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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.

CMP garment export brings in over \$4.7 bln in 11 months of this FY

CMP garment exports generated over US\$4.7 billion income abroad during the first 11 months of the 2022-2023 financial year, according to the statistics of the Myanmar Garment Manufacturers Association.

Garment factories operating under CMP system were able to export to foreign countries from April 2022 to February 2023 of current FY.

Garment industries in Myanmar are run by local entrepreneurs, China, South Korea, Japan and Thailand. Myanmar exports products of these industries to China, Thailand, Singapore as well as European countries.

Deputy Minister for Labour U Win Shein, at the garment factories in Shwelinban and Shwe Thanlwin Industrial zones in Hlinethaya township on 13 January, said that being factory managers, they have to understand that the capacity of skilled workers is the primary factor for timely export of products. He urged them to build fair relationship with workers and employees, must observe and practise the workplace regulations.

The garment industry is the major source of job opportunities and emphasizes the producing skilled workers. Employers and employ-



Female workers are pictured at one of the CMP garment factories.

ees stand to benefit through mutual interests. Employees must remain committed to their business, he said.

According to the deputy minister, the ministry is responsible for issuing national-level employment certi-

icates that recommend their skill levels. To achieve this, assessment centres would have been set up in garment factories run with significant number of workers, in collaboration with partner ministries, to evaluate their skills without

interrupting their work procedures, he added.

Now, there are a total of 738 factories operating throughout the entire country including 505 garment factories, 48 shoe manufacturing factories, 8 wig facto-

ries, as well as 117 factories involved in bags, sportswear, sports shoes, and socks. All of these enterprises are running their operations in compliance with the rules and regulations. —TWA/KZL

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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.

Illegal teaks, consumer goods, foodstuffs, electronic equipment, industrial raw materials, vehicles seized



Illegal goods seized at Mayanchaung and Thanlwin Bridge (Hpa-an) checkpoints on 9 and 10 March.

THE on-duty team under the supervision of the Customs Department made inspections. Officials confiscated one Dji drone estimated at K1.78 million without official documents at Mandalay International Airport on 7 March. And officials seized two kinds of goods including 9,014 oil filters worth over K1.5 million from Asia World Container Checkpoint on 9 March. Then, the inspection team nabbed 84 Kanjove Electric Tea Pot Double Cookers not declared in Import Declaration worth over K6 million from Hteedan Container Checkpoint on 10 March. The total seizures were worth over K2.3 million and the action was taken under the Customs Procedures.



Oil filters seized at Asia World Container Checkpoint on 9 March.

Furthermore, officials performed investigation at Yepu checkpoint in Shan State on 9 March and seized 590 cartons of tiles worth over K1.3 million

Fabric and 1,800 kilogrammes of Iron Pipe Fitting estimated at K34 million not declared in ID and one Mitsubishi Fuso, one Hyundai Tractor Head and one trailer estimated at K85 million on 9 and 10 March and the action was taken under the Customs Procedures. On 9 March, the inspection team under the supervision of Ayeyawady Region Illegal Trade Eradication Task Force seized 26.328 tonnes of various illegal timber worth over K1.7 million in Thabaung and Yekyi townships and the action was taken under the Forest Law.

20 cartons of M-150, 120 cartons of Cheers Beer, 180 cartons of Singha Beer estimated at K18 million and two Toyota HiAce, one Mini bus, one Mitsubishi Canter and one Top Super MP estimated at K50 million on 10 March. An on-duty team seized 40 cartons of Arm Bush and 170 cartons of Smart Softener without official documents estimated at K5.43 million at Kawkareik (Tadaky) checkpoint. The total seizures amounted to K73.43 million and the action was taken under the Customs Procedures.

Therefore, 27 arrests (es-



Smart softeners seized at Kawkareik (Tadaky) checkpoint on 10 March.

Moreover, the on-duty team carried out inspection at Thanlwin bridge (Hpa-an) checkpoint and seized 2,696 litres of vegetable oil, 160 cartons of Lipovitan-D,

timated value of K266,156,653) were made on 7, 9 and 10 March, according to the Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee. — MNA/KZW

Public Notice for Elimination of Violence

1. Declaring themselves to be “for the people”, the so-called CRPH, NUG and PDF terrorist groups are lawlessly killing Buddhist monks, civil servants including schoolteachers, and members of the general public, as well as looting and robbing.
2. Not encouraging, supporting, or assisting “CRPH”, “NUG”, and “PDF” terrorists, who are intimidating and killing people and committing destructive activities, is to protect the lives and property of the general public.
3. Giving information secretly to the authorities on terrorists and on the possession and transport of weapons/ammunition is tantamount to protecting the lives and property of innocent people.

No new case of COVID-19 reported on 12 March, total figure registers 633,955

MYANMAR’S COVID-19 positive cases registered 633,955 after no new case was reported on 12 March 2023 according to the Ministry of Health. The total number of patients who have recovered from COVID-19 in the country reached 614,442, including one new recovery. The death toll from COVID-19 in the country remained unchanged at 19,490 on 12-3-2023 with no new death reported from the pandemic. The country has vaccinated 30,969,767 people aged 18 and above for COVID-19 vaccines and 6,843,147 people aged under 18 till 11 March 2023. — GNLM

Implementation of two national visions for prosperity and food security in the nation

THE government is implementing two national visions for prosperity of the nation and security of food. Some 70 per cent of the population are engaged in agriculture, and the country is striving for development of the State economy based on agriculture and livestock farms. Hence, the government prioritizes the food sufficiency, nutrition and food safety for all citizens.

(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)

Second-day session of Myanmar Health Sciences Conference 2023 held

THE academic discussions and seminar of the Myanmar Health Sciences Conference (2023) continued yesterday for the second day at the Myanmar International Convention Center-II (MICC-II) in Nay Pyi Taw.

In the morning, the conference was held under the title of Concerted Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic in Myanmar: Challenges, Lessons Learnt and Strengthening Resilience to Future Pandemic.

Union Minister for Health Prof Dr Thet Khaing Win gave an opening speech and opened the session.

During the conference, participants discussed Ministry of Health's prevention activities and activities carried out to provide high coverage vaccinations for the COVID-19 disease according to the priority groups under the leadership of the Central Committee for the Prevention, Control and Treatment of COVID-19, laboratory testing activities, experiences and lessons learnt from balancing treatment activities in people's hospitals and clinics with the private health care sector and social organizations' cooperation, measures for obtaining sufficient medical equipment and protective equipment, and roles of the clinical manage-

ment committee, followed by the attendees' suggestions.

After that, the discussions were held under the titles: IPE, IPCP, essential strategy for quality care in medical practice, nursing education, and archaeogenetic exploration of the ancestors of Myanmar.

The Union Minister attended the discussions, and attendees rose questions what they wanted to know.

Parallel sessions were held at the same time, divided into five chapters so that those who attended the conference could study and discuss the subjects they were interested in.

Relevant experts discussed and presented titles on improving quality of care in hospital, saving the lives of children by quality immunization services, and food hoax and illegally medical products that impact on health, Osteoporosis: Why is a hip fracture so Dangerous, Acute Care in Paediatric Practice and Trans-catheter interventions in congenital heart disease, public health pandemic inheritance environmental stressor, Pitfalls in the interpretation of investigations in Rheumatological Practice, Lung Malignancy, and Changing concepts in Management of Type 2 Diabetes were discussed.



Myanmar Health Sciences Conference (2023) in progress at MICC-II in Nay Pyi Taw for the second day on 12 March.

Korean dentist Dr. Ha Nee Bae discussed the title on minimally invasive implant treatment.

Next titles on improving rehabilitation in Myanmar, Updated management of latent and drug-resistant TB, and Management of head and neck cancer were discussed and attendees asked for questions.

In the afternoon, the programmes continued as Parallel Sessions in various rooms and discussed the topic on Surgical Management of Oral Cancer in University of Dental Medicine, and Pediatric Neurology, led by Union Minister Prof. Dr. Thet

Khaing Win.

According to the programme, the topics on Anti-Microbial Resistance, a silent pandemic and Clinical teaching and critical thinking were also discussed.

