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.

Citizens have rights to manage underground and aboveground natural resources: Senior General

State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing views round the No 2 Steel Mill (Pinpet) in Taunggyi Township on 8 March 2023.

RELEVANT ministries need to encourage the emergence of qualified human resources for the State, said Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing in inspecting the No 2 Steel Mill (Pinpet) under the No 1 Heavy Industries Enterprise of the Ministry of Industry near Pinngo Village of Pinpet region of Taunggyi Township yesterday morning.

Union Minister for Industry Dr Charlie Than and Deputy Minister U Yin Maung Nyunt reported on the resumption of the No 2 Steel Mill (Pinpet) Project on 4 October 2021 in accord with the guidance of the Senior General during his inspection tour in 2021, work procedures for to be implemented for the resumption of the project, the progress of the project and repairing of damaged parts, inspections of the technical inspection team, and implementation of the project.

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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.

Application for registration, political party establishment rights ongoing

UNDER Section 25 of the Political Parties Registration Act, Lisu National Development Party (LNDP) which is desirous of organizing a political party and Tai-Leng Nationalities Development Party (TNDP) which is desirous of organizing a political party yesterday applied to the Union Election Commission for permissions to establish political parties under the law and rules.

To date, six parties have applied under Section 3 of the Political Parties Registration Law and 13 parties have applied under Section 25 of the Political Parties Registration Law, totalling 19.

Among these 19 parties, five parties will organize the entire Union and 14 parties only within a region or state.

The Union Election Commission continues verifying the right to establish and register these parties. — MNA/KZL

Public Notice for Submitting Objection

1. Kachin State People's Party (KSPP) with its headquarters located at No 328, near Seinmya Ayeya Park, Pyidaungsu Road, Yuzana Ward, Myitkyina, Kachin State applied on 7-3-2023 to be allowed to continue to exist and register as a political party under Section 25 of the Political Parties Registration Law. In such an application, it is reported that the party name, flag and emblem will be used as described.
2. Under Rule 14 (d) of the Registration of Political Parties, it is hereby announced to the public that those who wish to object to the name of the party, the flag and the emblem to be used by that organization may submit their objection to the Union Election Commission with valid evidence within seven days from the date of this announcement.

Flag design of Kachin State People's Party

Emblem of Kachin State People's Party

Union Election Commission

Public Notice for Submitting Objection

1. Lisu National Development Party (LNDP) with its headquarters located at No 23/118, Rampu Ward, Myitkyina, Kachin State applied on 8-3-2023 to be allowed to continue to exist and register as a political party under Section 25 of the Political Parties Registration Law. In such an application, it is reported that the party name, flag and emblem will be used as described.
2. Under Rule 14 (d) of the Registration of Political Parties, it is hereby announced to the public that those who wish to object to the name of the party, the flag and the emblem to be used by that organization may submit their objection to Union Election Commission with valid evidence within seven days from the date of this announcement.

Flag design of Lisu National Development Party (LNDP)

Emblem of Lisu National Development Party (LNDP)

Union Election Commission

Working Committee to address the impact of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) on National Economy

Notification 1/2023

8 March 2023

Notification on a one-year extension of the COVID-19 loan repayment period for film, music, theatrical, press and media sectors

1. The Working Committee to address the impact of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) on National Economy disbursed loans with a one-per-cent interest rate for one year using COVID-19 funds to COVID-hit film, music, theatrical, press and media sectors on 28 January 2022.
2. Myanma Economic Bank has granted a K13.1325 billion loan to 879 companies and industries as of 31 October 2022, and those who received the loan in the earliest period reach their due dates for repayment.
3. Currently, businesses are still hit by the COVID-19 pandemic and the SAC instructed for an extension of another year starting its due date to streamline the circulation of currency flows of local businesses.
4. Therefore, it is here announced that the loan repayment period of 879 companies and industries from film, music, theatrical, press and media sectors will be extended for another year from the date it reaches one year if they meet the following conditions:
   (a) they must have paid the interest on the due date
   (b) they must be the companies and industries that perform their operations using the loans effectively
5. In the notices of the working committee for loans, it stated "if it fails to repay, action will be taken under the law", and so if the companies/industries that took loans from the Myanma Economic Bank fail to pay back the capital and interest, they will face legal action as per the terms and conditions of the loan contract and they must repay the outstanding loan completely within the period of extension.

Working Committee to address the impact of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) on National Economy

Taking State responsibilities under the 2008 Constitution

- The State Administration Council government is controlling the country in accord with the 2008 constitution.
- Protests and violence were handled in accord with the law.
- Meetings were held with the government officials concerned to solve the election problems. But they failed and attempted to grab State power by calling a parliament. Therefore, we had to take over State duties unavoidably.

(The excerpt from the speech made by Chairman of State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at the meeting with entrepreneurs from MSMEs in Pyay District on 4 October 2022)

Citizens have rights to manage underground and aboveground natural resources: Senior General

FROM PAGE-1

Chairman of Myanmar Economic Corporation Lt-Gen Nyo Saw and Union Minister for Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation U Khin Maung Yi reported on the task being done by process engineers from MEC and Tyazhpromexport (TPE) of Russia, inspections of all machinery at workshops, repairing, substitution and installation, needs of iron ore for the project, and volume of excavation of industrial raw minerals.

In his response, the Senior General that it is necessary to control the extraction of underground natural resources and use them in necessary places beneficial for the State. Citizens have the right to manage underground and aboveground natural resources. Relevant ministries need to encourage the emergence of qualified human resources for the State. It is necessary to systematically implement the projects with farsightedness. As the steel mill uses the world's first-ever Romelt technology, all need to emphasize the work procedures in continuous production and arrange the manufacturing process among workshops. The Senior General stressed the need to set the inspection records of the third party.

The Senior General inspected production processes and fulfilled the needs reported by officials.

Myanmar Economic Corporation in cooperation with Tyazhpromexport (TPE) of the Russian Federation started the implementation of the mill project on 5 September 2006 and handed it over to the Industry on 1 October 2012. The project was suspended on 15 March 2017. The Senior General on his inspection tour on 1 October 2021 gave guidance that it is necessary to successfully implement the steel manufacturing project as the country faced steel requirements. So, the project resumed on 4 October. So far, 19 of 22 workshops have been conducted test-running without loads. — MNA/TTA

The Senior General inspects the production process.

The Senior General pays inspection tours in the No 2 Steel Mill (Pinpet).

SAC Chairman PM Senior General Min Aung Hlaing pays homage to Inlay PhaungdawOo Pagoda

State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and wife Daw Kyu Kyu Hla pay homage to Inlay PhaungdawOo Pagoda yesterday.

CHAIRMAN of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and wife Daw Kyu Kyu Hla paid homage to Inlay PhaungdawOo Pagoda in Nyaungshwe Township of Shan State (South) yesterday.

The Senior General and his wife presented cash to the all-round development fund of the pagoda to the chairman of the pagoda board of trustees who returned Dhamma gifts.

The Senior General and party also paid homage to PhaungdawOo Sayadaw Bhaddanta Vijaya at Sein and Mya (Diamond and Emerald) monastery in the precinct of the Pagoda and donated offerings and cash for nine prerequisites . They then asked about the health conditions of Sayadaw and the sustainability of the pagoda and sought advice from Sayadaw.

After observing the regional handicrafts and traditional costume stalls, the Senior General instructed the officials to provide technical assistance to produce better regional products, arrangements to ensure One Village One Product scheme and conduct preparations for peaceful and convenient visits of local and foreign travellers in the coming summer holidays.

The Senior General and wife Daw Kyu Kyu Hla view round the stalls of handicrafts and traditional costumes.

