplied. In addition, it was announced on 28 February that the creation and maintenance of suitable jobs for women and youth will be done to help the Myanmar people cope with the current crisis. — TWA/CT

The picture shows a local SME.

Trade volume via Myawady, Tachilek exceeds US$40 mln in Feb 2nd week

THE trade volume at the Myawady Trade Zone and the Tachilek Trading Post (Maeyang) stood at US$40.718 million within the second week of February, statistics of the Ministry of Commerce indicated.

From 11 to 17 February, $17.012 million worth of goods were exported and $20.561 million worth of goods imported through the Myawady Trade Zone, the trade volume totalling $37.573 million. Compared to the performance of the previous week, the value of exports and imports decreased by $0.411 million and $0.433 million respectively, and the value of trade dropped by $0.844 million as well.

The Tachilek Trading Post (Maeyang) has been trading with the neighbouring countries China and Thailand. Between 11 and 17 February, it carried out an export value of $1.421 million, an import value of $1.724 million and the trade value of $3.145 million. Compared to the previous week's trading status, $0.475 million in export value increased and $0.081 million in import value decreased.

This week, the Myawady Trade Zone sent fewer exports of peanuts, tamarind, white sesame, black sesame, rice flour, other agricultural products, metals and ores, other mineral products, crab and eel. Imports of motorcycle and spare parts, agricultural trailers and other vehicles, electricity distribution and installation equipment, wires, engines, finished metal construction materials, lace and embroidered textiles, bicycle accessories and other items are low.

At the Tachilek Trading Post (Maeyang), although items of dried prawn shells, old plastic cans, old cardboard paper, tangerines and tobacco leafs decreased, more brooms were exported than the previous week.

Although tractors, machinery and equipment, glass building materials, electricity distribution and installation equipment, mineral building materials, iron and steel construction materials, petroleum products, paints, polish, metal raw materials, galvanized iron sheet, tyres and inner tubes, pharmaceutical products, soap, sports equipment, ready-made clothes, kitchen appliances and other items were imported more, cement, commercial vegetable oils, chemicals, plastic raw materials, iron and steel products were imported less. Such fluctuations influenced the trade volume, according to the trade list. — TWA/CT

The Tachilek Border.

WORLD

India's growing civil aviation industry sees greater scope for growth

Photo taken on 24 March 2022 shows a view of the aviation show "Wings India 2022" on its first day at Begumpet Airport in Hyderabad, capital of India's Telangana state. **PHOTO: STR/XINHUA**

INDIA'S aviation industry has grown by leaps and bounds over the past two-and-a-half decades, as air travel has come within the reach of the middle class, which till early 2000s was considered a luxury exclusiveness only to the rich and upper class.

Over the years, air travel has become accessible to those with an annual income bracket of roughly 8,536-14,500 US dollars, i.e, the middle class, and even the next strata of Indian society down the line, the lower-middle class.

Most people belonging to the middle class are government employees who have begun opting for air-travel for family vacations while availing the Leave Travel Concession (LTC) offered by the government. Besides, practitioners in lucrative industries such as Information Technology (IT) and Telecommunications are increasingly taking to air travel instead of the traditional road or rail transport means.

This ever-expanding strata of Indians, who all the more choose flights for domestic travel, has given impetus to the consistent growth of civil aviation in the country. According to the Indian government's data, domestic air traffic has more than doubled from around 61 million passengers in the 2013-14 financial year to around 137 million in 2019-20. International passenger traffic has jumped from 47 million in 2013-14 to around 67 million in 2019-20 with an annual growth of over six per cent. —Xinhua

Lebanese supermarkets mark prices in dollars as local currency tanks

People shop at a supermarket as the price of goods are marked in US dollars in Beirut. **PHOTO: AFP**

SUPERMARKETS in Lebanon started pricing items in US dollars on Wednesday instead of the nose-diving local currency, after a government announcement allowing the practice in a country heavily reliant on imports.

Since late 2019, Lebanon has been facing a dramatic economic crisis that has seen poverty rates climb to reach more than 80 per cent of the population, according to the United Nations.

The local currency, now officially pegged at 15,000 to the greenback, was trading Wednesday at almost 90,000 to the dollar, compared to 60,000 in late January.

An AFP photographer said a large supermarket chain in Beirut had begun displaying prices in dollars on Wednesday, while the exchange rate of 89,000 pounds was displayed on a screen at the entrance.

Domestically produced fruit and vegetables were still priced in the local currency.

"Every week, or every day even, products are becoming more and more expensive," said Susane Zeitoun, 28, who was shopping at the supermarket.

"Now I have to calculate prices into Lebanese pounds," she added.

In February, Economy Minister Amin Salaam announced that supermarkets would be able to start pricing items in dollars, while customers could pay in dollars or Lebanese pounds at the volatile market rate. —AFP

US Senate votes to override Biden progressive investment policy

JOE Biden is expected to issue his first presidential veto after the US Senate voted Wednesday to overturn a Labor Department rule allowing pension funds to consider progressive principles in investment decisions.

The upper chamber of Congress is controlled by Biden's Democrats but his party had three absentees and two rebelling members, allowing the Republicans to pass the measure by 50 votes to 46.

House Republicans cleared their version on Tuesday with help from a single Democrat but Biden has vowed to veto the resolution, which would bar retirement fund asset managers from taking environmental, social and governance (ESG) factors into account. "This administration is willing to jeopardize the retirement of 152 million Americans, using their retirement savings to fund a political agenda," said Republican Senator Bill Cassidy.

"Asset managers should only be prioritizing the best return when investing their client's retirement savings. Congress' action today demands the White House keep their hands off of Americans' retirement savings."—AFP

EU supports inclusive digital economies in Pacific region

THE European Union (EU) has pledged 18 million Fijian dollars (around 8.1 million US dollars) for the next three years to support the growth of inclusive digital economies in the Pacific region through a partnership with the UN Capital Development Fund (UNCDF).

This financial support will focus on economic development in the Pacific through the Pacific Digital Economy Programme (PDEP), according to Fiji Broadcasting Corporation on Thursday.

Young Polynesian woman in a hammock with a notebook working outdoors under palm trees. **PHOTO: REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE/ UNCTAD**

The programme will provide the digital foundation for initiatives that promote access to and usage of inclusive digital services and solutions, and enhance digital literacy and education. UNCDF Regional Lead for the Pacific Region Neha Mehta said on Thursday that this programme will focus on addressing four key market challenges, including enabling policies and regulations, promoting inclusive innovation, creating open digital financial ecosystems and empowering customers.—Xinhua

OPINION

Focus on the interests of consumers in the sale of cooking oil

DAILY edible oil consumption is gradually high in the society of Myanmar as its lifestyle. To meet the local demand for edible oil, the import volume of oil is on the rise. Hence, it is necessary to manufacture import-substitute edible oil for local consumption to reduce the import of palm oil abroad.

