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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.

Feasibility studies must be conducted for the projects which must be cost-effective and beneficial for the people: Senior General



State Administration Council Chair Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing addresses the meeting 1/2023 of the National Planning Commission in Nay Pyi Taw on 21 March 2023.

DOMESTIC raw materials must be fully utilized for manufacturing finished goods with the technical assistance of relevant departments, said Chairman of National Planning Commission Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at the National Planning Commission meeting 1/2023 at the SAC Chairman Office in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

Speaking at the meeting, the

Senior General said that the economic growth rate declined 5.9 per cent from October 2020 to September 2021 in the 2020-21 financial year. In implementing the six-month interim plan, the economic growth rate increased by 2.4 per cent and in the first six-month period of the 2022-23 FY, by 3.4 per cent. The relevant department estimated that the economic growth rate may reach 3.4 per cent for the whole year.

Operation of manufacturing at home at full capacity is crucial

in the economic development of a nation. Only when domestic production increases will it fulfil the requirement of food for ensuring local food security.

The development of rural regions reflects the socioeconomic improvement of rural people, narrowing the development gap between urban and rural areas. The government will accelerate public-centred development measures for the whole nation.

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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

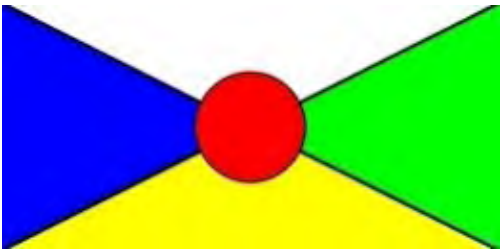
UNDER Section 25 of the Political Parties Registration Law, the New Society Party (NSP), which is desirous of organizing political parties, yesterday applied to the Union Election Commission for permission to establish political parties under the law and rules.

To date, six parties have applied under Section 3 of the Political Parties Registration Law, and 27 parties under Section 25 of the Political Parties Registration Law, totalling 33.

Among these 33 parties, eight parties will organize the entire union and 25 parties only within a region or state. The Union Election Commission continues verifying the right to establish and register these parties. — MNA

Public Notice for Submitting Objection

1. Akha National Development Party with its headquarters located at No 281, Akha Market Street, Wainkyauk Ward, Tachilek, Shan State (East) applied on 17-3-2023 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 Akha National Development Party



The emblem of the Akha National Development Party

Union Election Commission

Public Notice for Submitting Objection

1. Arakan National Party with its headquarters located between No 6 street and No 7 street, Pitethel Road, Tayatheesu Ward, Sittway, Rakhine State, applied on 20-3-2023 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 Arakan National Party



The emblem of the Arakan National Party

Union Election Commission

Public Notice for Submitting Objection

1. Democratic Party of National Politics (DNP) with its headquarters located at Satkya Deepa Farm, Corner of Zeyahtani Road and Pannkhin Road (near Begone Traffic Light), Pobbathiri Township, Nay Pyi Taw applied on 20-3-2023 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 Democratic Party of National Politics (DNP)



The emblem of the Democratic Party of National Politics (DNP)

Union Election Commission

Public Notice for Submitting Objection

1. Kachin National Congress (KNC) with its headquarters located at No 69, Dukahtaung Ward, Myitkyina, Kachin State applied on 20-3-2023 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 Kachin National Congress (KNC)



The emblem of the Kachin National Congress (KNC)

Union Election Commission

Nation's strength lies within

WHATEVER challenges the country is faced with, efforts will have to be made for realizing two national policies: the prosperity of the State and the sufficiency of food with the concept that the strength of the nation lies within.

(Excerpts from the speech delivered by State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing to the meeting 2/2022 of the financial commission held on 24 November 2022)

Feasibility studies must be conducted for the projects ...

FROM PAGE-1

The Senior General stressed the need to continuously strive for the cultivation of sunflowers on the schedule for ensuring local oil sufficiency. Local farmers need to learn from the difficulties of growing monsoon and winter sunflower cultivation to have success in meeting the target.

The Senior General highlighted that investments from home and abroad are invited to the nation in various ways and means. This being so, relevant departments are to comprehensively coordinate the implementation of investments in businesses in time.

The government allows the implementation of projects to build staff housing for doctors and nurses from the health sector; construct health infrastructures and accelerate healthcare services with the increased budget for the health sector.

The finance is increased annually for raising the sports sector and ensuring a healthy and fit society. So, standardized stadiums, gymnasiums and swimming pools are under construction in regions and states.

During its tenure, the State Administration Council raised the allocated budget for the education sector to improve education infrastructures and extend school buildings. Now, the plans have been allowed to build 51 technical, agricultural, and livestock schools in 50 districts for granting the students to have jobs and con-

tinue learning higher education in relevant subjects with stipends.

The Senior General urged all to strive for increasing the enrolment rate of school-age children in the future and decreasing the school dropout rate. All have to implement the education system to produce qualified students in larger quantities.

The Senior General pointed out that the world's geopolitical crises lead to rising fuel prices. So, high prices of commodities, changes in interest rates and foreign exchange rates raise the amount of debts causing a decline in the local currencies.

As such, the Senior General noted that guidance has been given to reduce the consumption of fuel oil and an effective energy consumption system develops. Effective reduction of fuel consumption will contribute to the emergence of a carbon-free environment. Efforts must be made for generating electricity at full capacity, timely completing the electricity projects and implementing small-scale hydropower projects in relevant regions while managing the generation of electricity from solar power, wind power, coal-fired power and nuclear energy.

Implementation of projects needs to follow the plan, do, check and act-PDCA for having the economic development before the Covid-19 period, the Senior General added.

Vice-Chairman of the Na-

During its tenure, the State Administration Council raised the allocated budget for the education sector to improve education infrastructures and extend school buildings. Now, the plans have been allowed to build 51 technical, agricultural, and livestock schools in 50 districts for granting the students to have jobs and continue learning higher education in relevant subjects with stipends.

tional Planning Commission SAC Vice-Chairman Deputy Prime Minister Vice-Senior General Soe Win stressed the need for timely completion of projects, spending the appropriate amount of money on projects, and achieving good results and high quality in the implementation of the project with the use of State budget.

Vice-Chairman of the National Planning Commission Deputy Prime Minister Union Minister for Planning and Finance U Win Shein reviewed the implementation of the national plan for the 2022-23 financial year and drafted the national plan for the 2023-24 FY.

Commission Secretary Deputy Minister for Planning and Finance Daw Than Than Lin reported on the 2023-24 FY national planning law (draft). Auditor-General of the Union

U Tin Oo explained recommendations over findings in the previous FY and plans to do auditing in the 2023-24 FY.

In his response to the reports, the Senior General said the State economic promotion fund allotted K400 billion to regions and states, self-administered zones and divisions. These amounts must be capital for agricultural tasks such as sunflower, green gram and summer paddy cultivation. Despite different situations, all need to seek ways and means for meeting the target and ensuring successful implementation of the projects.

In conclusion, the Senior General stressed the need to systematically hand over the finance to the government if the implementation of projects cannot be completed at the end of the financial year for many reasons. Feasibili-

ty studies must be conducted for the projects which must be cost-effective and beneficial for the people.

The economic promotion with the most certainty is operating agricultural produce and livestock products. Domestic raw materials must be fully utilized for manufacturing finished goods with the technical assistance of relevant departments.

The Senior General pointed out that it is necessary to adjust the income and expense of the State-owned enterprises. Any projects need to depend on efficient spending of money and full capacity in implementation. The Senior General urged all to seek strong and weak points in the national plan this financial year for the development of the State economy. — MNA/TTA

1 new case of COVID-19 reported on 21 March, total figure records 633,993

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases recorded **633,993** after **one** new case was reported on 21 March 2023 according to the Ministry of Health.
The total number of patients who have recovered from COVID-19 in the country reached **614,481**, including **one** new recovery.
The death toll from COVID-19 in the country remained unchanged at **19,490** on 21-3-2023 with no new death reported from the pandemic. — GNLM

It is necessary to constantly supervise the implementation of projects in conformity with the budget: Senior General

ONLY when union ministries and region and state governments can fully earn incomes meeting the targets in the financial year will they have the chance to fully spend the targeted expenditures, said Chairman of the Financial Commission Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at the financial commission meeting 1/2023 at SAC Chairman Office in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday afternoon.

Speaking on the occasion, the Senior General said that the budget for the 2023-24 financial year will contribute to the implementation of the five-point roadmap and 12 objectives of the Union government.

