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.

Prices of black gram, pigeon pea on upward trajectory amid high demand from India, China

THE prices of black grams and pigeon peas continued to rise, according to the Yangon Region Chambers of Commerce and Industry (Bayintnaung Commodity Centre).

The prices stood at K2,160,000 per tonne of pigeon peas and K1,858,500 per tonne of black grams on 1 March. The prices head for a three-week rise in the domestic market. The prevailing prices were K2,257,500 per tonne of pigeon pea and K1,985,000 per tonne of black gram. The figures indicated an increase of K97,500 per tonne of pigeon pea and K126,500 per tonne of black gram within two weeks.

The high price is attributed to the high demand by India and China. Additionally, traders who keep the stocks in their hands hiked up the price of black gram. Similarly, low stocks of pigeon peas raised the prices.

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. Of them, black gram export earned $499.49 million from 608,673.819 kilogrammes, while pigeon pea export pocketed $157.909 million from 202,557.35 kilos, the Ministry of Commerce's statistics showed.

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

A combine harvester is used in one of the bean and pulse plantations in Minbu Township, Magway Region.

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 to deliver the pulses to India under that annual quota.

Myanmar yearly produces approximately 400,000 tonnes of black grams 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

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Objectives of 78th Anniversary of Armed Forces Day

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

Application for registration, political party establishment rights ongoing

UNDER Section 25 of the Political Parties Registration Law, Myanmar Farmers' Development Party, which is desirous of organizing a political party, yesterday applied to the Union Election Commission for permission to establish a political party under the law and rules.

To date, six parties have applied under Section 3 of the Political Parties Registration Law, and 21 parties under Section 25 of the Political Parties Registration Law, totalling 27. Among these 27 parties, seven parties will organize in the entire union and 20 parties only within a region or state.

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

Public Notice for Submitting Objection

1. Mon Unity Party with its headquarters located at No 16, 19th Street, Myaingthaya Ward, Mawlamyine, Mon State applied on 15-3-2023 to be allowed to continue to exist and register as a political party under Section 25 of the Political Parties Registration Law. It is reported that the party name, flag and emblem will be used as described below.
2. Under Rule 14 (d) of the Registration of Political Parties, it is hereby announced to the public that those who wish to object to the name of the party, the flag and the emblem to be used by that organization may submit their objection to the Union Election Commission with valid evidence within seven days from the date of this announcement.

The flag design of the Mon Unity Party

The emblem of the Mon Unity Party

Union Election Commission

Public Notice for Submitting Objection

1. People's Pioneer Party with its headquarters located at No 63, Lower Block of Latha Street, No 3 Ward, Latha Township, Yangon Region applied on 15-3-2023 to be allowed to continue to exist and register as a political party under Section 25 of the Political Parties Registration Law. It is reported that the party name, flag and emblem will be used as described below.
2. Under Rule 14 (d) of the Registration of Political Parties, it is hereby announced to the public that those who wish to object to the name of the party, the flag and the emblem to be used by that organization may submit their objection to the Union Election Commission with valid evidence within seven days from the date of this announcement.

The flag design of the People's Pioneer Party

The emblem of the People's Pioneer Party

Union Election Commission

Public Notice for Submitting Objection

1. Rakhine State National United Party with its headquarters located at No 254, 5th Street, 8th Ward, Thandwe Township, Rakhine State applied on 15-3-2023 to be allowed to continue to exist and register as a political party under Section 25 of the Political Parties Registration Law. It is reported that the party name, flag and emblem will be used as described below.
2. Under Rule 14 (d) of the Registration of Political Parties, it is hereby announced to the public that those who wish to object to the name of the party, the flag and the emblem to be used by that organization may submit their objection to the Union Election Commission with valid evidence within seven days from the date of this announcement.

The flag design of the Rakhine State National United Party

The emblem of the Rakhine State National United Party

Union Election Commission

8 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 16 March, total figure rises to 633,975

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to **633,975** after **eight** new cases were reported on 16 March 2023 according to the Ministry of Health.

The total number of patients who have recovered from COVID-19 in the country reached **614,459**, including **one** new recovery.

The death toll from COVID-19 in the country remained unchanged at **19,490** on 16-3-2023 with no new death reported from the pandemic. — GNLM

Prompt implementation of NCA peace process needed

AS NCA was drawn by stakeholders in accord with the proposals of ethnic armed organizations, only when all walk on that way will the peaceful and tranquil State we all aspire to. Hence, it is necessary to leave a peaceful legacy for posterity and quickly implement the peace process.

(Excerpts from the message sent by State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing to 67th Anniversary of Kayin State Day ceremony which falls on 7 November 2022)

Printing and Publishing Department celebrates its 51st anniversary in Nay Pyi Taw

Union Minister U Maung Maung Ohn speaks on the occasion of the 51st anniversary of the Printing and Publishing Department in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

THE 51st-anniversary ceremony of the Printing and Publishing Department under the Ministry of Information took place at the Pho Wazira Hall of the News and Periodicals Enterprise in Khayaybin Junction, Zeyathiri Township, Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

The ceremony was attended by Union Information Minister U Maung Maung Ohn, Permanent Secretary U Myo Myint Maung, departmental heads, staff, officials and outstanding staff.

First of all, a video clip recording the work of the department within 51 years was played.

Union Minister U Maung Maung Ohn, in his opening speech, said that the Printing and Publishing Department is the sole printing industry that publishes the publications of the governmental organizations as per the stipulations and on time.

The Sarpay Beikman under the Printing and Publishing Department is carrying out the work of giving information, education and entertainment by publishing and selling various kinds of books, holding symposiums and literary talks and giving literary awards.

The Union minister appreciated that staff from the department are assisting the Ministry's activities in a defender role.

Then, he provided uniforms worth K8.9 million for 862 employees of the Printing and Publishing Department, which was accepted by Director-General U Win Kyaw Aung of the department.

Afterwards, he presented awards and certificates of honour to outstanding staff from the courses opened at the Civil Service Academy (Upper Myanmar).

Next, the Union minister, the permanent secretary and the director-general of PPD drew the raffle for the staff.

Finally, the Union minister and departmental heads enjoyed their lunch together with officials and staff from the Printing and Publishing Department. — MNA/CT

14th Meeting of Myanmar-Laos Border Authorities at Central Level held

THE 14th Meeting of the Myanmar-Laos Border Authorities at the Central Level co-chaired by U Kyaw Myo Htut, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and Mr Phoxay Khaykhamphithoune, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, was held on 15 March 2023 in Tachilek, Myanmar.

The two leaders discussed matters related to enhancing border cooperation including strengthening cooperation between the two border authorities, border passes, border checkpoints, border trade, labour cooperation, navigation on the Mekong River, inspection and restoration of boundary reference markers (BRMs) along the Mekong River, cooperation on drugs control and other matters. Senior officials from the respective ministries of both sides attended the meeting.

Afterwards, Deputy Minister U Kyaw Myo Htut hosted a dinner in honour of Mr Phoxay Khakhamphithoune, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Lao People's Democratic Republic and delegation at the Akha Traditional Restaurant in Tachilek.

The 14th Meeting of the Myanmar-Laos Border Authorities at the Central Level was proceeded by Senior Officials' Meeting co-chaired by U Aung Ko, Director-General of the Political Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Myanmar and Mr Anousine Khattiyalath, Director-General of the Office of the National Boundary Committee, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Lao PDR held on 14 March in Tachilek.

Laotian Deputy Minister Mr Phoxay Khaykhamphithoune and the Lao delegation arrived in Tachilek on 14 March to attend the 14th Meeting of the Myanmar-Laos Border Authorities at the Central Level. — MNA

The 14th Meeting of the Myanmar-Laos Border Authorities at the Central Level in progress on 15 March 2023 in Tachilek.

Interview with an official from the Political Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, on the matter of repatriation of the displaced persons from Rakhine State

Q: Could you please first brief us on a detailed account of why the displaced persons from Rakhine State crossed into Bangladesh in 2016 and 2017 as there has been a mixture of speculations and narratives in the media?

A: There have been numerous media reports, articles and news by various media, particularly foreign media, covering the account of the background of mass displacement from Rakhine State to Bangladesh since 2017. However, almost all of the media coverage are anyway one-sided narratives which never accurately reflect the reality of the ground situation at that time and are based on political agendas.

Actual events in October 2016 and August 2017 originated with coordinated attacks on police outposts and a regiment headquarters in Northern Rakhine State by extremists and members of the ARSA terrorist group. After their coordinated attacks failed, the terrorists impelled and threatened the residents to abandon their villages so that the displacement took place as per their coordinated plan. The first round of coordinated attacks using firearms, swords, spears, and slingshot crossbows was carried out on 9 October 2016 against the Kyikanpyin Border outpost Headquarters in Maungtaw Township by approximately 90 attackers, the NgaKhuYa Police Station by approximately 300 attackers, and the Kotankauk outpost in Rathedaung Township by approximately 20 attackers. In those raids, 9 policemen were killed and weapons were taken. When the Tatmadaw and the Border Guard Police jointly conducted counter-terrorism operations with a view to ensuring the prevalence of security, stability, and the rule of law in the region following the attacks, combined forces of extremists and between 300 and 800 strong ARSA counter-attacked the security forces, resulting in the causalities of security personnel. It is found out that these attacks were orchestrated by Harakah al-Yaqin which later changed its name to Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA) as they claimed the responsibility for the 2016 attacks later on 29 March 2017 and that Atta Ullah, a Bengali who used to live in Saudi Arabia, is the leader of the ARSA.