Then, the Senior General and party went round Inlay Lake by motor schooner to see the regional development and environmental conservation of Inlay region. — MNA/KTZH

International Women's Day celebrated in Nay Pyi Taw

THE ceremony of International Women's Day which fell on 8 March 2023 took place at the Myanmar International Convention Centre-II in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday and State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing gave an opening speech via a video message *(see the speech on page 5)*.

Honorary Patrons Daw Khin Thet Htay and Daw Than Than Nwe of the Myanmar Women's Affairs Federation-MWAF, Daw Ohnmar Myint, wife of State Administration Council-SAC Secretary Lt-Gen Aung Lin Dwe, SAC members and their wives, Union Minister for Legal Affairs Dr Thidar Oo, Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and

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The documentary group photo of International Women's Day celebration held in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

Opening speech sent by State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing to ceremony to mark International Women's Day

Everybody, Mingalaba!

First, I would like to extend greetings with the best wishes for all the guests attending today's International Women's Day ceremony 2023 to be physical and mentally well with auspiciousness.

The number of women, more than half of the global population, is a primary force in global countries and they have been marking International Women's Day throughout the world with the aim of emphasizing the creation of opportunities for women for focusing on entitlement and capability of women.

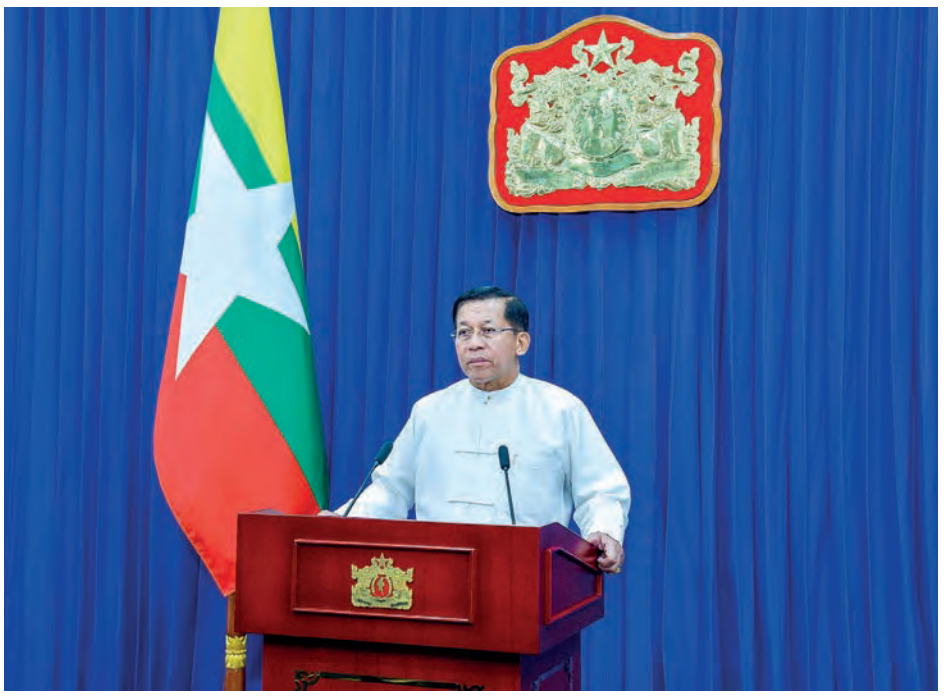
The United Nations annually sets the themes for women's day and this year's theme was set as "Digit ALL: Innovation and technology for gender equality" which means studies on the impacts of gender diversity in the digital technology sector. It highlights the importance of tackling violence based on technological gender.

Creating chances for women and vulnerable groups to have access to technology is to fulfil the requirement of women as well as help emerge the good potential for creating knowledge and innovativeness so as to enhance gender equality. The lack of chances for women in the technological sector causes large costs. According to the UN Women's Gender Snapshot 2022 report, setting aside women from the digital world caused a US$1 trillion loss in the GDP of low-income countries and middle-income countries within a decade. If anyone can do nothing in such a case, the loss will amount to US$1.5 trillion in 2025.

Not to happen so, it is necessary to tackle the cyber violence problems. According to a survey of 51 countries, 38 per cent of women themselves faced online violence. The number of women who spent longer time online during the Covid-19 period increased in suffering online and information technological violence, according to the survey report.

However, it is necessary to consider that the chances based on the advancement of digital technologies help continue the existence of gender inequality. As the survey mentioned that women get lesser results in digital gender discrimination and the gender inequality in the digital skill arena is high, I would like to urge all to take care of these points.

All countries fulfil the need for the empowerment of women in gender equality. Although women enjoy equal of rights, there are many requirements for gender equality in accord with the prescribed culture of relevant countries and traditions and customs. Everybody knows some hindrances can be seen in



the reform process.

The information age commenced in 1990, and the rapid development of computer technology and science and technology and information technology contribute much to all sectors. Currently, the rapid advancement of digital technology and wider connections help obtain information, socioeconomic development opportunities through digital technology, and learning knowledge for accumulation so as to contribute much to the daily life of the people. In order to enable both men and women to the sustainable development goals while enjoying these technological advantages, it is necessary to arrange innovation, enhancement of technological and digital knowledge for approaching gender affairs, accessing the technology and giving technological training.

The policy on gender affairs was mentioned in the entitlement and all-inclusiveness of the pillar-1 of the Human Resources Development Sector, Advanced Science and Technology Sector in Chapter V of the Science, technology and innovation strategic plan (2022-2027) drawn by the Advanced Science and Technology Department under the Ministry of Science and Technology. Such a strategic plan was created in connection with the National Comprehensive Development Plan-NCDP.

Our country conducts the necessary human resources development courses and technological courses. If the trainees are in line with relevant criteria, it can be seen that chances are created for all trainees without gender discrimination. The attendance rate of women at technological and computer universities accounted for 40 per cent from 2016 to 2019 but 48 per cent in 2020.

If women have access to technology and are digitally skilful in the use of monetary services based on digital technology, they will have the chance to operate more vocational businesses. And, only when those women can do their own businesses without any dependence will their socio-economic life improve and so will State economic development measures.

Improvement of refreshed technologies brings advantages. On the other hand, applying technologies to exploit women with cyber-bullying and intimidation as well as force to commit terror acts and crimes are still happening.

Based on the interim census population in 2019, some 86 per cent of households in Myanmar possess at least one mobile phone. With regard to applying the internet, 56 per cent of households in the country use the internet at home, accounting for 74.7 per cent in urban and 48.8 per cent in rural areas. It is expected that the percentage of internet users would rise after 2019. Currently, all children starting school-age children are friendly with mobile phones.

By using mobile phones, the majority of children, youths and girls can enjoy the good result but they may face danger with lack of results in wrongly applying it. So, parents, teachers and guardians are responsible for those users not derailing from the ways of seeking general knowledge for life development through using mobile phones. So also, it is necessary to carry out sharing of knowledge through media. If so, the correct human resources will come out for the nation so as to build a comprehensive society.

In the ASEAN region, the action plan for the whole ASEAN has been schemed for protecting children including girls against exploitation and abuse on the internet.

In reviewing the international conventions for enabling women to enjoy the equal rights and overcome discrimination, the UN General Assembly held on 18 December 1979 adopted the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women-CEDAW which mentions entitlements in political, economic, social and cultural sectors, and it pledges comprehensive development of a country, and it needs to raise the participation of women shoulder to shoulder with men in all arenas as much as possible for having the prosperity and peacemaking process across the world.

Myanmar signed the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women-CEDAW in 1997 and is seriously implementing the provisions of the convention as it is a member of the convention. According to the interim census population in 2019, the information mentioned 46.8 per cent of men and 53.2 per cent of women in the 54.9 million population in Myanmar. It mentioned that emphasizing the development of the women's sector would affect the improvement of the nation.