Next, titles on Time is brain, Recent advances of Status Epilepticus, Update on Hyperacute management of Ischaemic Stroke, Kidney Health for All, Multi-disciplinary team meeting in effective cancer management were discussed under the parallel sessions.

Dr Jieun Choi from Korea discussed the title on Approach to the patients with CNS infec-

tion and encephalopathy, and Dr Naoko Kishi from Japan the title on comprehensive treatment for cleft lip and plate.

Next, titles named Sustainability of HOPE by Hospice and Palliative care in Myanmar, and Ophthalmology Current trend in the management of Diabetic Retinopathy were also discussed.

Dr. Hijin You from Korea led the discussion on Introduction of Craniofacial surgery.

The Myanmar Health Sciences Conference 2023 was held on 11 and 12 March and about 2,000 attendees from relevant arenas attended the conference.—MNA/KZL



Three students from University of Medical Technology (Yangon) to join Kitasato University International Exchange Programme 2023 in Tokyo, Japan

AS a Memorandum of Understanding-MoU signed between the University of Medical Technology (Yangon) under the Department of Human Resources for Health, Ministry of Health, and the Kitasato University in Japan, three fourth-year undergraduate students from the University of Medical Technology

(Yangon) left Yangon for Japan by air on the evening of 11 March 2023, to attend the Kitasato University International Exchange Programme 2023 including the cross-cultural interdisciplinary case study which will be held in Tokyo, Japan annually by the Kitasato University according to the International Student Ex-

change Programme.

The International Student Exchange Programme is organized between the University of Medical Technology (Yangon) and the Kitasato University School of Allied Health Sciences to exchange students for academic advancement and international experiences.—MNA/CT

Union Electric Power Minister inspects wind power project sites



Union Minister for Electric Power U Thaung Han views erected anemometer at wind power project in Gwa Township of Rakhine State on 12 March.

UNION Minister for Electric Power U Thaung Han yesterday morning inspected progress of the wind power project in Gwa Township, Rakhine State, where anemometers has already been erected in order to conduct the feasibility studies of generating electricity from wind power.

At first, company officials explained the project information and measures regarding plans for wind power projects in An, Gwa and Thandwe townships to the Union minister. Then, the Union minister directed them to ensure safety in transportation of wind power equipment to the project

site, proceed power line and substation upgrades from all sides, and perform to produce electricity as soon as possible as it is the first-ever wind power project in Myanmar. Next, the Union minister and party checked the progress of recording wind speed results by installing anemom-

eters and the pre-surveyed areas. The wind power project in Gwa Township will be implemented together by a citizen-owned company Primus Advanced Technologies Limited (PRIMUS), Hong Kong-based Asia Ecoenergy Development Limited (AED)

and Yunnan Machinery and Equipment Import and Export Co Ltd from the People's Republic of China. It will be developed in Gwa Township, Rakhine State with an installed power of 100 megawatts, and the annual production capacity will be 227.2 million kilowatt hours. At the 66/11 KV (10MVA) sub-station in Gwa Township, the Union minister looked into the project area in the sub-station yard. After that, he met with the current employees and clarified the status of the Ministry's operations and the current power distribution. The employees' presentations were resolved and cash assistance was presented. Finally, the Union minister and officials visited the Kyeintali Creek near Kyeintali to conduct the feasibility studies of water resources. — MNA/CT

Workshop on Battery Waste Management and Recycling for EV and Sustainable Renewable Energy holds

A workshop with the title “Battery Waste Management and Recycling for Electric Vehicles and Sustainable Renewable Energy”, was held at the Ministry of Industry on 11 March to systematically manage expired and damaged batteries when electric vehicles become more widely used. Chair of Work Committee for Setting Policies, Standards and Procedures for Development of EV and Related Industries Deputy Minister for Industry U Yin Maung Nyunt said that the five work committees are cooperating with each other in the relevant

sectors, and the research and development work committee is cooperating with relevant departments and organizations in implementing the policies for battery production techniques and management of waste batteries in various electric vehicles. The deputy minister pledged to cooperate with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation in drafting the policy on Lithium battery waste management system. Afterwards, the Managing Director of Proven Technology Industry Co Ltd widely dis-



Deputy Minister for Industry U Yin Maung Nyunt speaking at workshop on battery waste management and recycling for EV and sustainable renewable energy on 11 March.

cussed the Lithium Battery Waste Management System. The attendees asked what

they wanted to know and what was not clear and the officials discussed it the detail.

The Deputy Minister for Industry gave the conclusion speech.—MNA/MKKS

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Union Tourism Minister makes field trip to Bagan for development of hotels and tourism sector

UNION Minister for Hotels and Tourism U Aung Thaw on 10 March met with departmental officials and officials and entrepreneurs from hotels and tourism associations at the Aureum Palace Hotel and Resort in Bagan.

During the meeting, the Union Minister said that the arrival of domestic tourists to the Bagan region has exceeded the previous maximum arrivals, but the arrival of foreign tourists is still low, so everyone must cooperate to increase the arrival.

As the number of travellers increases, not only the hotels and tourism industry but also other related industries will develop. Cultural heritage must be preserved without damage.

The Ministry of Hotels and Tourism, in accordance

with the regulatory and legal procedures, decided to serve interests of the nation and the people under the law.

The Union Minister said that only when all entrepreneurs and local residents cooperate with each other will the tourism industry achieve greater success.

After that, officials from the hotels and tourism associations discussed the difficulties encountered and operations according to the relevant sectors, and the Union Minister responded to the reports.

At the Heritage Bagan Hotel where Thai language course is being conducted, the Union minister viewed teaching process.

He visited the Information Desk opened by the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism in Bagan



Union Minister for Hotels and Tourism U Aung Thaw meets departmental officials and businesspersons of hotels and tourism services in Bagan on 10 March.

Airport.

At the Bagan Information and Training Centre (BITC), the Union minister viewed round the information desk and met with staff of the Bagan branch of the Directorate of Hotels and Tourism. —MNA/KZL

Short-term quality rice crops to use for growing double to triple cropping a year



Deputy Minister for Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation Dr Tin Htut views thriving paddy plantation in Shwedaung Township on 10 March.

IN meeting with farmers in Gyogone Village of Shwedaung Township on 10 March, Deputy Minister for Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation Dr Tin Htut said that it is necessary to use quality short-term quality paddy varieties to arrange double and triple cropping patterns on a yearly basis and urged farmers to make progress from seed production agents to seed manufacturers.

After that, the deputy minister and officials viewed round the plantation of the seed division under Thegon Township Department of Agriculture, and discussed needs of orderly management to be

able to increase the pure seed production business in financial years in cooperation with local farmers.

Likewise, the deputy minister inspected the research and development activities of the paddy branch of Regional Research Center (Letpadan) under Department of Agricultural Research.

In the evening, the Deputy Minister and officials observed the ongoing operations in financial years and future plans of the Myanmar Rice Research Institute, Department of Agriculture in Hmawby, Yangon Region and attended to the requirements. — MNA/CT

Coffee growers of Ywangan township get good price for coffee

FOUR coffee cultivation cooperative societies of Ywangan Cooperative Syndicate and Shwe Theingi coffee association, Danu Self-Administered Zone in Shan State (South) operate their businesses in buying, grinding and distributing coffee bean from local farmers.

In the fiscal year 2022-2023,

these cooperative societies distributed 471.294 tonnes of coffee bean, and when the coffee is harvested, members of the coffee farmers' cooperative societies are cost effective for fetching K1,500 to K3,800 per pound of whole coffee beans.

Furthermore, during the fiscal year 2022-2023, the Town-

ship Cooperative Syndicate and Kaung Htet Hein coffee production cooperative society refunded K31.566 million to their members. Additionally, the four coffee production cooperative societies and the Shwe Theingi Coffee group have already allotted K25.766 million of profit to coffee farmers. — MNA/KZW



Coffee beans seen in the sun before milling it.

CURRENT
AFFAIRS



Post office boxes where letters and parcels are kept safely.

PO box rental
service
available

THE post office box (PO box) rental service is launched, according to the Ministry of Transport and Communications.