Since the passable success of the attacks in 2016 encouraged the ARAS terrorists, more than a thousand members of the ARSA terrorist group including well-trained extremist villagers launched coordinated and simultaneous attacks against 30 police outposts and a regiment headquarters in Maungtaw district, Rakhine State, on 25 August 2017. During these attacks, 11 Myanmar policemen, two Tatmadaw soldiers, and one immigration officer were killed. ARSA terrorists not just attacked the security outposts but also committed various terror acts including torching villages of local ethnic people and Hindus as well as their own villages and killing the family members of local communities. It is reported by the victims of the acts of violence by the ARSA that over 100 Hindus from Khamaungseik and Yebawkya Village were abducted and massacred while eight adult females were compelled to convert their religion and sent to Bangladesh. Some 300 Hindus were also threatened and forced to cross into Bangladesh. Following information provided by Hindu villagers who managed to flee the massacre and return to Sittway Township, 45 dead bodies of Hindus were found near Yebawkya Village.

Such terrorizing acts and terror threats of ARSA are the actual accounts that led to the displacement of people, mostly Bengali, in Rakhine State to the other side of the border.

The international media, however, have always deliberately left and disregarded the root causes of the incidents and reality of the ground situation which includes terrorist attacks, coercion, threats, killings, and burning of villages including their own by the ARSA members and associated extremists. Instead, they have always unreasonably portrayed the incidents as if the displacement issue arose due to religious and ethnic implications to exert pressure on Myanmar.

Besides, the sufferings of local ethnic people and Hindus inflicted by violent acts of the ARSA terrorists have been ignored and barely mentioned by any international media.

Q: Could you please enlighten us about the ongoing talks between Myanmar and Bangladesh for repatriating displaced persons?

A: After the incidents in 2016 and 2017, Myanmar and Bangladesh have been negotiating to repatriate the displaced persons who crossed over to Bangladesh at that time.

I would like to highlight that three repatriation instruments have been signed between the two countries. The first instrument is "the Agreement on Return of Displaced Persons from Rakhine State" which was signed by the Minister-level officials of both countries in Nay Pyi Taw on 23 November 2017. The second instrument is the "Terms of Reference (TOR) for the Joint Working Group on the Repatriation of Displaced Myanmar Residents from Bangladesh" which was signed by the Permanent Secretary-level officials from Ministries of Foreign Affairs of both countries in Dhaka on 19 December 2017. The third instrument is the "Physical Arrangement for Repatriation of Displaced Myanmar Residents from Bangladesh under the Return of Displaced Persons from Rakhine State" which was also signed by the Permanent Secretary-level officials from Ministries of Foreign Affairs of both countries in Nay Pyi Taw on 16 January 2018.

The Government of Myanmar is proceeding with the implementation of the repatriation process in accordance with those bilateral instruments. And it is important to note that Myanmar will only receive those who crossed over to Bangladesh after 9 October 2016 and 25 August 2017 as per the bilateral agreements. Regarding the repatriation process, the Chairman of the State Administration Council expressed in a statement on 8 February 2021 that relevant agreements will be implemented through bilateral discussions if they are not harmful to the national interest.

It should be noted that Myanmar will verify and receive displaced persons based on the five criteria for eligibility to return as outlined in the instruments. Those five criteria for eligibility to return, adding one criterion to the four criteria stated in the 1992 repatriation process between Myanmar and Bangladesh, are "(i) Returnees must be residents of Myanmar, (ii) Returnees must be the ones who voluntarily wish to return to Myanmar by themselves, (iii) The members of split families and their left-behind members, and orphans need to be certified by a Court of Bangladesh, (iv) Both parents of additional offspring born on the other side of the border must be residents of Myanmar, and (5) Children born out of unwarranted incidents are to be certified by a Court of Bangladesh".

I would like to let you know that the Myanmar side keeps checking and verifying the verification forms of displaced persons sent by the Bangladesh side in accordance with the five criteria for eligibility to return.

I would also like to share information regarding the ongoing bilateral talks between Myanmar and Bangladesh based on the bilateral instruments. The key negotiation mechanism between the two countries for the repatriation process is the meeting of the Joint Working Group on the Repatriation of Displaced Myanmar Residents from Bangladesh. The Joint Working Group (JWG) meetings were held four times in January, May, and October of 2018, as well as in May of 2019.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, JWG meetings were unable to take place for three years; nevertheless, the 5th meeting of the Joint Working Group between Myanmar and Bangladesh was held in virtual format on 14 June 2022. The 5th JWG meeting was co-chaired by U Chan Aye, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Mr Masud Bin Momen, Foreign Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bangladesh, and attended by the Joint Working Group (JWG) members from respective ministries of both sides.

At the meeting, both sides exchanged views on how to resolve difficulties encountered during the verification process, preparation works done prior to the commencement of repatriation of verified displaced persons, and resettlement plans for prospective returnees, and both sides agreed to further cooperate on repatriation and verification process, to commence repatriation under a Pilot Project and to issue court certificates by relevant Bangladesh courts for children born by the displaced persons in Bangladesh.

Besides the JWG meetings, the two countries formed the Ad Hoc Task Force for Verification of Displaced Persons from Rakhine State late in 2021 in order to discuss challenges encountered in the verification process. The first meeting of the Ad Hoc Task Force of both sides was held via video conference on 27 January 2022, followed by the second virtual meeting held on 16 September 2022.

All these measures reflect Myanmar's commitment to continue and maintain its sincere cooperation with Bangladesh for the successful implementation of the repatriation of displaced persons from the Rakhine State in line with the bilateral agreements.

Q: There is some criticism over the progress of repatriating displaced persons. Would you like to respond to that matter?

A: Following the negotiations between Myanmar and Bangladesh to kick off the repatriation process, two attempts were made to commence the repatriation on 15 November 2018 and 22 August 2019 respectively. On both occasions, Myanmar had fully arranged everything with Bangladesh at the border to launch the repatriation process. The numbers of the prospective returnees agreed upon by both sides to receive were 2,260 for

the first attempt and 3,450 for the second one.

Officials from Myanmar, accompanied by representatives from the ASEAN Secretariat, the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management (AHA Centre) and the ASEAN-Emergency Response and Assessment Team (ASEAN-ERAT), were waiting at the border gate to receive the prospective returnees on both occasions.

However, due to the threats and intimidations from destructive elements and terrorists in the camp, as well as various pressures on those displaced persons who wish to come back, the scheduled repatriations did not occur. I would like to emphasise that Myanmar has always been ready to receive the verified displaced persons since the first attempt but any of those have not been sent back to Myanmar up to this point.

I believe that it explained why the repatriation process has not been able to start until now, but there exist misperceptions from some countries and international media that Myanmar hesitates to start the repatriation process based on unfounded allegations and fabricated narratives.

Q: I would like to know if there are any further negotiations between the two countries to begin the repatriation of displaced people.

A: Notwithstanding the failure of two attempts to kick off repatriation, the Myanmar side continues to negotiate with the Bangladesh side to repatriate verified displaced persons in accordance with the bilateral instruments. Negotiations are currently underway between the two countries to start the repatriation of around 1,000 verified displaced persons under a pilot project.

As there naturally are newborn children of the displaced persons, the Bangladesh side has already agreed to issue the court certificates for those newborns to certify that they were born in Bangladesh. In order to verify them, the Myanmar side will check not only the court certificates but the past residency of the parents whether they are displaced persons from Rakhine State who crossed into Bangladesh in 2016 and 2017, in line with the bilateral instruments. Furthermore, as the prospective returnees wish to return to Myanmar family-wise, all the members of the households are being checked by the Myanmar immigration authorities.

The relevant ministries are coordinating and undertaking the preparatory works, including the measures to prevent, control and treat COVID-19, for the smooth and successful reception of displaced persons under the pilot project.

Q: What are the key challenges encountered in implementing the repatriation process and how Myanmar is coping with them?

A: The main challenge for Myanmar is to verify data of individuals sent by the Bangladesh side such as names, addresses, and family members filled in the verification forms are inconsistent with the official data of the registered family household lists updated annually on the ground by the relevant authorities of Myanmar in Rakhine State, and that makes the verification laborious.

Furthermore, the concerned Bangladeshi authorities filled out the verification forms according to the pronunciation in the local dialects of the displaced persons that do not match the spellings used in the official family household lists of Myanmar. In addition, some have filled out the verification forms with their last addresses instead of official addresses registered in the family household lists. Some displaced persons might have also got married or divorced while in Bangladesh which makes the Myanmar Immigration authorities difficult to verify.