Departments and enterprises need to earmark the approximate budget for 2023-24 FY, strive for earning incomes exceeding the target income so as to balance the budget deficit, prioritize the expenditure for quickly contributing to the economic development of the State and enhancement of socioeconomic life of the people and systematically very other expenditures.

A plan was prioritized to pay back loans and interests of the State to foreign countries as a responsible country.

Only when union ministries and region and state governments can fully earn incomes meeting the targets in the financial year will they have the chance to fully spend the targeted expenditures. The Senior General urged financial commission members to discuss the Union budget and the Union budget bill for 2023-24 FY so as to submit them to the State Administration Council in time.

Vice-Chairman of the Financial Commission SAC Vice-Chairman Deputy Prime



State Administration Council Chair Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing presides over the meeting 1/2023 of the Financial Commission in Nay Pyi Taw on 21 March 2023.

Minister Vice-Senior General Soe Win made a speech, saying that the finance provided by the Union was yearly allotted to regions and states in a correct ratio in line with the mid-year financial framework and six socioeconomic indexes.

Commission Secretary Deputy Prime Minister and Union Minister for Planning and Finance U Win Shein reported on the Union budget for 2023-24 FY and the Union Budget Bill. The Auditor-General of the Union also clarified findings in auditing the budget in 2022-23 FY, reviews and requirements to follow the financial rules and regulations.

In conclusion, the Senior General noted that the 2023-24 FY Union budget and the Union Budget Bill have been ap-

proved. It will be submitted to the SAC via the Union government for enacting the Union Budget Law for 2023-24 FY.

The Senior General stressed the need for heads of departments to supervise the spending of the allotted fund and levy the taxes as incomes of the State under the law. Relevant ministries are to strive for increasing the incomes of State-owned enterprises.

It is necessary to constantly supervise the implementation of projects in conformity with the budget and to systematically accept auditing over incomes and expenses.

The government encourages the modernization of agriculture and livestock farms, the development of rural regions

and the improvement of MSME businesses. While allocating the budget comprising agriculture and livestock businesses, the government set up the State economic promotion fund, Covid-19 special loan fund and MSME development fund so as to fulfil the requirements of capital for these businesses.

The Senior General called for the development of domestic products, becoming the exporter country from the importer, ensuring local oil sufficiency, creating job opportunities for the people and increasing per-capita income.

In the past, the Senior General recounted that the trade deficit depended on lesser manufacturing at home and reliance on imported goods. Currently,

the government encourages manufacturing at home and tries to resume the operation of halted State-owned industries. Manufacturing quality consumer goods in larger quantities can help reduce spending on foreign exchange.

The government has increased the expenditure for generating electricity which plays a key role in the development undertakings of the State. On the other hand, the Senior General noted that relevant regions and states are to conduct feasibilities for generating electricity. Relevant ministries and organizations need to increase generating electricity and supervise minimizing loss and waste of electricity. —MNA/TTA

58th Myanmar Gems Emporium continues for fifth day

THE fifth day of the 58th Myanmar Gems Emporium continued yesterday at Maniradana Jade Hall in Nay Pyi Taw. Foreign and local jewellers observed pearl, gem and jade lots on display at the event.

The tender proposals for jade lots No 1 to 750 were opened, and officials announced a total of 576 lots were auctioned. International and domestic gem merchants evaluated jade lots No 751 to 1,500 for sale at the emporium and placed bids inside the tender boxes. Tender boxes would be

opened on the sixth day and jade lots that were sold would be announced.

So far, 290 of 295 pearl lots were sold to local and foreign gem traders. Moreover, 77 lots of 120 gem lots were sold on 20 March. — MNA/KZW

The fifth day of the 58th Myanmar Gems Emporium in progress in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.



Myanmar-China economic, trade promotion meeting held



DEPARTMENT of Trade Director-General U Myint Thura of the Ministry of Commerce and Lancang City Mayor of Mr Du Jianhui held a coordination meeting to further promote the economy and trade yesterday

Myanmar and China hold the economic and trade promotion meeting in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

at the Ministry of Commerce in Nay Pyi Taw.

Both sides discussed matters in connexion with further promoting the economy and trade between Myanmar and China, holding the fourth Border Trade Fair of Myanmar (Nay Pyi Taw)-China (Lancang), signing an agreement on cross-border transit trade between Myanmar and China, facilitating the trade of goods

from third countries crossing the Myanmar-China border post – Chinshwehaw, and uplifting border trade.

The meeting was attended by Myanmar Trade Promotion Organization Director-General Daw Naw Muta Kapaw from the Ministry of Commerce, the deputy director-general of the Department of Trade, responsible personnel and eight representatives from China. — MNA/TS



MR to extend special train services during Thingyan Festival



One of the Myanmar Railways' trains is seen approaching the station. **PHOTO: SOE MYINT AUNG**

will leave Yangon at 1 pm and arrive at Pyay at 8:55 pm and the Pyay-Yangon special train will depart from Pyay at 8 pm and arrive at Yangon at 4 am the next day.

On 17 April, the Yangon-Mandalay special train will leave Yangon at 7:15 pm and arrive at Mandalay at 2:30 pm the next day and the Mandalay-Yangon special train will depart from Mandalay at 6:30 pm and arrive at Yangon at 12:45 pm the next day. The Yangon-Nay Pyi Taw special train will leave Yangon at 5:30 pm and will arrive at Nay Pyi Taw at 6:15 am the next day. The Yangon-Mawlamyine special train will leave Yangon at 6:30 am and arrive at Mawlamyine at 4 pm and the Mawlamyine-Yangon special train will depart from Mawlamyine at 8:30 am and arrive at Yangon 6 pm. The Yangon-Pyay special train will leave Yangon at 1 pm and arrive at Pyay at 8:55 pm and the Pyay-Yangon special train will depart from Pyay at 8 pm and arrive at Yangon at 4 am the next day. — Pwint Thitsa/MKKS

MYANMA Railways-MR will run special trains in addition to regular trains to ensure smooth transport for passengers and government staff during the Thingyan holidays.

On 7 April, the Yangon-Mandalay special train will depart from Yangon at 7:15 pm and arrive at Mandalay at 2:30 pm the next day. The Mandalay-Yangon special train will depart from Mandalay at 6:30 pm and arrive at 12:45 pm the next day. The Nay Pyi Taw-Yangon special train will depart from Yangon at 6:30 pm and arrive at Nay Pyi

Taw at 7:20 am the next day.

On 8 April, the Yangon-Mandalay special train will depart from Yangon at 7:15 pm and arrive at Mandalay at 2:30 pm the next day. The Mandalay-Yangon special train will depart from Mandalay at 6:30 pm and arrive at Yangon at 12:45 pm the next day. The Yangon-Mawlamyine special train will leave Yangon at 6:30 am and arrive at Mawlamyine at 4 pm and the Mawlamyine-Yangon special train will leave Mawlamyine at 8:30 am and arrive at Yangon at 6 pm. The Yangon-Pyay special train

Public Notice for Elimination of Violence

- Declaring themselves to be “for the people”, the so-called CRPH, NUG and PDF terrorist groups are lawlessly killing Buddhist monks, civil servants including school-teachers, and members of the general public, as well as looting and robbing.
- 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.
- 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.

CURRENT
AFFAIRS

Voices of excitement for upcoming Film Academy

For the coming Academy Award ceremony for 2019, 2020 and 2021, The Global New Light of Myanmar (GNLM) gathered some people's expectations about their favourite actors and actresses.

TWA/KZW

Ma Khet Mon Oo
(Dagon Myothit (North) Township)

I have to say that I haven't watched the academy award ceremony for three years. I have to say that it is because of Covid and some other reasons. I read in the news that the academy award ceremony will be held in Nay Pyi Taw. I want my favourite actors and actresses to win the awards and I hope they will.

Ma Zin Mar Aung
(South Okkalapa Township)

I want all the actors including Yan Aung to get academy. Among the actresses, I expect Shwe Hmone Yati and Wutt Hmone Shwe Yi would get the award. For senior actresses, I want May Than Nu and Soe Myat Thuza to win the academy.

Aye Thuzar Win
(Dagon Myothit (East) Township)

THERE is a large number of films to be chosen for the academy awards. I don't know how many films will be short-listed. In the past, the award ceremony was held once a year and so I remember the number of films I saw in a year. Now I don't remember how many.

Min Khant
(Pazundaung Township)



THE heartbeat for the academy awards is not as attractive as it was in previous years. I'm not much excited about it. I would be happy if my expectations for my favourite actors and actresses were rewarded.



Ma Khin Myo Nwe
(Thanlyin Township)

I want to pray for all actors and actresses, who are beloved by our public audience, to be presented with the academy awards. That's what we have all been waiting for for a long while. It would be much happier if film stars would get double or triple rewards as the event is meant for three-year awards. I do pray for all artistes including supporting performers.



