

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.

Public Rental Housing Project (Yangon) Phase 1 to complete next FY

PHASE 1 of the Public Rental Housing Project (Yangon) developed on 171 acres of land near Laydauntkan Village in Dagon Myothit (South) Township of Yangon Region will be completed in the coming financial year.

The Public Rental Housing Project (Yangon) is implemented using the State budget and the Ministry of Construction carried out Phase 1 of the project. Under the supervision of the Urban and Housing Development Department, 194 buildings containing 3,104 apartments — 97 buildings each by MCEF (Myanmar Construction Entrepreneurs Federation) and MLCA (Myanmar Licenced Contractors Association) are constructed. Being a state-owned rental housing, it will be convenient for persons of low income, retired civil servants, employees nearing retirement age and low-paid company staff.

“Being a public rental system, the government develops the housing using its fund for the public to save their rental fees. Therefore, government employees and people can apply for apartments. We complete 97 buildings and return 27 buildings to the Department of Urban and



An aerial view of the Public Rental Housing Project in Dagon Myothit (South) Township, Yangon Region. **PHOTO : SOE MYINT AUNG**

Housing Development,” said Secretary General U Myo Myint of MCEF.

Of 97 buildings constructed by MCEF, 56 buildings are slated to complete by the end of March. The construction of 97 buildings has completes by 75 per cent and basic infrastructure such as roads, and box culverts and the

cleansing process have completed by 93 per cent, according to the Public Rental Housing Project (Yangon) site.

“The Yangon Region government invites tender for electricity and is construction power substation. The Department of Urban and Housing Development will also negotiate with YRTC (Yangon

Region Transport Committee) to facilitate the transportation of the residents,” he added.

The Public Rental Housing Project (Yangon) is located between the No 2 and No 7 highways and the people can live with the urban development of Yangon and the proper transport system in future.—Pwint Thitsa/ KTZH

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Tabu Hla Dam water supply benefits over 27,000 acres of summer paddy, beans and pulses, oil crops

THE Prime Minister instructed officials to make efforts to meet the goals in agricultural sector as the agriculture and livestock breeding-based manufacturing and production can be successful and the socioeconomic life of the majority of the people will be developed. Meanwhile, over 27,000 acres of summer paddy are irrigated by Tabu Hla Dam in Yangon Region and it can also expand the cultivation of beans and pulses, winter sunflower and summer paddy than previous years.

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PHOTO : KANU

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 82/2023

5th Waning of Tabaung 1384 ME
10 March 2023

Setting date of Trademark Law to come effective

THE Trademark Law enacted as the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Law No 3 in 2019 shall come effective from 1 April 2023 (12th Waxing of Tagu 1384 ME) in accord with Sub-Section (b) of Section 1 of this law.
I hereby signed this law under Section 419 of the Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar:

Sd/Min Aung Hlaing
Senior General
Chairman
State Administration Council

Myanmar Gazette

Appointment of Head of Service Organization confirmed

THE State Administration Council has confirmed the appointment of U Tin Ko Ko, Director-General of the Factories and Labour Laws Inspection Department under the Ministry of Labour on the expiry of the one-year probationary period.

The people are urged to receive vaccination of Covid-19 without fail as full-time vaccination of Covid-19 and receiving booster shots can effectively mitigate infection of the virus, severe suffering from the disease and increasing of death rate based on the disease.

Tabu Hla Dam water supply benefits over 27,000 acres of summer paddy, beans and pulses, oil crops

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The most summer paddy is grown in Taikkyi Township with 27,749 acres of summer paddy, 42,641 acres of beans and pulses, 7,994 acres of oil crops, 2,163 acres of winter sunflower and 889 acres of corns. The township Irrigation and Water Utilization Management Department makes arrangements regarding the dam water for expansion of cultivation. Some villages harvest the beans and pulses, winter sunflower and edible oil crops in the irrigated farmland areas and the farmers expect high summer paddy production rate with the access to dam water.

The farmland expansion is conducted year on year and the water is stored in the Tabu Hla Dam depending on the rainfalls. The department also conducts field study to utilize the dam water effectively and supply the surplus water to summer paddy farmers along the Yangon-Pyay Road.

The Tabu Hla Dam about 19 miles from east Okkan town



A bird's-eye view of the Tabu Hla Dam and its vicinity.

supplies water to fields from left and right canals via Okkan creek. The right canal provides water to the fields in Okkan town while the left canal to Taikkyi and Hmawby townships daily. There are nine dams including Tabu Hla Dam in Yangon Region. The Tabu Hla Dam plays a key role for paddy and oil crops and it started supplying dam water for summer

paddy cultivation on 15 December 2022 and will keep distributing until May.

“The summer paddy cultivation areas increase to over 1,000 acres. When the dam water is supplied, the paddy fields become green as far as the eyes can see. When the colour turns to yellow, it is time to harvest. We supply dam water when the paddy field

is over two months. We are very glad when the paddy field colour turns green and gold. The expansion of paddy fields is a sign of high summer paddy production rate of farmers and the summer paddy improves the incomes of farmers. Therefore, our department is always ready to develop the socioeconomic status of farmers,” said U Tun Nay Aung,

staff officer of Taikkyi Township Irrigation and Water Utilization Department.

The dams are crucial to promote the State economy from the sectors of agriculture and livestock breeding which are also keys for the socioeconomic development of farmers. The balance between the strength of dams and agriculture and livestock brings benefits to the country and farmers. The government also provides the regular access to dam water and agrochemicals for the farmers.

The summer paddy in Tabu Hla dam water irrigated areas will be harvested in April and mostly in May. The earthen dam Tabu Hla has water storage capacity of 194,600 acre-feet. The 200ft spillway transmits water to fields in Taikkyi, Hmawby and Okkan townships via 600 feet long three pipes daily at 5,300 cubic feet per second greening over 27,000 acres of summer paddy, beans and pulses and oil crops.

–Nyein Thu (MNA)/KTZH

Quick Win can result from rice sector promotion

- As rice is the staple food, it is the most important crop for socioeconomic development of our country.
- State Administration Council is prioritizing the export promotion activities for national economic development.
- In exporting promotion programmes to further boost products that are globally marketable and suitable with the country’s weather and geographical conditions, rice sector promotion is a Quick Win within a short period.

(The excerpt from the speech made by Chairman of State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at the opening ceremony of Myanmar Rice Conference-2022 on 6 October 2022)

Myanmar Libraries Foundation donates books to Yangon libraries

UNION Minister for Information U Maung Maung Ohn, accompanied by Yangon Region Chief Minister U Soe Thein, attended the books donation ceremony of Myanmar Libraries Foundation held in Yangon yesterday.

In his speech, the Union Minister said a total of 410 libraries were opened in districts and townships and provided free book rental services for the public and young people to ensure access to literature, improve their knowledge, spend their time effectively, know what is right and what is wrong and produce good citizens for the country since the Community Centres were established.

The ordinary book renting processes such as book and journal registration, drafting catalogue and book rental is upgraded into a digital library system and the Digital Library Management System is being adopted at 102 township offices.

The mobile library service is also launched for the promotion of reading. It also drafts the library law and makes efforts to develop the village and ward libraries.

The Myanmar Libraries Foundation provided books,

journals and facilities to ward and village libraries. The foundation also constructed 343 libraries using K460.3 million between 2011 and 2016 and provided furniture supplies to 225 libraries between 2011 and 2016.

After the remark of the regional chief minister, U Kyaw San, patron of the foundation explained the working processes of the foundation.

The Union minister and the chief minister gave K5 million donated by the Yangon Region Libraries Supervisory Committee to Myanmar Libraries Foundation Chairman U Nyunt Swe.

Then, the foundation chairperson donated books for the libraries in four districts of Yangon to respective librarians.

Deputy Minister for Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation Dr Aung Gyi donated 400 copies of books — 200 copies of the “Book on the collection of writings concerned with Father in the heart” and 250 copies of the “Book on the collection of writings about Agri-Livestock-Irrigation” to Myanmar Libraries Foundation.

Union Minister U Maung Maung Ohn then presided over



Union Minister U Maung Maung Ohn speaks on the occasion of books donation from the Myanmar Libraries Foundation to libraries in Yangon yesterday.

a meeting on holding of Myanmar Motion Picture Academy Awards Ceremony for 2019, 2020 and 2022 at the meeting hall of the Film Promotion Division of IPRD in Bahan.

During the meeting, the Union minister discussed the holding of the Myanmar Motion Picture Academy Awards Ceremony and the participation of artistes from the film, music and theatrical fields.

After the meeting, the Union minister and party enjoyed

the “The Teacher” film shown at Thamada Cinema.