The service aims at those who do not reside in specific addresses and are not convenient to receive the letter/parcel.

The benefits of renting the post office box are self-retrieval at any time, personal security, collecting materials without limitation of days during the rental period and picking up letters/parcels sent across the nation.

The initial registration fee is K10,000 and the annual fee is K12,000. For details, people can contact 067-3420630, 067-3420888 and explore at <https://www.myanmarpost.com.mm>. — TWA/KTZH

JLPT test results available from
exam centres



Students fill up the applications for the 2022 JLPT exam.

THE organizing committee of the Japanese Language Proficiency Test (JLPT) exam of the Myanmar Association of Japan Alumni (MAJA) announced the JLPT exam results are available to take out from the exam centres in Yangon and Mandalay.

Individuals taking results can be available earlier than the originally scheduled

dates due to fewer numbers withdrawing results through training schools in Yangon and Mandalay.

The JLPT exam results can be withdrawn from the exam centre at No 317, Pyay Road in Kamayut Township, Yangon, until 24 March with no off days and from the MAJA office at No 2B-5, Snow Garden Housing, Hninzigon

(Ka) Quarter in Thingangyun Township, Yangon after 28 March during office days.

In addition, the JLPT exam results can be available from the Mandalay exam centre at Building 1, Room 6, Mingala Mandalay in Chanmyathazi Township from 9 am to 4 pm during office days, MAJA stated. — TWA/MKKS

Passport fees
changed for
Myanmar
nationals in China

THE Myanmar Embassy in Beijing announced that the costs of applying for ordinary passports for Myanmar nationals in China will be changed.

Starting from 1 March, the fee adjusted to 280 yuan for normal passport renewal. In addition, a Myanmar woman married to a Chinese citizen will have to pay 2,700 yuan plus 280 yuan to renew her passport for the first time. The deposit of 2,700 yuan as an advance payment for the flight ticket will be refunded after three years.

If the passport is damaged or lost, the fee will be changed to 600 yuan, and if the expiry date exceeds two years, the fee will be changed to 400 yuan. — TWA/CT



The Myanmar Embassy in Beijing, China.

Students who passed Grade 9 can
study technology, agriculture and
animal husbandry while studying for
high school education



The University of Veterinary Science, Yezin in Nay Pyi Taw.

STARTING from the 2023-2024 academic year, those who have passed the middle-school level (Grade 9) will be able to learn technical science, agriculture and animal husbandry while study-

ing the high-school level education, according to the Ministry of Education.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Science and Technol-

ogy are cooperating with each other to be able to jointly open 51 basic education high schools in the townships of 50 districts for the study of technical science, agriculture and animal husbandry.

In addition, anyone interested can apply to learn the subjects if they have passed the middle-school level (Grade 9). Therefore, students who will continue their education after completing Grade 9 can choose to learn four types of education such as high-school level education, technical science, agriculture and animal husbandry. — TWA/CT

Yangon Region to install Smart
Metre System at 500 city taxis

ACCORDING to the Yangon Region Public Transport Committee-YRTC, a pilot project will be launched to install the Smart Metres at 500 city taxis operating in Yangon Region.

It aims to ensure safe and reliable rides at reasonable fares. Priority will be given to CNG-installed taxis at Yangon International Airport, a YRTC official stated.

Although the metre

system was used in taxis in the past, drivers made the meter run in advance to raise taxi fares. This time, 500 taxis will be fitted with the Smart Metres, according to the YRTC. — TWA/KZW



A taxi installed with smart metre seen in Republic of Korea.

LOCAL BUSINESS

Myanmar ships 75% of rubber production to China

CHINA, the main buyer of Myanmar rubber production, buys 75 per cent of Myanmar's rubber production.

Myanmar exports 92 per cent of its total rubber products to foreign countries. The top export destination for Myanmar's rubber is China with 75 per cent of total rubber products, and the remaining 17 per cent of rubber products goes to Indonesia, Singapore, Japan, India and China Taipei. The local consumption rate is only 8 per cent of its total rubber products domestically, according to the Myanmar Rubber Planters and Producers Association.

Rubber cultivation is an important agricultural activity

in Myanmar, and the country has a significant amount of rubber plantation land. According to the rubber association of Myanmar, there are over 1.6 million acres of rubber plantations in Myanmar which harvests 300,000 tonnes of rubber from over 800,000 acres per year.

The majority of the rubber industries in Myanmar designate May to September as the rubber plantation season, as it is time to suspend collection of rubber latex production.

The RSS3 rubber price was K1,380 per pound locally and Myanmar exported over 200,000 tonnes in the last 11 months of financial year 2022-2023.



A workshop which operates production of rubber sheets.

Most of the country's rubber trees are grown in Mon State as well as in Kayin State

and Taninthayi, Bago, Yangon and Ayeyawady regions. The plantations have also been

expanded in Shan and Kachin states and Sagaing Region. — TWA/KZL

400 companies fail to submit AR to DICA in February



The office of the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration-DICA.

A total of 400 companies failed to submit annual returns (AR) on the online registration system MyCO in February 2023, according to the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA).

The DICA has notified any registered company which fails to file its AR on MyCO is to be struck off the register from the date of the directive, under Section 430 (f) of Myanmar Companies Law, according to the DICA's notification.

In January, 500 companies did not file AR on MyCO. Additionally, 5,000 companies failed to submit AR in 2022, the DICA stated.

The registration and re-registration of companies on the MyCO website commenced on 1 August 2018, in keeping with the Myanmar Companies Law 2017.

All registered companies need to submit AR on the MyCO registry system within two months of incorporation, and at least once every year (not later than one month after the anniversary of the incorporation), according to Section 97 of the law.

According to Section 266 (A) of the Myanmar Companies Law 2017, public companies must submit annual returns and financial statements (G-5)

simultaneously. All overseas corporations must submit ARs in the prescribed format on MyCO within 28 days of the ending of financial year, as per Section 53 (A-1) of the Myanmar Companies Law 2017.

As per DICA's report, thousands of companies were suspended for failure to submit AR forms before the due date. Newly established companies are required to submit ARs within two months of incorporation or face a fine of K100,000 for filing late returns.

The DICA has notified that any company which fails to submit its AR within 13 months will be notified of its suspension (I-9A). If it fails to submit the AR within 28 days of receiving the notice, the system will show the company's status as suspended. Companies can restore their status only after shelling out a fine of K50,000 for the AR fee, K100,000 for restoration of the company on the register, and K100,000 for late filing of documents, totalling K250,000.

If a company fails to restore its status within six months of suspension, the registrar will strike its name off the register, according to the DICA notice. — NN/EM

Import quota to get cancelled upon lack of licence on trade net 2.0 platform

IMPORT quota will be cancelled unless traders apply for import licence on the trade net 2.0 platform, the Ministry of Commerce's Trade Department released a notification on 8 March.

For 2022-2023, a total of 92 importing companies for polyethylene, 1,762 for plastic raw materials, 1,411 for iron and steel products and 431 for food products were given the import quota respectively. The Republic of the Union of Myanmar Chambers of Commerce and Industry apprised those companies of this notification.

Regardless of the quota pass, some traders are found to fail to apply for import licences on the trade net 2.0 system. They are warned of quota cancellation if they do not seek an import licence within one week.

Those who have sought export and import licence and permits on Tradenet 2.0 platform through Tradenet 2.0 system are mandatory to withdraw the licence within a set period and they will be fined for late withdrawal, the Trade Department under the Ministry of Commerce released Notification No 5/2023 dated 27 February 2023.

The licence applicants need to make payment and withdraw the licence within seven days of approval by the department. Those who fail to do so will be cancelled automatically, according to the export/import notification No 4/2022.

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

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

During the auto cancellation period for licence/permit processing, the applicants will have their licence temporarily suspended for six months if they fail five times in three months, the notification No 20/2020 stated.

This being so, exporters and importers are suggested to withdraw their licence within seven days, the Trade Department notified on 27 February.