As I previously stated that Myanmar will only receive individuals who meet the five criteria for eligibility for return, it is thus imperative that the verification forms of the displaced persons need to be filled in with accurate and complete data in line with the registered lists of family households in Rakhine State.

Despite the criticism stemming from incomprehension of the difficulties and complexities involved in the verification process, Myanmar will address the challenges through the Ad-Hoc Task Force for the verification mechanism between Myanmar and Bangladesh.

Moreover, unconstructive perceptions, that Myanmar is not committed to starting the repatriation process based on groundless allegations and fictitious narratives, are not supportive and conducive to the successful implementation of the repatriation process. It is also blatantly disregarding the underlying reasons why no displaced persons returned at the two previous repatriation attempts by the Myanmar side.

Regarding the causes of the failure of the two attempts for the commencement of repatriation, it is learnt that the main obstacle to commencing the repatriation process is the presence of the Hardline groups and elements of the ARSA terrorists mingling with the displaced persons inside the camps in Cox's Bazar. They are reportedly threatening the displaced persons not to return otherwise they will be killed even upon their return to Myanmar. In addition, some so-called Bengali activists reportedly do not want the commencement of repatriation and are advocating for the denial to return and demands to fulfil their political agenda. Thus, even though Myanmar is best prepared to receive verified displaced persons, it would be difficult to start the repatriation if the threats and pressures still exist.

I would like to stress that Myanmar has made all necessary arrangements and preparations to receive the verified returnees since the first attempt. Myanmar always looks forward to receiving supportive cooperation from the Bangladesh side to send the verified displaced persons back to Myanmar in order to practically kick-start the repatriation process.

Therefore, it could be obviously observed that Bangladesh will also have to work shoulder to shoulder with Myanmar while understanding the challenges encountered by both sides so that the repatriation will soon be implemented in accordance with the bilateral arrangements.

Q: Do you have any additional comments to share on the repatriation process?

A: The State Administration Council continues bilateral negotiations with Bangladesh and preparatory works to implement the repatriation process in accordance with the bilateral instruments since taking the responsibilities of the State. And the verification process for displaced persons from Rakhine State has never been halted. Besides, new technical-level mechanisms between Myanmar and Bangladesh for repatriation and verification of displaced persons have been established under the current Myanmar Government while continuing the existing JWG meeting mechanisms.

Furthermore, relevant committees and ministries are also taking preparatory measures such as the renovation of reception and transit centres, including livelihoods, security and access to education and health services at the resettlement places to create conducive conditions for the prospective returnees under the pilot project.

It is reported that some foreign nations have expressed their concerns about the developments of the internal affairs of Myanmar would impact the efforts to start the repatriation of displaced persons from Rakhine State. On the contrary, I would like to reiterate that Myanmar keeps its commitment to implementing the repatriation process and its efforts to make necessary arrangements to receive the verified displaced persons in accordance with the bilateral instruments and the existing laws.

Additionally, it is advisable to be cautious not to fall for the one-sided news that is based on false narratives and fabricated information crafted by some international media and so-called Bengali activists to mislead the readers to achieve their political motive.

It is also important to highlight that the number of displaced persons is inaccurately inflated by some foreign media and countries, stating that 1.1 million displaced persons are living in the Cox's Bazar Camps. However, according to the official registered lists of family households in Rakhine state which are taken door to door annually by the relevant authorities, the number of people who left Rakhine State for Bangladesh after the 2016 and 2017 incidents is just around half a million people. Furthermore, there are just 6,365 verified individuals who remain to be repatriated from Bangladesh under the 1992 repatriation process but no one has returned to Myanmar since 2005 due to their own reasons. Therefore, regarding the exaggerated number of displaced persons, I would like to underscore that the Myanmar side will only repatriate the verified displaced persons who entered Bangladesh from Rakhine State after 2016 and 2017 including newborn children who meet the five criteria for eligibility to return.

In conclusion, as bilateral cooperation is the only means to resolve the current repatriation issue, Myanmar, in view of the good-neighbourly relations between the two countries, will continue to cooperate with Bangladesh in good faith for the successful implementation of the repatriation of displaced persons from Rakhine State in line with the bilateral instruments.

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(This is an unofficial translation of the Myanmar version of the Interview which appeared in the daily newspapers (Kyemon-The Mirror, Myanmar Alinn and Myawady Daily) published on 24 February 2023.)

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Write for us

We appreciate your feedback and contributions. If you have any comments or would like to submit editorials, analyses or reports please email **aungthuya@gnlm.com.mm** with your name and title.

Due to limitation of space we are only able to publish **"Letter to the Editor"** that do not exceed 500 words. Should you submit a text longer than 500 words please be aware that your letter will be edited.

Central Bank of Myanmar Nay Pyi Taw Announcement

17 March 2023

ACCORDING to the decision of the Board of Directors Meeting 1/2023, the money changer licences of 20 companies mentioned below have been revoked as they did not abide by the orders and directives issued by the Central Bank of Myanmar.

1. Oake Khaung Travels & Tours Co Ltd
2. Senjo Royal Myanmar Co Ltd
3. Dawei Popular Co Ltd
4. Zam Myo Co Ltd
5. Phyo Thet (PT) Co Ltd
6. Sky Bound Co Ltd
7. Myanmar MCG Corporation Ltd
8. Htwe and Htwe Family Co Ltd
9. Won Won Co Ltd
10. United Eleven Co Ltd
11. Tun Yama Co Ltd
12. Myanmar Alinkar Hotel Group Co Ltd
13. Cartel Co Ltd
14. Super Phoneix Co Ltd
15. Golden Falcon Shipping Co Ltd
16. Fairness Travels & Tours Co Ltd
17. Yadanar Bon Travels & Tours Co Ltd
18. Myanmar National Airlines Co Ltd
19. Dewant Financial Loan Microfinance Co Ltd
20. Treasure Su Co Ltd

CBM Governor receives delegation from Central Bank of Cambodia

CBM Governor Daw Than Than Swe holds talks with the delegation from the Central Bank of Cambodia yesterday.

GOVERNOR Daw Than Than Swe of the Central Bank of Myanmar received the delegation from the Central Bank of Cambodia at the Central Bank of Myanmar yesterday in Nay Pyi Taw.

During the meeting, both sides discussed matters of the current payment systems of Myanmar and Cambodia and procedures of trans-border payment regulations.

The meeting was also attended by the deputy governors of the Central Bank of Myanmar, the permanent secretary and heads of departments. — MNA/TS

Over 39,000 students sit for Geography on 7th day of matric exam

Students are seen after sitting for the geography subject.

ACCORDING to the Ministry of Education, altogether 39,617 out of 44,944 registered students took the Geography subject at one foreign and 778 local exam centres on the 7th day of the 2022-2023 matriculation examinations across the country, accounting for 88.15 per cent. — MNA/MKKS

Statement of Myanmar National Human Rights Commission in connection with Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)

Statement No 3/2023

1. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), as a common standard of achievement for all people and all nations, beginning with the historic passage "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights" was adopted on 10 December 1948 on the UN General Assembly as a proclamation voted by the then United Nations Members. The preamble of the said Universal Declaration of Human Rights says "every individual and every organ of society, keeping this Declaration in mind, shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedoms". Accordingly, the Myanmar National Human Rights Commission has, since its inception, been educating the general public to enhance their awareness of the rights contained in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights through a variety of measures.

2. To enable the entire public to understand more about the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and to foster positive opinions and observations of human rights, the Myanmar National Human Rights has taken the following measures in carrying out its educative activities:

   (a) In all the educational talks, workshops and training, including internal staff training and lectures, organized and conducted by the Commission from 2011 until now, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was consistently included as a major subject.

   (b) The text of the Universal Declaration of Human rights was translated from English to Myanmar and published in 2013, and additionally, it was translated also into a total of 21 ethnic languages, published and distributed to ensure easy access and understanding by the national races concerned regarding the rights contained in the Declaration.

   (c) For the purpose of ensuring that the general public has easy access to and acquire knowledge of the rights contained in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, posters and pocket booklets of the Declaration were published and distributed in 2018 and 2021 respectively.

   (d) To ensure the rights contained in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights are known and understood by persons with impaired eyesight, the Declaration was published in Braille format and distributed in 2022 in cooperation with the School for the Blind (Kyimyindine).

3. The year 2023 is the 75th Anniversary of the adoption and proclamation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In commemoration and honour of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which is the significant heritage of humankind, educational activities related to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights will be carried out all over the world as "75 UDHR Campaign" throughout the whole year up to the 75th International Human Rights Day which falls on 10 December 2023. To join the worldwide 75 UDHR Campaign, the Myanmar National Human Rights Commission has also planned to organize awareness-raising activities on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in various ways and means throughout 2023.

Myanmar National Human Rights Commission
Dated: 16 March 2023

LOCAL BUSINESS

Bayintnaung Market sees trade of over 700 containers of black grams, pigeon peas

DURING over two months until 15 March 2023, a transaction of 480 containers (weighing 11,520 tonnes) of black gram and 300 containers (weighing 7,200 tonnes) of pigeon peas/ red gram was done at the Bayintnaung Market, according to the transaction list of Bayintnaung Market.