Ko Lwin Min
(Dagon Myothit (South) Township)

I want all the deserving actors and actresses to get the academy awards. Screenplay and script awards also cost a lot of investment, and producers are suffering losses because of Covid, so if they win an Academy Award, it's worth it.

Weekly market update of dry groceries at Bayintnaung Wholesale Centre

BETWEEN 15 and 21 March 2023, the prices of rice, cooking oil, chickpea and black gram went up. Meanwhile, the sugar, Shan garlic, pigeon pea and mung bean saw slight price declines. The wholesale price of sugar was K3,050-3,080 per viss last month and now it was only K3,000-3,030 per viss on 21 March.

Garlic

On 21 March, the Shan Aungban garlic wholesale prices were K2,900-3,200-3,500-3,700 per viss depending on the varieties and qualities, whereas Kyukok garlic fetched K1,400 per viss.

Potato

On 21 March, the wholesale prices of potatoes in the Yangon market moved in the range between K1,300 and K1,850 per viss depending on producing areas.

Chilli pepper

On 21 March, the wholesale prices of chilli peppers were K10,000-11,000 per viss for Panye and Myarni long chilli pepper, K11,000-12,000 per viss for Moehtaungdimon, K13,000 per viss for Sinphyukyun and K13,000-14,000 per viss for Myitwa chilli pepper.

Rice

The rice prices were up about K2,000 per bag. The prices stood at K51,000-52,000 per bag for summer rice grown under the intercropping system and it was K54,000 per bag on 21 March. It was K61,000-K62,000 per bag for new short-mature summer rice (90 days) and K63,000-64,000 per bag for new Pawkywe rice. It was K70,000 for Pawsan rice from Bogale, K73,000 from Pyapon, K75,000 from Myaungmya and K85,000-87,000 from Shwebo.

Palm oil

The wholesale reference price of palm oil in Yangon for a week from 20 and 26 March is set at K4,570 and it shows a decline of K65 per viss to the previous week. On 21 March, the wholesale price was K6,900-7,000 per viss at Lanmadaw Nyaungpinlay Market while K7,100 per viss in the Myingyan market.

Bean

On 18 March, the black gram RC was priced at K2,049,000 per tonne and K2.4 million per tonne of pigeon pea. On 21 March, the black gram RC stood at K2,054,000 per tonne, SQ/RC at K2,334,000 per tonne and the pigeon pea at K2,397,000 per tonne. The mung bean (Khayan Shwewah Htatesa) prices dropped to K3,830 per viss and the chickpea reached K4,600/4,800 per viss. — TWA/KTZH

Two insober sailors drown while swimming

ON 20 March in Thanlyin Township, two sailors recently returned from abroad were drowned by swimming in a drunken state.

At 4:15 pm on that day, two men went swimming in the No 2 natural lake of Satkan, Bagosu Ward in Thanlyin Township and got drowned and the Shweyaung Twallatt Social Organization rushed to the scene to rescue them.

It is known that the deceased were sailors, and they were identified as Ko Pyae Sone, aged 32, from Dala Township and Ko Thurein, aged 40, from Insein Township. They were visiting their friend, Ko Ko Myat, who lives at the staff quarters in Thanlyin Township.

According to a resident, they drowned while swimming in the lake as they had been drinking, but it is not confirmed yet.

The body of, Ko Pyae Sone, one of the two drowning victims, was initially discovered at 5 pm on 20 March and was taken to the Public Hospital in Thanlyin Township. It is reported that the search for the remaining body of Ko Thurein is still ongoing. — TWA/CT



The search for the missing men is pictured.

LOCAL BUSINESS

YGEA requests members not to buy competitively following spot gold rate rally

YANGON Region Gold Entrepreneurs Association asked the members not to buy the gold competitively because of the surge in spot gold rates.

After the US bank went bankrupt, the gold price soared. Despite the gold gain in the global market, Myanmar's forex market sees no movement at all. Consequently, YGEA requested its members not to buy them competitively, tracking the upward trend in the gold spot price, as per YGEA's statement released on 20 March.

Additionally, it made a further request to control the market to stop volatile prices.

Afterwards, the YGEA called for the members to make gold transactions with only immediate payment and avoid verbal transactions over calls without having any physical stocks.

The YGEA is not bound to have any responsibilities for market manipulation in the unofficial markets. As a result of this, its members are asked to strictly ad-

here to the rules and regulations of the association while making gold transactions.

At present, the authorities concerned are attempting to deal with market abuse and inspecting and prosecuting market manipulation is being undertaken.

On 20 March, YGEA hiked the reference rate to over K2,358,600 per tical (0.578 ounce or 0.016 kilogramme) with the spot gold prices rising to US\$2,002 per ounce.

The gold rate moved slightly down to \$1,970 per ounce on 21 March, so the YGEA's reference rate decreased to K2,320,900 per tical.

Pure gold price is soaring at approximately K2,945,000 per tical in the unofficial domestic market, showing a price difference of K620,000 per tical compared with the YGEA's reference rate.

YGEA calculated the price depending on the Central Bank of Myanmar's reference exchange rate of K2,100, with some addition, while the US dollar is exchanged



Jewellery is pictured being displayed at the gold outlet in Yangon.

at K2,880 in the unofficial forex market.

The dollar exchange rate weighs on the market price and reference price of gold.

The soaring dollar exchanging at over K4,500 drove the pure gold price up to a record-high

of K3.7 million per tical in late August 2022.

For the gold price to decline, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation has been selling gold ingots under the competitive bidding system in Yangon, Mandalay and

Nay Pyi Taw.

With an aim at reducing gold prices, the YGEA and Mandalay Region Gold Entrepreneurs Association sold gold bullion supplied by the executive members and the members as well. – NN/EM

Onion prices in Yangon market remain high unlike other regions

ALTHOUGH approximately 200,000 visses of onions are daily supplied to Yangon markets, the price remained unchanged, unlike regions outside Yangon.

The prices moved in the range between K1,050 and K2,100 per viss depending on the producing areas (Seikphyu, Myittha), sizes and qualities on 21 March, with 180,000 visses of onions from various regions entering the Yangon market.

However, the bulk supply (180,000 visses) of onions to the Pakokku market scaled down the prices to around K1,000 per viss there, the market data of the Pakokku commodity depot showed.

On 19 March, about 108,080 visses of onions flowed into the Pakokku market. The maximum price was only K9,00-1,100 per viss.

This month, newly harvested monsoon onions and onion

seedlings entered the market. The price of onions in the first quarter of this year is higher than that of the year-ago period. This being so, the growers earn a handsome profit this year.

On 21 March 2022, the prices were K350-1,025 per viss in the Yangon market.

This year, the price doubled compared to that recorded in the corresponding period last year.

The onion growers are not happy with the prevailing prices this month in the second highest onion-producing country India as onions are priced at K230 per viss.

Myanmar's onion cultivation has an output of one million tonnes (600 million visses) per year. For the 2023-2024 financial year, Myanmar aims to achieve an export target of 150,000 tonnes of onions to its foreign trade partners, as per the official notification. India produces about 24 million tonnes of onions yearly. —TWA/EM



Myanmar's onion cultivation has an output of one million tonnes (600 million visses) per year. For the 2023-2024 financial year, Myanmar aims to achieve an export target of 150,000 tonnes of onions to its foreign trade partners.

Prices of fuel oil, gold and dollar on 21 March 2023

Fuel Oil Price (Yangon)

Octane 92	K1,965
Octane 95	K2,050
Diesel	K2,000
Premium Diesel	K2,080

All of the prices are based on per litre.

Gold Price

The reference price of high-purity gold set by YGEA	K2,320,900 per tical
High-purity gold in the gold market	K2,945,000 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	K2,865 to K2,880

The above prices may change from time to time.

Consume hygienic water but save it for perpetuity

AS A Myanmar saying goes: “travellers can understand the value of water bottles and slippers in summer”, the value of water is essential for all living beings including human beings for the needs of their daily life. It is because water is more important than food.

Among other significant international days commemorating the activities and benefits of the global people, World Water Day was designated by the United Nations General Assembly in 1993.

From then onward, global countries have been organizing World Water Day yearly for enabling people to notice and recognize the essential value of water in line with Sustainable Development Goal 6. In fact, World Water Day highlights the important role of fresh

World Water Day 2023 is about accelerating change to solve the water and sanitation crisis. Currently, dysfunction throughout the water cycle undermines progress on all major global issues, from health to hunger, gender equality to jobs, education to industry, and disasters to peace. No 6 point of the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) adopted by the United Nations as part of the 2030 Agenda mentions the promise that everyone would have safely managed water and sanitation by 2030.