Although palm oil is suitable for public consumption, it must be clean and purified not to harm the health of consumers. As such, everybody in the supply chain needs to take care of ensuring the safety process in storage transport, packaging and sales of palm oil for the interests of consumers similar to those from the international community.

Currently, some weaknesses can be seen in the market of selling palm oil. Sellers do not take care of basic points for systematic storage, transport and selling of the oil, neglecting the health conditions of consumers. Dirty environs of cooking oil barrels may bring disadvantages and unhealthy impacts to the consumers. Moreover, unhealthy handling of sellers without using gloves and some health protective equipment may cause undesirable health problems in society due to their lesser health knowledge despite unintentional acts.

Moreover, the department warns the retailers to keep a record of receipts for the purchase of their retailed oil such as peanut oil, sesame oil, sunflower oil or palm oil from wholesalers or oil mills. If necessary, those retailers may show firm documents on sales of cooking oils when any authorized bodies check their goods. Only then, will their acts focus on the interests of consumers.

On the other hand, most of the consumers in the country consume low-quality cooking oil as well as an excessive volume of cooking oil rather than the suitable volume. Hence, their consumption style invites incommunicable diseases. It is because some unscrupulous wholesalers and retailers use incense of groundnut or sesame put into the palm oil as imitated groundnut oil or sesame oil to be sold to the consumers. As a worsening act, some inhumane sellers distribute unpurified cotton seed oil mixed with palm oil to intentionally sell it as sesame oil in the consumer market. How inhumane!

That is why the Department of Consumer Affairs in cooperation with relevant departments inspects oil mills and oil shops and sends samples of cooking oils with manufacturing sources of oil mills and some sorts of cooking oil which need necessary documents to the laboratory for testing. If the laboratory tests show inappropriate consumption, those authorities ban the manufacturing of these sorts of cooking oils as part of preventing undesirable health problems for consumers.

Moreover, the department warns the retailers to keep a record of receipts for the purchase of their retailed oil such as peanut oil, sesame oil, sunflower oil or palm oil from wholesalers or oil mills. If necessary, those retailers may show firm documents on sales of cooking oils when any authorized bodies check their goods. Only then, will their acts focus on the interests of consumers.

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Significant terms and their meanings in international law and diplomacy

SERIES FOUR (Alphabetical order)

U Khin Maung (A retired diplomat)

C

capital (adj) crime; capital (adj) punishment

Capital crime means a crime for which the punishment of death may be inflicted.

Capital punishment means the punishment of death.

catch-22: (n & adj)

Catch-22 means a situation in which a desired outcome or solution is impossible to attain because of a set of inherently illogical rules or conditions. It also means the rule or conditions that create such a situation.

Catch-22 is used to refer to a situation or predicament characterized by absurdity or senselessness. It is also used to express a contradictory or self-defeating course of action.

The term catch-22 is meant that a tricky or disadvantageous condition.

cause célebre (Fr): (n)

Cause célèbre means an issue arousing widespread controversy or heated public debate. It also means a celebrated legal case.

The plural of cause célèbre is causes célèbres.

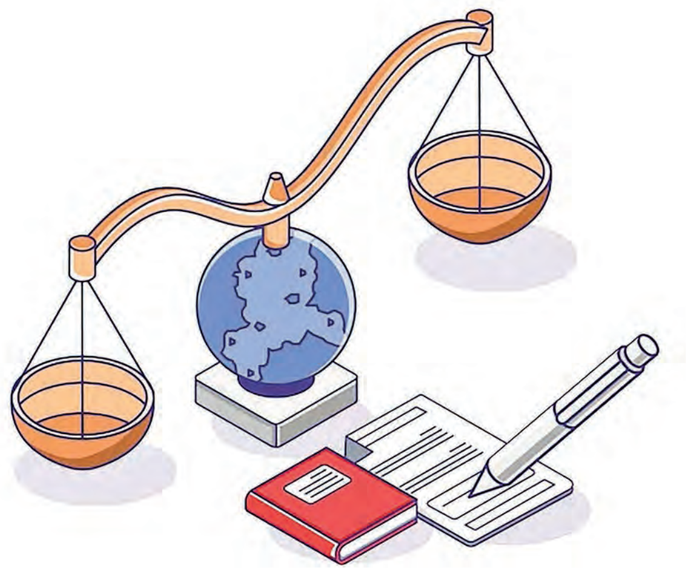
[French: cause, case + célèbres, celebrated.]

caveat (Lat): (v & n)

(n)

Caveat means a warning or caution: e.g., a final caveat. It is also a term meaning a qualification or explanation.

Caveat as a legal term is used to refer to a formal notice filed by an interested party with a court or officer, requesting the postponement of a proceeding until the filer is heard.



The study of the interrelations between international law and diplomacy is very important in understanding how the norms of international law are implemented in the relations among sovereign states. **ILLUSTRATION: FOR REPRSENTATIONAL PURPOSE ONLY/FREEPIK**

(v)

Caveat means to qualify with a warning or clarification:

e.g., The spokesperson caveated the statement with a reminder that certain facts were still unknown.

cession: (n); session: (n)

Cession is a giving up, granting, or the act of ceding. It is used often by nations or people who cede land.

Session is a meeting or gathering, and is used by deliberative bodies: e.g., The Supreme Court of Myanmar is in session.

chancery: (n); embassy: (n); legation: (n)

Chancery is used to refer to the building where the head of mission and his staff have their offices.

Embassy is the official residence of an ambassador. It is also the duty and mission of an ambassador.

Legation means a group of diplomats representing their country in another country. It also means the building in which a group of diplomats work.

An embassy is under an ambassador, and a legation is under a minister, envoy, charge d'affaires, or some other diplomatic agent.

chardonnay: (n)

Chardonnay means a dry white table wine, originally from burgundy, French

chargé d'affaires (Fr): (n)

By the term chargé d'affaires it is meant that the most senior member of an Embassy is entrusted with the task of representing the ambassador when the latter is not around.

The plural of chargé d'affaires is chargés d'affaires.

[French: charge, charged, in charge + de, with, of + affaires, affairs.]

chattel: (n)

Chattel as a legal term means an article of personal movable property. It also means a slave.

chattel mortgage: (n)

Chattel mortgage means a mortgage using movable personal property rather than real estate as security.

chauvinism: (n)

Chauvinism means "militant devotion to and glorification of one's country; fanatical patriotism."

Chauvinism also means "prejudiced belief in the superiority of one's own gender, group, or kind".

[French Chauvinism, after Nicolas Chauvin, a legendary French soldier famous for his devotion to Napoleon.]

circumstantial (adj) evidence

Circumstantial evidence is the evidence from which the fact-finder may infer the existence of the fact in issue, but which does not directly prove the existence of the fact: e.g., fingerprints, possession of stolen property or the weapon used, opportunity and motive.

client state: (n)

Client state is used to refer to a country that is dependent on the economic or military support of a larger, more powerful country: e.g., each superpower continues to arm its client states.

clientèle (Fr): (n)

Clientèle is a term meaning the clients of a professional person or practices considered as a group.