It is known that the sale of black gram was brisk in the first half of March. The prices of black gram and pigeon peas (red gram) are rising daily in the Bayintnaung Market. The black gram price of K1,863,000 per tonne on 7 March went up to K1,965,000 per tonne on 15 March. The price of pigeon peas (red grams) fetched K2,215,000 per tonne on 9 March and increased up to K2,235,000 per tonne on 15 March.

On 15 March, a tonne of black gram (RC), SQ/RC and pigeon peas (red gram) were valued at US$805-825, US$ 805-825 and US$ 895-915 respectively. The pigeon peas price on 15 March 2023 hit a record price not only in 2022 but also throughout the life of the local pulses market. Black gram is cultivated in October and November and enters the domestic pulses market in February and March. A total of 700,000 tonnes of black gram worth US$520 million are intended to be exported in the financial year 2023-2024. — TWA/CT

Octane surpasses diesel prices

THE prices of Octane exceeded diesel in the retail market on 16 March 2023, tracking the positive global cues.

The fuel prices were K2,150 per litre of Octane 92, K2,235 for Octane 95, K2,135 for diesel and K2,215 for premium diesel in Yangon markets. On 16 March, the prices stood at K2,041 per litre of Octane 92, K2,124 for Octane 95, K2,031 for diesel and K2,105 for premium diesel.

The crude oil price plunged to a 15-month low at US$67.55 per barrel.

In August 2022, the oil prices surged to K2,605 per litre for Octane 92 and K3,245 for diesel. The diesel price is way higher than the Octane price. The price of diesel became lower than Octane on 16 March. The price decrease of diesel will facilitate freight forwarding businesses.

The file photo shows the oil pump for the petrol station.

Since May 2015, the Octane price has been cheaper than diesel. In 2008, diesel price was around K300,000 per barrel. The price exceeded K79,000 per barrel on 21 February 2009, Ko Soe Min, a freight forwarder, told the Global New Light of Myanmar (GNLM).

Diesel is primarily used in freight forwarding businesses, generators and machinery. The price drop might save some cost.

Sharp fall in crude oil prices on positive global cues weight on the domestic fuel market as well, and market observers shared their opinions. – TWA/EM

Rubber price falls in Mon State

THE price of rubber slightly declined in Mon State's rubber market.

The price of rubber hit K1,385 per pound of sundried Local 3 and K1,405 per pound of Ribbed Smoked Sheet on 3 March. The prevailing prices have gradually moved down to K1,275 per pound of sundried local 3 and K1,295 per pound of Ribbed Smoked Sheet Local 3.

The figures indicated a decrease of K110 per pound within two weeks.

Global demand for rubber, rubber production of the Southeast Asian nations and the market supply are contributing factors to the rubber price condition of Myanmar.

The rubber price in Mon State, a major rubber production state in Myanmar, is positively related to those factors as well, the traders elaborated.

Rubber is commonly produced in Mon and Kayin states and Taninthayi, Bago, and Yangon regions in Myanmar. As per 2018-2019 rubber season data, there are over 1.628 million acres of rubber plantations in Myanmar, with Mon State accounting for 497,153 acres, followed by Taninthayi Region with 348,344 acres and Kayin State with 270,760 acres.

Myanmar's rubber production is annually estimated at 300,000 tonnes. Seventy per cent of rubber produced in Myanmar goes to China. It is also shipped to Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia, Viet Nam, the Republic of Korea, India, Japan, and other countries.

Myanmar bagged more than US$449 million in revenue from rubber exports in the previous financial year 2020-2021.—NN/EM

Myanmar bagged more than US$449 million in revenue from rubber exports in the previous financial year 2020-2021.

Prices of fuel oil, gold and dollar on 16 March 2023

Fuel Oil Price (Yangon)

Octane 92	K2,150
Octane 95	K2,235
Diesel	K2,135
Premium Diesel	K2,215

All of the prices are based on per litre.

Gold Price

The reference price of high-purity gold set by YGEA	K2,257,300 per tical
High-purity gold in the gold market	K2,887,000 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 t	K2,860 to K2,875

The above prices may change from time to time.

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OPINION

Be a clean environment under systematic waste management

UNDISCIPLINED disposing of household waste, unsystematic disposing of industrial waste and discarding of dangerous chemicals without management in both rural and urban areas can affect pollution as well as can cause serious health hazards to the people and natural environment.

The survey by the United Nations Environment Programme stated that some have seen millions of global people lose their lives to environmental pollution on a yearly basis. With regard to pollution, some 11.2 billion tonnes of waste are disposed of throughout the world yearly, and some eight million tonnes of plastic waste flow into the oceans and seas yearly causing water pollution.

Nowadays, global people use more than 100,000 items of chemicals and elements in the entire world. As the unsystematic use of chemicals and elements may cause serious hazardous problems to the environment and humans, those users need to take care of their activities.

> Cleanliness in the environment is not concerned with just government. Only when all the people including relevant departments and organizations as well as non-governmental organizations and INGOs join hands in the systematic management of disposing waste will the whole nation be free from the dangerous pollution in the environment.

Gradually, plastic pollution becomes a global problem as a large number of the global people do not follow the systematic despising the plastic waste. As such, the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-5.2) held in March 2022 agreed to implement an international convention under the law.

Myanmar needs to adopt plans for the control of plastic pollution in all aspects. As such a plan will directly benefit the people, all the citizens should follow the plan for the sake of the nation. It is because systematic disposal of plastic waste will contribute much to the national health activities as well as the personal health conditions of the people.

As such, relevant government bodies should systematically manage and control disposing of waste across the nation. Likewise, development committees at different levels and relevant organizations are to effectively and carefully implement the national waste management strategy and the master plan adopted by the government.

Hence, it is necessary to allot the land plots for discarding waste which may generally affect the people and the specific land plots for chemical and dangerous elements for enabling the people to avoid dangerous gases and solutions. Moreover, a systematic waste collection system must be set up with the strength of workers to collect waste from societies on time and to raise public awareness of dangerous impacts based on undisciplined disposing of.

Cleanliness in the environment is not concerned with just government. Only when all the people including relevant departments and organizations as well as non-governmental organizations and INGOs join hands in the systematic management of disposing waste will the whole nation be free from the dangerous pollution in the environment. ■

ARTICLE

Ginger

By Win Sein

In our humble opinion, ginger is the king of culinary spices, but its kitchen prowess is just half the story. There are ample ways to enjoy the health benefits of ginger. **ILLUSTRATION: FOR REPRESENTATIONAL PURPOSE ONLY/FREEPIK**

THE known history of ginger dates back about 5000 years. Its native home is still debated but its medicinal and spiritual uses were first documented in Southeast Asia, India and China. Like many other spices, ginger was once a costly commodity in the 14th century, a pound of ginger cost as much as one sheep. By the middle of the 16th century, Europe was importing more than 2000 tons of dried ginger a year from East Indies. In the Middle Ages, it was used to ward off the plague and for a while, it was so popular, it has become used to place on the table like salt and pepper.

In 19th century Britain, it was said to sprinkle in beer (the source of ginger ale) and so followed by the expression used to "ginger " a horse (placed on the backside of the horse to prance more enthusiasm energetically around the show ring).

In culinary, a saying in the kitchen is that ginger lifts and unifies the flavours among many dishes, from sweet to savoury. It can play a starry role in the recipe or smell. A mere pinch can elevate other ingredients into a delicious ensemble, though European manipulation of the sweet strongly flavoured dishes was found in many of the world's famous cuisines, namely: Chinese stir-fry, Dutch pepper jack (gingerbread) one of France's oldest spice group.

India and China are believed to have produced ginger as a root tonic for over 5,000 years to treat many of their ailments, and this plant is now cultivated outside the humid tropics, with India being the largest producer. In Thailand, it is an essential ingredient in many curry dishes so also in India, ginger is also an essential flavour ingredient in the vast majority of dishes as well as the popular hot beverage "Masala Chai" (milky black tea with aromatic spices).

Fresh ginger is a great way to add fresh flavour to a variety of meals and recipes. Once peeled and grated, ginger can easily be thrown into various sauces, glazes and meringue to brighten up the dish, traditionally like noddle bowl or stir-fry, it can also be for a fun twist on recipes like Lemon Chicken with root vegetables or Zesty Heirloom Gazpacho, don't forget to bake up a batch of fresh gingerbread squares for dessert.

In our humble opinion, ginger is the king of culinary spices, but its kitchen prowess is just half the story. There are ample ways to enjoy the health benefits of ginger. it was considered a luxury product thousands of years ago, it originated from Chinese folklore and was adopted by ancient Indians and Chinese to treat common illnesses, so making spices a very valuable product for trading purposes. Even though ancient civilizations don't have the knowledge of science or technology of the 21st century, they were inclined towards something, ginger is full of medicinal elements and its health benefits are supported by today's research. Ginger's medicinal benefits are indicated as follows: -

1, Help digestion
2, Reduces nausea (including morning sickness)
3, Has anti-inflammatory properties
4, Reduces exercise-induced muscle soreness and pain
5, Fight bacteria, and infections
6, May help protect against age-related cognitive degeneration diseases
7, May improve heart disease risk factors
8, May help lower cholesterol levels.