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

OPINION

Improve the morals and attitudes of a new generation of youths

NEW generation youths are a reserved force of the nation, a powerful strength of the country and a resource of the motherland. It is necessary to enhance the role, morals and correct attitudes of youths in order to develop the country. The future of the country depends on today's new generation of youths.

As new generation youths are reliable human resources of the country, they have to shoulder the State responsibilities taken over from the incumbents not to interrupt the generations. If so, State responsibilities can be served from generation to generation. As such, new generation youths have to uplift their capacities to be ready to overcome possible challenges when they serve the State duties.

Today's youths will become adults in the future. They will be the persons to continue serving the nation-building tasks. As such, it is necessary to improve the capacities, morals and attitudes of the youths to be qualified in leading the country.

might and main at a young age will they have the invaluable capacity and experiences to be applied in their future lives.

Global countries are nurturing the new generation of youths to have well-versed educated persons with social capital and intellectual capital to possess the capabilities to shape a developed and prosperous society in the future. A brighter future waits for a capable new generation of youths.

In Myanmar, the government is nurturing the youths to be able to participate in all sectors of the nation. Especially, the brighter future is being shaped for a new generation of youths to take a position in nation-building endeavours. Understanding the goodwill of the State, the youths actively participate in political, economic, social and other various arenas of the nation.

Today's youths will become adults in the future. They will be the persons to continue serving the nation-building tasks. As such, it is necessary to improve the capacities, morals and attitudes of the youths to be qualified in leading the country.

How Myanmar is Missing Out Big Time!

By UAC

MYANMAR has seen its best days in the past. Educated elderly people reminisced about how people across the region came over to study at the famous Yangon university (now world ranking at 6,500+), at a time when people respected Myanmar and UN Secretary-General U Thant, and the fact that people from China admired those emigrants, who escaped the poverty there to successfully come over to live in the golden land of Myanmar.

These days are long gone. Decades of mismanagement and a lack of world-class educational infrastructure have stripped the country of the ability to compete in the regional and international arenas. As Senior General Min Aung Hlaing said at the government term extension meeting, all the 7.3 per cent admirable growth rates achieved during President Thein Sein's administration are all but wiped out by the well below regional average growth of a miserable 3.4 per cent during corrupt Su Kyi administration.

The international community welcomed change in Myanmar with open arms. And did we NOT use that to our advantage during Su Kyi's administration? Ask any businessmen or working professionals, and 98 per cent of them would willingly vouch that the best of the times, economically at least, were during the 2013-2015 period. The international community welcomed Su Kyi with an even bigger arm. Hailed globally as an icon for democracy, they, especially the western world, have a vested interest to make their prodigy a success. Yet ostensible governance skills and international experience were up to no match against the previous administration, made up of ex-military top brass, reportedly lacking in management skills and worldly experiences. Now that there is indisputable evidence of her hand in voters' fraud as well as rampant corruption per excellence across the whole of her cabinet, the Western countries find it totally obnoxious to accept the fact that their erstwhile puppet would go down the history as the most corrupt and incompetent leader in Myanmar's history. Even King Thi Baw (the last king of Burma) would be laughing at his death bed, to finally have someone who would take his place.

Her NLD keyboard warriors kept on disparaging any ex-military leaders as big-time thieves, yet the most kleptocratic leader of all is no one but Su Kyi. Yet, being corrupt is not enough for her. How would people know of her omnipotent skills unless she leaves her legacy by transforming Myanmar into a dystopia? And the end is not there yet.

The end result of letting her govern actually brought the country down the path of the intractable morass. The only benefit would have been for the general public to realise what a mistake it had been. The superwoman who came down from heaven to save not just Myanmar, but the world, turned out to be at best, very well below average, after all. Lee Kuan Yew is right again!

Myanmar has become the poorest in ASEAN under her watch, in 2017. Our educational institutions have gone backwards. Worst of all, she has torn down the sense of loyalty that any decent human being should display. Her election slogan of 'Take everything from USDP then vote for NLD', has bred a generation of youngsters and workers, who thought that it is right not to be loyal to your employer - you can take everything from your employer and whatever he graciously provides you, yet it is ok to bad-mouth him, betray him, swear and cursed at him and slander him on Facebook. There need not exist any sense of gratitude!

Another slogan of her 'Do not look at the person, just vote for the party' discouraged handwork and individual excellence implicitly. You do not really have to be good or excel at what you do, you just need to follow her and say yes, all the time.

The end result has been bringing the country down the path of demise, together with her own. Not wanting to accept that their backer was a fraud, the western world refused to entertain, let alone believe in the factual evidence put forward to the world at large by the current State Administration Council.

Now Myanmar is poorer than ever because of her. And Myanmar is now totally impotent to even take on a once-in-a-millennium opportunity offered by companies shipped out of China.



Still today, fewer than a third of people in low-income countries have received at least one vaccine dose, while three quarters of people have in high-income countries, according to UN data. PHOTO: WHO

in India, Malaysia, Thailand, the Philippines and Viet Nam are still below \$3, approximately a third of China. Obviously, the decision to relocate the production base cannot be based on costs alone. At least in the high-tech manufacturing industry, the continuing high-tech war between US and China is also forcing manufacturers to reconsider their reliance on China.

Between 2020 and 2022, Japanese companies operating in China fell from 13,600 to 12,700. Sony itself is moving its camera production from China to Thailand. Samsung of Korea has slashed more than two-thirds of its workforce since 2013. Dell Computers aims to stop using Chinese chips by 2024. The immediate beneficiaries of this exodus are the countries of RECP (Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership) plus India and Bangladesh.

Taiwan's Foxconn, Pegatron and Wintron, which assemble gadgets for Apple among others, are investing heavily in Indian factories. The share of iPhones made in India is expected to rise from 1 in 20 last year to 1 in 4 by 2025. Two Taiwanese universities have teamed up with India's Tata, to offer courses in electronics to Indian workers. Google is shifting outsourced production of Pixel smartphones from China to Viet Nam. Malaysia is already exporting around 10 per cent of the world's chips, in terms of value. Qualcomm, the US chip design maker, opened its first research and development centre in Viet Nam in 2020. The country itself is now even courting a \$3.3 billion investment from Intel to open a chip manufacturing plant. Thamlev, US electric bike startup, moved production from China to Malaysia in 2022, to avoid a 25 per cent US tariff. Glico, a Japanese food processing MNC, opened its largest-ever factory in Indonesia for 'pocky' chocolate snacks to supply SEA and US, in 2023.

Where is Myanmar in this?

Myanmar is nowhere to be seen among the beneficiaries. Countries and MNCs are shunning Myanmar as they did Russia. Most of those who are interested in coming to Myanmar are also not interested in promoting the Myanmar brand either. They would buy raw materials or raw produce from Myanmar, repackaged them in their own countries, under their own brands and resell them internationally. Do we ever wonder, why we have never seen any rice bags with Myanmar brands in foreign supermarkets when the country itself is within the top 10 rice producers in the world?

The answer lies in our own resilience, hard work and perseverance. The Vietnamese had it worse during the Viet Nam war. Yet, the country is even now about to produce electric vehicles. Attacking each other, infighting among us and destroying local companies have hurt Myanmar. The faces of all our neighbours will be lit up with impish glee, as they observe us bring down each other on social media and destroy our top brand name companies, through social punishment and cyber harassment. This has got to stop! Perpetrators must be punished hard enough that there would be no repeat of such acts henceforth.

The food for youth!

Before you consider becoming a keyboard worrier or worse, a terrorist, please consider what youth in our neighbouring countries would be doing...

- While you are being lazy taking a nap or sleeping an extra hour or talking nonsense at the tea shop, factory workers in China are working seven days a week, every day non-stop for twelve hours.

Leaders say 'never again' to vaccine inequity

The letter urged leaders to support the tricky, ongoing international negotiations towards a pandemic accord, to ensure that equity is a key feature in the final agreement.

THREE years since the Covid pandemic began, nearly 200 prominent world figures called on Saturday for the vaccine inequity seen during the crisis to be relegated to history.

"We ask world leaders to pledge 'never again,'" the current and former dignitaries said an open letter.

It was published to mark the three-year anniversary since the World Health Organization first described the Covid-19 crisis as a pandemic.