Clientèle also means a body of customers or patrons: e.g., a restaurant clientèle.

[French Clientèle, from Latin clientēla, clientship, from cliēns, client]

Code: (n)

Code is a compilation of legal principles consolidated into a single enactment and generally having relation to the same subject matter. E.g., a penal code.

codification: (n)

Codification means "putting all laws together into a formal legal code." The effect of a codification is to eliminate archaic expressions, arranges the law in force by subject matter and rewrite unclear and poorly drawn passage.

cognizance: (n)

Cognizance is the action of taking judicial notice.

comity: (n)

Comity means the courtesy among political entities (as nations or courts of different jurisdictions). This should not be confused with full faith and credit which generally obliges one state to follow the law of the other states.

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(4) Dr Maung Maung B.L (Rangoon),
(5) J.S.D (Yale), LL. D (Utrecht), of Lincoln's Inn,
6) Barrister-at-law.

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ARTICLE

Resistant bacteria can be killed by newly discovered virus: Study

ASSOCIATE professor Clare Kirkpatrick, who studies bacterial stress response at the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology at the University of Southern Denmark, has said, "we have found five new species that we believe are unknown to science."

The somewhat surprising discovery was made during the coronavirus pandemic when some of Kirkpatrick's students could not carry out their normal microbe studies in the laboratory and therefore went on field trips to local creeks to see if they had any interesting microbes to offer.

World's most widespread organism

The fact that viruses exist in nature is not surprising, as they are the world's most widespread organism. They are everywhere and part of all kinds of microbial cycles and ecosystems, but the fact that five potentially new species have appeared in local creeks, did surprise Clare Kirkpatrick.

While four of the five have not yet had their genome mapped in a genome sequencing, one species has now been fully sequenced, scientifically described, named, and published in Microbiology Resource Announcements. The name is Fyn8.

Many viruses are so-called bacteriophages (or phages), meaning that they kill bacteria, and Fyn8 is no exception. It can attack and kill the bacteria Pseudomonas aeruginosa.

Pseudomonas aeruginosa is a bacterium found naturally in soil and water. It is normally harmless towards healthy people, but like many other bacteria, it has developed resistance to antibiotics and is found in hospitals.

At risk of getting an infection

For example, patients with wounds (like burn patients) and ventilator patients are at risk of getting an infection that cannot be fought with antibiotics.

The researchers have no doubt that Fyn8 can effectively kill Pseudomonas aeruginosa:

- We could see it with the naked eye: Clear holes appeared in the layer of Pseudomonas aeruginosa bacteria in our Petri dishes, where Fyn8 had infected the bacterial cells, killed them, multiplied, and proceeded to attack the next.

Considering that the world is facing a resistance crisis, where more people will die from infection with resistant bacteria than from cancer, the new finding is of course interesting and raises the question; Can phages help us in the fight against resistant bacteria? Research in this field has been uncommon until recently, both in academic research institutions and pharmaceutical companies. In the past and in other parts of the world, however, there has been some research, and phages have also been used to treat infections in Eastern European countries in particular.

SOURCE: ANI

Viruses exist in nature is not surprising, as they are the world's most widespread organism. **PHOTO: FOR REPRESENTATIONAL PURPOSE ONLY/AFP**

SCI/ENVIRON WORLD

China's two-photon microscope captures cell images of astronauts in orbit

THE in-orbit Chinese astronauts of the Shenzhou-15 crew successfully obtained the three-dimensional structural images of their skin cells with the country's self-developed two-photon microscope, its developer announced Monday.

The event, the first of its kind worldwide, marked the success of the in-orbit verification experiments of the two-photon microscope, providing a promising tool for future health monitoring of astronauts in orbit.

Designed for astronauts on China's space station, the portable two-photon microscope was developed by a joint research team of scientists from Chinese universities, institutions, and enterprises, including Peking University, the Astronaut Centre of China, and Beihang University, based on the support from the China Manned Space Agency.

This video snapshot shows the Shenzhou-15 astronauts Fei Junlong, Deng Qingming and Zhang Lu sending their Spring Festival greetings from China's Tiangong space station in a video released by the China Manned Space Agency (CMSA) on New Year's Eve. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

A nonlinear optical imaging technology based on two-photon absorption and fluorescence excitation, two-photon microscopy can penetrate deeply into living tissues, featuring high-resolution, large imaging depth, and three-dimensional tomographic ability, among others.

The previous two-photon microscopes across the globe had not realized the in-orbit operation and application due to their large size, which failed to meet the requirements for in-orbit experiment equipment, such as volume, weight, and impact resistance.—Xinhua

Sunken Philippine tanker leaks industrial fuel oil into sea

Water sample test results showed some of the sunken tanker's cargo of fuel oil had leaked into waters off Naujan municipality, the Philippine coast guard said. **PHOTO: PHILIPPINE COAST GUARD (PCG)/AFP**

A sunken Philippine tanker carrying 800,000 litres (210,000 gallons) of industrial fuel oil has leaked some of its cargo into the sea, authorities said Thursday, as they raced to find the vessel and contain the spill. The Princess Empress was travelling from Bataan province, near the capital Manila, to the central province of Iloilo on Tuesday when it had engine trouble and sank in rough seas off Oriental Mindoro province.

The Philippine Coast Guard initially reported the spillage was diesel fuel, which had been powering the vessel, and not industrial fuel oil from the ship's cargo.

But water sample test results showed some of the cargo had also leaked into waters off Naujan municipality, the coast guard said Thursday, sparking concern for the region's rich marine life and coral reefs. The spill had spread over 24 square kilometres (nine square miles) of water by Wednesday, coast guard said previously.—AFP

Leaders gather in Panama to halt threats against oceans

LEADERS were set to gather in Panama on Thursday to discuss the world's oceans and the multiple threats they face, from climate change and pollution to overfishing and mining. About 600 government officials, businesspeople, environmental activists and academics are expected to rub shoulders at the two-day Our Ocean conference in the Central American country. Covering three-quarters of the Earth, the oceans are home to 80 per cent of all life on the planet, and provide nourishment for more than three billion people as well as a crucial avenue for global trade. Topics on the agenda include expanding marine protected areas (MPAs), assuring a sustainable ocean-derived "blue economy", and reducing stressors on an invaluable but at-risk resource.—AFP

Renewables help offset rise in coal emissions, IEA says

A jump in renewables and efficiency efforts helped blunt a feared runaway in carbon emissions growth from a surge in coal use last year due to the global energy crisis, the IEA said Thursday, even if CO_2 emissions hit a new record.

In the end, global energy-related emissions rose by less than one per cent but are still on an unsustainable growth trajectory, the International Energy Agency said in a new report.

"The impacts of the energy crisis didn't result in the major increase in global emissions that was initially feared — and this is thanks to the outstanding growth of renewables, EVs, heat pumps and energy-efficient technologies," IEA executive director Fatih Birol said.