Spiritual benefits of ginger (masculine energy, good luck, chakra activities and more). In ancient Chinese medicine, ginger is believed to help raise the heart of the body and harmonize the energies, and ginger is used to balance the Chi, promote health and vigour and help invoke divine masculine force within.

The spiritual benefits of ginger are as follows: -

1, Burn ginger root to consecrate ritual performance and charged religious power on amulets/jewellery
2, Diffuse ginger essential oil or incense for strength and vigour
3, Take a bath with ginger to channel divine masculine energy
4, Use ginger to attract good luck and love onto your life
5, Use ginger to balance the root chakra.

There are not but a few ways to approach in order to incorporate ginger into your dishes at home.

Honey Garlic Shrimp

The low-calorie meal includes shrimp, which are high in proteins, vitamins, minerals and essential fatty acids, honey soy sauce, garlic and ginger mixed to create flavourful bites your family will love.

The Gingerbread Pumpkin Yule Log

Desserts, such as Gingerbread-flavoured treats can include ginger too, there's little worrying that your family won't gobble up this ginger-infused cake.

Ginger Beef Salad

Give your family a salad dish they'll want to eat again n again. This quick and easy salad is healthy and savoury.

Toasted Sesame Ginger Salmon

Salmon is one of the best dishes to eat because it's full of healthy vitamins and excellent for your heart. Enjoy this delicious dish with brown rice and vegetables.

Ginger Honey Chicken Wings

Take a healthier spin on an American classic meal by adding a ginger honey flavour to Chicken Wings. Warning !- this is surely a fingers-licking meal.

Ginger, all in all, is a powerful medicinal and spiritual tool that has been used for thousands of years, fresh or dried, it's spicy flavour and the strength of its incredible properties make it a bit of a "do it all" " a spice commodity associated with heat, fire, masculine energy and the Sun. This spice is said to keep illness away and promote Health, Wealth and Prosperity. ■

SPRING HAS COME TO JAPAN!

By Suzuka YOSHIDA

Japan is heading from the heavy snowfall season to the spring full of flowers.
Bright sunlight, warm air, flowers blooming,
and everyone wants to walk upward.
You can't help but want to fill your lungs with warm spring air.
This is March.

Spring is similar to "democracy",
Even if you want it, you can't get it right away,
The ancestors planted flowers and strive to beautify local area without polluting the environment,
This is the result of their efforts.

Many foreigners are now visiting Japan and taking pictures.
I want them to be interested in the nameless people behind the scenes.

Mount Fuji from a rail station, photographed by the Author

BioNTech mobile mRNA vaccine labs reach Rwanda

BioNTech has said vaccine production should begin within a year of delivery of the BioNTainers. **PHOTO: BIONTECH**

SIX mobile vaccine production units by German pharma company BioNTech arrived in Rwanda on Monday, the first such shipments to Africa as the continent seeks to boost mRNA vaccine manufacturing.

The units, made from recycled shipping containers, arrived in the capital Kigali, where they will be assembled to make a vaccine production hub for jabs against a variety of illnesses.

"This is a historic moment," said BioNTech's chief operating officer Sierk Poetting.

The Covid-19 pandemic exposed Africa's huge dependence on imported vaccines.

Less than 50 per cent of the continent's 1.2 billion people are fully inoculated against Covid-19, according to the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

The facility in Kigali — capable of producing up to 100 million mRNA vaccines per year — will take at least 12 months before it starts producing doses.

"The technology is scalable… It is also flexible so you can move it anywhere," said Poetting, without providing details on the overall cost of the project.

The containers, dubbed BioNTainer, will also pioneer treatments in the development phase against diseases like malaria, tuberculosis and HIV that are among the leading killers in Africa.

"We are also thinking of cancer therapies that we are developing to be produced in these BioNTainers," said Poetting.

BioNTech said it had employed nine local scientists, with a plan to increase staffing to at least 100 by next year and eventually have local employees run the facility.

Rwanda will distribute the vaccines to the 55-member African Union bloc.

"This shows the power of science, partnerships and humanity, what people can do to fight a terrifying pandemic," Health Minister Sabin Nsanzimana said.

Rwanda's facility is the first of three slated for Africa with deliveries planned for South Africa and Senegal, according to BioNTech.

SOURCE: AFP

CURRENT AFFAIRS

58th Myanmar Gems Emporium to be held in Nay Pyi Taw

THE 58th mid-year Myanmar Gem Emporium is to be held at the Maniradana Jade Hall in Nay Pyi Taw between 17 and 23 March, according to the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation.

In this emporium, pearl, jade and jade lots will be on sale, the Central Committee on Organizing the Myanmar Gems Emporium stated.

Myanmar national gem and jewellery merchants, who are engaged in the extraction and sale of gems, will be allowed to attend the emporium and buy the gems following the rules and regulations.

For more information, one can contact the head office of Myanma Gems Enterprise and that of Myanma Peal Enterprise held in Nay Pyi Taw, it is learnt.

The local and foreign merchants, who are allowed to purchase the gems at the exhibition, have to pay the value of purchases within 60 days.

At the 58th mid-year Myanmar Gem Emporium in 2022, a total of 362 pearl lots, 55 gems lots and 1,836 jade lots were sold. – TWA/MKKS

Traders viewed pearl lots in the 57th Myanmar Gems Emporium.

Upgrading works of Pyay Road and Parami Road completed

ACCORDING to the Yangon City Development Committee-YCDC, the upgrading and expansion of Pyay Road and Parami Road in Hlaing Township from four lanes to six lanes have been completed.

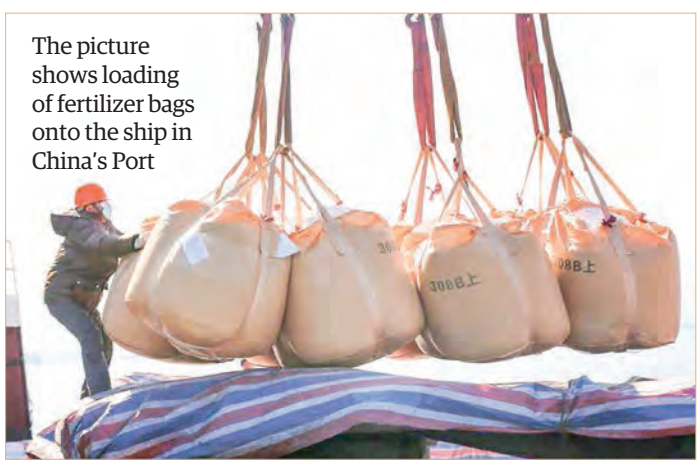
After the construction, fox tall trees were systematically planted in rows so that they can be seen from the entrance sidewalk and bicycle lane to the University of Yangon (Hlaing Campus), together with the beautiful scenery of Inya Lake.

As the intersection of Pyay-Parami Road is important for travelling around the Yangon, the YCDC and relevant departments implemented the project on time under the guidance of the Yangon Region government.

Road expansion and the construction of sidewalks and bike paths can make people safe around the intersection, in addition to reducing traffic jams on Parami Road. — TWA/CT

A landscape of entrance sidewalks and bike paths with foxtail palm trees to the University of Yangon (Hlaing Campus).

Fertilizer prices move slightly up in domestic market



The picture shows loading of fertilizer bags onto the ship in China's Port

THE prices of fertilizer have gradually increased in the domestic market.

Between 8 and 13 March, the prices of fertilizer moved in the range between K62,000-152,000 per 50-kg bag depending on the brand (Myanma Awba, Thai Grow How, Pearl, MPE, Thai Myinpyan) and types of fertilizer. Last month, Myanmar imported about 30,000 tonnes of fertilizer worth US$17.912 million, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

Myanmar brought in about 17,000 tonnes from China, about 6,500 from the UAE, over 2,000 from Belgium, over 1,500 from Thailand, over 300 from Jordan, over 400 from Uzbekistan, over 300 from the US, over 500 from the Republic of Korea, over 500 from Laos, over 600 from Malaysia and about 700 from Viet Nam. The export volume was down by over 3,000 tonnes compared to that recorded in February 2023.

Meanwhile, the country imported over 3,500 tonnes of fertilizer worth $1.765 million through a cross-border channel last month, with the majority of them imported by China. — TWA/EM

3,500 YBS buses installed with new embossed vehicle number plates

NEW embossed vehicle number plates have been installed on 3,500 YBS in Yangon, according to the Yangon Region Public Transport Committee.

It is reported that YBS vehicles without new number plates will be banned from running. There are about 5,000 registered YBS vehicles in Yangon Region, but only around 3,500 and 4,000 are actually running.