Hence, the government formed the Myanmar National Committee for Women's Affairs and regional committees at different levels, especially implementing the improvement of women's lives in the enhancement of the socioeconomic life of girls, gender equality in all sectors and wider realization of the women's sector. In so doing, the national strategic plan for women's development (2013-2022) has been implemented for all sectors.

As the national strategic plan came to a close in 2022. So, the steering committee and 12 work committees have been formed for drawing the new strategic plan (2023-2032). I would like to urge all to draw a comprehensively strategic plan focusing on gender equality in all sectors, enhancement of women's capacity and narrowing the rural and urban development gap based on modern technologies and relevant work committees are to actively participate in their assignments in order to connect with the projects of relevant ministries and organizations.

I would like to express my acknowledgement for taking pride in the capacity of women who shoulder with men in political, economic and social processes to protect and develop the interests of families, society, country and nationality throughout the history of Myanmar.

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SAC Vice-Chair DPM Vice-Senior General Soe Win receives Director of International Committee of Red Cross (ICRC)

VICE-CHAIRMAN of the State Administration Council Deputy Prime Minister Vice-Senior General Soe Win received a delegation led by Mr Martin Schuepp, Director of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) at the Credentials Hall of the Office of the State Administration Council Chairman in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

They frankly discussed humanitarian assistance to internally displaced persons, effective measures to provide ICRC's aid to those who require aid and the resumption of temporarily suspended prison visits due to COVID-19 for inmates and their families.

Also present at the meeting were Union Ministers Lt-Gen Soe Htut, Dr Thet Khaing Win and Dr Thet Thet Khine, Deputy Minister Maj-Gen Aung Linn Tun, ICRC Regional Director for Asia and the Pacific Ms Christine Cipolla and ICRC Resident Representative Ms Elean Ajmone Sessera. —MNA/KTZH

State Administration Council Vice-Chair Deputy Prime Minister Vice-Senior General Soe Win receives ICRC Director.

Opening speech sent by State Administration Council Chairman ...

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It is necessary to draw new policies, procedures and laws which need to overcome hindrances and challenges that women and girls traditionally face. Meanwhile, the need to effectively protect women and girls under the existing laws should be amended in conformity with current situations.

In conclusion, I would like to say that today is the knowledge age and well-versed human resources play a crucial role in the development of a country. Hence, women accounting for more than half of the country's population are a powerful force in building the Union based on democracy and federalism and they are very valuable and powerful human resources.

As the majority of women are the mothers as well as early teachers of children, they play a key role in nurturing the youths for the future of the nation.

I would like to urge all to collaboratively participate in applying the capacity of women and girls as valuable human resources in all sectors with narrowing the urban and rural development gap and creating chances for women to keep abreast of men to have a sustainable developed future in line with the motto: Digit All: Innovation and technology for gender equality set as the theme of this year's International Women's Day.

Thank you all.

International Women's Day celebrated in Nay Pyi Taw

The honorary patrons of the Myanmar Women's Affairs Federation and dignitaries view the exhibitions at the event yesterday.

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Resettlement Dr Thet Thet Khaing, Union ministers' wives, the wife of Nay Pyi Taw Council Chairman, judges of the Union Supreme Court, members of the Constitutional Tribunal of the Union, deputy ministers' and wives, the wife of Nay Pyi Taw Command Commander, chairpersons and members of the Myanmar Women's Affairs Federation-MWAF, the Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association-MMCWA, the Myanmar Women's and Children's Life Promotion Association-MWCLPA and the Myanmar Women's Sports Federation-MWSF, invitees and officials were present on the occasion.

First of all, SAC Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing delivered the opening speech via video message.Myanmar National Committee on Women-MNCW Chairperson Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr Thet Thet Khaing explained the measures for the development of women, the promotion of women's rights and the prevention of violence against women in various forms. Then, the MNCW Secretary and Director-General of the Department of Social Welfare read the formal message sent by the Secretary General of the United Nations.

Afterwards, MWAF Honorary Patron Daw Khin Thet Htay presented to the chairpersons and the secretarstet of MWAF and MMCWA. MWAF Honorary Patron Daw Than Than Nwe also awarded the Excellence Awards in the Women's Sector to the chairpersons and the secretaries of MWCLPA and MWSF.

Later, MNCW Vice-Chairman Deputy Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement U Soe Kyi handed over the handbooks of the management of safe temporary shelters for women victims of violence compiled by the Department of Social Welfare to the chairman and the secretary of Women's Committee in Union Territory, Nay Pyi Taw, on behalf of Nay Pyi Taw Council, and representatives of the regions and states.

Finally, the honorary patrons of MWAF, the wives of the SAC Secretary and the SAC members took documentary photos with attendees and viewed the exhibitions in celebration of International Women's Day. — MNA/CT

MoHA opens course on traditional and religious culture for offspring of service personnel

THE Ministry of Home Affairs opened the course on traditional and religious culture for the offspring of the service personnel and their families was held yesterday at the Myanmar Police Force Headquarters in Nay Pyi Taw.

The opening ceremony was attended by Deputy Prime Minister Union Minister for Home Affairs Lt-Gen Soe Htut and wife, Deputy Minister Maj-Gen Toe Yi and wife, Deputy Minister Chief of Myanmar Police Force Maj-Gen Zin Min Htet, Permanent Secretary U Khaing Tun Oo and wife, the directors-general, senior officers and wives, instructors, teachers and trainees.

First, the Deputy Prime Minister said that the training was opened to ensure the offspring of the service personnel and their families are civilized and have high morals so as to adore the country and religion. He then warmly greeted the trainees.

Four classes were attended by a total of 469 offspring students of service personnel and their families under the Ministry of Home Affairs. The training will be conducted from 8 to 25 March. – MNA/TS

The opening ceremony of cultural etiquette training at the Ministry of Home Affairs is in progress yesterday.

Working Committee to address the Impact of COVID-19 on National Economy meets

THE meeting of the Working Committee to address the Impact of COVID-19 on the National Economy 1/2023 was held yesterday at Office No 1, Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations.

The meeting was chaired by Dr Kan Zaw, Union Minister for Investment and Foreign Economic Relations. Members of the Working Committee, deputy ministers for Planning and Finance, for Investment and Foreign Economic Relations, for Labour and for Commerce, the deputy governor from the Central Bank of Myanmar, the permanent secretary, directors-general and representatives from the ministries concerned also attended the meeting.

Union Minister Dr Kan Zaw chairs the meeting 1/2023 of the Working Committee to address the Impact of COVID-19 on the National Economy yesterday.

During the meeting, they discussed matters of the working committee regarding the coordination on loan repayments and the situation in which loan repayments were extended by one year to the fishery and livestock sector, loan recovery plans for the companies which has completed three years of loan maturity, providing capital into the State's revolving fund and also one-year extension for the film, music, theatrical, press and media sector.

Moreover, Deputy Minister for Investment and Foreign Economic Relations Dr Wah Wah Maung, in the capacity as the secretary of the working committee, discussed loan repayment monitoring situations in states and regions as well as the circumstance of the success story of the companies and businesses that have taken out loan, capital and interest return.

The meeting also discussed relief measures carried out by concerned ministries, works regarding the statement on the one-year extension of loan for the film, music, theatrical, press and media sector and upcoming plan of actions to be implemented by the committee. — MNA

No new case of COVID-19 reported on 8 March, total figure registers to 633,949

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases registered **633,949** after **no** new case was reported on 8 March 2023 according to the Ministry of Health.

The total number of patients who have recovered from COVID-19 in the country reached **614,426**, including **ten** new recoveries.

The death toll from COVID-19 in the country recorded **19,490** on 8-3-2023 with no new death reported from the pandemic.

The country has vaccinated **30,965,795** people aged 18 and above for COVID-19 vaccines and **6,841,966** people aged under 18 till 7 March 2023.