World Water Day 2023 is about accelerating change to solve the water and sanitation crisis. Currently, dysfunction throughout the water cycle undermines progress on all major global issues, from health to hunger, gender equality to jobs, education to industry, and disasters to peace. No 6 point of the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) adopted by the United Nations as part of the 2030 Agenda mentions the promise that everyone would have safely managed water and sanitation by 2030.

Generally, anyone cannot ensure the impact of thirst in the morning, showing the important role of water in the daily life of human beings. Various sorts of jewellery items as well as the property may be valuable. But these cannot be compared to the invaluable role of water. So, all global people can consume water but save it.

The Unforgettable Gratitude 44 Years Ago

By Junior Thinn

IT HAPPENED to read the following paragraph on one of the internet pages mentioned by The Global New Light of Myanmar newspaper. It is as follows...

“Originally established on 12th January 1964 as “The Working People’s Daily”, the Global New Light of Myanmar is Myanmar’s oldest English daily. The Working People’s Daily changed its name to The New Light of Myanmar on 17 April 1993. The paper started printing 12 black and white pages in broadsheet size. On 1st January 2003, the size of the paper was reduced from broadsheet to tabloid still in black and white pages but the number of the pages increased to 16. The process of black and white printing was terminated on 17 October 2012 in Nay Pyi Taw. The new version of the New Light of Myanmar came out on 18 October 2012 with full-colour printing. Yangon saw the colour of the New Light of Myanmar on 5 December 2012 just in tabloid size. For about half a century, the paper was under the News and Periodicals Enterprise of the Ministry of Information. According to the changing situation of the country, it needs to change itself from the old style to a more attractive and people-oriented one. To meet this end, plans have been made to put the paper under a joint venture with the Global Direct Link Co Ltd with the support of Kyodo News Agency of Japan. Now, the paper is changed and its works are in full swing. It tries to expand its field to the Web. We invite your comments and opinions.”

It was just a brief history of the Paper but I happened to take notice of the words which I made bolded on the first line. With the association of those words, I remembered the year 1979 and the gratitude of The Working People’s Daily upon me. You might have been somewhat surprised by it, I think. At that moment, I was an English subject teacher in an affiliated high school in Kyaunggon Township, Ayeyawady Region.

When I graduated, the major I took in the university was Zoology. However, I was assigned to teach at the school was English. I thought there was no connection between the knowledge of Zoology and the teaching skills in English. I denied it at first but as there were only three teachers in the ninth and tenth grades and the other two teachers could not touch English at all, I was forced to accept the responsibility of teaching English.

There were 14 students in the tenth grade and about 35 students in the ninth grade. I was the class teacher in the ninth grade but I had to teach English subjects in both classes. By the way, I will have to tell you about my qualification in English for the matriculation examination. I passed the matric exam in 1973 with a mark of 41 in English. Moreover, I had to take English as a minor subject for only



“Originally established on 12th January 1964 as “The Working People’s Daily”, the Global New Light of Myanmar is Myanmar’s oldest English daily.

two years: the first and second years in the university at that moment. Here, you can guess my level of English after my graduation.

Let me continue revealing my status teaching English in the affiliated school. There were a lot of challenges for me in teaching English in those two classes during the first week.

Teaching English to Grade 9 and Grade 10 level students was a challenging task for an English teacher like me, as students at this level were often in the process of

developing their language skills and might have different learning styles and preferences. Some of the challenges that I faced when teaching Grade 9 and Grade 10 level students included:

1. Motivating Students: One of the biggest challenges for me was to motivate my students. To effectively teach English to Grade 9 and Grade 10 level students, teachers had to find ways to engage and inspire their students, whether through interesting and relevant content, interactive activities, or

creative assignments.

2. Addressing Varied Skill Levels: Students at Grade 9 and Grade 10 levels might have different skill levels when it came to English language proficiency. Some students might struggle with basic reading and writing, while others may be more advanced and require more challenging coursework. An English teacher like me had to be able to identify and address these varying skill levels and provide individualized instruction as needed.

3. Developing Critical Thinking Skills: At Grade 9 and Grade 10 levels, students were still developing their critical thinking skills. An English teacher like me had to be able to encourage students to think critically about literature and other materials, analyze and interpret texts, and draw their own conclusions.

4. Incorporating Technology: As it was not a digital age, it was not important for me to incorporate technology into their lessons. This could also be a challenge for some teachers including me who might not be familiar with the latest digital tools and technologies, I think.

5. Addressing Cultural Differences: Students in Grades 9 and 10 might come from diverse cultural backgrounds, which could make it challenging to address cultural differences and ensure that all students felt included and represented in the classroom.

6. Assessing Progress: Another challenge for me at Grade 9 and Grade 10 levels is assessing student progress. Teachers had to be able to accurately assess students’ writing and reading abilities, as well as provide constructive feedback and suggestions for

improvement.

Teaching English to Grade 9 and Grade 10-level students could be a challenge with so many things but it was a rewarding experience. With the right approach, I could help their students develop a love for literature, improve their language skills, and prepare for future academic and professional success, I thought. However, among those challenges, I realized that one would surely be the most important difficulty for me. It was nothing but a lack of skill in grammatical functions of my own. I also realized that it was the first and foremost challenge that I would have to settle. Therefore, I seek the best ways to solve it.

Not long after, a thought dawned upon me. I remembered the English newspaper viz. “The Working People’s Daily” which my dad read daily while he was in our house. At that moment, I often surfed the pages and I happened to take notice of the Sunday Supplement every Sunday which carried grammar explanations for the middle and high school level students by C.T.O. (later I became aware that those initials referred to Sayagyi (U) Chit Thein Oo). These explanations were very

useful for my self-study because they are in Myanmar and English. I thought the Sunday Supplement would also give a lot of assistance to my students in Grades 9 and 10.

Therefore, I made an order of weekly Sunday Supplements to the newspaper agent for my students and myself. It made me much exhausted because I had to study the explanations of grammatical functions in the Sunday Supplements in advance at night with a faintly lighted oil lamp. Then, I had to arrange for my students to attend my special classes daily before school began. I put up my plan to my headmaster and he agreed with it easily. I started my special academic and professional success, I thought. However, among those challenges, I realized that one would surely be the most important difficulty for me. It was nothing but a lack of skill in grammatical functions of my own. I also realized that it was the first and foremost challenge that I would have to settle. Therefore, I seek the best ways to solve it.

The school was situated in a rural area and the students obeyed me. I was sure the special classes made my students many benefits. More surely, my English got improved through regular studies in grammatical functions explained by C.T.O. In the following year, I could teach English to the students of Grade 9 and Grade 10 very well.

I have been familiar with The Global New Light of Myanmar newspaper since it was named “The Working People’s Daily”. I will never forget the gratitude of Sayagyi C.T.O. and the Sunday Supplement of the paper as they conveyed to me, who was once very poor in English, on the way which has made me much improvement and fluency in the English language.

Study: Pregnancy-related mortality rising due to COVID among reproductive-age women



FOLLOWING the emergence of the highly contagious Delta and Omicron COVID-19 variants, pregnancy-related mortality rates in the United States increased faster in 2021 than the previous year, according to a new study (UMD).

The study by Boston Uni-

CDC recommends COVID-19 vaccines for everyone ages six months and older, including people who are pregnant, breastfeeding, trying to get pregnant now, or might become pregnant in the future and getting boosters, if eligible.
PHOTO: ANI

versity School of Public Health (BUSPH) and the University of Maryland School of Public Health.

Published in the journal Obstetrics & Gynecology, the findings on pregnancy-related mortality are consistent with rising COVID-19-related death rates among reproductive-age women, and the results follow the team’s previously published research that also revealed alarming spikes in maternal mortality rates during the first year of the pandemic in 2020.

The staggering data captures the worsening burden of pregnancy-related mortality in the United States during the pandemic, which includes deaths during pregnancy

through one year postpartum.

Mortality rates increased most among racial and ethnic minorities, and the study adds COVID context to a new report from the National Centre for Health Statistics, which shows that maternal mortality rates in the United States increased by 38 per cent in 2021 compared to 2020 rates.

The new study found that pregnancy-related deaths ratios rose to 45.5 deaths per 100,000 live births overall in 2021—and as high as 56.9 deaths per 100,000 live births during the third quarter of 2021—compared to 36.7 deaths per 100,000 live births in 2020, and 30.3 deaths per 100,000 live births

pre-COVID.