There are 117 YBS lines in Yangon Region, which transport more than 1.4 million passengers every day. — TWA/KZW

Transport charges in downtown Yangon higher than highway fare

TRANSPORT charges in Yangon are higher than fares to the countryside areas, said a person who faced such a case.

"When I sent a 10-viss carton to Aung Mingala highway terminal from the countryside 300 miles away from Yangon and freigh charges are K4,000. However, the freight charges for it from the Highway terminal to downtown Yangon are K5,500," parcel owner U San told the Global New Light of Myanmar (GNLM).

He added, As service charges are so high, I investigate the short-haul transport service. It costs only K1,000 from Aung Mingala to Mingala Taungnyunt. Therefore, I refused the K55,00 service.

People face local short-haul services at higher service charges than normal service providers. Similarly, the car rental fee from the downtown area is higher than the bus fare of Hlinethaya terminal.

The car rental fee from downtown Yangon to the highway bus terminal is about K15,000. Therefore, the 14-seat HiAce car operates from Yangon's Hlinethaya highway bus terminal to the delta region.

In August 2022, the diesel was above K3,000 per litre and now it is only K2,200 per litre. However, there are still people who offer higher service prices. Customers negotiate with gas-fuelled taxi drivers in Yangon.

Some trucks are seen near the Bayintnaung Wholesale Centre.

People purchase their products at higher prices at the Nyaungpinlay market in Lanmadaw Township despite wholesale prices at the Bayintnaung wholesale centre due to high car rental fees.

Yangon vendors choose rideshares for the same directions to save charges, grocery store owner Ma Win from Lanmadaw Township told the GNLM. — TWA/KTZH

MoI Deputy Minister makes inspection tours of Kalay, Singaing and Kyaukse townships

DEPUTY Minister for Information U Ye Tint inspected the library, the mini-museum and the children's reading room of Kalay District IPRD, met the head of the MRTV re-transmission station, discussed the progress of work and fulfilled the needs on 15 March.

Afterwards, Deputy Minister U Ye Tint accompanied by District officials visited No (1) Basic Education High School in Kalay township to view the students taking the matriculation examination.

On 15 March afternoon, the Deputy Minister reached the Naytha monastery and donated offertories, K20 million and periodicals to the Naytha Sayadaw.

Then, the Deputy Minister inspected the Singaing township IPRD office and met officials and staff from Singaing and Tada-U townships and gave necessary instructions.

In addition, the Deputy Minister met officials and staff from Kyaukse and Myittha townships at the Kyaukse District office and encouraged the students who are attending the Basic English Course being conducted at the Kyaukse District office.

During the meeting, the Deputy Minister urged the staff to successfully implement the work of information and education and try to increase the number of readers. — MNA/MKKS

Deputy Minister U Ye Tint meets officials and staff from the Information and Public Relations Department in Kyaukse.

CRIME NEWS

Illegal timbers, foodstuffs, consumer goods, industrial materials, raw materials and vehicles seized

Seized illegal commodities at the Mayanchaung permanent checkpoint.

ON 9 and 10 March, an on-duty team under the management of the Customs Department made inspections at the Asia World Port Terminal container checkpoint.

Officials confiscated 21 kinds of goods including 54,680 ceramic tiles and 26,400 porcelain tiles that exceeded the 61 days of Valid for Prior Arrival (VPA) worth K252,606,013 from six containers and 56,000 ball-pens, 1,020 kilogrammes of welding rods and 400 kilogrammes of stickers worth K29,302,000 from two containers. The action was taken under Customs procedures.

In addition, a combined team at the Mayanchaung permanent checkpoint in Mon State captured 5,000 kilogrammes of ceiling bars (that exceeded the Import Declaration-ID) worth K7 million from a Hino Tractor head and a trailer (approximately K115 million) heading to Yangon from Myawady on 12 March and 120 cartons of M-150 energy drinks without official documents worth K2.16 million from a Higer express bus (approximately K30 million) heading to Toungoo from Hpa-an. The action was taken under Customs procedures.

On 13 March, an on-duty team at the 16th-Mile Kyaukchaw checkpoint seized 1,392 bottles of flower vacuum steel flask, 6,000 kilogrammes of iron pipes and 17 tonnes of red gram that were different from Import Declaration (ID) worth K69,550,451 from two Mitsubishi Fuso Trucks and a Hino Profia Truck(approximately K120 million). The action was taken under Customs procedures.

On 14 March, a combined team conducted a surprise check and captured four kinds of goods including 1,840 cartons of various tea and coffee mix and 150 kilogrammes of colour crepe paper without official documents from a Faw truck and a Gongfeng tractor truck (approximately K55 million) in bus station compound in Muse township. The action was taken under Customs procedures.

An on-duty team at the Thanlwin Bridge (Mawlamyine) nabbed 4,400 litres of palm oil without Customs duty paid that were stacked at the side of the road and the action was taken under Customs procedures.

Similarly, an inspection team led by Sagaing Police Station seized 34 kinds of goods including foodstuffs without Customs duty paid, consumer goods and cosmetics worth K30,128,001 from a Nissan Condor truck (approximately K20 million) in Sagaing township. The action was taken under the Export and Import Law.

On 15 March, a total of 9.731 tonnes of illegal teak and 48.700 tonnes of other timbers worth K9,083,314 were seized in Pyu and Letpadan townships. The action was taken under the Forest Law.

Therefore, 43 arrests (estimated value of K857,714,878) were made on 9,10,12,13,14 and 15 March, according to the Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee. — MNA/MKKS

Heroin worth over K720 mln confiscated in Shan State (North)

OVER 48 kilogrammes of heroin worth over K720 million were confiscated in Nawnghkio Township, Shan State (North).

On a tip-off, a combined team comprising of members of Security Force searched a vehicle, Landcruiser, driven by Khaung Lwan near Konesan village in Nawnghkio Township, Shan State (North) on the morning of 21 February, and confiscated 48.4 kilogrammes of heroin worth over K720 million put in 4,840 soap cases. According to the investigation, the heroin was carried from Shan State (North) to Mandalay. The action was taken against the suspect and the police uncovered the chain perpetrators in connection with the case.—MNA

Public Notice

1. The Anti-Corruption Commission has established corruption prevention units within ministries to effectively curb corruption.
2. The ACC used SMS on the mobile phone to ask the public who seek services at an office of the department of the relevant ministries via Short Code No "1111" for feedbacks, including the Public Feedback Programme-PFP.
3. According to the PFP, the right replies of the citizens via Short Code No "1111" will provide the quality of services of each department and the requirements for corruption prevention to be fixed.
4. Therefore, the public should make a reply to the questions of the ACC and corruption prevention units of the ministries via SMS at Short Code No "1111" and such doing is a supportive measure for PFP, and the people are urged to cooperate in the operations.

Anti-Corruption Commission
Answer "1111" to fight against corruption
Answer "1111" to improve services
Let's work together to eliminate corruption towards prosperity

ECONOMY
WORLD/AD

Russia's oil revenue sinks as price cap bites: IEA

Russian oil exports fell by 500,000 barrels per day to 7.5 million bpd in February, with a big drop in shipments to the EU, but it was still near pre-war levels. **PHOTO: AFP**

RUSSIA'S oil-export revenue sank by almost half in February compared to last year as Western powers tightened sanctions on the country, the International Energy Agency said on Wednesday.

The country earned $11.6 billion from its oil exports last month after the European Union imposed a ban on Russian petroleum products alongside a price cap agreed with the Group of Seven and Australia, according to the IEA.

This was down from $14.3 billion in January and a 42 per cent drop from $20 billion in February last year.

Russia, however, was still shipping "roughly the same" amount of oil to world markets, according to the IEA, which advises wealthy nations.

"This indicates that the G7 sanctions regime has been effective in not restricting global crude and product supplies, while simultaneously curtailing Russia's ability to generate export revenue," the IEA said.

Russian oil exports fell by 500,000 barrels per day to 7.5 million bpd in February, with a big drop in shipments to the EU, but it was still near pre-war levels. "Recent tanker tracking data suggest that Moscow has managed to re-route most of the barrels previously destined for the EU and US to new outlets in Asia, Africa and the Middle East," the IEA said.—AFP

Strike grips Sri Lanka as unions protest IMF bailout

SRI Lanka deployed armed troops as trade unions crippled hospitals, ports and banks Wednesday to protest against high income taxes imposed as a precondition for a crucial IMF bailout.

Schools cancelled term tests and outpatient departments at hospitals closed due to the work stoppage that involved more than 40 trade unions. Fewer vehicles were seen on roads.

Dockers at the main sea port in Colombo stayed away while air traffic controllers joined the combined industrial action to carry out "go slow" for two hours affecting at least 14 international flights.

"All considered, our work-to-rule was for two hours, but we will consider a full-blown strike if the government does not roll back the new tax rates," Rajitha Seneviratne, secretary of the air traffic controllers' association, told AFP.