The letter, coordinated by the NGO coalition People's Vaccine Alliance, was signed by Timor-Leste President Jose Manuel Ramos-Horta, who won the 1996 Nobel Peace Prize, alongside the former leaders of more than 40 countries.

Several other Nobel laureates, faith leaders, and former United Nations secretary general Ban Ki-moon were among the signatories, alongside a range of current and former UN agency heads.

With the end of the pandemic in sight, "the world is at a critical juncture", they wrote.

"Decisions made now will determine how the world prepares for and responds to future global health crises. World leaders must reflect on mistakes made in responding to the Covid-19 pandemic so that they are never repeated."

The letter criticised the glaring inequity that characterised the response to the pandemic, which has officially killed nearly seven million people worldwide, although the true toll is believed to be far higher.

'People's vaccines'

While a number of highly effective vaccines against Covid-19 were developed at record speed, wealthy nations were quick to snap up most of the initial doses, leaving vulnerable people in many poorer

nations waiting in vain for jabs.

Still today, fewer than a third of people in low-income countries have received at least one vaccine dose, while three quarters of people have in high-income countries, according to UN data.

"There are decades of publicly funded research behind Covid-19 vaccines, treatments and tests," the letter said.

"Governments have poured taxpayer money by the billions into research, development and advance orders, reducing the risks for pharmaceutical companies," it said.

"These are the people's vaccines, the people's tests and the people's treatments," it insisted.

But "instead of rolling out vaccines, tests and treatments based on need, pharmaceutical companies maximised their profits by selling doses first to the richest countries with the deepest pockets", it said.

The letter pointed to a study last year in the science journal Nature estimating that 1.3 million fewer people would have died of Covid if the jabs had been distributed equitably in 2021, amounting to "one preventable death every 24 seconds" that year.

Source : AFP

SCI/ENVIRON WORLD

UFO sightings putting rural Japan community on intergalactic map

A tiny rural community in north-eastern Japan known for numerous UFO sightings is promoting itself as a “home to aliens” in a bid to revitalize its local economy and put itself on the intergalactic map.

By displaying its many pieces of UFO paraphernalia and holding events that appeal to enthusiasts, Iinomachi, once prosperous through silk production and weaving industries, hopes to build a new future by drawing visitors with a passion for the extraterrestrial.

Residents believe they live in a UFO hot spot and speak of repeated appearances of unknown luminous flying objects over the past four decades near the conical 462-meter-high Senganmori mountain.

Recent headlines about air-

borne objects with unclear origins, including a suspected Chinese spy balloon, have created geopolitical tensions, but a Fukushima municipal government official said their focus is considering possible extraterrestrial life from a more “romantic” viewpoint. The area, formerly categorized as the town of Iino and integrated into the city of Fukushima in 2008, has a dwindling population of some 5,000 people. Senganmori, which the locals speculate is a possible ancient pyramid due to its shape and the large rock formations in its surrounds, dominates the scenery.

Visitors to Iinomachi cannot avoid having close encounters with extraterrestrial life everywhere, including UFO-shaped streetlights, bus stops, flags and

even an alien statue.

The “UFO Fureaikan” museum opened halfway up the mountain in 1992 to display around 3,000 books, photos and other resources related to aliens and UFOs, some of them donated by the famous late UFO researcher Kinichi Arai. Around 30,000 people from in and out of the prefecture visit annually.

A UFO festival, in which participants dressed in alien costumes to take part in a parade and contest, was held for the first time last year to mark the museum’s 30th anniversary.

The population of the former town peaked at approximately 9,500 in 1955 but has since almost halved. Those who remain, however, believe the future can be bright. —Kyodo



Tetsu Konno, who joined the International UFO Lab as a researcher, poses in Fukushima on 20 January 2023. **PHOTO: KYODO**

Senegalese recyclers seek solutions in fight against plastic

DISCARDED containers and bags are an eyesore in many towns, while beaches are covered by debris — Senegal’s notorious problem of plastic pollution is not going away.

Fly-tipping is a scourge and landfills like the sprawling Mbeubeuss site near the capital Dakar are overstretched, with several thousand tonnes of detritus dumped daily, polluting the ground and water.

For young Senegalese entrepreneurs keen on cleaning up their country and turning a profit in the process, enthusiasm is not lacking — but technology, funding and public awareness are.

President Macky Sall has

proposed turning Senegal into a “zero waste” nation and banned single-use plastics in 2020.

But after decades of chaotic management in dealing with the problems, activists see negligible progress.

“The law is still not applied and alternative solutions are not put forward,” said Aisha Conte, head of the country’s zero-waste association.

Recycling up close

Onboard a ship that recently docked at Dakar, Baptiste Lomenech walked a group of entrepreneurs through some basics in plastic recycling. —AFP

At San Francisco expo, AI ‘sorry’ for destroying humanity



Curator Audrey Kim talks about the piece “Paperclip Embrace” at the Misalignment Museum. **PHOTO: AFP**

ADVANCES in artificial intelligence are coming so hard and fast that a museum in San Fran-

cisco, the beating heart of the tech revolution, has imagined a memorial to the demise of hu-

manity. “Sorry for killing most of humanity person with smile cap and mustache,” says a monitor welcoming a visitor to the “Misalignment Museum,” a new exhibit on the controversial technology.

The pieces in this temporary show mix the disturbing with the comic, and this first display has AI disburse pithy observations to the visitors that cross into its line of vision.

“The concept of the museum is that we are in a post-apocalyptic world where artificial general intelligence has already destroyed most of humanity,” said Audrey Kim, the show’s curator. —AFP

China plants 3.83 million hectares of forest last year

CHINA has made new strides in advancing afforestation in 2022, with the area of newly planted forests totaling 3.83 million hectares, said a report released on Sunday.

The country has also restored 3.21 million hectares of degraded grassland through grass planting in 2022, according to the report from the National Greening Commission.

After decades of afforestation, China has created the world’s largest planted forests, with its forest coverage rate more than doubling from 12 per cent in the early 1980s to 24.02 per cent last year.

The country’s grassland vegetation coverage rate rose to 50.32 per cent in 2022, according to the report. Last year, China has also tackled 1.85 million hectares

of sandy and stony land through vegetation improvement.

The country’s green movement is also part of China’s efforts to fulfill its commitment to peaking carbon dioxide emissions by 2030 and achieve carbon neutrality by 2060, as forests and grasslands are important carbon sinks that absorb and store carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. — Xinhua



The Plastic Odyssey is on a three-year round-the-world tour offering solutions to locations that are badly hit by plastic pollution. **PHOTO: AFP**

HEALTH/PANDEMIC
WORLD

Ozone pollution linked to increased heart disease: study

OZONE air pollution is linked to a higher rate of hospitalisations for heart diseases, according to a large study released Friday, the latest warning of the health dangers posed by greenhouse gases.

While a layer of ozone in the upper atmosphere helps block harmful ultraviolet (UV) radiation from reaching Earth, at ground level it is a major component of the smog polluting most big cities.

Scientists have warned that a different kind of air pollution, fine particulate matter known as PM2.5, causes 8.8 million premature deaths a year; but ozone's full impact on health is still becoming clear.

Ozone is created in the atmosphere by a chemical reaction



At ground level, ozone is a major component of the smog polluting many big cities. PHOTO: AFP/FILE

when two pollutants, often emitted by cars or industry, combine in the presence of sunlight, and

has been shown to interfere with plant photosynthesis and growth. The new study said it was

the first to evaluate the risk of hospitalisation for heart disease when ozone levels rise above the

World Health Organization's daily guideline of 100 microgrammes per cubic metre of air.

For the study, published in the European Heart Journal, a team of China-led researchers looked at data on hospital admissions from 2015 to 2017 in 70 Chinese cities collected for health insurance purposes.

The data covered 258 million people across 70 cities, representing roughly 18 per cent of China's population.

The researchers compared the hospitalisations to air quality data tracked in real-time across the cities. It found that — independent of other pollutants — ozone was associated with more than three percent of hospitalisations for coronary heart disease, heart failure and stroke. — AFP

The technology fighting Rwanda's silent killer of women

WHEN Rwandan villager Lillian was diagnosed with cervical cancer, the 30-year-old feared that her life was over. But a new gadget aimed at patients in low-income countries offered her hope.