In the afternoon, the Union minister held a meeting on the organization of the new Executive Committee of Myanmar Music Association (Central) and the development of the music field with Myanmar Music Association (Central) at the meeting hall of MRTV.

During the meeting, the Union minister said it can be seen that the acting Executive Committee of Myanmar Music

Association (Central) arranged the welfare of artistes from the music field and participated in State-level ceremonies and entertainment during one year and a half establishment of the committee. Currently, all the musicians should participate in returning to normal situations. The arrangements are also made to develop the music field and to emerge the new executive committee members, said the Union minister. — MNA/KTZH

Asian Games Fun Run held to promote 19th Asian Games



The documentary group photo of the deputy minister, the Chinese cultural attaché, officials and runners aged above 13 and under 13 at the event yesterday.

AN ASIAN Games Fun Run was held at the athletics ground in Kyaikkasan Grounds under the Institute of Sports and Physical Education, Yangon, yesterday morning.

Myanmar Olympic Committee General Secretary Deputy Minister for Sports and Youth Affairs U Myo Hlaing, Cultural Attaché from Chinese Embassy Mr Peng Fong, Director-General U Tun Myint Oo of the Department of Sports and Physical Education, officials from

relevant departments, invited persons and athletes attended the event.

The deputy minister and officials watched and encouraged the 1.4-kilometre races for above 13 boy’s event, a 1.4-km race for above 13 girl’s event, a 400-metre race for U-13 boy’s and girl’s and a 100-metre race for disabled males and females.

Afterwards, the winning athletes for relevant races were awarded by officials respectively. — MNA/MKKS

MoC Union Minister meets commercial attachés going to work abroad



UNION Minister for Commerce U Aung Naing Oo met commercial attachés who will be working abroad at the ministry and gave a speech yesterday.

The Union minister discussed matters related to main exports from the country, the export of value-added products to international markets, increasing exports and gaining more market shares, collaboration with governments, organizations and entrepreneurs concerned, the invitation to foreign countries to visit and invest in Myanmar; and real-time knowledge of foreign markets. Union Minister U Aung Naing Oo urged commercial attachés to make their utmost efforts for the development of the trade and economic sector of the country.

The meeting was also attended by Deputy Minister for Commerce U Nyunt Aung, the permanent secretary, directors-general and commercial attachés. – MNA/TS

Union Minister U Aung Naing Oo gives the speech to commercial attachés in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

Nay Pyi Taw to hold 58th Myanma Gems Emporium

ORGANIZED by the Central Committee on holding Myanma Gems Emporium, the 58th Myanmar Gems Exhibition 2023 will be held from 17 to 23 March at the Mani Yadana Jade Hall in Nay Pyi Taw. A total of 295 pearl lots, 120 gems lots and 2,150 jade lots will be displayed for sale.

Myanmar national gemologists, jewellers and investors with the approved licence will be allowed to attend the event according to the specifications.

The inspection of pearl lots to be sold at the exhibition will be done on 17 March and the open tender sale on 18 and 19 March. The observation of gems lots will take place between 17 and 19 March and its open tender sale will be held on 20 March. The examination of jade lots will be conducted from 17 to 20 March and the open tender sale will be continued from 21 to 23 March.

It is reported that issues related to the right to participate in the 58th Myanmar Gems Exhibition 2023 can be inquired at the Myanma Pearl Enterprise and the Myanma Gems Enterprise in Nay Pyi Taw, the Central Committee on holding Myanma Gems Emporium. — Aung Min Han/CT



161,633 students take Maths on 3rd day matric exam

Students are seen at the examination centres in Zabuthiri Township, Nay Pyi Taw (top), and in Bahan Township, Yangon (right).



A total of 161,633 students took the mathematics exam on the third day of the 2022-2023 matriculation examinations across the country.

There are five foreign exam centres and 858 local exam centres and 161,633 students out of 179,843 applicants took the mathematics exam, accounting for 89.87 per cent. — MNA/MKKS

4 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 10 March, total figure rises to 633,954

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to **633,954** after **four** new cases were reported on 10 March 2023 according to the Ministry of Health. The total number of patients who have recovered from COVID-19 in the country reached **614,439**, including **one** new recovery.

The death toll from COVID-19 in the country remained unchanged at **19,490** on 10-3-2023 with no new death reported from the pandemic. — GNLM

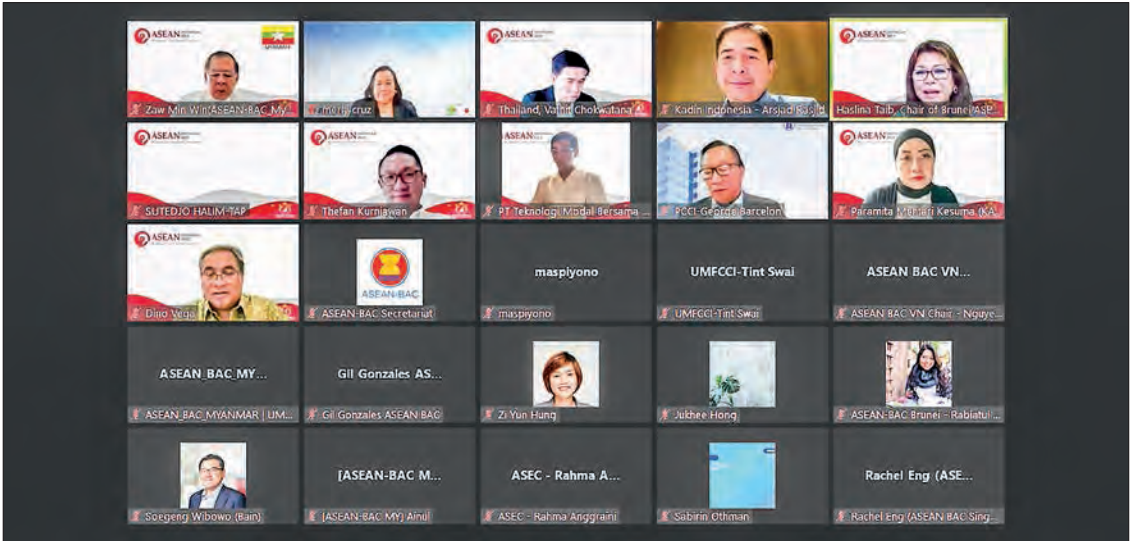
96th ASEAN Business Advisory Council Meeting focuses on strengthening business cooperation in ASEAN region

THE 96th ASEAN Business Advisory Council meeting (ASEAN-BAC), led by ASEAN-BAC Chair Mr Arsjad Rasjid PM (ASEAN-BAC Indonesia), was held by a virtual format on 8 March 2023 and Senior Executive Advisor U Zaw Min Win, CEO U Moe Kyaw and officials from UMFCCI attended it.

The meeting covered various topics, including a summary of proceedings from the 95th ASEAN-BAC meeting, the ASEAN-BAC Malaysia Council's introduction programme

for new members, legacy projects of ASEAN countries, and the draft report for the AEM retreat dialogue.

The meeting was attended by officials from Viet Nam, Thailand, Brunei, Malaysia, Indonesia, Laos, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore and Cambodia. ASEAN-BAC Myanmar members, Senior Executive Advisor U Zaw Min Win, CEO U Moe Kyaw and IR advisor U Tint Swe of UMFCCI were present at the event. — Myo Min Thura/KZW



CRIME NEWS

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

ON 7 March, an on-duty team at the 16th-Mile Kyaukchaw checkpoint under the management of the Mandalay Region Illicit Trade Eradication Task Force nabbed 7,000 kilogrammes of iron pipes worth K9,578,450 that exceeded the Import Declaration (ID) from a stationed Nissan Diesel auto (approximately K40 million) at 52/2-Milepost on the Mandalay-Lashio Road, 29,000 kilogrammes of iron sheets worth K39,682,150 that exceeded the Import Declaration (ID) from four stationed vehicles (approximately K160 million) near 22nd-Milepost on the Mandalay-Lashio Road, 44,200 kilogrammes of iron pipes worth K60,481,070 that exceeded the Import Declaration (ID) from stopped six stationed vehicles on the bypass road of PyinOoLwin and 22,100 kilogrammes of iron pipes worth K30,240,535 from three vehicles (approximately K105 million) heading to Mandalay from Chinshwehaw at the 16th-Mile Kyaukchaw checkpoint. The action was taken under Customs procedures.

In addition, an on-duty combined team seized 1,800 kilogrammes of multi-vita plus sugar-coated tablets worth K35 million from a Dagon Tawwin truck (estimated value of K35 million) heading to Yangon



Officials check confiscated timbers.

from Myawady on 7 March and 25 cartons of instant rice vermicelli and 125 cartons of Lactasoy worth K2.5 million without official documents from a Yutong bus (estimated value of K18 million) heading to Yangon from Myawady on 8 March. The action was taken under Customs procedures.