Armed soldiers were deployed at railway stations as well as the port as the government attempted tried to restore minimum services. Dock workers had a tense standoff with the military inside the port, but there were no reports of clashes. President Ranil Wickremesinghe's office said 20 trains operated to bring office workers to the capital, but unions said it was less than five per cent of the daily services.—AFP

Hospital outpatient departments closed due to the work stoppage. **PHOTO: AFP**

Myanmar Brand Networks Company Limited
(Registration No.114600792-In member's voluntary Liquidation)

(Notice for Final General Meeting Pursuant to the Myanmar Company Act and Myanmar Insolvency law)

Notice is hereby given that, the Final General Meeting of Myanmar Brand Networks Company Limited will be held on on 18TH day of March 2023 at 10:00 am at the registered address of No 122, 2ND Floor, 38TH Street, Kyauktada Township Yangon for the purpose of the account of winding-up.

Daw Swe Zin Win [BACT, CPA, PA-1290]
Liquidator
No.805, Zanila (4)Street, (16/1) Quarter,
Thingangyun Township,Yangon

Notice for change of distributor

Notice is hereby given that the official distributor – **Agro Power Co.,Ltd.** to **Myanmar Arysta LifeScience Co.,Ltd**. has been changed for the following pesticides manufactured by **United Phosphorus Ltd.(UPL Limited), India**.

No.	Trade name	Active Ingredient	Registration No.
1	Uthane 75 WP	Mancozeb 75% WP	F 2017 - 1276
2	Bisect 10 EC	Bifenthrin 10 %EC	P 2019 - 4618
3	Fenkill 20%EC	Fenvalerate 20% w/v EC	F 2015 - 136
4	Sygastar	Tebuconazole 20% EC	P 2019 - 4599
5	Spada 600 WG	Propanil 60% WG w/w	P 2019 - 4611
6	Mace	Tricyclazole 75% WP	P 2019 - 4537
7	Stam 80 DF	Propanil 80% DF	F 2012 - 829

Agro Power Co.,Ltd. invites objections to Co-secretary, Pesticide Registration Board, Plant Protection Division, West Gyogone, Insein township, Yangon from all parties within a period of fourteen (14) days from the publication of this notice. If no objections are received within the period prescribed, parties mentioned above shall proceed with the completion of formalities recorded with the Pesticide Registration Board.

Agro Power Co.,Ltd. No.570, Thumana St, 16/4 Qtr, Thingangyun Tsp, Yangon.
09-444461516, 09-783928133

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
M.V MSC SUPARNA F VOY.NO. (SB310A)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V MSC SUPARNA F VOY.NO. (SB310A)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **17-3-2023** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **AWPT** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S MEDITERRANEAN SHIPPING COMPANY S.A

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
M.V BRIGHT COMET VOY.NO. (2302)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V BRIGHT COMET VOY.NO. (2302)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **17-3-2023** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MITT** 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.

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Japan, S Korea business lobbies to launch foundations to deepen ties

THE major business lobbies in Japan and South Korea said Thursday they will each establish a foundation to jointly tackle common issues, including energy, and promote youth exchanges, a move that could help repair bilateral relations, which soured over a wartime labour compensation dispute.

The announcement by the Japan Business Federation and the Federation of Korean Industries to launch their "future partnership" foundations came after South Korea last week announced a plan to settle the long-running dispute with Japan.

The two groups are expected to contribute 100 million yen ($752,000) each to their respective foundations and will discuss the details on how to utilize the funds.

The foundations will also solicit funding from private companies, with the Japanese foundation open to contributions from Nippon Steel Corp and Mitsubishi Heavy Industries Ltd, which were sued by the Korean plaintiffs who won lawsuits over their alleged forced labour during Japan's 1910-1945 colonial rule of the Korean Peninsula.

Under the plan, recently announced by Seoul, a South Korean government-backed foundation will pay compensation to plaintiffs instead of the Japanese companies that were sued. — Kyodo

The business lobbies also plan to make it easier for South Korean students to find jobs and internships at Japanese companies. Senshu University students make a presentation in July of university dorm construction plans under an internship programme for a dormitory operator in Kawasaki. **PHOTO: REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE/KYODO**

Baidu shares fall after disappointing AI chatbot debut

CHINESE search engine company Baidu's shares fell as much as 10 per cent on Thursday after the company unveiled its ChatGPT-like AI software, with investors unimpressed by the bot's display of linguistic and maths skills.

The artificial intelligence-powered ChatGPT, created by San Francisco company OpenAI, has caused a sensation for its ability to write essays, poems or programming code on demand within seconds, sparking widespread fears of cheating or of professions becoming obsolete.

Chinese tech giants have joined the global rush to develop rival software, with Alibaba and JD.com also announcing similar projects. But Baidu's "Ernie Bot", unveiled at a press event in Beijing on Thursday, fell short of expectations with the company's co-founder Robin Li showing only a pre-recorded demonstration of the software's capabilities, rather than a live interaction. The company showed audiences a screen recording of the bot answering questions about popular Chinese science fiction novel "The Three-Body Problem" and generating a plot summary. — AFP

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Dated: **17 March 2023**

GLOBAL AFFAIRS

Japan, S Korea take steps to restore ties as Yoon visits Tokyo

JAPAN and South Korea announced relaxed trade controls and a return of frequent reciprocal visits on Thursday, as President Yoon Suk Yeol visits Tokyo on a trip intended to rebuild ties between the neighbours.

For years, the two countries have been locked in a bitter spat over wartime forced labour.

But since his election last year, Yoon has made it clear that repairing relations with Japan is a top priority.

He has already met Prime Minister Fumio Kishida on the sidelines of diplomatic events, and on Thursday the pair kicked off the first full-scale summit between the countries in 12 years.

"At today's summit, I believe that there will be fruitful discussions that can transform Korea-Japan relations, which have been at a standstill, into a relationship of cooperation and mutually beneficial development," Yoon said.

Kishida said the two sides had "agreed on the resumption of shuttle diplomacy by leaders of Japan and South Korea, no matter what the format" of the trips.

Japanese media said this could include Kishida inviting Yoon to the G7 summit in Hiroshima in May, and then visiting Seoul.

Relations deteriorated in 2018 after South Korea's Supreme Court ordered Japanese firms to compensate victims of wartime forced labour and their families. But Seoul announced a plan this month to compensate Korean victims without Tokyo's direct involvement.

In a further sign of thawing relations, Tokyo's trade ministry said Thursday it would restore the status quo after nearly four years of restricting exports to South Korea of key industrial materials needed for semiconductors.

At the same time, South Korea announced it would withdraw a complaint filed with the World Trade Organization.

Japan and South Korea are holding their first full-scale summit in 12 years. **PHOTO: POOL/AFP**

North Korean missile

However, in a potent reminder of the security challenges that have pushed Seoul and Tokyo to try to form a united front, North Korea fired a long-range ballistic missile just hours ahead of Yoon's arrival.

Yoon said the need for cooperation was growing as the "values of liberal democracy, which have served as the basis for peace and prosperity in the international community, face serious challenges".—AFP

North Korea test-fires ballistic missile, SKorea military says: Yonhap

NORTH Korea test-fired a ballistic missile Thursday in the latest of a flurry of launches amid acute regional tension, the South Korean military said, according to the Yonhap news agency.

The unspecified projectile was fired into waters off the east coast of the Korean Peninsula, the agency said, quoting the Joint Chiefs of Staff, which it said gave no details.

Washington and Seoul have ramped up defence cooperation in the face of growing military and nuclear threats from the North, which has conducted a series of increasingly provocative banned weapons tests in recent months. —AFP

RUSSIA-UKRAINE CONFLICT

Putin calls to step up fight against destabilization

Dennis Christensen, a Danish Jehovah's Witness, was sentenced in a Russian court in February 2019. **PHOTO: M. ANTONOV/AFP/FILE**

RUSSIAN President Vladimir Putin on Wednesday called on prosecutors to increase pressure on "attempts to destabilize" Russia's domestic situation amid the Ukraine offensive.

Moscow has heightened its crackdown on critical voices since sending troops to Ukraine last year, introducing new legislation to silence dissent.

"I ask you to react harshly to attempts to destabilize the socio-political situation in the country," Putin said during a meeting with the Russian prosecutor general's office.

"Prosecutors should be more active in countering extremism," Putin added.

Moscow has used the extremist label to target opposition figures and civil society organizations.

The organization of jailed Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny was in 2021 labelled "extremist", enabling the detention of several of his supporters and others to be sent into exile abroad.

Russia's list of extremist organizations includes jihadist groups, Jehovah's Witnesses, and since 2022 the parent company of Facebook and Instagram, US tech giant Meta.—AFP

EU parliament urges tougher sanctions on Belarus

THE European Parliament on Wednesday urged EU countries to impose new sanctions on Belarus over its crackdown on the opposition and support for Russia's war in Ukraine.

The 27-nation bloc has already hit Minsk with multiple rounds of sanctions over its domestic repression and role as a springboard for Moscow's invasion.