Status of COVID-19 vaccination (as of 7 March 2023)

People aged 18 and above who received vaccines	30,965,795
People under 18 years old who received vaccines	6,841,966

According to the research, it is found that people who have been vaccinated do not suffer severely from the disease, need not to be hospitalized and unlikely to die. If they have received booster shot, the death rates can be reduced more.

As such, the people need to follow the new normal way in living with COVID. Hence, all the people above five have to fully receive COVID-19 vaccination inoculated by the Ministry of Health free of charge. Six months after the vaccination, they have to take booster jabs at relevant health centres and ward/village administration offices without fail. Moreover, they have to wear masks while in closed chambers and public places. They need to often wash hands with soap and water or the hand gel containing alcohol (at least 60 per cent) for 20 seconds.

People need to follow the social distancing rule and avoid the crowds as much as possible. While not wearing masks, if they cough and sneeze, they need to cover mouth and noses with elbows in line with the personal hygienic ways.

COVID-19 information can be browsed on the internet page moh.gov.mm of the Ministry of Health.—**GNLM**

OPINION

Actively participate in Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project

THE Rakhine State prioritizes operating agriculture and fishery sectors. Local people are engaged in manufacturing industries based on agriculture, livestock and natural resources and trading. As such, the state is on the path to economic growth.

Offshore Rakhine State is endowed with sound foundations to implement natural gas projects and operate border trade with foreign countries. Hence, the government is assisting in the development undertakings of the Rakhine State to have greater progress. In this regard, the Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project is under implementation to bring greater development to the Rakhine State.

Thanks to the project, the export and import process of products will be swift and smooth in the state. The project will polish the image of good relations and good neighbouring history of Myanmar and India. As such, all local people are to join hands with the local authorities, relevant ministries and the government in implementing the Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project to be successfully finished without relentless efforts on the schedules.

Currently, the project is being jointly implemented by Myanmar and India to enhance relations and trade. The Kaladan River which originates from India and the hilly areas of the Chin State flows to the Rakhine State. Local people call it the Kissapanadi River along which beautiful scenes can be seen with tourist attractions.

In truth, only when the Rakhine State ceases armed conflicts and restores peace and stability can the government carry out development tasks not only in Paletwa of Chin State but in the whole northern part of Rakhine State, contributing to development along the Kaladan River.

Currently, the project is being accelerated. Hence, the project site has been facilitated with offices and buildings, heavy machinery and transport vessels. The jetty has been built in Paletwa for operating inland water transport. Later, such a jetty will be designated as an international customs port. For the time being, a plan is underway to construct a highway from Paletwa to the Myanmar-India border region. Upon completion, the whole project will benefit the development of the Rakhine State as well as the economic development of the nation.

Moreover, the project will bring advantages to the region with better trade opportunities for both Myanmar and India, direct trading with India and other countries, creating job opportunities for local people of the Rakhine State, and operation of the tourism industry. Especially, the project will help enhance the trade and tourism services of the state and develop the economic sector of the relevant areas.

Thanks to the project, the export and import process of products will be swift and smooth in the state. The project will polish the image of good relations and good neighbouring history of Myanmar and India. As such, all local people are to join hands with the local authorities, relevant ministries and the government in implementing the Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project to be successfully finished without relentless efforts on the schedules. ■

ARTICLE

Fine Art of the Teaching Profession

By Hu Wo (Cuckoo's Song)

IN THE real world, vocational professions are springing up like mushrooms. Everybody must have got at least one profession to earn their living with no worry. But here, some would like to go into teaching school as a dream job very strangely rather than other professions. In actual fact, the teaching profession is a kind of fine art as well as one of the noblest jobs, especially in accordance with Myanmar religious beliefs. Being able to make an artistic living as a qualified teacher requires, first of all, mastering academic and educational subjects. Most inexperienced teachers may, in all honesty, find it easy to enter the teaching profession; of course, that profession is more difficult than most thought. And other people who are not teachers like to speculate that the teaching occupation would not cost too much money for the teacher. In practice, teachers tend to lavish most of their attention, hard work, time, and even expensive materials on the teaching process with the best intentions. I have been teaching part-time for several years. Thus, this article will form the basis for my part-time teaching experience.

Many young learners frequently assume their teachers to know anything great and small like a mine of information or an all-rounder. What I mean is that those learners expect they should ask their respective teachers whatever they want to know. In this connection, teachers should have known their major subjects inside out. After all, this assumption has direct relevance to a teacher's academic subject mastery. Personally, the term `subject mastery´ means that a teacher knows any subject like the back of his hand, and such this mastery could be up to standard for the only subject, but probably no more. Plus, a teacher's higher educational levels often play a critical role in the matter of subject mastery, where it would be better if that degree is more advanced than the learners'. Provided that the teacher has done a high degree whenever possible, he will most likely point out the future route to higher education to elementary learners. Also, subject mastery vitally involves seeing the nature of a subject very well, in which all subjects of diverse fields can be generally categorized as arts and sciences. Arts subjects like Myanmar and English are foremost based on divergent thinking and imagination, whereas science subjects such as Mathematics and Physics are chiefly grounded in practicals, facts and figures. So, arts subjects entail an enormous amount of book reading and discussion while science subjects demand quite a lot of laboratory experiments and tests in order to arrive at subject-related aims and goals for certain. Perhaps subject mastery is the first step towards a highly confident and competent teacher in consequence.

After the mastery of an academic subject, a teacher needs to know his stuff in the three educational subjects to a wide extent: Educational Theory, Educational Psychology, and Methodology. Firstly, Educational Theory exerts a strong influence on all persons in the world of education – educational policy-makers, curriculum developers, headmasters, and teachers. This educational subject also studies three types of education: formal education, informal education, and non-formal education. Formal education can be systematically obtained through schooling, private educational sectors, or university education; informal education may be done unconsciously from free literary talks or whatever; and non-formal education is consciously achieved with the help of non-government courses or tuition. The teacher himself needs to take up the other two types of education besides formal education for his professional and referenced powers. The advantages and limitations of each type of education notwithstanding, he must be able to advise his learners to pursue all types of education for their conceptual, inspirational, mental, and emotional well-being in advance, too. Furthermore, Educational Theory is closely linked to educational management and administration including school infrastructure, setting and seating arrangements, a lunch programme, etc. When a teacher gives instruction in any subject to learners, he will certainly have to think about a teaching space. An average classroom holds only 25 students with an area which is well-lit, well-ventilated, and broad to the extent that learning activities can be done smoothly and efficiently, to the best of my knowledge. Next, the subject relates to philosophy, in which the term `philosophy´ denotes the love of wisdom. By and large, the philosophy of education is accepted to mainly comprise four beliefs – idealism, realism, pragmatism, and existentialism. Without theory, practice is blind or vice versa.

After the mastery of an academic subject, a teacher needs to know his stuff in the three educational subjects to a wide extent: Educational Theory, Educational Psychology, and Methodology. **ILLUSTRATION: FOR REPRESENTATIONAL PURPOSE ONLY/FREEPIK**

Secondly, Educational Psychology is connected with the study of a learner's mental and emotional traits due to his age, especially interpreting his apparent physical behaviours scientifically. These psychological traits contain the intelligence, memory, forgetting, emotion, and motivation of a learner. In my experience, schoolgirls have higher linguistic intelligence than schoolboys. Still, schoolboys possess better mathematical intelligence than schoolgirls, even though both of the above-mentioned intelligence are working just on the left-hand side of the brain. Then, good care should be taken whether a learner has got a short or long memory. It does not matter to learners with long-term memory. On the other hand, short-term memories not only rely upon an interest in studies but also call for learning by repetition. Besides, memory is sometimes interrupted by forgetting that will be caused by proactive or retroactive inhibition, too. For instance, not being able to memorize something new well owing to something old is a form of proactive inhibition and not being able to recall something old on account of something new is a variety of retroactive inhibition. It is only human nature to forget after learning new things. Deep learning and frequent practice will manage to get over the retarded process of forgetting. As regards emotions, they are two types: positive emotions like smiling or laughing and negative emotions such as seeing red or crying. Before a learning process, every individual learner had better express their physical, mental, and emotional readiness. Learners' intrinsic motivations and teachers' extrinsic motivations must be considered carefully in Educational Psychology as well. A student's lifelong ambition usually becomes his best intrinsic motivation and the legitimate power, reward power, and coercive power of a teacher turn out to be his greatest extrinsic motivations for learners. All teachers will be able to keep healthy classroom control over learners in addition to their emotional control and maturity whenever they need it if they are an expert in child psychology.