On 8 and 9 March, a total of 39.1748 tonnes of illegal teak worth K18,789,924 was captured in Bago, Pyu, Kyaukdaga, Latpadan and Yedashe townships and the action was taken under the Forest Law.

On 9 March, an on-duty team confiscated 1,422 litres of vegetable oil worth K3,555,000 without official documents from a Toyota Hiace auto (estimated value of K13 million) at the Thanlwin Bridge (Hpa-an)

combined checkpoint and 125 Camel motorbike tyres worth K3,125,000 without official documents from a vehicle at the Kawkareik (Tadakyoe) combined checkpoint. The action was taken under Customs procedures.

Similarly, an on-duty team at the Chinshwehaw trade post captured 590 cartons of tiles worth K13,619,550 that exceeded the Import Declaration (ID) from a Hino Profia vehicle (approximately K35 million). The action was taken under Customs procedures.

Therefore, 42 arrests (estimated value of K838,551,679) were made on three consecutive days from 7 to 9 March, according to the Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee. — MNA/MKKS

Over K30 bln worth of Ice for carrying abroad captured in Thazi

OVER K30 billion worth of 1.5 tonnes of Ice (Methamphetamine) which will be carried abroad was captured in Thazi township in Mandalay Region, Myanmar Police Force stated.

A combined team consisting of members of the Anti-Narcotics Task Force examined an eight-wheel fuel tanker, heading to Thazi from Kalaw, driven by Thein Win Swe (aka) Me Gyi accompanied by Kyaw Khaing Htwe at the Kywetetson checkpoint in Thazi township at noon on 4 March, according to information.

Officials captured a to-

tal of 1.5 tonnes of Methamphetamine worth K30 billion that were hidden from the vehicle's body. Acting on a tip-off, Police arrested Ko Phone (aka) Phone Naing Win, a trafficker, at his house in Taunggyi township with a Ford auto at noon on 5 March.

Offenders admitted the seized drugs were carried from Shan State to Yangon Region and will be carried abroad by sea.

Police have taken legal action against the offenders and an investigation is underway to identify the perpetrators of the crime chain. — MNA/MKKS



Three offenders are seen along with seized drugs, vehicles and related items.

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CURRENT
AFFAIRS

38 petrol stations to be affiliated with
EV charging stations within 3 months



EV charging stations are under construction.

DEPUTY Minister for Construction U Win Pe recently said plans to construct EV charging stations within the next three months at 38 designated petrol stations in Yangon, Yangon-Mandalay Expressway and Nay Pyi Taw. The National-Level Leading Committee on the Development of Electric Vehicles and Related Businesses have approved the installation of EV charging stations as part of the first phase of the project. Twenty-four fuel outlets in Yangon, seven on the Yangon-Mandalay Expressway and seven in Nay Pyi Taw totalling 38 will be affiliated with EV charging

stations. A total of 51 chargers are set to be installed across 38 petrol stations as part of the EV charging infrastructure project. At present, authorities are requesting charging station plans from petrol retailers to facilitate the installation process. — TWA/KZW

12 collisions on Yangon-Mandalay Expressway
result in 11 fatalities, 5 injuries in Feb

THE Yangon-Mandalay Expressway experienced a total of 12 accidents resulting in the deaths of 11 individuals and injuries to 15 others, as reported by the Expressway Police statistics. Vehicle crashes have resulted in the loss of seven men and five women, with the total value of damage estimated at K14.15 million. As per the latest available data, a total of 169 traffic accidents occurred on the Yangon-Mandalay Expressway in 2022. These incidents left 57 dead and 280 hurt. Speed limits on the highway have been set as follows: small cars are permitted to travel at a maximum speed of 100 kilometres per hour, while passenger vehicles are limited to 90 kilometres per hour. Commercial trucks and Hijet vehicles have a speed limit of 60 kilometres per hour according to the Myanmar National Road Safety Council. — TWA/KZW



A Thingyan pavilion in Tamway Township is pictured in 2022.

YRG to accept applications for
constructing Thingyan pavilions in
Yangon Region

THE Yangon Regional Government has announced that applications for constructing pavilions for the Maha Thingyan Water Festival 2023 are now being accepted. The dimensions of family pavilions and entertainment pavilions will be determined depending on the availability of water and traffic congestion. Applications, along with the approvals of the General Administration Department in relevant townships and districts, will have to be submitted to the Engineering Department (Roads and Bridges) of the Yangon City Development Committee. It is mentioned in the statement that the construction work will have to begin only after receiving the permission of the Yangon Region government office. The applications should be made between 9 and 31 March and late applications will not be considered, according to the statement from the Yangon Region government. — TWA/CT

Market price of palm
oil drops by around
K1,200 per viss

THE price of palm oil in the Yangon market went down from K7,400 per viss on 25 February, to K6,380 and K6,250 per viss on 7 and 8 March respectively, a palm oil trader from Bayintnaung stated. There is no oil at the tank in the Yangon market even though the market price slumped down to K6,200 per viss. Some say that oil can be bought for K6,600 per viss from oil hoarders. The wholesale reference price of palm oil in the Yangon market from 6 to 12 March was K4,600 per viss, the same as the previous week. Within two weeks from 27 February to 12 March, the palm oil price in the external market is around K1,200 per viss lower than the wholesale reference price, according to palm oil dealers. Dealers who purchased palm oil at the end of February with the high prices said that they faced many losses

when the price has fallen these days. Due to the rumours that there is difficulty in purchasing palm oil on the evening of 7 March, palm oil was priced at K6,650-K6,700 per viss at the Myingyan market. However, the palm oil price in the Yangon market declined again. Thus, the opening prices of Bayintnaung and Nyaungpinlay markets became the same at K6,250 per viss. Such a sharp price drop caused the difference between the market price and the wholesale reference price per viss from around K2,900 at the end of February to only around K1,700 on 8 March. The price of a tonne of foreign palm oil was US\$970 on 28 February, US\$1,025 on 3 March, US\$1,005 on 7 March and US\$1,000 on 8 March, according to the foreign palm oil market price statements. — TWA/CT



LOCAL BUSINESS

Upward trend of domestic fuel oil prices persists

DOMESTIC fuel oil market sees price spikes. The prices have been volatile since February.

On 10 March, the prices touched a high of K2,150 per litre of Octane 92, K2,235 for Octane 95, K2,175 for diesel and K2,255 for premium diesel.

The domestic fuel prices are set depending on the price index set by Mean of Platts Singapore (MOPS), the pricing basis for many refined products in southeast Asia, according to the Supervisory Committee on Oil Import, Storage and Distribution of Fuel Oil.

Last August 2022, the oil prices surged to K2,605 per litre for Octane 92, K2,670 for Octane 95, K3,330 for premium diesel and K3,245 for diesel.

The committee is therefore governing the fuel oil storage and distribution sector effectively not to have a shortage of oil in the domestic market and to ensure price stability for energy consumers.

The Petroleum Products Supervision and Inspection De-

partment, under the guidance of the committee, is issuing the daily reference rate for oil to offer a reasonable price to energy consumers. The reference rate in Yangon Region is set on the MOPS's price assessment, shipping cost, premium insurance, tax, other general cost and health profit percentage.

The rates for regions and states other than Yangon are evaluated after adding the transportation cost and the retail reference rates daily covered on the state-run newspapers and are posted on the media and official website and Facebook page of the department daily starting from 4 May. The committee is inspecting the fuel stations whether they are overcharging or not. The authorities are taking action against those retailers of fuel stations under the Petroleum and Petroleum Products Law 2017 if they are found overcharging rather than the set reference rate.

As per the statement, 90 per cent of fuel oil in Myanmar is imported, while the remaining 10



On 10 March, the prices touched a high of K2,150 per litre of Octane 92, K2,235 for Octane 95, K2,175 for diesel and K2,255 for premium diesel. PHOTO: KO NAING(BAGO)

per cent is produced locally. The domestic fuel price is highly correlated with international prices. The State is steering the market to mitigate the loss between the importers, sellers and energy consumers. Consequently, the government is trying to distrib-

ute the oil at a reasonable price compared to those of regional countries.

Some countries levied higher tax rates and hiked oil prices than Myanmar. However, Malaysia's oil sector receives government subsidies and the prices are

about 60 per cent cheaper than that of Myanmar. Every country lays down different patterns of policy to fix the oil prices. Myanmar also levies only a lower tax rate on fuel oil and strives for energy consumers to buy the oil at a cheaper rate. — NN/EM

Pigeon pea price hits fresh new peak of over K2.2 mln per tonne

PIGEON pea price reached a record high of over K2.2 million per tonne in the domestic market.