The Delta variant began rippling through the country in June 2021, before the even-more-contagious Omicron variant took hold in late fall. Notably, the study found that the largest relative increases in pregnancy-related deaths between 2020 and 2021 were among Hispanic people (at 34 per cent) and especially American Indian/Alaska Native (AIAN) people (at 104 per cent).

Pregnancy-related mortality ratios in 2021 were highest for AIAN (161 deaths per 100,000 live births) and Black (98 deaths per 100,000 live births) pregnant people. The proportion of pregnan-

cy-related deaths with a COVID diagnosis was highest among Hispanic (at 43 per cent) and AIAN (at 36 per cent) people.

“The pandemic exacerbated what were already poor maternal outcomes in the US by deepening disparities by race/ethnicity and place of residence resulting in maternal death rates not seen since 1964,” says study senior author Dr Eugene Declercq, professor of community health sciences at BUSPH. “In particular, the extraordinary increases among American Indian and Alaska Natives in 2021 deserves greater attention.”

SOURCE: ANI

TECH/SCI/ENVIRON WORLD

Scientists make 'disturbing' find on remote island: plastic rocks

THERE are few places on Earth as isolated as Trindade island, a volcanic outcrop a three- to four-day boat trip off the coast of Brazil.

So geologist Fernanda Avelar Santos was startled to find an unsettling sign of human impact on the otherwise untouched landscape: rocks formed from the glut of plastic pollution floating in the ocean.

Santos first found the plastic rocks in 2019, when she travelled to the island to research her doctoral thesis on a completely different topic — landslides, erosion and other "geological risks".

She was working near a protected nature reserve known as Turtle Beach, the world's largest breeding ground for the endangered green turtle, when she came across a large outcrop of the peculiar-looking blue-green rocks.

Intrigued, she took some back to her lab after her two-month expedition.

Analyzing them, she and her team identified the specimens as a new kind of geological formation, merging the materials and processes the Earth has used to



This handout picture released by the Parana Federal University (UFPR) shows "plastic rocks" found at the Trindade Island, Espirito Santo state, Brazil, on 2 September 2022, that are part of a scientific research handled by scientists of the UFPR. **PHOTO: FERNANDA AVELAR / PARANA FEDERAL UNIVERSITY / AFP**

form rocks for billions of years with a new ingredient: plastic trash.

"We concluded that human beings are now acting as a geological agent, influencing processes that were previously completely natural, like rock formation," she told AFP.

"It fits in with the idea of the Anthropocene, which scientists are talking about a lot these days: the geological era of human beings influencing the planet's natural processes. This type of rock-like plastic will be preserved in the geological record and mark the Anthropocene."

Island paradise

The finding left her "disturbed" and "upset," said Santos, a professor at the Federal University of Parana, in southern Brazil.

She describes Trindade as "like paradise": a beautiful tropical island whose remoteness has made it a refuge for all sorts of species — sea birds, fish found only there, nearly extinct crabs, the green turtle.

The only human presence on the South Atlantic island is a small Brazilian military base and a scientific research centre.

"It's marvellous," she said.

"So it was all the more horrifying to find something like this — and on one of the most ecologically important beaches."

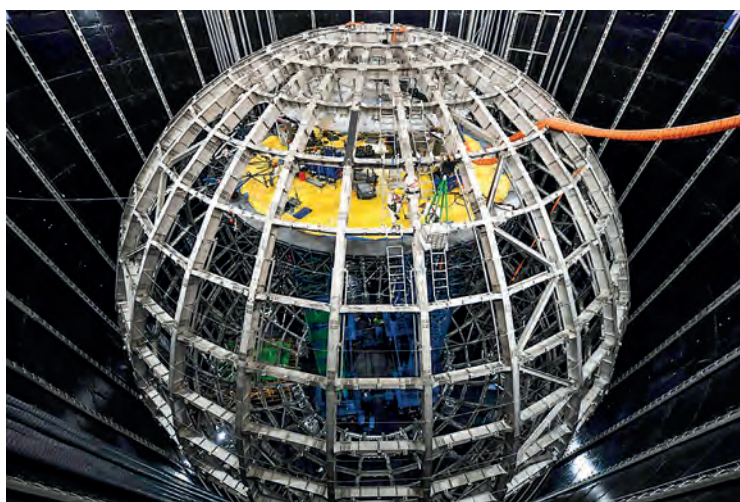
She returned to the island late last year to collect more specimens and dig deeper into the phenomenon. — AFP

Scientists mull building underwater telescope to detect cosmic rays

CHINESE scientists are working on a blueprint for a gigantic telescope to observe neutrinos, one of the most abundant particles in the universe, from deep within the seas or lakes.

The facility, designed to have a roughly 30-cubic-kilometre volume, will be submerged to a depth of more than one kilometre, said Chen Mingjun, lead researcher of the project at the Institute of High Energy Physics under the Chinese Academy of Sciences.

The aim of building such an underwater telescope is to detect high-energy neutrinos. The particles are thought to be produced outside the solar system. According to Chen, detecting the neutrinos that pass through the telescope will contribute to solving a century-old scientific puzzle of the origin of cosmic rays. In the early 1900s, scientists discovered



An underground neutrino observatory is under construction in Jiangmen, south China's Guangdong Province, 2 September 2022. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

that Earth is constantly bombarded by energetic particles from outer space called cosmic rays. In 2021, China's Large High-Altitude Air Shower Observatory (LHAASO) detected 12 sources of gamma rays that are thought to come

from the same sources as cosmic rays. Chen said one popular hypothesis is that the high-energy neutrinos and gamma rays are potentially produced simultaneously when high-energy cosmic rays originate. — Xinhua

How AI 'revolution' is shaking up journalism



Experts are divided whether AI will ever fully replace journalists, but widely expect it handle more mundane tasks. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

JOURNALISTS had fun last year asking the shiny new AI chatbot ChatGPT to write their columns, most concluding that the bot was not good enough to take their jobs. Yet.

But many commentators believe journalism is on the cusp of a revolution where mastery of algorithms and AI tools that generate content will be a key battleground.

The technology news site CNET perhaps heralded the way forward when it quietly deployed an AI programme last year to write some of its listicles.

It was later forced to issue several corrections after another news site noticed that the bot had made mistakes, some of them serious.

But CNET's parent company later announced job cuts that

included editorial staff — though executives denied AI was behind the layoffs.

The German publishing behemoth Axel Springer, owner of Politico and German tabloid Bild among other titles, has been less coy.

"Artificial intelligence has the potential to make independent journalism better than it ever was — or simply replace it," the group's boss Mathias Doepfner told staff last month.

Hailing bots like ChatGPT as a "revolution" for the industry, he announced a restructuring that would see "significant reductions" in production and proofreading. Both companies are pushing AI as a tool to support journalists, and can point to recent developments in the industry. — AFP

Australian workers feel exhausted, unprepared for AI-driven future: report

A new report has found that Australian workers are exhausted, unwell, at risk of quitting and largely unprepared for future workplace challenges driven by automation and artificial intelligence (AI).

The report, released on Monday by the University of Melbourne, involved 1,400 Australian workers fielded in June 2022, who were asked about their experiences at work since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. According to the report, 38 per cent of the workers said they

suffered a chronic illness, higher than the 32 per cent found in the most recent Australian census in 2021, while discrimination remains pervasive at work, particularly against women, chronic illnesses patients, caregivers and indigenous groups.

At the height of the pandemic between 2020 and 2021, one in five Australians felt "depressed and anxious" all the time, which captured "a significant increase" in the proportion of workers reporting mental stress. — Xinhua

HEALTH/PANDEMIC WORLD

New study shows COVID infection weakens immune-cell response to vaccination

THE magnitude and quality of a key immune cell's response to vaccination with two doses of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine were considerably lower in people with prior SARS-CoV-2 infection compared to people without prior infection, according to a new study published on Monday.

The study, co-funded by the US National Institutes of Health, also found the level of this key immune cell that targets the SARS-CoV-2 spike protein was substantially lower in unvaccinated people with COVID-19 than in vaccinated people who had never been infected. The study, published in the

journal Immunity, suggests that the virus damages important immune-cell response. The new findings highlight the need to develop vaccination strategies to specifically boost antiviral CD8+ T cell responses in people previously infected with SARS-CoV-2, according to the researchers. — Xinhua



A health worker administers a COVID-19 vaccine shot to a resident in Los Angeles, the United States, on 17 December 2022. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

Malawi says cholera crisis risks worsening after Cyclone Freddy

MALAWI faces increased risk of a surge in cholera cases following the devastation caused by Cyclone Freddy that has destroyed water systems and toilets, the health ministry warned Monday.