Lawmakers approved a non-binding resolution calling for the EU to broaden the list of those targeted over the clampdown, in a vote that followed the sentencing of Nobel Prize winning activist Ales Bialiatski to 10 years in jail. —AFP

In this Sept 2020 file photo, European Union lawmakers attend a plenary session at the European Parliament in Brussels. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

GLOBAL AFFAIRS

Under fire over legal reforms, Netanyahu to face critics in Berlin

ISRAELI Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, under heavy fire at home over planned legal reforms, was due to arrive Wednesday in Berlin where Germany's leaders will also urge him to reconsider the overhauls.

The German government is under pressure for hosting Netanyahu at a time of the disputed reforms, with critics urging Berlin to scrap the visit.

Netanyahu, speaking before boarding his plane to Germany, said Iran would be the "main issue" of his discussions, along with "other topics important to Israel". "The security issues don't pause, even for a moment," he added. German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier, speaking in Tallinn on Wednesday, said he planned to raise the reforms with Netanyahu when they meet on Thursday.

Israel is the "only democracy in the whole region, a country with a strong constitutional state", he said.

"What I would like to see is that what we have admired about Israel... is preserved." Netanyahu's government, which includes ultra-Orthodox and extreme-right parties, introduced its judicial reform package in January.

Ahead of Netanyahu's departure, critics took their protests to Ben Gurion airport. **PHOTO: AFP**

The changes would allow lawmakers to override Supreme Court decisions that strike down legislation with a parliamentary majority, and then deny the court the right to review such a move.

It would also make it harder for the Supreme Court to strike down legislation it deems to contravene Basic Laws, Israel's quasi constitution.—AFP

Stormy Daniels meets US prosecutors in Trump probe: lawyer

Stormy Daniels said she had an affair with Donald Trump before he was president. **PHOTO: AFP**

UNITED States prosecutors met Stormy Daniels on Wednesday as they decide whether to charge ex-president Donald Trump over hush money paid to the porn star before the 2016 election, her lawyer said.

If the Manhattan district attorney were to indict Trump, the 76-year-old would become the first former president charged with a crime.

It could also upend his bid to win the Republican nomination for the 2024 presidential election.

The investigation centres on $130,000 paid weeks before the 2016 polls to stop Daniels, real name Stephanie Clifford, from going public about an affair she says she had with Trump years earlier.

Trump has denied having an affair with Daniels.

Daniels' lawyer Clark Brewster said on Twitter that his client met prosecutors at the request of the district attorney's office.

"Stormy responded to questions and has agreed to make herself available as a witness, or for further inquiry if needed," Brewster said.

Daniels later re-posted the message, thanking her attorney for his support in "our continuing fight for truth and justice".

Trump has been given the opportunity to testify by District Attorney Alvin Bragg's team but will almost certainly decline, to avoid potentially incriminating himself.—AFP

Macron faces 'moment of truth' as French pension reform goes to vote

A proposed reform of France's pension system, which has sparked massive protests and strikes since the start of the year, is to be put to a vote in parliament on Thursday in a decisive moment for President Emmanuel Macron.

The Senate and lower house National Assembly are set to hold ballots on the legislation to raise the retirement age to 64, with Macron's minority government dependent on the opposition Republicans (LR) party for support. After months of negotiations, "everyone wants a moment of truth", a senior figure in Macron's Renaissance party told AFP on condition of anonymity. He conceded that there was a risk that "we might lose".

Support appears almost certain in the upper house Senate, but a majority will be more difficult to find in the fractured Assembly, and the ultimate winning or losing margin could come down to a handful of votes.

"In my group, as well as in the ruling party, there are some MPs who do not want to vote for this reform," the top-ranking Republicans party lawmaker in the Assembly, Olivier Marleix, conceded on Wednesday evening.

The government has argued that raising the retirement age, scrapping privileges for some public sector workers and toughening criteria for a full pension are needed to prevent major deficits building up. Trade unions have led resistance to the plans since the start of the year, organizing some of the biggest demonstrations in decades, which peaked last Tuesday when an estimated 1.28 million people hit the streets.—AFP

A protester poses with a placard reading "Macron, take your pension, not ours" during a demonstration against pension reform. **PHOTO: AFP**

Saudi-Irani detente opens door to peace in Yemen, UN says

THE surprise rapprochement between Saudi Arabia and Iran should offer momentum towards peace by the warring parties in Yemen after eight years of conflict, UN officials said Wednesday.

The UN Security Council on Wednesday discussed the impact on Yemen of the shock Chinese-led announcement on 10 March that diplomatic relations between Sunni Saudi and Shiite Iranian rivals would be restored within two months.

Hans Grundberg, the UN Secretary General's Special Envoy for Yemen, urged the parties to the conflict to "seize the opportunity" of this diplomatic breakthrough in the Gulf. "Intense diplomatic efforts are ongoing at different levels to bring the conflict in Yemen to an end," Grundberg told the Security Council via videolink. The Swedish diplomat was in Tehran this week, while his US counterpart Timothy Lenderking visited Riyadh and Oman on Tuesday, according to the State Department.—AFP

Japan, S Korea take steps to restore ties as Yoon visits Tokyo

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THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

SPORT

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

1. Political affairs

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

2. Economic affairs

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

3. Social affairs

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

Medvedev allays fitness fears to reach Indian Wells semis, Sabalenka, Tiafoe race through

DANIIL Medvedev's sore right ankle wasn't a factor Wednesday as he beat Alejandro Davidovich Fokina 6-3, 7-5 to reach the semi-finals at Indian Wells, where Aryna Sabalenka and Frances Tiafoe raced into the final four.

Medvedev showed little ill effect from the twisted ankle he suffered in a three-set battle against Alexander Zverev a day earlier as he pushed his ATP match winning streak to 18 straight.

He booked a semi-final clash with 16th-ranked American Tiafoe, who beat 2021 Indian Wells winner Cameron Norrie 6-4, 6-4. Australian Open champion Sabalenka, still building on her maiden Grand Slam title in Melbourne, overpowered Coco Gauff 6-4, 6-0 to advance at the combined WTA and ATP Masters 1000 event.

Sabalenka will face 2022 runner-up Maria Sakkari after the seventh-ranked Greek defeated two-time Wimbledon champion Petra Kvitova 4-6, 7-5, 6-1. Medvedev arrived in the California desert riding high after nabbing titles at Rotterdam, Doha and Dubai in three weeks.

Long a critic of the slow hard courts of the Indian Wells Tennis Garden, he was through to the quarters for the first time after hanging on to beat Zverev despite rolling his ankle.—AFP

MFF appoints new head coach for Myanmar national football team

Michael Feichtenbeiner, new head coach of the Myanmar national football team. **PHOTO: MICHAEL FEICHTENBEINER FB**

THE Myanmar Football Federation (MFF) has appointed Germany coach Michael Feichtenbeiner on a two-year contract starting from March 2023 for various international competitions this year.

The 63-year-old Michael began his coaching career in 1989 with the Swiss club BSC Old Boys Basel, and then coached in Germany, Austria, and Indonesia, and took charge of the clubs from Malaysia.

From 2016 to 2019, he managed Germany's U15 and U17 teams, and from 2020, he served as the technical director and head coach of the Malaysian club Selangor.

Michael, along with assistant coach Lorenz and goal coach Mike Andre, will take charge of the Myanmar national team, the Myanmar Football Federation stated. — KZL

Gianni Infantino re-elected FIFA president until 2027

GIANNI Infantino has been re-elected as president of FIFA until 2027 after standing unopposed at the congress of world football's governing body on Thursday.

The 52-year-old Swiss lawyer, who succeeded the disgraced Sepp Blatter in 2016, was waved in for a third term by acclamation, just as he was four years ago, by delegates from the 211 member federations.

"To all those who love me, and I know there are so many, and also those who hate me, I know there are a few: I love you all," Infantino told delegates in the Rwandan capital, where the voting system did not register the number of dissident voices.

While FIFA statutes currently limit a president to a maximum of three four-year terms, Infantino has already prepared the ground to stay until 2031, declaring in December that his first three years at the helm did not count as a full term. Infantino, who staunchly defended Qatar's hosting of last year's World Cup as the Gulf state's treatment of migrant workers, women and the LGBTQ community came under the spotlight, has overseen the expansion of the men's and women's World Cup and huge increases in FIFA revenues.

Norwegian Football Federation president Lise Klaveness had said she would not support Infantino and tabled a proposal to discuss at the congress "FIFA's responsibilities to remedy human rights abuses" in relation to the Qatar World Cup and future tournaments.

However, Infantino's mainly European-based opponents were not able to put forward a candidate to stand against the man who was once Michel Platini's number two at UEFA.

Expanded World Cup

"There is a lot to be looking forward to," Infantino said as he turned thoughts to the next four years and declared the 2026 World Cup, the first edition to be enlarged to 48 teams, will be "the most inclusive World Cup ever".

FIFA announced on Tuesday that the tournament in North America will feature 104 matches, a huge increase from the 64 at the most recent World Cup, as it will start with 12 groups of four teams.—AFP

Gianni Infantino has been reconfirmed as FIFA president for a third term. **PHOTO: AFP**