Last August, the record price of pigeon peas was K2,120,000 per tonne. Therefore, the prevailing price of K2,211,000 per tonne broke a new record, traders involved in the pulses market said.

The demand of the main buyer India influences the prices. The price soared on the back of strong demand.

Additionally, India notified on 28 December 2022 that the free import policy of black gram (urad) and pigeon pea (tur) extended up to March 2024, causing the price plunge, traders pointed out.

The Kyat value against the US dollar also affected the price of pigeon peas. The hard currency is exchanged at K2,880 in the unofficial market at present. Last August 2022, weakening Kyat to over K4,500 against the US dollar drove the pigeon pea price up to K2.12 million per tonne.

Myanmar bagged over

US\$1.2 billion from more than 1.6 million tonnes of pulses exports over the past 11 months in the current financial year 2022-2023 (April-March). Of them, pigeon pea export earned \$157.90 million from 202,557.35 kilogrammes, the Ministry of Commerce's statistics showed.

Myanmar primarily exports black gram, green gram and pigeon peas. Of them, black gram and pigeon peas are mainly sent to India while green grams are shipped to China and Europe.

India has growing demand and consumption requirements for black grams and pigeon peas. According to a Memorandum of Understanding between Myanmar and India signed on 18 June 2022, India will import 250,000 tonnes of black gram and 100,000 tonnes of pigeon peas (tur) from Myanmar for five consecutive years from 2021-2022 financial year to 2025-2026 FY. This G-to-G pact will not affect the pulses' annual quota set by India. Myanmar's exporters are also entitled



According to a Memorandum of Understanding between Myanmar and India signed on 18 June 2022, India will import 250,000 tonnes of black gram and 100,000 tonnes of pigeon peas (tur) from Myanmar for five consecutive years from 2021-2022 financial year to 2025-2026 FY.

to deliver the pulses to India under that annual quota.

Myanmar yearly produces approximately 400,000 tonnes of black gram and about 50,000 tonnes of pigeon peas. Myanmar is the top producer of the black gram that is primarily demanded by India, while pigeon peas, green grams and chickpeas are cultivated in Australia and African countries besides Myanmar. — NN/EM

Prices of fuel oil, gold and dollar on 10 March 2023

Fuel Oil Price (Yangon)

Octane 92	K2,150
Octane 95	K2,235
Diesel	K2,175
Premium Diesel	K2,255

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	K2,835,000 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	K2,860 to K2,875

The above prices may change from time to time.

OPINION

Take care of bio-security for the prevention of terrible diseases

THE planet Earth is a habitat not only for human beings but for a large number of species of animals. As human beings and animals are inseparable in their habitats, communicable diseases spread to each other unavoidably.

Some human-borne diseases and animal-borne diseases caused the outbreak of pandemics and plaques throughout the world. In successive eras, aforesaid diseases often menace mankind. According to the data, some 75 per cent of terrible diseases were based on animals infecting humans within the past 20 years.

Indeed, the root causes of the outbreak of zoonosis are the growing population across the world, the travelling of global peoples and distribution of commodities throughout the world in a short time, environmental degradation, climate change and careless lifestyle in health conditions.

Taking an invaluable lesson from the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, all global peoples should take high care of bio-security in operating animal farms as part of conserving wildlife and the natural environment not to cause terrible zoonosis again in the future while broadening the scope of health knowledge of the people in the society to be able to avoid suffering from diseases.

Practically, wildlife animals, farming cattle and pet animals are important sources of communicable diseases to human beings but these animals cannot be set aside from society. So, everybody needs to take preventive measures against possibly communicable diseases. It is because, these animals must be avoidably bred to produce meat, milk, eggs and other products the human beings can consume.

However, authorities, businesspersons and ordinary people need to strictly manage animal farming tasks with the use of protective equipment not to infect themselves and others and not to carry viruses from one place to another. If so, infection of viruses from animals can be prevented to some extent.

Taking an invaluable lesson from the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, all global peoples should take high care of bio-security in operating animal farms as part of conserving wildlife and the natural environment not to cause terrible zoonosis again in the future while broadening the scope of health knowledge of the people in the society to be able to avoid suffering from diseases.



HAPPINESS means different things to different people and unfortunately, there is no universal key to open it. This is the problem. The more we pursue happiness in any of its forms, the more we realize just how difficult it is to really hold on to it. However, we can still give ourselves the best possible chance of finding real happiness more philosophically.

For the vast majority of people, the desire to be happy is one of the core motivators in this life. Whether we consciously realize it or not, we have been working for certain financial, career or personal goals assuming generally, that achieving these things will help us to become happier than we are now.

Happiness can be influenced by a wide range of factors including personal relationships, financial security, health, achievement of goals and personal values. Happiness is not a constant state, and everyone experiences up and down in their emotional well-being by some factors and also, they affect happiness directly.

We can't create happiness but can adjust some factors that affect our mood. We can do it by making action, caring for the health and fulfilling nutrient needs.

Making actions

To be happy, we have to make some actions. The most important one is socializing. Man is a social animal. Thus, we should have strong and bidirectional social relationships. We need sympathetic, empathetic and helpful friends. Those buddies would give advice, help and support when we are in need. Even when we are not in trouble, direct person-to-person

contact triggers parts of our nervous system that release a mixture of neurotransmitters tasked with regulating our response to stress, anxiety and social motivation.

Social contact can help to improve memory formation and recall and protects the brain from neurodegenerative diseases also. And in your social community, you shouldn't be a take-and-forget person. You must appreciate the help of other people when you are in trouble. This is practising gratitude. Expressing gratitude is associated with a host of mental and physical benefits. Studies have shown that feeling thankful can improve sleep, mood and immunity. Gratitude can decrease depression, anxiety, difficulties with chronic pain and risk of disease.

Appreciating the help of other people only isn't enough. Volunteering is a practical way to practise gratitude. The act of helping others fires up areas of the brain associated with pleasure, social connection and trust. It has powerful benefits which also help us feel more positive about ourselves and improve our physical health.

The next thing to do is de-clutter our minds. Everything we experienced in our life is not to keep along. There are things to remember and things to forget. Unnecessary things in our minds are to be shed for a lighter, happier life. Those things that made burdens on us could be toxic relationships or negative habits or physical items. Regularly check

The Happiness Prescription

By Saya Norm



Spending time on an activity that you enjoy can improve your mental health and wellbeing. People with hobbies are less likely to suffer from stress, low mood, and depression. Activities that get you out and about can make you feel happier and more relaxed. **ILLUSTRATION: FREEPIK**

the things that should be left behind in order to make space for all the good stuff.

And then you need a sense of humour to be happy. In fact, laughter is a strong medicine. It draws people together in ways that trigger healthy physical and emotional changes in the body. It protects us from the damaging effects of stress.

Laughter helps us stay mentally healthy. What laughter makes us are: stops distressing emotions: helps us relax and recharge: shifts our perspective: and draws us closer to each other.

So, try to laugh even in difficult situations.

The action you have to make next is movement. A sedentary lifestyle makes us unhealthy and unhappy. Movement or exercise is a useful tool in our self-care kits. It gives us a way of proactively building mental and health resilience. After the exercise, the brain can increase the happy neurotransmitters such as dopamine serotonin, noradrenaline and endorphins which make us feel good.

For people over their fifties, workouts needn't be overly long and intense to get those mood-en-

hancing benefits. Choose an exercise series you can do regularly and earnestly in half an hour a day for three times a week is enough.

One minor thing most people think is not very important for happiness is hobby work. But engaging in hobby works is important for happiness because it provides an opportunity to engage in activities that one finds enjoyable, stimulating and fulfilling.

There are many kinds of hobbies and they have numerous benefits for the mind. They reduce stress, boost mood, increase happiness, help calm the mind

and improve social connections that help mental health. Different hobby works in different ways for the mind but some are more beneficial for mental health such as painting, writing, playing musical instruments, singing, gardening and physical exercises.

Nutrition

Good nutrition is essential for overall health. Many nutritionists said that diet plays a big role in happiness. Anybody who wants to be happy should prioritize plant-based food, especially bananas, strawberries, lentils, avocados, spinach, grapes, sesame seeds and raw nuts. For the meat portion, chicken, oily fishes and seafood are better. But we can't get enough mood-boosting nutrients daily from the food that we had. So, try to upgrade your diet and supplement your shelf with happy nutrients.