The country was already battling its deadliest cholera outbreak on record when the storm landed last week, causing mudslides and flooding, killing 476 and displacing nearly half a million.



This aerial view shows the path of Cyclone Freddy-induced mudslides in the district of Mulanje, Malawi, on 18 March 2023. **PHOTO: AFP**

The cholera outbreak, which began last year, infected more than 30,600 people and claimed more than 1,700 deaths. "With the floods, people's toilets have been washed away and most people have no access to safe drinking water," health services director Storn Kabulu-zu told AFP, saying the country faced an "immediate danger" of surging cholera cases. After a record-breaking rampage, the storm caused 579 deaths in three southern African countries including Mozambique and Madagascar. Malawi was hit the hardest as Freddy triggered floods and mudslides that swept away homes, roads and bridges — also causing massive damage to the country's water infrastructure. — AFP

Viet Nam aims to bolster local medicine production

AS Viet Nam's pharmaceutical market is expected to swell to 16.1 billion US dollars in the next three years, the government has aimed for domestic medicine production of up to 80 per cent by 2030, Vietnam News reported on Tuesday. In a strategy aimed at cutting reliance on imports and boosting local pharmaceutical industry, the Vietnamese government will prioritize the production of more advanced technology products, urging domestic companies to focus on research and development. The Ministry of Health estimated the market at 6.9 billion dollars in 2021, while BMI Research forecast the market to reach 16.1 billion dollars in 2026 with a compound annual growth rate of 11 per cent.

However, domestic companies still have to face tough competition from foreign investors, said Nguyen Dieu Ha, general secretary and office chief of the Viet Nam Pharmaceutical Companies Association. Ha pointed out that locally-manufactured drugs accounted for 46 per cent of resident spending on medicine during 2015-2021, significantly up from 17 per cent in the 2001-2011 period, but well below the world average. Poor research and development investments due to a lack of skilled personnel, technical knowledge and adequate infrastructure have caused the local market to depend on drug importing, said Le Van Truyen, former deputy health minister. — Xinhua

Omicron subvariant XBB.1.5 accounts for over 90% new COVID-19 cases in US

THE highly transmissible Omicron subvariant XBB.1.5 now accounts for over 90 per cent of new COVID-19 cases reported in the United States, according to the latest estimates by the US Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). XBB.1.5 was estimated to account for 90.2 per cent of all COVID-19 cases in the country in the latest week ending 18 March. It was up from 88.8 per cent a week before and 86.3 per cent two weeks prior, CDC data showed. The prevalence

of XBB.1.5 has kept increasing since late last year. The second most prevalent strain BQ.1.1 only accounted for 3.5 per cent in the latest week. The CDC first started tracking XBB.1.5 in November last year, when it accounted for less than one per cent of cases nationwide. Since then, the strain is spreading quickly in the United States. While XBB.1.5 is spreading easier, scientists said it does not seem to cause more severe disease. — Xinhua

Across China: TCM cooperation helps strengthen Sino-Pakistani relationship

THE cooperation between China and Pakistan in the field of traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) has helped strengthen bilateral relations in recent years. At the beginning of 2023, health authorities of Sindh Province in Pakistan initiated a program, which proposed that China assist the country in training doctors proficient in the field of TCM. According to the project organizer, the Sino-Pakistan Cooperation Centre for Traditional Chinese Medicine (SPCCTCM) in central China's Hunan Prov-

ince, the Pakistani side will select the first batch of ten young doctors and send them to the centre to carry out a two-year TCM theory learning and clinical practice. After the training, they will return to their hometown to carry out TCM diagnosis and treatment. SPCCTCM was jointly established by the Hunan University of Medicine and the International Centre for Chemical and Biological Sciences of the University of Karachi in Pakistan in late 2020, aiming to build an international cooperation centre integrating healthcare,

TCM education and training, scientific research, and industrial cooperation. "This is the preliminary exploration of SPCCTCM in the training of Pakistani TCM talents," said He Qinghu, co-director of SPCCTCM and president of the Hunan University of Medicine. He said the training project, with support from both the Chinese and Pakistani governments, will unite TCM colleges and hospitals to train talents with a certain level of TCM theory and clinical practice skills for Pakistan. — Xinhua

Credit Suisse tells Hong Kong clients to ‘embrace new reality’

DAYS after it was rescued in an emergency buyout, Credit Suisse gathered hundreds of clients in an upscale Hong Kong hotel on Tuesday for a glitzy investment conference where they were told to “embrace the new reality”.

Executives at the event from the troubled Swiss lender were eager to offer reassurances, even as details of the takeover by Swiss giant UBS remained unclear and global markets were buffeted by fears for the banking industry.

UBS agreed on Sunday to a government-brokered deal to take over Credit Suisse for \$3 billion Swiss francs (\$3.25 billion), a move authorities say was vital to prevent further economic turmoil.

Chairman Axel Lehmann

and CEO Ulrich Korner cancelled their scheduled appearances at the event in the Chinese finance hub.

That left Head of Global Equities Neil Hosie to welcome corporate clients at Hong Kong’s Conrad Hotel, overlooking the city’s famed Victoria Harbour.

A Credit Suisse executive at the event told AFP Hosie did not speak about company prospects during his closed-door welcome speech and took no questions.

A brief statement was released to the media in which Hosie said: “The (conference) represents Credit Suisse at its best.”

“For 26 years, it has been our privilege to present powerful perspectives on the themes that matter most.” — AFP



Promotional material for Credit Suisse is displayed as people attend the Asian Investment Conference in Hong Kong on 21 March 2023. PHOTO: AFP

Sri Lanka bailout conditional on tackling corruption: IMF

SRI Lanka must not allow entrenched corruption to undermine a bailout for its bankrupt economy, the IMF said Tuesday after signing off on a \$3 billion loan for the crisis-hit nation.

The International Monetary Fund approved its long-delayed rescue programme on Monday after China, the South Asian island’s biggest bilateral lender, offered debt relief assurances.

But it said the rescue was conditional on tackling the deep-rooted culture of graft and government mismanagement blamed for tipping Sri Lanka

into an unprecedented economic crisis last year.

Peter Breuer, the IMF mission chief in Sri Lanka, said the government had agreed to enact tougher anti-corruption laws within months during the bailout negotiations.

“We emphasize the importance of anti-corruption and governance reforms as a central pillar of the programme,” he told reporters.

President Ranil Wickremesinghe said the latest rescue would allow him to ease a range of import bans imposed since March 2020 to shore up foreign

exchange reserves.

“The world has accepted that Sri Lanka is no longer a bankrupt country,” he said in a national address. “Normal transactions can resume.”

Sri Lanka’s tea-and-tourism economy is no stranger to crisis, and Monday’s bailout is the 17th loan facility negotiated with the IMF since 1965.

Its last programme, agreed in 2016, was scuttled by Colombo after a change of government three years later.

“Every few years, we seem to go back to the Fund because we don’t seem to be able to put our house in order,” Murtaza Jafferjee of the Colombo-based Advocata Institute think-tank told AFP.

“But one is hopeful that because the crash was so steep this time, that there will be an awakening and there will be permanent changes.”

Sri Lanka once again went to the Washington-based lender of last resort shortly before defaulting on its \$46 billion foreign debt last April.

A critical shortage of foreign exchange had left the island nation unable to finance even the most essential imports, causing severe food and fuel shortages. — AFP



A man walks inside Colombo Stock Exchange (CSE) in Colombo on 21 March 2023. Sri Lanka must not allow entrenched corruption to undermine a bailout for its bankrupt economy, the IMF said on 21 March 2023 after signing off on a \$3 billion loan for the crisis-hit nation. PHOTO: AFP

Malaysia’s export outlook remains uncertain amid sluggish global demand, say economists

ECONOMISTS see Malaysia’s export outlook will remain uncertain due to sluggish global demand.

Affin Hwang Investment Bank said in a note that in the near term, it believes global macroeconomic uncertainties will continue to weigh on trade activities, which pose downside risks to Malaysia’s overseas demand, especially with negative events regarding the banking system in the United States.

Due to elevated inflation rate in major economies, it be-

lieves that the global financial condition will continue to tighten but at a slower pace in the short term.

Coupled with the prolonged Russia-Ukraine conflict, it said the risks from external factors tilted to the downside.

Taking into consideration the weaker-than-expected export growth, it is maintaining its projection that Malaysia’s real gross domestic product (GDP) growth will likely slow to 3.7 per cent in 2023 from 8.7 per cent in 2022. — Xinhua

EU raids energy drink maker Red Bull in antitrust probe

EU antitrust investigators have raided energy drink maker Red Bull over suspicions it abused its dominance in the wildly popular market, officials said Tuesday.