Lastly, Methodology gives rise to a wide variety of methods on the teaching ground. Numerous teachers like following traditional methods of teaching as their old teachers did to start with. They too find it convenient to apply these methods, to a certain degree. Afterwards, they are going to lust for trying alternative or modern methods of teaching if need be. One of the prominent traditional teaching methods is lecture-discussion, also a teacher-centred approach to lessons, which must still be employed by today's teachers, particularly university teachers. The second mode of pedagogy is content-focused teaching which is dependent on instructing according to the nature of a subject. To my certain knowledge, modern teachers are getting to prefer the process of learning by doing to traditional teaching methods these days. In that connection, they put songs, mnemonics, creative games, crosswords, puzzles, and other learning activities in their teaching process seeing that children will learn better if they do learn all by themselves, most notably in contact with real-life situations. What is more, a teacher may conduct any one or all of the assessments _ diagnostic, formative, and summative _ before, while, and after teaching respectively. Questioning skills play a key role in the teacher's instruction. A good question can have direct relevance to teaching lessons and will bring about critical or logical thinking for convergent or divergent thoughts; questioner teachers need to have found right or possible answers ahead.

As shown above, the teaching profession is a fine art in that a teacher ought to take various roles in the art of teaching. Speaking as a pupil, teaching all the time is so boring that even advanced learners would get sleepy during the lecture very quickly. Consequently, the teacher should make his learning environment amusing and enjoyable through humour, suspense, or any strong feeling. His sense of humour and suspense possibly comes from his life experiences or intensive and extensive reading. In other words, merely his knowledge of the subject matter in textbooks is almost impossible to be enough for an accomplished teacher. Therefore, teachers should read as many sorts of books as they can afford. As my best friend Saya Aye said, it has come to my knowledge that elementary learners are fond of listening to ghost stories and the supernatural. Only if learners show an interest in the teacher's instruction can it be said that his instructional process has been successful. Not only that, providing the learners think their studies are essential for them indeed, their educational achievement will have flown high. Now that teachers are learners' role models, their styles of talking, wearing, and staying are willingly imitated by the learners. Hence, teachers must wear their school uniforms for duty, respect, love, and unity, at the very least. Tests and measurements are likewise of great importance, relating to the dignity of a teacher. Basically, there can be divided into three types of tests: written, oral, and practical. Students' exam nerves or test anxiety, guessing ability and bluffing should be taken into account as far as tests and examinations are concerned. Excellent tests must consist of at least three qualities, viz. course coverage, reliability, and validity. More importantly, teachers will by no means let on tests to any learner until the examination days.

The art-like teaching profession is becoming deep and broad more often nowadays. By making effective use of a tool called language, teachers can explain everything that they instruct simply and clearly. They should also make eye contact with each learner in the class so as to avoid paying attention to the only one or looking somewhere else. That eye contact may tell them whether or not their learners have an interest in what they will say, are saying or said. Moreover, the teacher must not be standing inactive as a marble statue in front of the class. He has to go around the whole class with suitable facial expressions, overcoming language barriers and behavioural issues as best he can. When absolutely necessary, he must be able to recite poems off the cuff and sing songs in a good voice. Above and beyond, a well-prepared lesson plan is a teacher's life anytime. If any teacher believes that his teaching methods have been flawless and adequate for both him and his learners, he will necessarily be the best failure as a teacher in the future. Additionally, a person who wishes to be an authority on the teaching profession must have in-depth studied Bloom's Taxonomy of Classification, Piaget's Cognitive Theory, Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences, Maslow's Theory of Hierarchical Needs, James Marcia's Identity Statuses, and Vytogsky's Zone of Proximal Development. May the teaching profession be this article reader's success. ■

MoIC Union Minister observes reception of IDPs with Embassies' Heads of ASEAN, neighbouring countries of Myanmar, representatives of AHA Centre in Rakhine State

Union Minister U Ko Ko Hlaing and party view the resettlement process at the Hlaphoekhaung temporary transit centre.

THE team comprising of the officials and diplomats of ASEAN countries, China, India and Bangladesh embassies and representatives of the AHA Centre led by Union Minister for International Cooperation U Ko Ko Hlaing in his capacity as Vice-Chairman 1 of the Rakhine State Stability, Peace and Development Work Coordination Committee arrived in Sittway Township by flight from Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

Then, Union Minister U Ko Ko Hlaing, Rakhine State Chief Minister U Htein Lin, Deputy Minister for Border Affairs Maj-Gen Khun Thant Zaw Htoo, state cabinet members and departmental officials held a meeting on reception of Rakhine internally displaced persons at the guest hall of the state government.

After the opening remark of the International Cooperation Union Minister, officials from the Ministry of Border Affairs, Ministry of Immigration and Population, Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement and Rakhine State government reported on the arrangements for the repatriation of Rakhine internally displaced persons, pilot project and assistance to IDP camps.

Then, the Union minister and party inspected the Ngakhuya reception centre in Maungtaw Township and stressed the necessary instructions to the in charge of the centre.

They also observed the two-day-a-week schooling system of Ngakhuya Basic Education High School in the 2023-2024 academic year and basic tailoring and crochet courses launched by the Rakhine State Small-Scale Industry Department under the Ministry of Cooperatives and Rural Development.

The Union minister and party also inspected the Hlaphoekhaung temporary transit centre, Thechaung market, Darpaing and Thetkepyin IDP camps in Sittway Township.—MNA/KTZH

Union Minister U Ko Ko Hlaing and party observe the Ngakhuya Basic High School.

Union Minister U Maung Maung Ohn speaks on the book donation occassion yesterday.

500 books donated to MoI offices, libraries

A ceremony to donate books written by Dr Aung Gyi to offices and libraries of the Ministry of Information was held yesterday in Nay Pyi Taw.

Union Minister U Maung Maung Ohn, Deputy Minister U Ye Tint, Deputy Minister for Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation Dr Aung Gyi, Permanent Secretary U Myo Myint Maung and officials were present on the occasion.

First, a total of 500 books: 250 books of "Yin Hte Ka A Pe" (The Father Who Is in My Heart) and 250 books of "Sitemwe Se" (Agricultural Dam) written by Deputy Minister Dr Aung Gyi of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation was donated to Union Minister U Maung Maung Ohn who then returned a certificate of honour to the deputy minister.

Deputy Minister Dr Aung Gyi explained the purpose of book donations and Union Minister U Maung Maung Ohn gave words of thanks before concluding the event. — MNA/TS

Surgery performed on 866 cataract patients to hail Myanmar Health Sciences Conference 2023

MYANMAR Health Sciences Conference 2023 will be held at Myanmar International Convention Centre II in Nay Pyi Taw on 11 and 12 March and, to hail the conference, examination and surgery were done on cataract patients at Shwebo General Hospital in Sagaing Region on 6 and 7 March.