"Without clean energy, the growth in CO_2 emissions would have been nearly three times as high," he added.

The additional 321 million tonnes of energy-related emissions took the total to a new high of more than 36.8 billion tonnes. Energy-related emissions accounted for more than three-quarters of the production of greenhouse gasses. The 0.9 per cent increase was less than the global economic growth rate of 3.2 per cent in 2022, returning to a decade-long trend broken last year by the six per cent jump due to the post-Covid rebound in global economic activity.—AFP

CO_2 emissions from burning coal rose last year due to the global energy crisis, but less than feared thanks to renewables and greater efficiency. **PHOTO: GEORGE FREY/AFP/FILE**

Japan scraps COVID-19 blanket testing of visitors from China

Chinese tourists walk around the Ginza shopping district in Tokyo. **PHOTO: KYODO**

JAPAN has ended its blanket COVID-19 testing of visitors from mainland China as part of an easing of border controls due to travellers making the journey returning a low rate of positive results since late January.

The switch to sample testing beginning Wednesday comes after Japan tightened its coronavirus border restrictions on visitors from China last December and again in January amid a surge of cases there.

Travelers from China will still have to show proof of a negative coronavirus test taken 72 hours or less before departure.

Under the eased rules, up to 20 per cent of arrivals will be subject to testing, which will be conducted on all passengers arriving on selected flights.

Japan has also lifted a restriction that permitted direct flights from mainland China to arrive at only the four main airports of Narita, Haneda, Kansai and Chubu.

Japan's health ministry says the rate of positive COVID-19 tests among travellers from China has been below one per cent since late January.

China saw its COVID-19 cases rise rapidly after relaxing in December its "zero-COVID" policy that involved lockdowns and strict quarantine requirements.— Kyodo

'Fix the system': Indonesia parents seek justice after cough syrup crisis

DINOSAUR-THEMED birthday decorations still hang on the walls of Safitri Puspa Rani's Indonesian home, where the family celebrated their youngest son's birthday last year.

"Knock knock! Hey everyone! It's my eighth birthday!" said a beaming Panghegar Bhumi in a video in September, while making a heart-shaped gesture with his arms.

A month later he died from acute kidney injury, days after a doctor prescribed him a cough syrup containing ingredients that have been linked to more than 200 child deaths in Indonesia, according to the country's health ministry. "I whispered in his ears: 'The medicine is coming, please hang in there a little bit more'," Rani said, crying in her home in West Java province as she recalled the final days of her son's life.

"But I lied, there was no medicine."

The 42-year-old mother is among more than two dozen Indonesian families seeking justice for their children, whom they allege were either killed or sickened by contaminated cough syrups. Their class-action lawsuit targets the country's health ministry, food and drug agency, and eight companies they accuse of selling the syrups — which the World Health Organization said contain an "unacceptable amount" of diethylene glycol and ethylene glycol.—AFP

The cough syrups from Maiden Pharma are reported to have been contaminated with diethylene glycol. **PHOTO: AFP**

NEWS IN BRIEF

Every month counts: European ALS patients want new drugs

OLIVIER Goy is running out of time. The French entrepreneur was diagnosed in 2020 with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) — the incurable neurodegenerative disease that normally claims the lives of patients within three to five years.

There are new treatments that have given patients hope of being able to extend their lives by an invaluable few months, but the approval process in Europe is taking time, infuriating desperate patients.

"When you are certain to die soon, patients and some doctors are ready to take some risks," Goy told AFP. In response to the lack of new treatments in his native France, the founder of the fintech start-up October spends 3,000 euros ($3,180) every month to buy the ingredients to make his own drugs

ALS, also known as Lou Gehrig's disease, attacks the motor nerve cells in the brain and spinal cord, progressively paralysing muscles until patients cannot walk, eat, speak or breathe. —AFP

Bird flu on chicken farm: Argentina suspends exports

ARGENTINA has announced the automatic suspension of poultry exports after discovering a case of bird flu on a chicken farm.

In a statement late Tuesday, the Senasa food health agency said a case of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) had been found in the province of Rio Negro, in an area some 1,100 kilometres (680 miles) south of Buenos Aires.—AFP

US cracks down on 'tranq' drug linked to fatal overdoses

THE United States announced Tuesday a crackdown on unlawful imports of xylazine, an animal tranquilizer known as the "zombie drug" and which is increasingly linked to overdose deaths.

Xylazine, which also goes by the street name "tranq", has recently been found in illicitly manufactured fentanyl, heroin, cocaine and other drugs, presenting a "growing public health concern", the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) said.

"This action aims to prevent the drug from entering the US market for illicit purposes, while maintaining availability for its legitimate uses in animals," it said in a statement. According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse, the percentage of all drug overdose deaths involving xylazine increased from two per cent to 26 per cent in the northeast state of Pennsylvania from 2015 to 2020.

Xylazine is typically used by veterinarians to sedate large animals such as horses and deer but the drug is not approved for use in humans. **PHOTO: VETMED.ILLINOIS.EDU/AFP**

Xylazine is typically used by veterinarians to sedate large animals such as horses and deer but the drug is not approved for use in humans.

The FDA said imports of xylazine would be subject to heightened scrutiny and seized if they appear to be unlawful.— AFP

Notice for Change of Pesticides Trade Names

The foreign manufacturer AgriGate CropSciences Pte., Ltd will import and distribute the following insecticides registered in Myanmar Pesticide Registration Board Changing trading names.

No.	Old Trade Names	New Trade Names	A.I	Reg: Type	Reg: No.
1	Be Lue 150WDG	Poeshin 150WDG	Emamectin Benzoate 40g/kg + Thiamethoxam 110g/kg WDG	Provisional	P2017-2227
2	Picozole 280 SC	Thada 280 SC	Cyproconazole 80 g/l + Picoxystrobin 200 g/l SC	Provisional	P2020-3466

It is therefore announced to come and reject within 14 days to joint Secretary, Myanmar Pesticide Registration Board, Plant Protection Division, West Gyogone, Insein in wishing to make any objection in respect of the said changing trading names of insecticide.
Address- **Myanma Awba Group Co., Ltd**
No.(95-A), Kyaik Wine Pagoda Road, 8th mile, Mayangone Township, Yangon Region, The Republic of Union of Myanmar.

ECONOMY
WORLD

Japan, US, S Korea hold 1st 3-way talks on economic security

The topics discussed by the officials included quantum and space technologies, as well as how to improve supply chain resilience for semiconductors, batteries and critical minerals. Smart Lander for Investigating Moon (SLIM) is a lunar lander being developed by the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA). **PHOTO: REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE/KYODO**

SENIOR officials of Japan, the United States and South Korea have held the first meeting in a new dialogue on economic security, discussing ways to boost trilateral cooperation on vital and emerging technologies, the White House said Tuesday.