Red Bull said EU Commission officials “visited our premises” on Monday.

“We will, of course, work with them on all matters that concern them,” the company said in a statement, declining

to comment further.

The EU’s executive arm said earlier its teams carried out unannounced inspections Monday “at the premises of a company active in the energy drinks sector in various member states”. It did not name the company nor say in which countries investigators — joined by competition authorities of each member state affected — had conducted raids. — AFP

Stocks rally
as panic
eases over
banks

STOCK markets jumped Tuesday, gradually recovering from last week's plunge, as shares in banks rallied on easing fears of a fresh financial crisis.

Panic across markets eased after authorities in leading economies pledged support for depositors and troubled lenders following the recent collapse of Silicon Valley Bank and Signature Bank in the United States. Still, the takeover of troubled Credit Suisse by Swiss rival bank UBS for \$3.25 billion fanned concerns about what could be next on the chopping block, and analysts warned it was too early to say that the crisis was over.

"Despite the apparent relief, uncertainty is still in charge," noted Neil Wilson, chief market analyst at Finalto. — AFP

Amazon to lay
off 9,000 more
employees

AMAZON announced on Monday the company's plan to cut 9,000 more jobs in a new round of layoffs. Amazon CEO Andy Jassy said in a blog post Monday morning that the cuts will mostly impact those in the company's cloud services, advertising and Twitch units.

The news came just a couple of months after Amazon announced a cut of 18,000 jobs. "Some may ask why we didn't announce these role reductions with the ones we announced a couple of months ago," Jassy wrote. "The short answer is that not all of the teams were done with their analyses in the late fall." — Xinhua

Firm creates app for overseas buyers to access
Japan's fish catch

A Japanese company has tapped into growing demand in Asia for fresh seafood, allowing overseas customers to use a smart-phone app to order freshly caught fish from ports across Japan and ensuring hassle-free delivery.

Uuuu, Inc, acting as an intermediary between sellers and buyers, recently delivered red seabream to Thailand in an initial foray into the global market, the Hiroshima-based company said in a press release.

Overseas importers are able to utilize the app

"Uuuu importer" to look through listed pictures of seafood from numerous ports in Japan as well as obtain information on the fishing method, landing date and delivery date, simplifying a procedure that often requires phone calls.

The fish will be delivered after Uuuu arranges the dates and steps for transport with a third-party exporter.

Importers are able to buy fresh fish from around 100 ports across Japan after obtaining daily information regarding the type



Supplied photo shows red seabream exported to Thailand. (Photo courtesy of Uuuu, Inc). PHOTO: KYODO

of seafood available and its quantity. Uuuu is also exploring new production areas.

Customers are additionally able to request certain types of fish not listed on the app, the company said.

Japan's seafood exports last year rose to a record 387.3 billion yen (\$2.91 billion), up 28.5 per cent from a year earlier, supported by the yen's weakness as well as an increase in people flocking to restaurants amid an easing of COVID-19 restrictions. — Kyodo

US to allow Japan-provided materials in EV tax
credit scheme



Photo shows an electrified vehicle and a charging station in Santa Clara, California, on 17 March 2023. PHOTO: KYODO

WASHINGTON and Tokyo are preparing to make Japanese vehicles eligible for tax credits in a US initiative for electrified vehicles that use critical minerals from the United States or countries that it has free trade agreements with, sources familiar with the talks said Tuesday.

Under the changes, the United States would relax the rules to allow EVs to contain key miner-

als provided by Japanese companies, such as parts makers, despite Tokyo not holding a free trade agreement with Washington.

Promoting EV uptake is a key US government policy. As part of its Inflation Reduction Act passed in August 2022, it offers tax credits of up to \$7,500 on purchases of electrified vehicles that come off North American assembly lines and in which a certain

amount of battery-critical minerals are sourced or processed domestically or from free trade agreement countries.

Japanese companies play a major role in processing minerals sought for electric vehicle production, and both governments have decided that easing requirements will be mutually beneficial, the sources said. — Kyodo

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V TI2 APPLE VOY.NO. (015E)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V TI2 APPLE VOY.NO. (015E)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **22-3-2023** 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:

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Public Announcement

HEMASCORP (PRIVATE) LIMITED, incorporated in Singapore has sold its stake in HEMAS MANDALAR PHARMACEUTICALS LIMITED, incorporated at No. 113, Waizayanthar Garden Housing, Yeikthar 4th Street, Thingangyun Township, Yangon, Republic of the Union of Myanmar, to a local Myanmar entity since April 1, 2021 and has exited from being a shareholder.

HEMASCORP (PRIVATE) LIMITED no longer involves in HEMAS MANDALAR PHARMACEUTICALS LIMITED, and HEMAS MANDALAR PHARMACEUTICALS LIMITED is currently seeking regulatory measures to change the company name as HEALTHCARE MANDALAR PHARMACEUTICALS AND LABORATORY COMPANY LIMITED. Therefore, since April 1, 2021, any activity of HEMAS MANDALAR PHARMACEUTICALS LIMITED does not, in any way, relate to or attributable to HEMASCORP (PRIVATE) LIMITED or to the "HEMAS" brand.

For HEMASCORP (PRIVATE) LIMITED

U Sa Sa Nyunt	Daw May Nandar Myint
LLB, LLM, MRes (Law), PhD	LLB, LLM
Higher Grade Pleader (License No. 37265)	Higher Grade Pleader (License No. 52958)

KST Legal

No. 1611 & 1622, 16th Floor, LeBooster (CCI France) Office Service, Office Tower 2, Times City, between Hantharwaddy and KyunTaw Street, Kamaryut Township, Yangon.

Mobile – 09 765 443 761

Xi says China will continue to play constructive role in promoting political settlement of Ukraine crisis



Chinese President Xi Jinping meets Russian President Vladimir Putin at the Kremlin on his arrival in Moscow, Russia, 20 March 2023. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

CHINA stands ready to continue to play a constructive role in promoting the political settlement of the Ukraine crisis, Chinese President Xi Jinping said here on Monday.

Xi made the remarks while having an in-depth exchange of views on the Ukrainian issue with his Russian counterpart, Vladimir Putin.

Xi stressed that, on the Ukraine issue, voices for peace and rationality are building. Most countries support easing tensions, stand for peace talks, and are against adding fuel

to the fire. A review of history shows that conflicts in the end have to be settled through dialogue and negotiation.

China released a document on its position on the Ukraine crisis, advocating the political settlement of the crisis and rejecting the Cold War mentality and unilateral sanctions, said Xi.

China believes that the more difficulties there are, the greater the need to keep space for peace. The more acute the problem is, the more important it is not to give up efforts for dialogue. China will continue to

play a constructive role in promoting the political settlement of the Ukraine issue, said Xi.

For his part, Putin said that Russia appreciates China for consistently upholding an impartial, objective, and balanced position and standing for fairness and justice on major international issues. Russia has carefully studied China's position paper on the political settlement of the Ukraine issue and is open to talks for peace. Russia welcomes China to play a constructive role in this regard. — Xinhua

London police force racist, misogynist and homophobic: report

THE London police forces, Britain's largest, is institutionally racist, misogynist and homophobic and could still be employing rapists and murderers, a scathing independent review said Tuesday.

The report, written by government official Louise Casey, was commissioned after the kidnap, rape and murder two years ago of a London woman, Sarah Everard, by serving Metropolitan Police officer Wayne Couzens.

But since then, another officer, David Carrick, was also jailed for life for dozens of rapes and sexual assaults stretching back two decades, and several other Met scandals have emerged.

Casey found the shocking

crimes had been perpetrated in a pervasive culture of "deep-seated homophobia" and predatory behaviour, in which female officers and staff "routinely face sexism and misogyny".

Officers from minorities suffer widespread bullying, while violence against women and girls in the majority white and male force has not been treated seriously enough, she concluded.

Asked if there could be more officers like Couzens and Carrick -- who at one point served in the same armed unit protecting MPs and foreign diplomats -- Casey said: "I cannot sufficiently assure you that that is not the case." —AFP

Macron defiant as anger smoulders over French pension reform

FRENCH President Emmanuel Macron told allies Tuesday he plans to keep the government in place and not dissolve parliament, defying opponents and widespread public anger over his pensions reform.

Police arrested another 234 people in Paris on Monday night during clashes between protesters and security forces, with several groups burning trash bins, bikes and other objects.