The surgery was performed on 866 patients at general hospitals in Nay Pyi Taw, Yangon, Mandalay, Singaing, Hpa-an, Mawlamyine, Sao San Tun of Taunggyi, Bago, Pyay, Magway, Minbu and Pathein. — MNA/KZW

Free of cost eye health screening and treatment are underway in Shwebo General Hospital.

Over 160,000 students sit for 2023 Matriculation Exam

THE first day of the 2023 Matriculation Exam was held yesterday morning and a total of 161,851 students sat for the exam.

This year, the Ministry of Education opened five foreign exam centres and 858 local exam centres. A total of 179,843 students submitted application forms, but only 161,851 (about 90 per cent) sat for the exam on the first day, according to the Ministry of Education. — MNA/MKKS

BEHS 1 Yenangyaung, Magway Region.

BEHS 6 Botahtaung, Yangon Region.

Myitkyina, Kachin State.

Kawkareik, Kayin State.

Falam, Chin State.

Homalin, Sagaing Region.

Pwintbyu, Magway Region.

Taungup, Rakhine State.

Yatsauk, Shan State(South).

Myaungmya, Ayeyawady Region.

Tharawady, Bago Region.

Haigyi Island, Ayeyawady Region.

Phyu, Bago Region.

Loikaw, Kayah State.

2022-2023 matriculation examination begins

THE 2023 matriculation examination began yesterday across the nation and students took the exam peacefully at relevant examination centres in Nay Pyi Taw Council Area.

In Nay Pyi Taw Council Area, a total of 6,433 students are taking the matriculation exam. The security personnel, health workers, Fire Brigade members and ward/village administrators systematically provide security measures around school areas for the students to be able to take the exam peacefully. The exams will last from 8 to 18 March. — Aung Ye Thwin/MKKS

Students are pictured in Nay Pyi Taw for the 2022-2023 matric exam.
PHOTO: KO GYI HTEIN

More than 22,070 students take 2023 Matriculation Examination in Mandalay

OUT of 24,012 applications for the 2023 matriculation examination, a total of 22,070 students took the exam in Mandalay Region on 8 March, accounting for 91.9 per cent.

There are 97 exam centers in the region. The nationwide matriculation exam commenced at 9 a.m. yesterday at the respective exam centers.

The teachers checked the ID cards of the students at the school's entrance made sure that everything was in line with the COVID-19 prevention measures.

U San Aung, deputy director-general of the Mandalay Region Education Office said "This Grade-11 exam is a chance for the students for admission to the universities with the old curriculum. The persons with disabilities are also found taking the exam. The exam will be held in line with the rules and regulations of the Department of Myanmar Examinations. The exam centres are opened at Mandalay's Central Prison and the General Hospital. I was so delighted to see the students taking the exam passionately and vigorously.

Myanmar will adopt a new curriculum till Grade 12. That being so, this test is a special chance for the students to have direct admission to universities. Hopefully, they will pass the exams with great results as this is a great opportunity for them. I hereby would like to request the parents to pay attention to it. I pray for them to do well in exams."

The security forces, health care personnel, fire brigade members and the officials of the General Administration Department in the respective townships are ensuring the safety and security measures for the students in the school proximity.

Daw Chaw Su Lwin, in charge of No. 16 BEHS exam centre said, "a total of 300 students took the exam in 11 rooms on the first day and 28 were absent. Preparations for the safety of the students have been undertaken. We have improved the school security system. Also, we follow the COVID-19 health guidelines. This is a good opportunity for the students. So, I like to encourage the students to make strenuous efforts in the exams."

The 2023 matriculation examination will last from 8 to 18 March.—Maung Aye Chan/EM

Students are seen for the 2022-2023 matric exam in Mandalay.
PHOTO: MAUNG AYE CHAN

Illegal timbers, foodstuffs, consumer goods, communication devices, electronics and vehicles confiscated

AN inspection team of Mawlamyine township Customs Department under the management of Mon State Illicit Trade Task Eradication Force captured 22 kinds of goods worth K18,655,500 from a Fuso Bus (approximately K40 million) that were handover from an on-duty team at the Thanlwin Bridge (Mawlamyine) on 5 March. The action was taken under Customs procedures.

In addition, a combined team seized a total of 1.458 tonnes of illegal teaks worth K481,140 in Mohnyin township and the action was taken under the Forest Law.

On 6 March, the on-duty team confiscated a plant growth chamber worth K8,167,740 without an import licence and 6,631 kilogrammes of glass Ashtray worth K5,987,793 that exceeded 61 days of valid for prior arrival (VPA) from two containers at the Asia World Port container checkpoint, five kinds of goods worth K18,500,000 from luggage at the Yangon International Airport, K2.4 million worth of bicycles (used) that were not declared in the Import Declaration (ID) from a Nissan-Diesel auto (approximately K30 million) heading to Yangon from Myawady and two kinds of goods worth K4.3 million without official documents from Yutong Express bus (approximately K50 million) heading to Mandalay from Myawady at the Mayanchaung permanent checkpoint in Mon State. The action was taken under Customs procedures.

Similarly, a combined team at the 16th-Mile Kyaukchaw checkpoint nabbed various goods worth K40,760,000 without official documents from five vehicles (approximately K198 million). The action was taken under Customs procedures.

An unregistered Honda CRV auto (approximately K4.5 million) was seized at the junction traffic light of Thanthuma street and Thisar street in South Okkalapa township. The action was taken under the law.

On 7 March, a total of 10.9832 tonnes of illegal timbers worth K7,248,912 was seized in Zigon and Paukkhaung townships. The action was taken under the Forest Law.

Therefore, 26 arrests (estimated value of K429,001,085) were made on three consecutive days from 5 to 7 March, according to the Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee. — MNA/MKKS

France's EDF reports fresh crack in nuclear reactor pipe

FRENCH energy group EDF has reported discovering a significant new crack in a cooling pipe at a nuclear power plant on the Channel coast, in the latest such incident to plague the energy sector.

The group has been beset by maintenance problems at its ageing park of reactors over the last year that has forced it to take more than a dozen of them offline for checks and emergency repairs.

The group last month reported the latest "serious corrosion problem" on an emergency cooling system at its Penly 1 plant in northern France which was among the 16 taken offline in the last year.

The report went largely unnoticed until it was covered in French media on Tuesday.

The new crack was 15.5 cm (six inches) long and up to 2.3 cm deep, covering around a quarter of the circumference of the pipe which is 2.7 cm thick, France's Nuclear Safety Authority (ASN) said late on Tuesday.

The regulator ordered EDF to "revise its strategy" of addressing the corrosion problems which could have major financial repercussions for the debt-laden state-owned utility as well as France's energy production capacity. —AFP

The crack was discovered in a cooling pipe at a reactor on the Channel coast. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

Adidas stuck with Yeezy gear after dropping Kanye

Not selling Yeezy apparel and shoes linked to Kanye West would cost Adidas 1.2 billion euros ($1.3 billion) in lost revenue. **PHOTO: AFP**

ADIDAS said Wednesday it was still weighing what to do with its huge inventory of Kanye West's Yeezy products after it ended its partnership with the controversial rapper.

Potentially not selling the apparel and shoes linked to West would lead to a revenue loss of 1.2 billion euros ($1.3 billion), the group said, announcing its 2022 full-year results.

Adidas halted its tie-up with West -- now known formally as Ye -- in October after he made a series of anti-Semitic outbursts. As a result, the group ended production of the highly successful Yeezy line designed together with West.—AFP

Over 50,000 protest in Greece over rail tragedy

MORE than 50,000 protesters took to streets across Greece on Wednesday and workers staged mass strikes, expressing anger over the country's worst rail tragedy and urging the prime minister to resign.

At least 57 people were killed, and 14 others remain in hospital after a freight train crashed head-on with a passenger train, carrying mostly students on 28 February.