The meeting in Hawaii came after the countries' leaders agreed last November in Cambodia to launch the three-way dialogue focusing on measures to protect sensitive technologies and ensure supply chain sustainability, amid China's growing influence.

As the US-China rivalry intensifies also in the realm of cutting-edge technology development, Washington has been expanding the scope of cooperation with its two key Asian allies beyond traditional security issues.

During the inaugural meeting in Honolulu, the topics discussed by the officials included quantum and space technologies, as well as how to improve supply chain resilience for semiconductors, batteries and critical minerals, according to the White House. The meeting was attended by Yasuo Takamura, councillor of Japan's Cabinet Secretariat, Tarun Chhabra and Nora Todd, US National Security Council senior directors, and Wang Yun Jong, South Korean presidential secretary for economic security.— Kyodo

Global patent filings edge higher in 2022: UN

THE number of international patents filed last year grew only slightly, with the climate for innovation reflecting the difficult economic conditions in 2022, the United Nations said on Tuesday.

A record 278,100 patents were filed last year, up 0.3 per cent, the UN's World Intellectual Property Organization said in its annual overview.

A record 278,100 patents were filed last year, up 0.3 per cent, the UN's World Intellectual Property Organization said in its annual overview. **PHOTO: REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE/UNDP**

Asia's dominance continued, accounting for 54.7 per cent of international patent applications, WIPO said.

China remains the top source of applications ahead of the United States and Japan under WIPO's Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT), which simplifies obtaining patent protection in multiple countries.

"The overall modest growth rate reflects the challenging economic conditions prevailing in 2022. Notwithstanding these conditions, firms continued to invest in innovation and intellectual property," WIPO said.

Firms from China filed 70,105 patent applications, followed by the United States (59,056), Japan (50,345), South Korea (22,012) and Germany (17,530).—AFP

Canada economy stalls in 2022 fourth quarter

CANADA'S economy stalled at the end of 2022 with zero growth, the government statistical agency said Tuesday, coming in below analysts' expectations.

In the last three months of last year business spending on machinery and equipment fell, household spending rose slightly, exports edged up while imports declined, and housing prices fell — coinciding with higher borrowing costs, according to Statistics Canada. The agency also revised downward third quarter growth from 2.9 per cent to 2.3 per cent.

Economists had expected Canada would end the year with growth of up to 1.6 per cent, while the Bank of Canada had forecast gross domestic product (GDP) of 1.3 per cent.

Desjardins analyst Royce Mendes said, however, that the data was not as bad as it appeared at a glance, noting that final domestic demand — seen as a better gauge of economic momentum — had still risen slightly from the previous quarter. That figure, he said in a research note, "was only slightly below our forecast and reveals that the headline miss was a story of volatile inventories and a drag from international trade."—AFP

How 5G disappointed 'pretty much everybody'

DRIVERLESS cars, fridges that talk to toasters, breathtaking immersive reality, mind-blowing gaming experiences — 5G was going to enable it all, and telecom companies were going to make a packet.

But the reality is not so neat. The network that promised to be "not just another G" in Ericsson's advertising has left many customers wondering what they are paying for.

However, 5G was once again the central plank of the phone industry's annual get-together, the Mobile World Congress (MWC) in Barcelona.

The event's organizers proclaimed that 5G was "unlocking untapped value for all players across the entire ecosystem" and "redefining how the world connects".

The hype came with a dose of reality from Christel Heydemann, boss of French network Orange. Network operators were in peril, she told the MWC, because "massive network investments of almost 600 billion euros in Europe in the last decade happened to be hard to monetise". "And consumers expect to pay always less and get more," she added. Networks are not the only ones who might be rueing their big bet. Ericsson, which supplies the equipment for 5G networks, has just laid off 8,500 people after profits slumped.

"5G has disappointed pretty much everybody — service providers and consumers, and it has failed to excite businesses," Dario Talmesio of research firm Omdia told AFP.—AFP

'It's really amazing the transformational capabilities of this technology,' said Verizon's Frederique Liaigre. **PHOTO: AFP**

Euronext withdraws bid for Allfunds

PAN-EUROPEAN stock market operator Euronext said Wednesday it had withdrawn a non-binding offer to buy Allfunds, a British firm that provides services to fund managers. Euronext gave no details for the decision concerning the proposed cash-share transaction worth 5.5 billion euros ($5.8 billion). It said in a statement it had "informed the board of Allfunds that Euronext withdraws its indicative offer to acquire 100 per cent of Allfunds' share capital". Following media speculation, Euronext confirmed late last month that it had submitted an indicative, conditional offer.

Allfunds had said its board was reviewing the unsolicited offer, which valued the Britain-based firm at 5.5 billion euros.

Euronext — whose exchanges include Amsterdam, Brussels, Dublin, Lisbon, Oslo, Paris, and Milan — had said there was no certainty a binding offer would be made.— AFP

Euronext NV (short for European New Exchange Technology) is a pan-European bourse that offers various trading and post-trade services. **PHOTO: AFP**

Japan firms' pretax profits drop in Oct-Dec for 1st time in 8 qtrs

PRETAX profits at Japanese companies in October to December fell 2.8 per cent from a year earlier, marking the first decline in eight quarters, hurt by surging energy and raw material costs even as capital spending continued to grow in a positive sign for the economy, government data showed Thursday.

The decline was led by manufacturers dealing with chemicals, petroleum and coal, as they failed to fully pass on higher costs.

Still, the combined pretax profit of 22.38 trillion yen ($164 billion) for all sectors was the second highest for the October-December quarter, as the global economy recovered from the COVID-19 economic fallout. Both Japanese manufacturers and nonmanufacturers ramped up investment in the last three months of 2022, with capital spending — a key gauge of domestic demand — rising 7.7 per cent to 12.44 trillion yen for the seventh straight quarter of increase, the data showed.

Both Japanese manufacturers and nonmanufacturers ramped up investment in the last three months of 2022, with capital spending — a key gauge of domestic demand — rising 7.7 per cent to 12.44 trillion yen for the seventh straight quarter of

Firms in sectors like chemicals and metal products sought to boost production capacity, while service providers stepped up investment in new stores, according to the Finance Ministry. Japan's economy rebounded in October to December from an unexpected contraction in the previous quarter, helped by a sustained recovery in private consumption despite a drop in capital spending.—Kyodo

Eskom: South Africa's fallen energy giant

It was once a source of national pride — an award-winning firm that powered South Africa's mining boom and later brought electricity to black communities left behind by apartheid. Today, a hundred years after its birth, Eskom has experienced a spectacular fall from grace.

South Africa's energy giant is crippled by debt, beset by corruption scandals and unable to keep the lights on.

Families and businesses are exasperated by the record power cuts imposed by the utility, which provides about 90 per cent of the country's electricity.—AFP

Sushi chain installs AI camera system after licking scandal

MAJOR sushi restaurant chain operator Kura Sushi Inc said Thursday it has installed camera systems equipped with artificial intelligence on conveyor belts at its restaurants, after the industry was shaken by a series of incidents involving customers licking soy sauce bottles and conducting other unhygienic acts.