Four kinds of nutrients are essential for happiness. They are omega-3 fatty acids, magnesium vitamin D and B12. Omega-3 is known as fish oil. It has been shown to be effective in relieving the symptoms of depression, as well as beneficial effects on anxiety and premenstrual syndrome. It also supports heart and brain health.

Omega-3 is rich in oily fish, nuts, seeds and certain oil such as flaxseed oil and walnut oil. It can be available as a one-gramme soft gel capsule containing 300 mg

of Omega-3.

Magnesium is a mineral and its deficiency could be seen in many people throughout the world even in developed countries like the USA. Most people don't meet the daily requirement of 400 mg. Magnesium supports hormone balance, calms the nervous system, relieves stress and encourages sleep. It is rich in spinach, nuts, seeds and wholemeal bread. But magnesium supplement with high bioavailability is more certain for daily need.

Vitamin D is known as the sun's vitamin. Sunbathing for 20 minutes in the morning supplies daily vitamin D requirements. But modern people mostly live indoors and that makes low levels of vitamin D. Thus, many people take vitamin D supplements. There are two variants of vitamin D: D2 and D3. Vitamin D3 is superior to D2. Vitamin D deficiency increases the likelihood of depression – it's also essential for bone health and immunity. Vitamin D-rich foods are oily fish, egg yolk, red meat and fortified food. The current daily allowance of 600 international units is not sufficient for a therapeutic dose.

B12 contributes to the normal functions of the nervous and immune systems. Low levels can cause a whole host of symptoms that include low mood, irritability and fatigue. B12 supplements can be available as high as 5,000 microgram tablets that work well

not only for mood but also for red blood cells. B12-rich foods are meats.

Health problems

Some health problems are related to unhappiness. You have to solve them early with qualified and skilful health professionals. The most frequent problems connected with happiness are sleep deprivation, depression and thyroid problems. Sleep is essential for health and happiness. Lack of sleep can have an impact not only on health and wellness but on the immune system and general mood.

Only 4.5 hours of sleep a night for one week made feeling more stressed, angry, sad and mentally exhausted. Chronic sleep deprivation leads to depression and severe unhappiness.

Depression can cause a lot of symptoms within the central nervous system. Symptoms of depression include overwhelming sadness, grief and a sense of guilt. Chronic depression may make sleep problems. Sleep problems could cause depression – vice versa.

Thyroid problems also make mood changes and unhappiness. An overactive thyroid makes mood symptoms that may include anxiety, nervousness and irritability. In underactive thyroid – depression and unusual tiredness.

Above-mentioned factors may be useful when we figure out the underlying causes of unhappiness. But man is the most important factor. We need individual and collective efforts as well as mutual support and humane treatment to implement happiness. In this way, anyone could feel happy anytime, anywhere.



Tourism announces its return at Berlin fair, defying inflation

THE Berlin tourism industry fair this week celebrated its comeback from the dark days of the coronavirus pandemic with strong demand that has so far defied high inflation figures.

The industry gathering returned after a three-year hiatus enforced by the pandemic crisis, with 5,500 exhibitors from 161 countries descending on the German capital.

"Travel is back!" Julia Simpson, the head of the World Travel and Tourism Council said during the fair.

In 2022, the World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) registered an increase in international arrivals of almost 900 million compared with the previous year.

In total, arrivals stood at 67 per cent of their pre-pandemic level, with the figure reaching as high as 80 per cent in Europe.

"We are already at a similar level to 2019" in some countries, said UNWTO Europe director Alessandra Priante.

Savings power

"The savings made by a whole section of the population during the pandemic lockdowns have yet to be fully spent and are flowing into the sector," said Clemens Fuest, head of the economic think tank Ifo Institute.

China's abandonment at the end of last year of its zero-Covid policy, which strictly regulated travel in and out of the country, has been another boon.

Before the pandemic, Chinese travellers represented 15 per cent of all tourists.

The atmosphere at the fair was celebratory with delegates from central Asia and Pacific islands parading through the aisles in traditional garb to promote their

region. "Our clients have all come back," Lukas Knauber, 23, a German spa hotel worker, told AFP.

The upturn in fortunes has continued despite painfully high inflation in many parts of the world. Consumer prices in the eurozone rose at an 8.5-per cent pace in February and look set to remain elevated.

But the positive trend may not carry forward very far.

"In 2023, many consumers

were able to say I'm going even if I have lost spending power. But in 2024 that will likely not be the case," said Fuest.

Consumer behaviour is already changing as a result of inflation. In Germany, more and more holidaymakers are "booking early in the year to benefit from discounts", the German tourism industry group DRV said in early March.

SOURCE: AFP



The tourism industry is recovering from the pandemic but now faces risks from inflation eroding the purchasing power of consumers. **PHOTO: JOHN MACDOUGALL / AFP**

NASA to reveal crew members in April for flight around Moon



NASA's Orion space capsule being retrieved after splashing down in the Pacific Ocean. **PHOTO: POOL/AFP**

NASA will announce the names next month of the four astronauts -- three Americans and one Canadian -- who will fly around the Moon next year, the head of the US space agency said Thursday.

NASA administrator Bill Nelson said the crew members of the mission known as Artemis 2 would be revealed on 3 April.

"Astronauts -- three from America and one from Canada -- will fly around the moon and they'll test NASA's Space Launch System, which is our rocket, and the spacecraft called Orion," Nelson said.

The first Artemis mission wrapped up in December with

an uncrewed Orion capsule returning safely to Earth after a 25-day journey around the Moon.

Artemis 2, scheduled to take place in late November 2024, will take a four-person crew around the Moon but without landing on it.

The ambitious programme aims to return humans to the Moon for the first time since the historic Apollo missions ended in 1972.

Artemis 3, scheduled for about 12 months after Artemis 2, will see astronauts land for the first time on the south pole of the Moon.

NASA hopes to establish a lasting human presence on the lunar surface and later launch a years-long trip to Mars.

As part of the Artemis missions, NASA is planning to send a woman and a person of colour to the Moon for the first time. — AFP

Scientists use TikTok to explain, fight climate change

WITH his moustache caked in icicles and frozen droplets, glaciologist Peter Neff shows his 220,000 TikTok followers a sample of old ice excavated from Antarctica's Allan Hills.

The drop-shaped fragment encapsulates tiny air bubbles, remnants of 100,000-year-old atmosphere. The greenhouse



A growing number of scientists are leveraging the short-form video app TikTok to boost literacy on climate change. Glaciologist Peter Neff holds a fragment of Antarctic ice containing 100,000-year-old air bubbles. **PHOTO: AFP**

gases trapped inside carry precious information on Earth's past climate, explains icy_pete as he brings the translucent nugget closer to the camera.

A growing number of scientists are leveraging the short-form video app TikTok to boost literacy on climate change, campaign for action or combat rampant disinformation online.

Some have gone viral on one of Gen Z's favourite platforms.

"TikTok allows me to give people a lens through which they can embody the experience of being a climate scientist in Antarctica," Neff told AFP. "I share my insider perspective on how we produce important records of past climate without having to spend too much time on editing and playing all the games to make perfect content."

Neff is one of 17 tiktokers and instagrammers listed in the 2023 Climate Creators to Watch, a collaboration between startup media Pique Action and the Harvard School of Public Health. — AFP

Rise in ocean plastic pollution 'unprecedented' since 2005

PLASTIC pollution in the world's oceans has reached "unprecedented levels" over the past 15 years, a new study has found, calling for a legally binding international treaty to stop the harmful waste.

Ocean plastic pollution is a persistent problem around the globe — animals may become entangled in larger pieces of plastic like fishing nets, or ingest microplastics that eventually enter the food chain to be consumed by humans. Research published on Wednesday found that there are an estimated 170 trillion pieces of plastic, mainly microplastics, on the surface of the world's oceans today, much of it discarded since 2005.

"Plastic pollution in the world's oceans during the past 15 years has reached unprecedented levels," said the study,

published in open-access journal PLOS One.

The amounts were higher than previous estimates, and the study found that the rate of plastic entering the oceans could accelerate several-fold in the coming decades if left unchecked. Researchers took plastic samples from over 11,000 stations around the world focusing on a 40-year period between 1979 and 2019.

They found no trends until 1990, then a fluctuation in trends between 1990 and 2005. After that, the samples skyrocket. "We see a really rapid increase since 2005 because there is a rapid increase in production and also a limited number of policies that are controlling the release of plastic into the ocean," contributing author Lisa Erdle told AFP.—AFP



Plastic waste and garbage is seen at the beach in Costa del Este, Panama City, on 21 September 2022. **PHOTO: AFP**

NEWS IN BRIEF

Apple to launch app dedicated to classical music

APPLE on Thursday said it will start streaming classical music from a stand-alone app on 28 March as it seeks to distinguish itself from rivals Spotify and specialist platforms.