Demonstrators in Athens waved signs reading "it's not an accident, it's a crime" and "it could have been any of us on that train".

By early afternoon, police said up to 53,000 demonstrators had taken to the streets across the country to protest the accident.

"I am here to pay tribute to the dead but also to express my anger and my frustration," Athens protester Niki Siouta, a 54-year-old civil engineer, told AFP.

"This government must go." There were about 30,000 protesters in Athens, 15,000 in Greece's second city Thessaloniki and 10,000 in the western port city of Patras, a police spokeswoman told AFP.—AFP

Chinese automaker JAC's sales, exports surge in February

CHINESE automaker Anhui Jianghuai Automobile Group Co Ltd (JAC) has reported a year-on-year increase of 41.57 per cent in sales for the month of February.

Last month, JAC sold a total of 49,700 vehicles, among which 15,700 were exported, marking a staggering increase of over 171 per cent year on year, according to the company.

JAC's booming business was highlighted by a major delivery ceremony held on 27 February, with a shipment of 3,000 vehicles exported to the United Arab Emirates. By September, a total of 10,000 vehicles will be delivered to the United Arab Emirates, according to the contract.—Xinhua

Fragrance firms hit by price cartel probe

EUROPEAN and American antitrust authorities are investigating some of the biggest names in the global fragrance industry over allegations they colluded to fix prices and thwart competitors, Switzerland's regulator said Wednesday.

The Swiss Competition Commission COMCO said dawn raids took place "at various locations" in consultation with European Union, US and British antitrust authorities.

The commission said Swiss firms Firmenich International and Givaudan, US peer International Flavours & Fragrances and Germany's Symrise — among the biggest companies in the sector — were being investigated over suspicions of violating cartel laws.

Fragrances and flavours are used in a long line of products, from fine perfumery and cosmetics to shampoos and detergents and food products, in a multi-billion dollar market. — AFP

One of the companies under investigation, Firmenich International, is behind the Thierry Mugler perfume Angel. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V BLPL TRUST VOY.NO. (1304S)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V BLPL TRUST VOY.NO. (1304S)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **9-3-2023** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **AWPT** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

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M/S BLPL SHIPPING LINES

GLOBAL AFFAIRS

RUSSIA-UKRAINE CONFLICT

Swiss president opposes arms exports to Ukraine, citing neutrality

President Alain Berset's comments came after Berlin requested that arms manufacturer Rheinmetall be allowed to acquire old Swiss Leopard tanks. **PHOTO: AFP**

SWITZERLAND remains opposed to exporting arms to war-torn Ukraine, the famously neutral country's President Alain Berset said Tuesday on the sidelines of meetings at the United Nations.

Switzerland bars re-export of Swiss weaponry to nations at war, but the issue of the country's long tradition of neutrality has been under debate since Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine just over a year ago.

"The discussion about the export of arms, weapons... while we have (our) legal framework in Switzerland, it is not possible to do it," Berset, who currently holds the country's rotating one-year presidency, told reporters on the margins of UN meetings on women's rights.

"For the government and for the Federal Council, we have to, and we want to, maintain this legal framework and to work in this legal framework," he said.

His comments came after Berlin requested in late February that German arms manufacturer Rheinmetall be permitted to acquire old Swiss Leopard tanks, guaranteeing they will not be transferred to Ukraine.

While the wealthy Alpine country, which is not a member of the European Union, has followed the bloc's lead on sanctions targeting Moscow, it has so far shown less flexibility on its military neutrality.

"These sanctions, they are absolutely compatible with the neutrality," said Berset, speaking in English.—AFP

Ukraine seeks support for Africa grain deliveries

UKRAINE on Tuesday appealed for international efforts to keep open Black Sea shipping lanes used to carry millions of tonnes of grain to African nations.

A Ukrainian envoy told the Least Developed Countries summit in Doha that 2.7 million tonnes of grain have been shipped since November.

The Kyiv government at that time launched its Grain from Ukraine programme, mainly for poorer African states.

Ukraine plans to send at least 60 more vessels "to the most affected by hunger and drought countries across Africa and Asia," added Maksym Subkh, Ukraine's special envoy to the Middle East and Africa.

The world's poorest nations have faced the "heaviest burden" from Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February last year, Subkh said.

Both countries are among the world's top grain exporters.

Russia imposed a blockade of Ukrainian ports until the United Nations with Türkiye brokered a deal to allow grain shipments to resume in July.

The blockade fuelled the inflation of food prices in many countries and Subkh said, "The war has aggravated the food crisis across the globe." —AFP

Ukraine vows to fortify defences in frontline Bakhmut

UKRAINE pledged on Monday to bolster its defences in frontline Bakhmut, after reports that Kyiv was withdrawing from the city that's become a symbolic prize in the war.

The eastern Ukrainian city has been virtually flattened in what has become the longest and bloodiest battle since Russia's more than year-long invasion.

Ukraine has reported an increasingly difficult situation around Bakhmut in recent days and some analysts said its forces may have initiated a strategic retreat.

But President Volodymyr Zelensky met with top commanders Monday and his office said they were in favour of "continuing the defensive operation and further strengthening our positions in Bakhmut." —AFP

Ukrainian soldiers ride on armored personnel carrier (APC) along a road not far Bakhmut. **PHOTO: ANATOLII STEPANOV / AFP**

WORLD: TOP HEADLINES

Clashes in Georgia over contentious 'foreign agents' law

GEORGIAN police used tear gas and water cannon against protesters Tuesday as thousands of demonstrators took to the streets in the capital Tbilisi to oppose a controversial "foreign agents" bill.

At one point a protester opposed to the law, which would impose registration requirements on media and NGOs with foreign ties, threw a Molotov cocktail at a cordon of riot police, according to television footage.

The demonstration took place after Georgian lawmakers earlier Tuesday gave their initial backing to the draft law, which is reminiscent of Russia's legislation used to crack down on dissent. In recent years Georgian authorities have faced mounting international criticism over perceived backsliding on democracy, seriously damaging Tbilisi's ties with Brussels. In 2012, Russia adopted a law that allows authorities to take action against NGOs, media outlets and others deemed "foreign agents".

Georgian President Salome Zourabichvili expressed support for the demonstrators and vowed to veto the legislation.—AFP

Protesters brandishing a European Union flag brace as they are sprayed by a water canon during clashes with riot police near the Georgian parliament in Tbilisi. **PHOTO: AFP**

NATO chief sees 'progress' on Sweden, Finland bids

NATO Security General Jens Stoltenberg said Tuesday that he saw some "progress" in Sweden and Finland's stalled bids to join, ahead of talks with Türkiye set to restart this week. Türkiye and Hungary are the only NATO members still to ratify the bids of the Nordic nations, which must be accepted by all 30 existing members of the military organization. Ankara had suspended negotiations with Sweden and Finland in outrage after protests in January that included the burning of the Koran outside its embassy in Stockholm. –AFP

GLOBAL AFFAIRS

Australia PM says to meet Biden in US, submarine deal expected

AUSTRALIA'S prime minister said Wednesday he will soon meet President Joe Biden in the United States, where they are expected to unveil a nuclear submarine deal aimed at countering China's growing assertiveness in the Pacific.

After 18 months of negotiations, it's anticipated that Australia will reveal plans to obtain eight nuclear-powered submarines, in what Prime Minister Anthony Albanese has called "the single biggest leap" in defence capability in the country's history.

The deal is part of the fledgling regional security pact between Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States known as AUKUS.