"The medical diagnosis was very scary; my husband couldn't believe it," Lillian — not her real name — told AFP.

"We had heard of people dying of cancer and that it was incurable, so it was a very scary moment." Her fears were not unfounded.

Cervical cancer is a notorious "silent killer" of women, but especially so in poor countries that lack affordable treatment and diagnostics.

In Rwanda, it is the most

commonly diagnosed cancer, attacking 42 out of every 100,000 women, three times the global average, according to national statistics.

The stigma and fear surrounding the disease and its connection to HIV — a major risk factor for cervical cancer — means many Rwandan women are reluctant even to get tested.

And those who are diagnosed often assume that treatment is out of bounds, unless they live in a major city.

For Lillian, whose village is a three-hour drive east of the capital Kigali, the likelihood of emerging cancer-free, less than four months after diagnosis, seemed like a fantasy. —AFP



Cervical cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer affecting women in Rwanda. PHOTO: AFP

In EU, a food fight over nutrition labels

EUROPE is taking longer than planned to concoct an EU-wide food-labelling system after a colour-coded scheme created in France did not go down well in culinary rival Italy.

Fearing that cultural icons such as olive oil or Parmesan cheese would get bad grades, Italy successfully rallied other European Union nations to reject the French system.

The European Commission was supposed to come up by late 2022 with a label aimed at helping consumer make healthier food choices. France's Nutri-Score system was initially seen as the front-runner to be used across the 27-nation EU. The front-of-pack nutrition label has already been adopted by Belgium, Ger-



Nutrition or food labels are important as they let people know exactly how many calories, sugar and nutrients they are consuming. PHOTO: AFP

many, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Spain.

Nutri-Score ranks food products on a green-to-red and A-to-E scale based on their nu-

tritional value, from containing a good amount of protein or fibre to too much salt or saturated fat, but companies are not obligated to use the label. — AFP

59 H3N2 Influenza cases detected in Odisha in 2 Months: State Health department

A total 59 H3N2 Influenza cases has been confirmed out of 225 samples collected in the month of January and February this year in the State. Confirming this Director Dr Sanghamitra Pati, Regional Medical Research Center (RMRC) Bhubaneswar, said that "Symptoms are similar to the seasonal flu viruses including fever and cough etc."

Amid sharp surge in H3N2

virus cases across the state, Health Secretary of Odisha on Sunday directed all district administrations to be vigilant and step up influenza-like illness (ILI) and severe acute respiratory infections (SARI) surveillance at Health facility level and community level, Department of Health informed.

State Health Department

stated in a press statement that, "H1N1 and H3N2 are subtypes of Influenza A virus. It's common flu virus quite common in children and elderly from December to March. Most of the illnesses are mild and self limiting. Handwashing, personal hygiene and avoiding crowded places are the key measures to be followed as done earlier." — ANI

ECONOMY WORLD

Chile's Boric vows to keep pushing defeated tax plan

CHILE'S leftist president Gabriel Boric marked his first year in office on Saturday and insisted he will continue pushing tax reforms seen as central to his ambitious social program.

Boric began the day meeting with his cabinet before greeting hundreds of people gathered in front of the presidential palace in Santiago.

Boric spent nearly an hour shaking hands, posing for pictures and receiving gifts and messages, while a smaller



Supporters of Chile's President Gabriel Boric celebrate his first year in office, outside the presidential palace in Santiago, on 11 March 2023. **PHOTO: AFP**

group of far-right demonstrators nearby staged an anti-Boric protest.

In the cabinet meeting, Boric said he would not give up on the reform program that was narrowly rejected Wednesday by the lower house.

"We are going to insist on the tax reform," he said, without explaining how he hoped to do so.

The defeated plan would have imposed new taxes on the wealthiest Chileans and on

the mining industry in order to finance greater spending on health and education, as well as a 25 per cent increase in the universal basic pension.

"The year 2022 was not easy," Boric conceded, before adding that "we have all the conditions to move forward and lay the foundations of a welfare state and guarantee social rights." Boric, a former student leader, became the youngest president in Chilean history when he took office a year ago. — AFP

French Senate approves pensions reform as protests appear to lose steam



Police had expected up to a million people to protest across France, but fewer than half that figure showed up. **PHOTO: AFP**

FRANCE'S Senate voted late Saturday to approve a deeply unpopular reform to the country's pension system, hours after demonstrators took to the streets to oppose the cornerstone policy of President Emmanuel Macron's second term in office.

Senators passed the reforms

by 195 votes to 112, bringing the package another step closer to becoming law. A committee will now hammer out a final draft, which will then be submitted to both the Senate and National Assembly for a final vote.

"An important step was taken this evening with a broad vote

on the pension reform text in the Senate," Prime Minister Elisabeth Borne told AFP after the vote, adding that she believed the government had a parliamentary majority to get the reforms passed into law.

Should Macron's government fail to assemble the necessary majority, however, Borne could deploy a rarely used and highly controversial constitutional tool, known as article 49/3, to push the legislation through without a vote.

Unions, which have fiercely opposed the measures, still hoped on Saturday to force Macron to back down, though the day's protests against the reform were far smaller than some previous ones.

"This is the final stretch," Marylise Leon, deputy leader of the CFDT union, told the broadcaster Franceinfo on Saturday. "The endgame is now." — AFP

UK announces two-decade clean energy plan

BRITAIN on Friday announced a 20-year plan to capture carbon and commit to nuclear energy as it strengthens energy supplies and seeks a net zero economy by mid-century.

The project's investment worth £20 billion (\$24 billion) will help to create 50,000 jobs, according to a statement.

Finance minister Jeremy Hunt was set to outline more details in his budget announcement on Wednesday, it added.

Speaking Friday, Hunt said the move would help to avoid a repeat of soaring energy bills that millions of Britons have endured since last year after the invasion of Ukraine by major energy producer Russia tightened global oil and gas supplies.

"We don't want to see high

bills like this again, it's time for a clean energy reset," Hunt said in the statement.

"That is why we are fully committing to nuclear power in the UK, backing a new generation of small modular reactors, and investing... in clean energy through carbon capture."

Energy Security Secretary Grant Shapps said the government wants Britain, "already a global leader in offshore wind power" to reach the same level "for the UK's nuclear and carbon capture industries".

In the near-term, the government plan would "drive forward projects that aim to store 20-30 million tonnes of CO2 a year by 2030".

This would equal emissions from 10-15 million cars, the statement said. — AFP

Canada bans aluminum, steel imports from Russia

CANADA on Friday announced a ban on imports of Russian aluminum and steel products, with the aim of denying Moscow revenues to fund its war in Ukraine.

The imports were worth almost Can\$250 million (US\$180 million) in 2021, according to the latest government data.

The ban comes as a 200 percent tariff on Russian aluminum imports announced last

month by the United States came into effect, and after the EU already blocked Russian steel products last year.

"Canada, and our partners, have already sanctioned the Russian Central Bank and capped the price of Russian oil and gas," Deputy Prime Minister Chrystia Freeland said in a statement.

"And now, we are ensuring

(President Vladimir) Putin cannot pay for his war by selling aluminum and steel in Canada, in coordination with action taken by the United States today."

The ban covers Russian unwrought aluminum, aluminum sheets, and finished products including containers and other household items made from aluminum. — AFP



The cooling towers of the Drax coal-fired power station near Selby in North Yorkshire in 2015. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

VW joins e-car price war as global rivalry heats up

GERMAN giant Volkswagen is set to follow Tesla's lead with a high-profile price drop as the battle for global dominance in the electric car segment intensifies, and local challengers race ahead in key market China.

A new version of Volkswagen's flagship ID.3 electric car model will go on sale from the end of March for just under 40,000 euros (\$42,000), the VW brand announced this week.

That is a 3,000-euro markdown from the current ID.3 price tag, putting it on par with US rival Tesla's popular Model Y.