The iPhone giant said Apple Music Classical will offer "the world's largest classical music catalog", with exclusive albums and an advanced search functionality not seen on other apps.

With five million tracks, the app will compete with rivals exclusively dedicated to classical music, including Germany based Idagio, currently the only subscription-based platform for classical audio streaming. Apple Music Classical will offer streaming with high quality audio especially sought after by classical music buffs.

The app will come at no additional charge to the Apple Music subscription and will soon be available on Android-based devices, the company said. — AFP

HEALTH/PANDEMIC WORLD

Honduras authorizes morning-after pill



Xiomara Castro had spoken out for legalized abortion and same-sex marriage during the campaign that led to her election as president.
PHOTO: ÓSCAR DEL POZO / AFP/FILE

HONDURAS' first woman president, Xiomara Castro, on Thursday lifted a 14-year-old ban on the emergency contraceptive pill in one of the last countries to outlaw its use.

Access to the pill was a key demand of women's rights groups in Honduras, which maintains an absolute ban on abortion along with its Central American neighbours El Salvador and Nicaragua. But the move was vehemently opposed by church and

other interest groups in a deeply conservative society.

Its use was previously authorized in Honduras but was prohibited shortly after Castro's husband Manuel Zelaya, president from 2006 to 2009, was unseated in a coup supported by the military, business elites and the political right.

"We commemorate the historical struggle of women," Castro tweeted on Thursday as she announced she had signed

an "executive agreement for the free use and commercialization" of the morning-after pill. "The World Health Organization (WHO) has determined that is part of the reproductive rights of women and is not abortive," said the leftist president, who had spoken out for legalized abortion and same-sex marriage during the campaign that led to her election in November 2021. Church groups insist the morning-after pill is akin to abortion. According to the WHO, emergency contraception can prevent up to 95 per cent of pregnancies when taken within five days of unprotected sex or rape. The pill prevents or delays ovulation and does not induce an abortion, it says.

According to the NGO Doctors without Borders (MSF), there is limited access to contraceptives in Honduras, a gap in sex education, and a high rate of sexual violence all contributing to a high rate of teen pregnancy.—AFP

Canada moves to allow humanitarian aid to reach Afghanistan

CANADA on Thursday moved to amend its anti-terrorism laws in order to allow deliveries in Afghanistan of humanitarian aid and do other work that has been blocked since the Taliban took over.

Ottawa listed the Taliban as a terrorist group in 2013, making it a criminal offence for Canadians to have dealings with the Islamic fundamentalists.

After the Taliban retook the country in August 2021, aid groups were warned they risked running afoul of Canadian laws if they continued to provide aid to Afghans.

Even taxes collected by the Taliban on purchased goods or on salaries of locals

hired by foreign NGOs, for example, would amount to illegally contributing to a terror group. As a result, their efforts to help Afghans were effectively paralyzed. A draft of the bill says aid workers can get an exemption to help people in crisis "in a geographic area that is controlled by a terrorist group" without fear of prosecution in Canada.

The proposed tweaks would allow delivery of humanitarian assistance, health and education services, resettlement, and programmes "to assist individuals in earning a livelihood" and to promote or protect human rights.

The bill must still be passed by parliament. — AFP



Parliament Hill, colloquially known as The Hill, is an area of Crown land on the southern banks of the Ottawa River in downtown Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. **PHOTO: REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE/ AFP/FILE**

Undernutrition in mothers is rising sharply: UNICEF

THE number of pregnant women and nursing mothers suffering from undernutrition has increased by 25 per cent since 2020 in 12 countries at the epicentre of the world food crisis, the UN children's agency warned Monday, stressing the impact it is having on children's health.

The UNICEF report, based

on data analysis of women in nearly every country in the world, estimates that more than one billion women and adolescent girls suffer from undernutrition — which leaves them underweight and of short stature — and from a deficiency in essential micronutrients as well as from anaemia.

Most of them are in the world's poorest regions, with South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa constituting 68 per cent of women and adolescent girls who are underweight and 60 per cent of those suffering from anaemia.

These nutritional deficiencies have an impact not just on the well-being of the women but also affect their children, said UNICEF, noting that "poor nutrition is passed down through generations".

Malnutrition increases the risk of neonatal death, but can also "impair fetal development, with lifelong consequences for children's nutrition, growth, learning and future earning capacity". "Globally, 51 million children under two years are stunted. We estimate that about half of these children become stunted during pregnancy and the first six months of life when a child is fully dependent on the mother for nutrition," the UNICEF report said.—AFP



A nutritious and healthy diet during pregnancy is essential for the health of both mother and baby. **PHOTO: REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE/ JAY DIRECTO/ AFP/FILE**

Ex-Malaysian PM Muhyiddin charged with corruption over COVID-19 fund

FORMER Malaysian Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin was charged on Friday with corruption and money-laundering over dealings related to a COVID-19 fund he initiated while in power.

Muhyiddin, who was in office between March 2020 and August 2021, pleaded not guilty at a Kuala Lumpur court to charges of abusing his power as prime minister and president of his Bersatu party to solicit bribes from various sources on behalf of Bersatu.

The four corruption charges could see him facing a maximum 20 years in prison, while the two money-laundering charges could mean up to 15 years in prison, in addition to a hefty fine, if he is convicted. Muhyiddin was detained Thursday when he presented himself for questioning at Malaysia's anti-corruption agency headquarters in Putrajaya, the federal administrative capital, over the Jana Wibawa programme. —Kyodo

ECONOMY
WORLD

Safety costs at nuclear plants in Japan exceed 6 tril yen



File photo shows Tohoku Electric Power Co's Onagawa nuclear plant, as pictured in August 2020. **PHOTO: KYODO**

COSTS for safety measures necessary to restart Japan's idle nuclear reactors following the 2011 Fukushima nuclear disaster ballooned to over 6.09 trillion yen (\$44.3 billion) in January, according to 11 major power companies in the country.

As some companies have not yet included costs related to implementing anti-terrorism measures in their calculations, required under stricter regulations introduced in 2013 following the nuclear accident that occurred on 11 March 2011, the total amount is expected to increase further. The costs involve safety measures for 15 nuclear power stations and consist of both expenses already used and those expected in the future. As of January 2022, they totalled 5.78

trillion yen.

Over a one-year period through January this year, safety costs increased by 230 billion yen at the No 2 unit in Tohoku Electric Power Co's Onagawa plant in Miyagi Prefecture, northeastern Japan, and by 80 billion yen at Chugoku Electric Power Co's Shimane nuclear plant in western Japan. The Onagawa No 2 unit and the Shimane No 2 unit have already cleared safety screenings by the country's nuclear regulator, the Nuclear Regulation Authority, with construction work necessary to restart them under way after gaining local consent.

The cost of safety measures for the Onagawa No 2 unit totals 710 billion yen, more than double the roughly 300 billion yen spent to build it. — Kyodo

Afghanistan coffers swell as Taliban taxman collects

A dusty logjam of trucks inches across a rut in the mountains splitting Pakistan and Afghanistan, teeming with a cargo of fruit and coal -- and paying the Taliban authorities for the privilege of passage.

In downtown Kabul, a patrol of accountants inspects a bazaar, billing shopkeepers for trading honey, hair conditioner and gas hobs under the snapping white flag of the country's new rulers.

Afghanistan is frozen deep in a second winter of humanitarian turmoil since the Taliban seized power in 2021, but cash is changing hands at a dizzying pace. The Taliban administration is proving adept at collecting tax -- and seemingly without the corruption associated with the previous administration.

At Torkham on the border,



There are signs the country's coffers have benefitted from a crackdown on corruption, which sucked the US-backed government dry for 20 years. **PHOTO: AFP**

one trucker told AFP that under the old regime he would pay 25,000 Afghani (\$280) at illegal checkpoints along a 620 kilometre (380 mile) trip to Mazar-i-Sharif.

"Now we travel day and night, and no one asks us to pay," said 30-year-old driver Najibullah. —AFP

VW 'awaits EU answer' to US green subsidies

GERMAN carmaker Volkswagen said Wednesday it would "wait and see" how the European Union responds to a massive US green subsidy package before moving ahead with a planned battery plant in eastern Europe.

The announcement will likely fuel concerns among EU leaders that US President Joe Biden's landmark Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) — which includes \$370 billion in climate funding — will lure away investment and put European jobs at risk.

"We are still evaluating suitable locations for our next cell factories in eastern Europe and North America. No decisions have been made

yet," a VW spokesman said in a statement.

"We stick to our plan to build cell factories for about 240 GWh in Europe by 2030, but for this we need competitive framework conditions.