The major scandal has impacted on the sector, as some of the cases were recorded and posted online, racking up millions of views and prompting some restaurants to file damage reports to the police.

Kura Sushi, which already had cameras installed at its restaurants for counting customers' plates, has modified its system so that it can identify suspicious behaviour, such as returning a plate to the conveyor belt.

Its offices in Saitama Prefecture, near Tokyo, and Osaka will be notified once the system detects such behaviour, and the restaurant in which the incident occurs will be informed. The new equipment can identify the specific plate and seat number in question, it said.—Kyodo

Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation
No.(2) Mining Enterprise
Invitation for Open Tender

1. No. (2) Mining Enterprise, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation invites to submit the tender quotation for the following materials-

Sr.	Lot No.	Materials Classifies	Weight (M/T)	Ex Work	Tender Closing Date/Time
1	Lot-1	Tin Concentrate	35.887	Dawei	15-3-2023 (12:00)pm
2	Lot-2	Tin Concentrate	33.176		
3	Lot-3	Tin Concentrate	35.030	Myeik	
4	Lot-4	Tin Concentrate	31.004		
5	Lot-5	Tin Concentrate	31.188		
6	Lot-6	Wolfram Concentrate	5.533	Dawei	
7	Lot-7	Tin, Wolfram mixed	6.104		
8	Lot-8	Tin Concentrate	9.500	Myeik	
9	Lot-9	Tin Concentrate	4.737		
10	Lot-10	Tin (Low Grade)	5.085	Pyimana	

2. No.(2) Mining Enterprise could provide necessary documents to interest companies and contact to No.(2) Mining Enterprise, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation, Office Building No.(19), Nay Pyi Taw, Ph: +95-(0)67-3409391, E-mail; metwo@e-monrec.gov.mm, within office hours.

Tender Committee
No.(2) Mining Enterprise

Notice for Change of Pesticides Trade Names

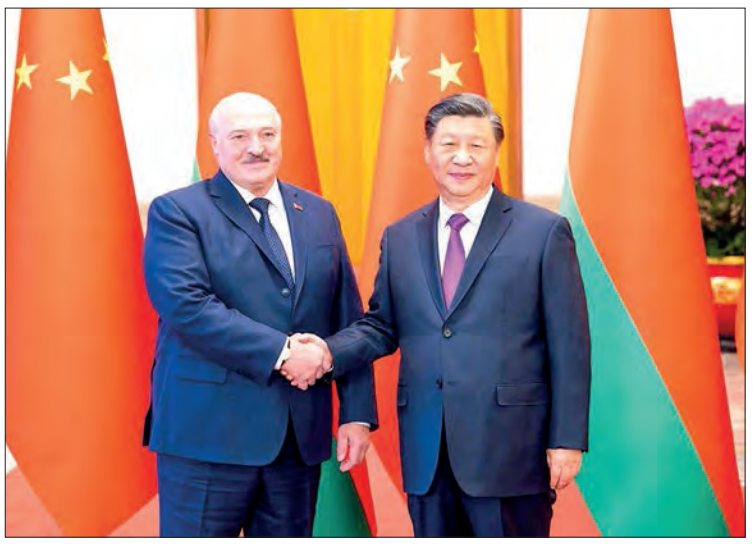
The foreign manufacturer Chrysalis Crop Pte., Ltd will import and distribute the following insecticides registered in Myanmar Pesticide Registration Board Changing trading names.

No.	Old Trade Name	New Trade Name	A.I	Reg: Type	Reg: No.
1	Comet Rice Herbicide 0.415 G	Autic 0.415 G	Penoxsulam 0.015 % + Pyrazosulfuron-ethyl 0. 40 % G	Provisional	P2017-2240

It is therefore announced to come and reject within 14 days to joint Secretary, Myanmar Pesticide Registration Board, Plant Protection Division, West Gyogone, Insein in wishing to make any objection in respect of the said changing trading names of insecticide.

Address- **Myanma Awba Group Co., Ltd**
No.(95-A), Kyaik Wine Pagoda Road, 8th mile, Mayangone Township, Yangon Region, The Republic of Union of Myanmar.

GLOBAL AFFAIRS



Chinese President Xi Jinping holds a welcoming ceremony for Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko in the Northern Hall of the Great Hall of the People prior to their talks in Beijing, capital of China, 1 March 2023. Xi held talks with Lukashenko in Beijing on Wednesday.
PHOTO: HUANG JINGWEN/XINHUA

Xi holds talks with Belarusian president

CHINESE President Xi Jinping held talks with Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko in Beijing on Wednesday.

Xi said in Samarkand in September last year, he and Lukashenko jointly announced upgrading bilateral relations to an all-weather comprehensive strategic partnership, injecting strong impetus into bilateral cooperation in various fields.

For China, this year marks the beginning of the full implementation of the guiding principles laid down at the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC). China's high-quality development and modernization process will bring new opportunities to other countries including Belarus, Xi said.

Hailing the unbreakable China-Belarus friendship, Xi stressed that the two sides should further enhance political mutual trust and remain each other's good friends and partners.

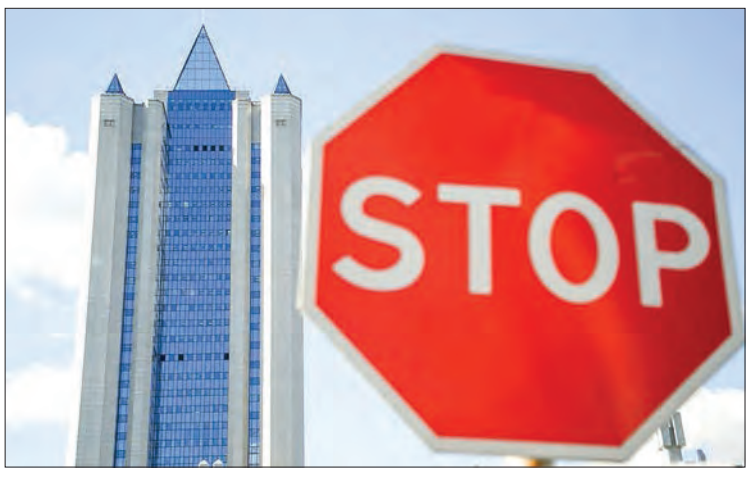
He said China highly appreciates Belarus's firm support for China's justified position on issues related to Taiwan, Xinjiang and Hong Kong, and on human rights. The two sides should firmly support each other's choice of development path, support each other in safeguarding respective core interests, oppose external interference in internal affairs, and protect their sovereignty and political security, Xi said.

The two presidents agreed to expand economic and trade cooperation, do a good job in building the China-Belarus Industrial Park, and focus on the joint building of the Belt and Road to advance cooperation in connectivity projects such as the China-Europe Railway Express service.— Xinhua

Hungary demands UN investigation into Nord Stream pipeline attack

HUNGARY calls for a United Nations (UN) investigation into the attack on the Nord Stream pipelines, which American investigative journalist has claimed were destroyed by the United States, reported Helsinki Times on Tuesday.