The latest unrest came after Macron's centrist government narrowly survived two no-confidence motions in parliament on Monday, meaning the legislation to raise the retirement age from 62 to 64 looks almost certain to enter into force.

But anger over the government's decision to invoke a notorious constitutional power to ram the reform through



Railway workers hold a banner reading "Macron and his laws : out !" during a demonstration against the law reforming the pension system outside Montpellier railway station in Montpellier, southern France, on 21 March 2023. **PHOTO: AFP**

parliament without a vote last week has dismayed many ruling party MPs and caused fury on the streets.

"The reform is adopted but

it is not seen as legitimate in the eyes of French people," political scientist Jerome Jaffre told France Inter radio on Tuesday. — AFP



Greek train drivers seek safety assurances ahead of relaunch

GREEK train drivers on Tuesday called for safety assurances as officials prepared to restart the

Youths lay flowers on the tracks at the railway station of Rapsani, north Greece, on 5 March 2023 during a commemorative gathering for the victims of a deadly train crash which killed 57. **PHOTO: AFP**

country's rail network after last month's collision that killed 57 people.

In a statement to services operator Hellenic Train, the drivers' union PEPE called for better monitoring of rail crossings, improved tunnel lighting, bridge inspection data and the removal of debris and overgrown vegeta-

tion from tracks.

"We believe that unless these problems are solved, services cannot resume in these areas," the union said. The government has said rail services that were suspended after the 28 February tragedy will be gradually restored from Wednesday until mid-April. — AFP

Thailand to hold general election on 14 May

THAILAND plans to hold a general election on 14 May, the country’s Election Commission announced on Tuesday, a day after the House of Representatives was dissolved.

Political parties must submit their prime ministerial nominees between 4 and 7 April, Election Commission Chairman Ittiporn Boonpracong told a news conference.

In a statement, the Election Commission also announced the application schedule for 500

House of Representatives candidates.

Under the two-ballot system, more than 52 million eligible voters will elect 500 members of the House of Representatives.

Thailand’s King Maha Vajiralongkorn Phra Vajiraklaoc-haoyuhua on Monday endorsed a decree to dissolve the House of Representatives which was formed after the 2019 general election, with a four-year term scheduled to end on 23 March. — Xinhua



(FILES) In this file photo taken on 27 May 2020 members of the Thai parliament attend a session in the newly inaugurated parliament building in Bangkok. **PHOTO: AFP**

NEWS IN BRIEF

India strongly protests vandalization of its consulate in San Francisco

INDIA on Monday strongly protested with the US against the vandalization of the property of its consulate in San Francisco, said the Ministry of External Affairs.

Several people, seen as separatists demanding Khalistan as a separate state from India, had attacked India’s consulate general, media reports said.

“The US government was reminded of its basic obligation to protect and secure diplomatic representation. It was asked to take appropriate measures to prevent recurrence of such incidents,” said an official statement released by the ministry. — Xinhua

Indonesian students rally against Japan’s plan to dispose nuclear wastewater

INDONESIAN students rallied on Tuesday against Japan’s controversial plan to dump its nuclear wastewater into the sea.

They delivered statements while clad in anti-radioactive costumes and holding up posters depicting perilous nuclear waste in front of the Japanese Embassy in Jakarta.

“In the name of humanity, we reject the plan to dump 1.25 million tonnes of nuclear wastewater into the Pacific Ocean,” said Kevin Sidabutar, coordinator of the organization named Environmental Lovers Student Participation. — Xinhua

Strong quake has people fleeing homes in Afghanistan, Pakistan

A strong earthquake lasting for at least 30 seconds was felt across much of Afghanistan, Pakistan and parts of India Tuesday night, with the United States Geological Survey putting the magnitude at 6.5.

“It was a terrifying tremor. I had never felt such a tremor before in my life,” Khatera, 50, a resident of Kabul, told AFP after rushing out of her fifth-storey apartment in the capital.

The USGS said the quake was centred near Jurm in north-eastern Afghanistan and had a depth of 187 kilometres (116 miles).

The region is frequently hit by earthquakes — especially in the Hindu Kush mountain range, which lies near the junction of the Eurasian and Indian tectonic plates.

Two people, including a child, were killed in Laghman province,



Hotel guests gather outside their hotel after an earthquake in Amritsar on 21 March 2023. **PHOTO: AFP**

Shafiullah Rahimi, spokesman for Afghanistan’s Ministry of Natural Disaster Management, told AFP.

Government spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said health centres across the country had been put on high alert.

Noor Mohammad Hanifi, a shopkeeper in Kabul, set up tents in a street for his family to spend

the night in.

“Nobody dares to go inside their homes,” Hanifi told AFP as his family, cloaked in blankets, took shelter. Hanafi said he felt dizzy when the quake hit as he had just returned from a long trip.

“But when I heard the doors and windows shaking I realized it was an earthquake.” — AFP



Photo shows the exterior of the renovated Hiroshima City Museum of Contemporary Art on 17 March 2023. **PHOTO: KYODO**

Hiroshima modern art museum reopens after renovations

A modern art museum designed by world-famous architect Kisho Kurokawa in the atomic-bombed city of Hiroshima has reopened after around two years of major renovations.

The Hiroshima City Museum of Contemporary Art opened in 1989 as Japan’s first publicly run modern art museum and has exhibited many artworks

on the themes of atomic bombs and peace, owing to its location in a city that endured an atomic bombing in the final days of World War II in 1945.

Following the large-scale renovations and repairs to the structure’s interior and exterior, the building, which reopened Saturday, is now equipped with barrier-free bathrooms and

nursing rooms to make the museum more accessible.

Among other changes to the facility, which closed in December 2020 due to aging, its aluminum roof has been replaced, and its exhibits are now illuminated with LED lights.

A cafe has also been added to the entrance, along with a multi-purpose space. — Kyodo

GLOBAL AFFAIRS

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SPORT



Myanmar national team players are seen in their training sessions. PHOTO: MFF

Myanmar team prepares for int’l friendly matches in India

MYANMAR national team has started training for the international friendly matches to be played in India from 22 to 28 March.

The new Myanmar national team head coach, Feichtenbeiner, has selected 25 players for the tournament, and they have been practising since the evening of 18 March.

The Myanmar national team previously selected 24 players, but Shan United’s attacking midfielder Myat Kaung

Khant was chosen as a reinforcement.

Head coach Feichtenbeiner, Assistant Coaches Lorenz, U Myo Hlaing Win, U Zaw Win Htun, U Maung Maung Myint, Goal Coaches Mike Andrey, and U Ko Ko Aung will handle the team during the training trip.

Goalkeepers Kyaw Zin Phyoo, San Satt Naing, and Pyae Phyoo Thu, defenders Hein Phyoo Win, Nanda Kyaw, Hein Thiha Zaw, Ye Min Thu, Zwe Min Khant, Thet Hein Soe, Hein Zeyyar Lin, Thi-

ha Htet Aung, midfielders Wai Lin Aung, Yan Naing Oo, Zaw Win Thein, Kyaw Min Oo, Lin Htet Soe, Myat Kaung Khant, Lwin Moe Aung, Maung Maung Lin, Hein Htet Aung, and Nyein Chan Aung, forward players Win Naing Tun, Aung Kaung Marn, Than Paing, and Aung Thu are included in the Myanmar squad.

Team Myanmar will play friendly matches against Kyrgyzstan on 22 March, and India team on 25 March. — Ko Nyi Lay/KZL

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.

Mbappe to become new France captain

KYLIAN Mbappe will take over as captain of France after Hugo Lloris stepped down following the World Cup final defeat to Argentina, a source close to the team has told AFP.

Paris Saint-Germain forward Mbappe, 24, accepted the role after discussions with coach Didier Deschamps.

His first game as captain will be Friday’s Euro 2024 qualifier against the Netherlands at the Stade de France, Les Bleus’ first match since their World Cup final disappointment in Doha on 18 December.

Tottenham goalkeeper Lloris, 36, brought an end to his international career in January, in the weeks after Lionel Messi’s Argentina side beat the French in a penalty shootout following a thrilling match that ended 3-3 in extra-time.

Lloris had been skipper for more than a decade.

Atletico Madrid attacker Antoine Griezmann was named vice-captain after Manchester United centre-back Raphael Varane also hung up his boots following the defeat to Argentina in December.

Mbappe, who scored a hat-trick in the World Cup final defeat, had been heavily linked with the captain’s role for weeks. — AFP



(FILES) In this file photo taken on 26 November 2022 France’s forward #10 Kylian Mbappe celebrates scoring his team’s second goal during the Qatar 2022 World Cup Group D football match between France and Denmark at Stadium 974 in Doha. PHOTO: AFP