"That is why we wait and see what the so-called EU green deal will bring."

The IRA includes tax cuts for companies that invest in clean energy, along with subsidies for electric vehicles and batteries — if they are manufactured in North America.

To head off the threat, the European Commission has unveiled proposals such as a relaxation of state aid rules to level the playing field. — AFP



Assembly of the ID 3 in the Transparent Factory Dresden. **PHOTO: REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE/ VOLKSWAGEN AG**

Medical tourism in spotlight after Mexico kidnapping

AS reports swirl around the recent kidnapping in Mexico of four Americans, two of whom were killed, one detail has drawn particular attention — they had crossed the border for a medical procedure.

The revelation threw a spotlight on the steady stream of so-called medical tourism from the United States to its southern neighbour, as Americans cross the border seeking lower costs or treatments inaccessible at home, despite the risks — including that of going to a country known for drug-related violence.

Americans make the trip for everything from dental work to cosmetic surgery to treatment for cancer. — AFP

M’bishi Motors aims to electrify all cars sold globally by FY 2035



From late 2006, “MiEV” encompasses all of Mitsubishi Motors’s electric drive systems work, including lithium-ion batteries, in-wheel motors and other technologies related to electric vehicle (EV), hybrid-electric vehicle and fuel-cell vehicles. **PHOTO: MITSUBISHI**

MITSUBISHI Motors Corp said Friday it aims to electrify all of the cars it sells globally by fiscal 2035, expecting related investment to total more than 1.4 trillion yen (\$10 billion) through fiscal 2030.

Mitsubishi Motors, which had previously set a 50 per cent electrification target for its cars by fiscal 2030, is the latest Japanese automaker to accelerate a shift away from gas-powered vehicles amid inten-

sifying competition worldwide. “We will push ahead with electrification. We will introduce new technologies to achieve carbon neutrality,” Mitsubishi Motors President Takao Kato told

a press conference. Currently, electrified vehicles account for less than 10 per cent of the company’s car sales. Investment by the year ending March 2031 will reach somewhere between 1.4 trillion yen to 1.8 trillion yen, he said. The maker of the Outlander sport utility vehicle plans to launch 16 new cars, including nine electrified models globally in the next five years. The company will focus its resources in the Southeast Asian and Oceanian markets to increase profit, it said. It also said it will spend a total of 210 billion yen on procuring batteries by fiscal 2030 to catch up with the increased production of battery-powered vehicles.—Kyodo

US banking shares hammered as stocks tumble ahead of jobs data

US banking shares plunged Thursday, weighing on the broader stock market after a mixed session on global bourses. The worries about the financial sector come ahead of key American jobs data, and as investors were already on guard following hawkish commentary this week from Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell. **SVB Financial**

Group, a Silicon Valley-focused financial company, disclosed Wednesday that it lost \$1.8 billion following securities sales to raise funds, as it contends with declining customer deposits. The news came on top of an announcement the same day that crypto banking titan Silvergate plans to shut down in the face of cryptocurrency market turmoil. — AFP



With the labour market still tight, investors are keeping a wary eye on US jobs data with a strong reading likely putting pressure on the Federal Reserve to hike interest rates further. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

Profits plunge at Russia’s top lender Sberbank

RUSSIA’S top bank Sberbank said Thursday its net profit dropped nearly 80 per cent in 2022, a year marked by unprecedented Western sanctions on Moscow over its offensive in Ukraine. The group published a net profit of 270.5 billion rubles (\$3.56 billion) last year, a 78.3 per cent decrease compared to 2021.

“2022 has been an extremely difficult year for the Russian economy and the Russian banking sector,” CEO German Gref said. He added that “a number of countries imposed blocking sanctions” against Russia’s “largest companies”, including Sberbank. In the wake of EU sanctions, Sberbank an-

nounced in March last year that it was withdrawing from the European market. Last May, the state bank was excluded from the SWIFT financial messaging system for global payments. Gref, who served as a minister of economic development during Russian President Vladimir Putin’s

first two terms in power, is also under personal sanctions. Gref insisted on Thursday that Sberbank’s “business model yet again passed the endurance test”. In January, Sberbank announced the opening this year of its offices on the Crimean peninsula which Moscow annexed from Ukraine in 2014. —AFP

Ex-Goldman banker sentenced to 10 years in 1MDB scandal

A US judge in New York on Thursday sentenced former Goldman Sachs banker Roger Ng to 10 years in prison following his conviction in the massive 1MDB bribery scandal. A New York jury in April 2022 found Ng guilty in the scheme involving the state-owned Malaysian investment fund 1MDB following testimony from Tim Leissner, another former Goldman Sachs banker and a co-conspirator. — AFP

Tender Invitation

GRGI Company Limited will do major renovations to its existing head office building located on Pyay Road, Hlaing Township, Yangon and build a new building at this compound. Therefore, GRGI is looking for interested companies for conceptual design & architectural design works.

For inquiries and more information, pls, contact the Phone No. 09-795825698, 09-43091929 within office hours 8:30 am to 5:00 pm not later than 24-3-2023.

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V UNI ACCORD VOY.NO. (0288-743N)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V UNI ACCORD VOY.NO. (0288-743N)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **11-3-2023** 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 Myanmar Port Authority Agent For: **M/S EVERGREEN MARINE (S'PORE) PTE LTD**

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V TJ HARVEST VOY.NO. (TJ2303)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V TJ HARVEST VOY.NO. (TJ2303)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **13-3-2023** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **TMIT-2** 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: **2301928** Shipping Agency Department Myanmar Port Authority Agent For: **M/S ELDER TRIUMPHANT SHIPPING LINES PTE LTD**

GLOBAL
AFFAIRSIndia, Australia pledge to
strengthen defence ties

Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese and his Indian counterpart Narendra Modi pledged greater defence ties Friday after a diplomatic tour where the leaders bonded over their countries' shared love of cricket. **PHOTO: AFP**

AUSTRALIAN Prime Minister Anthony Albanese and his Indian counterpart Narendra Modi pledged greater defence ties Friday

day after a diplomatic tour where the leaders bonded over their countries' shared love of cricket. Australia and India, with Ja-

pan and the United States, make up the Quad alliance that is seen as a bulwark against China's assertiveness in the Indo-Pacific region.

Albanese's four-day visit included a Thursday reception aboard the INS Vikrant, India's first homemade aircraft carrier, where he announced new joint military drills.

"Security cooperation is an important pillar in the comprehensive strategic partnership between India and Australia," Modi said Friday at a joint press briefing after a private meeting.

Albanese said "significant" and "ambitious" progress had been made in defence ties with India.—AFP

N Korea's Kim orders army to ramp up in
preparation for "actual war"

NORTH Korean leader Kim Jong Un has ordered the military to be ready to fight and called for intensified exercises after he oversaw a "fire assault drill" that demonstrated a capability "to counter an actual war," state-run media reported Friday. The report came

a day after North Korea fired at least one short-range ballistic missile from the western city of Nampo toward the Yellow Sea, according to the South Korean military. The launch came ahead of a major joint military exercise known as the "Freedom Shield"

between South Korea and the United States next week. Photos released by the Rodong Sinmun, the official newspaper of the Workers' Party of Korea, showed six missiles fired simultaneously, as well as Kim with his daughter during Thursday's drill.—Kyodo

Mexico won't let US troops
fight cartels, president says

MEXICO'S president on Thursday ruled out allowing foreign soldiers into the country to fight drug cartels following the deaths of two US citizens kidnapped by suspected drug traffickers.

"We're not going to allow any foreign government to intervene, much less the armed forces of a foreign government," President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador told reporters.

He spoke a day after Republican Senators Roger Marshall and Rick Scott introduced a bill in the US Congress seek-

ing to designate Mexican drug cartels as "foreign terrorist organizations".

Another Republican, Senator Lindsey Graham, has gone further, calling for President Joe Biden's administration to allow the US military to pursue the drug traffickers "wherever they exist".

Calls for action mounted after two of four US citizens abducted by suspected cartel members after entering north-eastern Mexico for medical reasons were found dead on Tuesday, while two others survived.—AFP



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. Mexican security forces take part in an operation to return two US kidnap survivors to Brownsville, Texas. **PHOTO: STR / AFP**

RUSSIA - UKRAINE CONFLICT

Biden meets Finland president,
reaffirms support for NATO entry

PRESIDENT Joe Biden met his Finnish counterpart Sauli Niinisto on Thursday to reaffirm US support for Finland quickly entering the NATO military alliance, the White House said.

Biden saw Niinisto briefly during his trip to Washington, where he was meeting with US senators and White House National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan, after earlier trips this week to Seattle and California.