Industry insiders see the move as a direct re-

sponse to several rounds of price-cutting by the Elon Musk-owned company in recent months, including discounts of up to 20 per cent in Europe and the United States.

In Germany, Tesla's sales soared by more than 900 per cent year-on-year in January as a result, making it the top-selling e-car in the country that month.

Although the 10-brand VW group was Europe's leading e-car manufacturer in 2022 with 352,000 vehicles sold, Tesla's audacious markdowns have forced the German firm's hand, said industry analyst Ferdinand Dudenhoeffer. —AFP



It will soon cost less to drive away with VW's ID.3 as a price war intensifies in the battery electric car market. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

New Nissan-Renault alliance no longer aiming for greater synergies

THE rebalancing of their mutual shareholdings by Nissan Motor Co and Renault SA guarantees increased management flexibility for each automaker but fewer synergies under their partnership — once seen as the most successful alliance in the industry.

Renault's plan to reduce its stake in Nissan to 15 per cent from 43 per cent will help the French automaker propel investment for growth with the proceeds, while giving its Japanese partner more autonomy, analysts say.

The two automakers said recently that they will jointly develop six new models for the Indian market and export, their first tie-up plan after outlining the new capital structure. But the lack of strong leadership after the ouster of Carlos Ghosn, former chairman of the alliance, waning mutual trust and diverging strategies all signal their joint operations are unlikely to be as effective as before, analysts say. —Kyodo

World's first 3D printed rocket set for inaugural flight

THE world's first 3D printed rocket is scheduled to blast off from Florida on Saturday on the maiden flight of an innovative spacecraft billed as being less costly to produce and fly. Liftoff of the rocket, Terran 1, had been scheduled for Wednesday at Cape Canaveral but was postponed at the last minute because of propellant temperature issues.

The new launch window for the rocket built by California aerospace startup Relativity Space to put satellites into orbit is from 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm (1800 GMT to 2100 GMT) on Saturday.

Terran 1 is set to reach low Earth orbit eight minutes after blastoff on a voyage intended to gather data and demonstrate that it can withstand the rigors of liftoff and space flight.

If the rocket manages



California startup Relativity Space is carrying out a test flight of the world's first 3D printed rocket, the Terran 1. **PHOTO: AFP**

to attain low Earth orbit, it will be the first privately-funded vehicle using methane fuel to do so on its first try, according to Relativity.

Terran 1 is not carrying a payload for its first flight but the rocket will

eventually be capable of putting up to 2,755 pounds (1,250 kilograms) into low Earth orbit.

The rocket is 110-feet (33.5 meters) tall with a diameter of 7.5 feet (2.2 meters) and 85 per cent of its mass is 3D printed with

metal alloys, including the engines.

It is the largest ever 3D printed object according to the Long Beach-based company whose goal is to produce a rocket that is 95 per cent 3D printed. — AFP

Saudi Aramco reports 46% jump in profits for 2022

SAUDI Aramco reported on Sunday that profits jumped 46 per cent last year, highlighting how a surge in oil prices after Russia invaded Ukraine spurred growth in the world's biggest crude exporter.

The mostly state-owned energy giant, the world's second most valuable company behind Apple, said in a filing with the Saudi stock market that net income for 2022 was \$161.07 billion, up from \$110 billion in 2021.

The increase was "predominantly due to the impact of higher crude oil prices and volumes sold, and stronger refining margins," it said.

Aramco's results are consistent with record profits for 2022

reported by the five oil majors — Shell, Chevron, ExxonMobil, BP and TotalEnergies — which surpassed \$150 billion and would have been closer to \$200 billion without costly withdrawals from Russia. — AFP

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V MTT SAISUNEE VOY.NO. (23MS094N)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V MTT SAISUNEE VOY.NO. (23MS094N)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **13-3-2023** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MIP** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S MTT SHIPPING SDN.BHD.

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V TI2 APPLE VOY.NO. (014E)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V TI2 APPLE VOY.NO. (014E)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **13-3-2023** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **HPT** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S TI2 LOGISTICS PTE LTD

GLOBAL AFFAIRS

North Korea adopts war deterrence measures: state media

NORTH Korea has decided to take “important practical” war deterrence measures, state media reported Sunday, a day before Seoul and Washington begin their largest joint military drills in five years.

The decision was made at a meeting of the ruling party’s military commission presid-

ed over by leader Kim Jong Un, according to the official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA).

“The meeting discussed and adopted the important practical steps for making more effective, powerful and offensive use of the war deterrent,” KCNA said. — AFP

Germany airport staff strikes sees 350 flights cancelled

A 24-hour strike by security staff at four German airports will force the cancellation of 351 flights Monday, their union announced, an action denounced by the airports association.

“One will have to expect longer queueing times as well as cancelled flights,” said a

statement Saturday from the Verdi union, which is pressing for better pay and conditions.

The expected flight cancellations will be at Berlin, Bremen, Hamburg and Hannover airports, hitting around 100,000 passengers, airports association ADV said. — AFP



Security staff members wearing vests with the logo of German union verdi stage a strike at the airport in Hanover, northern Germany on 16 January 2019. **PHOTO: AFP / FILE**

China’s national legislature decides on new cabinet lineup



Vice premiers, state councilors and secretary-general of the State Council pledge allegiance to the Constitution at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, capital of China, 12 March 2023. Nominated by Premier Li Qiang, Ding Xuexiang, He Lifeng, Zhang Guoqing and Liu Guozhong were endorsed as vice premiers, while Li Shangfu, Wang Xiaohong, Wu Zhenglong, Shen Yiqin and Qin Gang were endorsed as state councilors and Wu Zhenglong was endorsed as secretary-general of the State Council at the fifth plenary meeting of the first session of the 14th National People’s Congress (NPC). **PHOTO: XINHUA**

CHINA’S national legislature on Sunday decided on the new lineup of the State Council, or the cabinet, at its ongoing annual session.

Upon nomination by Premier Li Qiang, vice premiers, state councilors, ministers, governor of the central bank, auditor-general, and secre-

tary-general of the State Council were endorsed by lawmakers at the fifth plenary meeting of the first session of the 14th National People’s Congress (NPC).

Chinese President Xi Jinping signed a presidential order to appoint these officials.

Lawmakers also approved by voting chairpersons, vice chairpersons and members of eight special committees of the 14th NPC at the meeting.

The vice premiers, state councilors and secretary-general of the State Council pledged allegiance to the Constitution. — Xinhua

RUSSIA-UKRAINE CONFLICT

Ukraine readies counteroffensive as Russia inches forward in Bakhmut

THE Ukrainian military was preparing Sunday for an upcoming counteroffensive, with a top commander saying his forces’ ongoing defence of Bakhmut in the face of fierce and sustained Russian attacks was necessary to “buy time” for that push.

The remarks came as British intelligence said the front-line had shifted in the fight for Bakhmut — the longest and bloodiest battle of Moscow’s year-long invasion — but that any further Russian advance in the devastated town would be “highly challenging”.

Some military experts have questioned the sense of continuing to hold the city, but the commander of Ukraine’s ground forces, Oleksandr Syrsky, said that it helped win time in preparation for the coming counteroffensive.

“The real heroes now are the defenders who are holding the eastern front on their shoulders, and inflicting the heaviest possible losses, sparing neither themselves nor the enemy,” Syrsky was quoted as saying in a statement on Saturday. — AFP

Russia, UN set for Ukraine grain deal renewal talks



The first UN-chartered vessel MV Brave Commander loads more than 23,000 tons of grain to export to Ethiopia, in Yuzhne, east of Odesa on the Black Sea coast, on 14 August 2022. **PHOTO: OLEKSANDR GIMANOV / AFP**

RUSSIA and the United Nations will hold talks in Geneva on Monday on renewing the Ukraine grain export deal, with the UN saying the fate of millions rested

on its extension.

Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February last year saw Ukraine’s Black Sea ports blocked by warships until a deal

signed in July allowed for the safe passage of exports of critical grain supplies.

More than 23.7 million tonnes have been exported under the UN and Turkey-brokered Black Sea Grain Initiative, according to the United Nations.