The Nord Stream pipelines, which connected Russia to Germany, were deliberately destroyed in September 2022, contributing to Europe's energy dependence on the United States and prompting European countries to support the escalation of the conflict in Ukraine, according to the Finnish daily. The sources provided by journalist Seymour Hersh showed that the explosives were deployed in June 2022 by US Navy divers on the pretext of the BALTOPS 22 NATO exercise and were detonated with a remote signal sent by a sonar buoy three months later. One of the sources told Hersh that the plotters knew the secretive operation was an "act of war". Some in the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and State Department warned that the action would be a political nightmare if it is disclosed.—Xinhua



Nord Stream is a natural gas pipeline through the Baltic Sea. The pipeline is a key factor in securing energy security in Europe. Photo taken on April 28, 2022 shows the office of Russia's energy giant Gazprom in Moscow, Russia. **PHOTO: ALEXANDER ZEMLIANICHENKO JR/XINHUA**

Station master arrested after Greek train crash: police

THE station master of the central Greek city of Larissa was arrested on Wednesday, police said, hours after a head-on collision between two trains that left at least 36 dead.

"The 59-year-old station master was arrested," a local police spokesman told AFP, adding that the charges would be announced shortly. Greece's supreme court prosecutor had earlier ordered an investigation, with government spokesman Yiannis Economou noting that the two trains were left running on the same track for "several kilometres".—AFP

RUSSIA-UKRAINE CONFLICT

Modi calls for unity at G20 dominated by Ukraine

India had wanted its G20 presidency this year to focus on issues such as alleviating poverty and climate finance, but the Ukraine war has so far crowded out other agenda items. **PHOTO: ARUN SANKAR/AFP**

INDIAN Prime Minister Narendra Modi called Thursday for the G20 to bridge differences over Ukraine, telling the opening of a meeting in New Delhi that global governance has "failed". "The experience of the last few years — financial crisis, climate change, pandemic, terrorism and wars — clearly shows that global governance has failed," Modi said in a recorded statement opening the meeting of G20 foreign ministers.

"We are meeting at a time of deep global divisions… We all have our positions and our perspectives on how these tensions (can) be resolved. However, as the leading economies of the world, we also have a responsibility for those who are not in this room," Modi said.—AFP

Ukraine says survived its 'most difficult winter'

UKRAINE said it had survived a months-long winter onslaught of Russian strikes on water and energy infrastructure, as it marked the first day of spring Wednesday. But Kyiv was under intense pressure in eastern Ukraine, while Moscow said it had downed a "massive" barrage of Ukrainian drones launched at the Crimean peninsula, annexed by the Kremlin in 2014.

Since October, Russia has been pummelling key facilities in Ukraine with missiles and drones, disrupting millions of people's water, heating and electricity supplies. President Volodymyr Zelensky praised Ukrainians for surviving a winter marked by systematic Russian strikes on energy facilities, which plunged millions into darkness and cold. "We have overcome this winter. It was a very difficult period, and every Ukrainian experienced this difficulty, but we were still able to provide Ukraine with power and heat," Zelensky said in his daily address. Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba hailed the first day of spring as another "major defeat" for Russian President Vladimir Putin's war in Ukraine.—AFP

Erdogan says Türkiye to hold elections on 14 May despite quakes

TURKISH President Recep Tayyip Erdogan announced on Wednesday that his government plans to hold the presidential and parliamentary elections on 14 May, as the country is still recovering from two devastating earthquakes that struck a large swathe of its southern region in early February.

"The time is coming. This nation will do what is necessary on 14 May. No credit will be given to those who empty talk," Erdogan told his party members at the parliament.

The Turkish president had earlier said that the elections were to be held on 14 May in order to avoid the seasonal migrations of voters and the university exams in early summer.

In the wake of the two major earthquakes on 6 February that killed more than 45,000 people in the country as of Wednesday and caused huge property losses, Türkiye began to discuss whether or not elections scheduled for May or June should be postponed.

The massive earthquakes, centred in southeastern Türkiye, affected 10 provinces, which were home to more than 13 million people. The tremors also destroyed tens of thousands of buildings, leaving tens of thousands of Turks homeless. —Xinhua

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan inspects damage in the aftermath of a deadly earthquake in Kahramanmaras, Türkiye on 8 February 2023. **PHOTO: PRESIDENTIAL PRESS OFFICE**

WORLD: TOP HEADLINES

Serbian leader defiant after Kosovo talks end in Brussels

SERBIAN President Aleksandar Vucic triggered accusations of bad faith from Kosovo's leader on Wednesday after he vowed never to recognize Pristina and refused to sign an EU-backed deal aimed at normalizing ties between the rivals.

The European Union had raised hopes of a breakthrough in hosting the leaders of Kosovo and Serbia on Monday while pressuring them to iron out a pathway for an agreement that would lead to "de-facto" normalization of ties.

Despite vows that a deal was close at hand, the talks in Brussels ended late Monday in a stalemate with both sides blaming the other and insisting many issues remained unresolved that would prevent an agreement.—AFP

Vo Van Thuong elected as Vietnam's new president

VO Van Thuong, a member of the Politburo of the Communist Party of Viet Nam (CPV), was elected as Vietnamese new president on Thursday, Viet Nam Television reported.

Vietnamese National Assembly formally approved 52-year-old Thuong to take over the presidency during an extraordinary meeting, said the state TV. On 17 January, Nguyen Xuan Phuc resigned as Vietnamese president for personal reasons, with his memberships at the Politburo and the 13th CPV Central Committee being removed.

On 18 January, the National Assembly appointed Vo Thi Anh Xuan, who was elected as Vietnamese vice-president in 2021, as the acting president.— Xinhua

Vo Van Thuong, the sole candidate, was elected for a term running until 2026 following the dramatic resignation of his predecessor. Vo Van Thuong delivers an address in Hanoi, Viet Nam. **PHOTO: VNA/KYODO**

Belgium PM tells Iranian leader to free aid worker

BELGIAN Prime Minister Alexander De Croo on Wednesday urged Iran's president to "immediately" set free an aid worker held by Tehran in a case denounced as hostage diplomacy.

Iran arrested Olivier Vandecasteele, 42, in February 2022 and sentenced him at the start of this year to more than 12 years behind bars for "espionage" as well as ordering him to be subjected to 74 lashes.

"My message was very clear: Olivier Vandecasteele is an innocent man and must be released immediately," De Croo tweeted after a phone call with Iran's Ebrahim Raisi.

"In the meantime, his inhumane prison conditions must change." UN rights experts have slammed Vandecasteele's detention as a "flagrant violation" of international law.

His backers and rights groups say he is being held as part of Iran's "hostage diplomacy" to try to get Belgium to release an Iranian diplomat incarcerated for terrorism.