Biden dropped in on the Sullivan meeting and "reiterated our strong support for Finland's swift accession to NATO," Principal Deputy Press Secretary Olivia Dalton told reporters.

The White House said Biden and Niinisto also "discussed their continued commitment to



Finland is in the process of joining NATO due to the new security environment in Europe following the Russian invasion of Ukraine. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

supporting Ukraine in the face of Russia's aggression".

Along with Sweden, Finland has applied to join NATO in response to the more than year-long war unleashed by Russia

against Ukraine.

The two countries' accession requires unanimous consent from the 30 current members. Türkiye and Hungary have yet to give the green light.—AFP

US behind 'anti-Russia'
sentiment in Georgia: Kremlin

THE Kremlin on Friday accused the United States of stoking anti-Russian sentiment among thousands of protesters who have taken to the streets in Georgia this week.

"We see where the president of Georgia is addressing

her people from. She is not making an address from Georgia, she is making an address from America," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters, accusing "someone's visible hand" of stoking "anti-Russian" sentiment.—AFP

Ukraine ambassador hopes Zelenskyy
attends G-7 as "voice of country"

UKRAINIAN Ambassador to Japan Sergiy Korsunsky said Friday he hopes his country's president, Volodymyr Zelenskyy, can attend the upcoming Group of Seven summit talks in May in Hiroshima as the "voice of the country", amid increasing fears that Russia could use nuclear weapons on

its neighbour.

Korsunsky told a press conference in Tokyo that the vast majority of Ukrainians are willing to fight against Russia even in the face of the nuclear threat, adding that "we have to win or disappear" as Russia's war with the country drags into its second year.—Kyodo

Xi Jinping unanimously elected Chinese president, PRC CMC chairman



Xi Jinping, newly elected president of the People's Republic of China (PRC) and chairman of the Central Military Commission of the PRC, makes a public pledge of allegiance to the Constitution at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, capital of China, 10 March 2023. **PHOTO: XIE HUANCHI/XINHUA**

Xi Jinping was unanimously elected president of the People's Republic of China (PRC) and chairman of the Central Military Commission (CMC) of the PRC on Friday at the ongoing session of the 14th National People's Congress.

Xi Jinping made a public pledge of allegiance to the Con-

stitution at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing on Friday.

In another development, Chinese President Xi Jinping on Wednesday stressed opening new ground for enhancing integrated national strategies and strategic capabilities.

Xi, also general secretary of the Communist Party of Chi-

na Central Committee, made the remarks while attending a plenary meeting of the delegation of the People's Liberation Army and the People's Armed Police Force, during the first session of the 14th National People's Congress, China's national legislature. —Xinhua

UK unveils US-style digital border permit

THE United Kingdom on Thursday announced the roll-out of an Electronic Travel Authorization (ETA) scheme, with visitors from Qatar the first to use it from October.

Qataris will apply in advance for an ETA, which authorizes an individual to travel to the UK and which the government says will make border crossings more efficient and secure.

By the end of 2024, ETAs will be required for all foreign visitors who are eligible to come visa-free for short stays,

including from Europe.

Currently, travellers from the continent and countries such as the United States and Australia do not need to make any form of application to visit to the UK. "Strengthening our border remains one of the government's top priorities," British Immigration Minister Robert Jenrick said.

"ETAs will enhance our border security by increasing our knowledge about those seeking to come to the UK and preventing the arrival of those who pose a threat. —AFP



Qataris will apply in advance for an ETA, which authorises an individual to travel to the UK and which the government says will make border crossings more efficient and secure. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

20 years after US invasion, Iraq far from 'liberal democracy'

TWENTY years after the US-led invasion of Iraq toppled Saddam Hussein, the oil-rich country remains deeply scarred by the conflict and, while closer to the United States, far from the liberal democracy Washington had envisioned.

President George W. Bush's war, launched in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks, is seared in memory for its "shock and awe" strikes, the toppling of a giant Saddam statue, and the years of bloody sectarian turmoil that followed.

The decision after the 20 March 2003 ground invasion to dismantle Iraq's state, party and military apparatus deepened the chaos that fuelled years of bloodletting, from which the jihadist Islamic State



US Marines carry a portrait of toppled Iraqi president Saddam Hussein at the international airport in Baghdad, in this file photo from 14 April 2003. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

group later emerged.

The US forces, backed mainly by British troops, never found the weapons of mass

destruction that had been the justification for the war, and eventually left Iraq, liberated from a dictator but marred by

instability and also under the sway of Washington's arch-enemy Iran.

"The US simply did not understand the nature of Iraqi society, the nature of the regime they were overthrowing," said Samuel Helfont, assistant professor of strategy at the Naval Postgraduate School in California.

Bush -- whose father had gone to war with Iraq in 1990-91 after Saddam's attack on Kuwait -- declared he wanted to impose "liberal democracy", but that drive petered out even if Saddam was overthrown quickly, Helfont said.

"Building democracy takes time and building a democracy doesn't create a utopia overnight," said Hamzeh Haddad, a

visiting fellow at the European Council on Foreign Relations.

Instead of discovering nuclear, biological or chemical weapons, the assault by the US-led international coalition opened a Pandora's box, traumatized Iraqis, and alienated some traditional US allies.

Major violence flared again in Iraq after the deadly February 2006 bombing of a Muslim Shiite shrine in Samarra north of Baghdad, which sparked a civil war that lasted two years.

By the time the US withdrew under Barack Obama in 2011, more than 100,000 Iraqi civilians had been killed, says the Iraq Body Count group. The United States claimed nearly 4,500 deaths on their side. —AFP

GLOBAL AFFAIRS

Xi Jinping
unanimously elected
Chinese president,
PRC CMC chairman

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SPORT



Yangon United star striker Win Naing Tun. PHOTO:YUFC

Yangon United to play
Dagon Star United
today

YANGON United will take on Dagon Star United as a 2023 season Myanmar National League match at 4:00 pm on 11 March at Thuwunna stadium in Yangon.

Yangon United star striker Win Naing Tun expressed his feeling upon the match.

He said Yangon United is preparing for the coming match

to perform their best.

The young striker Win Naing Tun said, “I know they are a good team. So we are building a good form and preparing to respond to them. As we focus on every single match, you will see the result on the pitch.”

Also, he has invited the fans, “I’m so grateful to have

big applause from our fans and please keep supporting us.”

Dagon Star United is standing in third place after three games were played: two won and one drew with seven points, while Yangon United led the table with full nine points after three matches played. — KZL

Arsenal face Fulham test, Liverpool target top four



Arsenal are aiming to take another step towards the Premier League title away at Fulham. PHOTO: AFP

ARSENAL travel to Fulham in the latest test of the Gunners’ Premier League title credentials this weekend as Manchester City aim to ramp up the pressure on Mikel Arteta’s men by winning at Crystal Palace.

Liverpool are the in-form side in the race for a top-four

finish ahead of their trip to Bournemouth after a historic 7-0 thrashing of Manchester United last weekend.

At the bottom of the table, nine clubs are separated by just six points. Leicester and West Ham are among them and home games this weekend may

be must-wins for Brendan Rodgers and David Moyes to keep hold of their jobs.

AFP Sport looks at some of the key talking points ahead of the weekend’s action in the English top flight.

Euro effect on title race

Dramatic late fightbacks against Bournemouth and Aston Villa in recent weeks have kept Arsenal five points clear of City in the title fight. But the Gunners have the extra complication of their trip to Craven Cottage on Sunday being sandwiched between two Europa League last 16 ties against Sporting Lisbon.

Arteta was able to heavily rotate his side during the group stages, but named a strong starting line-up for a 2-2 first leg draw in the Portuguese capital on Thursday.—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.

Medvedev, Sabalenka not counting
on Wimbledon

DANIIL Medvedev would like nothing more than a return to Wimbledon, but the sixth-ranked Russian isn’t getting caught up in reports that the All England Club could rescind its ban of Russian and Belarusian players.

The UK’s Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) came under pressure from the British government to impose the ban last year after Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, and an eventual ban extended to the grass court Grand Slam at Wimbledon. Britain’s Daily Telegraph reported last week that Wimbledon will likely lift the ban, but Medvedev was not building on it when asked at

the hard court tournament in Indian Wells. “Same like last year, you know, we hear rumors,” he said, adding when asked that he’d heard nothing from organizers and wouldn’t expect to.

“I know that I’m not someone who’s going to make this decision for them or even help them make this decision,” Medvedev said. “They have to make it by themselves for their different reasons, like they made it last year. “I always said that I will respect this decision. I play where I can play. Last year I couldn’t play Wimbledon — I was practising hard back where I live.” — AFP