The BSGI deal, which has helped ease the global food crisis caused by the invasion, will automatically renew on March 18 unless Moscow or Kyiv object.

But Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said Thursday that extending the deal was becoming “complicated”, as he claimed a parallel agreement on Russian exports was not being respected. — AFP

Popular but facing opposition, Francis marks 10 years as pope

POPE Francis marks 10 years as head of the Catholic Church on Monday, hugely popular but facing internal dissent after a decade of reform, even if he has left basic doctrine intact.

When he appeared at the balcony of St Peter’s Basilica on 13 March 2013 in his plain white papal robes, the newly elected Jorge Bergoglio immediately presented an image of a different kind of papacy.

The smiling, outspoken Jesuit was in sharp contrast to his reserved, intellectual predecessor Benedict XVI, who shocked the world by becoming the first pope since the Middle Ages to resign.

And Francis had a plan — to reform the governance of the Church plagued by inertia, clean



Pope Francis blesses attendees as he arrives in the pope mobile for a prayer meeting outside the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Blessed Virgin of Ta’ Pinu, in Gharb, Gozo island, Malta, on 2 April 2022, on the first day of the pope’s two-day trip to the Mediterranean archipelago. **PHOTO: ANDREAS SOLARO / AFP / FILE**

up its murky finances and turn its focus outwards.

While he has not deviated from some staunch Catholic beliefs — he has called abortion murder and homosexuality a sin — he has shown a more compassionate and less dogmatic approach, including condemning the persecution of gay people.

“No more demonisation of homosexuality, debates on extramarital relations or the contraceptive pill... all that has been taken off the table,” noted Italian Vaticanist Marco Politi.

Instead, the 86-year-old pontiff — who is seemingly never happier than when among his flock — has emphasised social justice, inter-religious dialogue, the environment and the rights of refugees. — AFP

Iran says deal reached to buy Russian fighter jets

IRAN has finalised a deal to buy Sukhoi Su-35 fighter jets from Russia, state media reported, as defence cooperation between the two countries deepens.

The air force of sanctions-hit Iran has an ageing fleet of aircraft and has struggled to acquire spare parts to keep its warplanes in the air.

In a statement to the United Nations, Tehran said it began approaching “countries to buy fighter jets” to replenish its fleet in the wake

of the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq war.

“Russia announced it was ready to sell them” after the expiry in October 2020 of restrictions on Iran purchasing conventional weapons under UN Resolution 2231, said the statement carried late Friday by the official IRNA news agency.

“The Sukhoi 35 fighter jets were technically acceptable for Iran,” it added.

Tehran has forged strong ties with Moscow in various sectors including the military in the past year. — AFP



In this file photo taken on 26 September 2019, a Russian air force Sukhoi Su-35 fighter jet is prepared for take off at the Russian military base of Hmeimim, in Syria’s Latakia governorate. **PHOTO: MAXIME POPOV / AFP**

Watchdog ‘clears’ S Africa’s Ramaphosa over cover-up scandal



South African President Cyril Ramaphosa says the half a million dollars stolen from his ranch was payment for 20 buffalo. **PHOTO: AFP**

SOUTH Africa’s anti-corruption watchdog cleared President Cyril Ramaphosa of any wrongdoing in a preliminary report into a cover-up scandal that has tar-

nished his reputation, local media reported on Saturday.

The Public Protector said it has notified implicated parties of the preliminary findings of its

probe over the theft of a cash haul from Ramaphosa’s luxury farmhouse — something the president is accused of having attempted to conceal.

Ramaphosa’s spokesman Vincent Magwenya said on Saturday the president received the report, details of which have been leaked to local media.

“We note the report. As stated before, we reiterate that the President did not participate in any wrongdoing, nor did he violate the oath of his office,” Magwenya said in a statement.

The scandal, which erupted in June, revolves around about half-a-million dollars in cash that Ramaphosa has acknowledged were stolen from beneath sofa cushions at his ranch. — AFP

Thousands join anti-government protest in Prague

THOUSANDS took to the streets of Prague on Saturday in protest against the Czech government, high inflation and demanding an end to the country’s military support for Ukraine.

The Czech Republic has been battling record inflation levels for a year mainly because of a spike in energy prices caused

by the war in Ukraine.

In February, annual inflation in the EU and NATO member state of 10.5 million people reached 16.7 per cent.

Saturday’s “Czechia against poverty” rally was organised by a new political party.

“We have gathered here today to take a stand against this

poverty,” Jindrich Rajchl, a lawyer leading the non-parliamentary PRO party, told the crowd in central Wenceslas Square.

The protesters called on the centre-right government of Petr Fiala to resign, while Rajchl said he wanted leaders who “care about the interests of Czech citizens first”. — AFP

Popular but facing opposition, Francis marks 10 years as pope

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Lauber's office was at the time involved in investigating massive corruption allegations within world football, including irregularities in the decision to award Qatar the 2022 World Cup. PHOTO: AFP

Qatar spied on ex top Swiss prosecutor probing FIFA: media

QATAR spied on a former Swiss attorney general and bugged his secret meeting with the FIFA chief, amid fears it could be stripped of hosting the 2022 World Cup, media reported Sunday.

An intelligence operation commissioned by Qatar bugged an informal meeting six years ago between Switzerland's top

prosecutor at the time Michael Lauber and FIFA chief Gianni Infantino, the NZZ am Sonntag weekly reported.

The paper said its months-long investigation had revealed that the covert meeting in Bern on 16 June 2017, which after it was revealed cost Lauber his job, had been secretly recorded on behalf

of the wealthy Gulf state. Qatar had denied the allegations, while Lauber's lawyer told the paper his client was not aware of being spied on, and had not been blackmailed.

Lauber's office was at the time involved in investigating massive corruption allegations within world football, including irregularities in the decision to award Qatar the 2022 World Cup. — AFP

Argentina goalie auctions World Cup gloves for \$45K for cancer hospital

THE gloves worn by Argentina goalkeeper Emiliano "Dibu" Martinez in the nail-biting penalty shootout with France at Qatar's World Cup final last year were auctioned Friday for \$45,000 in aid of a children's cancer hospital.

"\$45,000 for the Dibu gloves to help the Garra-

han boys!" the Argentine Pediatric Foundation said on Instagram, referring to the oncology ward of the Garrahan Hospital, the main pediatric hospital in Argentina. The auction was held online Friday and featured Martinez via video-link from his home in England, where he plays for Aston Villa. — AFP

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 U-20 Women's Team advances to Asian Cup U-20 Women's 2nd round Qualifiers

THE last day of the first round of 2024 Asian Cup U-20 Women's Qualifiers Group (G) continued on 12 March in Cambodia, where the Myanmar team won two consecutive matches and qualified for the second round. Team Myanmar yesterday won the last match of the group against Malaysian team by 3-1. The Myanmar squad defeated both Cambodia and Malaysia in the group matches, successfully qualifying for the second stage.

Myanmar head coach Daw San San Thein yesterday made some changes to the starting lineup that played against Cambodia.

Team Myanmar line-up includes Goalkeeper May Oo

Khin, Khin Htay Kyaing, Phyu Phway, Phyu Phyu Win, Kyel Sin, Wai Hnin Phyto, Sandar

Lin, Nang Cho Hmwe, May Thet Mon Myint, Hnin Pwint Aye, and Yin Loon Eain. Team Myanmar took the lead in the 19th minute of the game with a

goal scored by Wai Hnin Phyto, but in the 57th minute, Nufa Sari scored an equalizer for Malaysia, and the

match was tied at one goal each.

After that, the Myanmar team tried to score a winning goal, and Yin Loon Eain in the 80th minute and Wai Hnin Phyto scored the winning goals in the 85th minute. In the group matches, the Myanmar team beat the Cambodian team 1-0 and the Malaysian team 3-1. They finished first in the group with six points and qualified for the second round qualifiers. The first round qualifiers is divided into eight groups, and only the top eight teams from each group will advance to the second round qualifiers. — Ko Nyi Lay/KZL

Myanmar women's U-20 football team players celebrate the victory as they have advanced to the Asian Cup U-20 Women's 2nd round Qualifiers. PHOTO:MFF