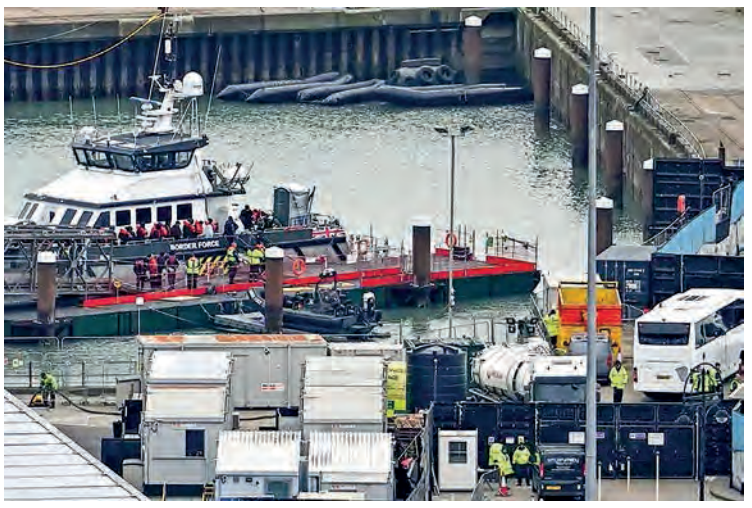
"I'll be meeting with President Biden in the United States," Albanese told reporters in Perth on Wednesday.

"We'll have further announcements about details soon about the arrangements that will be taking place."

Australia does not have the expertise to build its own nuclear subs — which have an extended range and powerful strike capabilities — and must buy them from either the United States or Britain. Since September 2021, detailed behind-the-scenes talks have been taking place between the AUKUS partners about how to equip Australia's military with sensitive nuclear-propulsion technology.—AFP

Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese (pictured) has said he will soon meet with US President Joe Biden. **PHOTO: AFP**

UK unveils contentious bid to stop cross-Channel migrants



Migrants are escorted ashore from the UK Border Force vessel 'BF Ranger' in Dover, southeast England, on 6 March 2023, after having been picked up at sea while attempting to cross the English Channel.
PHOTO: BEN STANSALL / AFP

THE UK government will Tuesday unveil radical plans to stop migrants crossing the Channel illegally on small boats, acknowledging it is stretching international law amid an outcry from rights campaigners.

Prime Minister Rishi Sunak said the plan would "take back control of our borders once and for all" — reprising a popular pledge from campaigners like him who backed Britain's Brexit divorce from the European Union.

"This new law will send a clear signal that if you come to this country illegally, you will be swiftly removed," he wrote in The Sun newspaper, ahead of a summit Friday with French President Emmanuel Macron.

Under the draft law, anyone who is deported after making the dangerous journey from France would be banned from re-entering the UK and ever claiming British citizenship.

Home Secretary Suella Braverman would be given a new legal duty to deport illegal migrants, trumping their other rights in UK and European human rights law. —AFP

WORLD: TOP HEADLINES

Venezuela's Guaido to stand in opposition primary elections

VENEZUELAN opposition leader Juan Guaido will stand in primary elections to choose a rival to President Nicolas Maduro in the 2024 vote, his party said on Tuesday.

Guaido has been widely viewed as the de-facto political counterpoint to Maduro since he launched an audacious bid to unseat him in January 2019, using his then-position of parliament speaker to declare himself acting president.

Although he was recognized by more than 50 countries, the move floundered and Guaido was increasingly marginalized, even within the opposition.—AFP

Two US citizens kidnapped in Mexico found dead, two survive

TWO US citizens kidnapped by suspected Mexican drug traffickers were found dead Tuesday while two others survived, in what officials said appeared to be a tragic case of mistaken identity.

Washington vowed to do everything in its power to ensure justice for the victims, who crossed the border into the crime-plagued city of Matamoros in Tamaulipas state on Friday for medical reasons.—AFP

Women march as rights under threat across the globe

WOMEN were beginning to hit the streets en masse across the globe on Wednesday to defend rights that are coming under increasing attack.

To mark International Women's Day, capitals across the world are hosting marches, rallies and demonstrations, including Madrid, where broad tree-lined boulevards are regularly packed with a sea of purple, a colour often associated with women's rights.

Marches took place on Wednesday in Thailand and Indonesia, where a few dozen women gathered in front of the country's parliament to urge lawmakers to pass a long-awaited bill to protect domestic workers and some chanted "long live Indonesian women".

With the Taliban government's banning of women from universities in Afghanistan, Iran's repression of the Mahsa Amini protests, new US restrictions on abortion rights and the Ukraine war's impact on women, there are many reasons to protest.

Global progress on women's rights is "vanishing before our eyes," UN chief Antonio Guterres warned on Monday, saying gender equality would take another three centuries to achieve.—AFP

Women hit the streets in Bangkok to defend rights that are coming under increasing attack. **PHOTO: AFP**

Australia PM says to meet Biden in US, submarine deal expected

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THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

SPORT

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.

Myanmar to compete in 7th ASEAN Inline Freestyle Championships

The Myanmar Skating Team is seen at Yangon International Airport yesterday before leaving for Singapore to compete in the 7th ASEAN Inline Freestyle Championships.

ATHLETES from the Myanmar Skating Sports Association left Yangon for Singapore yesterday to compete in the 7th ASEAN Inline Freestyle Championships to be held in Singapore from 8 to 15 March.

The Myanmar Skating Sports Federation head coach U Thet Khaing Oo will supervise the team, and 17-year-old and under-15 athletes Maung Zwe Pyae Tun, Maung Htoo Lin Myat and Ma Pyae Pyae Phyo will participate in the competition.

Slalon and Classic Slalon will feature in the competition and ASEAN countries, India, China Taipei, Korea and Japan will compete in the tourney. — Bala Soe/KZL

Murray 'won't go nuts' if Wimbledon scraps Russia ban

ANDY Murray has said he will "not be going nuts" if Russian and Belarusian players are allowed to feature at this year's Wimbledon, even though the British tennis great would have mixed emotions regarding their return.

Murray, 35, received the ATP's Arthur Ashe Humanitarian Award for 2022 after donating more than £500,000 ($592,000, 562,000 euros) in prize money to help children in Ukraine affected by Russia's invasion, but has previously said he was "not supportive" of last year's ban.

But British media reports last week suggested the ban was about to be lifted, with three-time major winner Murray telling the BBC: "It's a really difficult one and I do feel for the players who weren't able to play last year — but I also understand the situation and why it's really hard for Wimbledon to make a call on it as well."

The Scot added: "My understanding is that they are going to be allowed to play and I'm not going to be going nuts if that is the case.

"But if Wimbledon went down another route, I would be understanding of that." — AFP

Myanmar team wins its debut in Asian Cup U-20 Women's Qualifiers

THE first day of the 2024 Asian Cup U-20 Women's Qualifiers Group (G) began in Cambodia on 8 March, and team Myanmar won its debut.

Myanmar squad started the game against the host Cambodia team and won by 2-0. The Myanmar team struggled to win as there were no goals in the first half, but they won with goals in the second half.

As the Myanmar team won this match, they are in a good shape to advance to the second round qualifiers and will have to play a decisive group match against the Malaysian team.

Team Myanmar lined up with youth players including goalie May Khin Oo, Hnin Pwint Aye, Khin Aye Kyaing, May Thet Mon Myint, Nang Cho Hmwe, Phyu Phyu Win, Wai Phoo Eain, Zin Moe Pyae, Kyal Sin, and Yu Ya Naing.

Myanmar team player (red) blocks the running path of the Cambodian player during their 2024 Asian Cup U-20 Women's Qualifiers Group G match played in Cambodia on 8 March 2023. **PHOTO:MFF**

The Myanmar team, which did not score in the first half, scored the opening goal in the 49th minute, and Sandar Lin did.

After scoring the goal, team Myanmar was able to control the game, and Wai Hnin Phyo scored the second goal in the 64th minute.

The Myanmar team will play against the Malaysian team on 12 March as the final group game. — Ko Nyi Lay/KZL