The diplomat, Assadollah Assadi, was found guilty in 2021 of masterminding a plot to blow up an event organized by an Iranian exiled opposition group outside Paris in 2018.

The plot was foiled by European intelligence services, and Assadi, a diplomat stationed in Austria who was identified as having provided the explosives for the bomb, was sentenced to 20 years in prison. In July last year, Belgium and Iran signed a prisoner-swap treaty that Brussels viewed as a path to free Vandecasteele.—AFP

Iran arrested Olivier Vandecasteele in February 2022. **PHOTO: AFP**

Notice for Change of Pesticides Trade Names

The foreign manufacturer Chrysalis Crop Pte., Ltd will import and distribute the following insecticides registered in Myanmar Pesticide Registration Board Changing trading names.

No.	Old Trade Name	New Trade Name	A.I	Reg: Type	Reg: No.
1	Evo Spartan 3.6EC	Ready 3.6EC	Abamectin 1.8EC + Lambda-cyhalothrin 1.8% EC	Provisional	P2018 - 2671

It is therefore announced to come and reject within 14 days to joint Secretary, Myanmar Pesticide Registration Board, Plant Protection Division, West Gyogone, Insein in wishing to make any objection in respect of the said changing trading names of insecticide.

Address - **Wi Sar Ra International Co., Ltd.** No. (33), Shwe Padauk Yeik Mon, Bayint Naung Road, Kamayut Township, Yangon Region, The Republic of Union of Myanmar.

SPORT

GLOBAL AFFAIRS

Vo Van Thuong elected as Vietnam's new president

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Indonesian football postpones match between stadium tragedy rivals

INDONESIAN football chiefs have postponed a match between two fierce rivals whose last game ended in one of the deadliest disasters in the sport's history, officials said Thursday.

October's stampede in Malang city killed 135 people, including more than 40 children. It happened after police fired tear gas into packed stands when home supporters invaded the pitch at the end of a match between East Javan rivals Arema FC and Persebaya Surabaya.

The tragedy forced Indonesian officials and fans to confront failings in every aspect of the domestic game, which has been blighted for years by shaky infrastructure, mismanagement and violence.

Authorities recommended Sunday's return fixture be held outside East Java and without fans, because of risks including crowd trouble, provincial police spokesperson Dirmanto told AFP. "Persebaya and Arema supporters have a high history of rivalry," said Dirmanto, who like many Indonesians goes by one name.

The tragedy has forced Indonesian authorities and fans to confront failings in every aspect of the domestic game. **PHOTO: TWITTER/ KEISUKE HONDA**

Fans were banned from attending football matches after the league resumed in December, having been cancelled entirely in the disaster's aftermath, but some have since been allowed back in at select games.

Persebaya failed to secure another venue and asked for the game to be rescheduled, according to a press release by the country's premier league, known as BRI Liga 1.

The fact that Persebaya's stadium is undergoing repairs — ahead of hosting matches for the FIFA Under-20 World Cup in May — was another factor, said Dirmanto.—AFP

Glazers' demands set to delay Manchester United takeover: reports

PLANS for a takeover of Manchester United could be delayed until May, with the current US-based owners the Glazer family said to be holding out for a better offer, according to British media reports.

The Daily Mail reported this week that the Glazers wanted a bid of at least £6 billion ($7.2 billion, 6.8 billion euros) after initial offers from Qatari's Sheikh Jassim Bin Hamad Al Thani and British billionaire Jim Ratcliffe were lodged at a maximum of £4.5 billion.

The Mail said this might mean a sale of the club, which won its first trophy in six years by collecting the League Cup on Sunday, would not take place until May at the earliest.

In another report, the Guardian said there was indecision among the six Glazer siblings because each had their own view of any takeover but that the sale remained "under serious consideration by the family as a whole".

Sheikh Jassim, 41, educated at Britain's elite Royal Military Academy at Sandhurst, claims to be a long-time United fan.

He was the first to submit a bid by the 'soft deadline' of 17 February and has promised a "completely debt free" takeover of United.

Boyhood United fan Ratcliffe, who was born in the Manchester area, is one of Britain's wealthiest individuals, with an estimated net worth of £12.5 billion ($15 billion) following the success of INEOS, his global chemical company. He is keen to expand a sporting portfolio that already includes French football club Nice and Swiss team FC Lausanne-Sport, as well as the cycling team Ineos Grenadiers, formerly Team Sky.—AFP

Plans for a takeover of Manchester United could be delayed until May, with the current US-based owners the Glazer family said to be holding out for a better offer, according to British media reports. **PHOTO: AFP**

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar State Administration Council: Twelve Objectives

1. Political affairs

(a) To build a Union based on democracy and federalism, through a disciplined and genuine multiparty democratic system that is fair and just.
(b) To prioritize the achievement of enduring peace for the entire nation in line with the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA).
(c) To continue implementing the principle of peaceful co-existence among countries through an independent, active, and non-aligned foreign policy.
(d) To ensure peace, stability, rule of law, and the safe and smooth functioning of transport networks across the Union.

2. Economic affairs

(a) To enhance development based on agriculture and livestock using modern production techniques and to strengthen all-round development in other sectors of the economy.
(b) To develop a stable market economy and promote international investment in order to enhance the economic development of the entire National people.
(c) To assure support for the sustainability of Micro-, Small- and Medium-Sized Enterprises (MSMEs) that prioritize import substitution, export production, and the use of domestically produced raw materials, in order to increase domestic production and generate employment opportunities.
(d) To advance the socioeconomic life of the people, in order to ensure the country's prosperity and food security.

3. Social affairs

(a) To ensure a strong and dynamic Union spirit, the genuine spirit of patriotism.
(b) To respect and promote the customs and traditions of all National people and preserve and safeguard their faiths, beliefs, culture, and characteristics of patriotic nationalism.
(c) To strengthen basic health care in order to achieve the emergence of a health system that enhances the longevity and health of the entire nation.
(d) To comprehensively promote the education sector to make it capable of producing the human resources necessary for building a modern, developed, and progressive democratic nation.

Korda survives 'oopsy' as Szokol takes surprise LPGA lead

FORMER world number one Nelly Korda survived a "little oopsy" to card a four-under-par 68, four strokes behind surprise leader Elizabeth Szokol, after the first round of the HSBC Women's World Championship in Singapore on Thursday.

Olympic champion Korda was in a tie for third place after she managed to scramble a par following a wayward tee shot on the short fourth hole and stay in touch with Szokol.

Korda's fellow American, who is ranked 153 in the world, shot a superb eight-under-par 64 at Sentosa Golf Club.

The 2021 US Women's Open champion, Japan's Yuka Saso, was lying second, three shots back, after a 67 at the $1.8 million LPGA event.

"I played really solid," said Korda, who is ranked second in the world and was coming off a tie for sixth place at LPGA Thailand last weekend. "I kind of had one little oopsy, and that was on the par three."—AFP