

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.

Thanlyin Bridge-3 crossing Bago River 75.5 per cent complete



Photo shows the construction site of the Bago River crossing Thanlyin Bridge-3. PHOTO: HSAN KYAW OO (IPRD)

THANLYIN Bridge-3 crossing Bago River is under construction as the more important transport facility for smooth and swift flow of commodities along the route of Yangon-Thanlyin-Thilawa Special Economic Zone in Yangon Region.

The Department of Bridges under the Ministry of Construction is taking responsibilities for implementation of the bridge project. So far, construction of the bridge has completed by 75.5 per cent, according to the Deputy Director General of the Department of Bridges.

The bridge project is being implemented with Yen 31 billion of ODA loan with soft interest rate from Japan International Cooperation Agency-JICA. The loan period was set for 40 years including 10 years suspended period. The bridge will be 8,638.86 feet long, and it will be built in



three sections. The bridge will be a reinforced concrete steel cable suspension type. The main structure of the bridge will be 22.9 metres long with 13 metres high of clearance. The facility can withstand 75 tonnes of loads for each vehicle.

Japanese consultant engineers participate in construction

of the bridge applying Japanese technologies.

Currently, the approach bridge on Thanlyin bank has been installed with TC box, and piers P11 and P12 have been built with the pier heads. Steel box beams are being installed from P16 to P19 piers. Remaining piers are under construction.

As the Department of Bridges slates to complete the bridge construction in mid-2024, engineers and skilled labours are pouring out utmost efforts in implementing the project to be completed on schedules.

Upon completion, local people will have easy access to the special economic zone in Thanlyin Township, Kayan and Thongwa townships in Yangon Region as well as to Bago Region.

Thanlyin Bridge which is the first-ever bridge across Bago River linking Thanlyin and Yangon. Some 30 years old Thanlyin Bridge is 2.2 kilometres long.

Thanlyin Bridge-2 links the cities of Thanlyin and Yangon. The 1.38 km long second bridge links Dagon Myothit (Seikkan) township on the Yangon side and Kalawe village on the Thanlyin side. — Hsan Kyaw Oo (IPRD)/TTA

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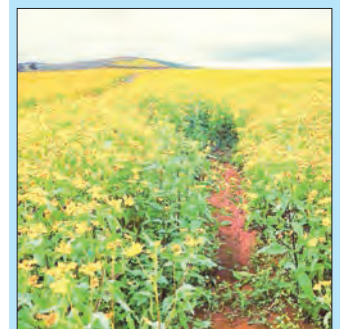
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Public notice on installation of new embossed number plates

THE Road Transport Administration Department has issued Notifications regarding the installation of new embossed number plates not later than 31-3-2023. The department also makes operations as convenient as possible.

Currently, the deadline has come and there are still some vehicles to change and install new embossed number plates. It will recognize April 2023 as the period of educating programmes and actions will be taken over that period.

Therefore, the vehicle owners are urged again to contact the relevant RTAD offices to install new embossed license plates.

Road Transport Administration Department

One new case of COVID-19 reported on 2 April, total figure registers 634,085

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases registered 634,085 after one new case was reported on 2 April 2023 according to the Ministry of Health. The total number of patients who have recovered from COVID-19 in the country reached 614,563, including eight new recoveries.

The death toll from COVID-19 in the country remained unchanged at 19,490 on 2-4-2023 with no new death reported from the pandemic. The country has vaccinated 30,983,505 people aged 18 and above for COVID-19 vaccines and 6,847,302 people aged under 18 till 2 April 2023. — GNLM

Daily newspapers to be published alternately during New Year holidays

DAILY newspapers of the News and Periodicals Enterprise under the Ministry of Information will be in alternate circulation during the holidays of the Myanmar New Year.

The Kyemon and the Global New Light of Myanmar dailies will be in circulation from 9 to 12 April, while the Myanma Alinn daily will take a break.

The Myanma Alinn Daily will be published from 13 to 17 April whereas the Kyemon and the Global New Light of Myanmar dailies will take holidays.

The Shwepyi Rakhine Image supplement published every Wednesday by the Sub-Printing House (Sittway) will take a holiday on 12 April, the Ethnic Sector in the Shan Language by the Sub-Printing House (Taunggyi) published every Thursday on 13 April, the Ethnic Sector in Mon, Skaw Kayin, Poe Kayin and Pa-O languages published every Sunday by the Sub-Printing House (Mawlamyine) on 9 and 16 April. After the Thingyan holidays, all dailies will be published regularly from 18 April.

However, advertisements will be accepted throughout the holidays.

News and Periodicals Enterprise

Chinese Culture Centre (Yangon) opens summer courses under Myanmar-China cultural exchange programme



Female students from Chen Guang Training School perform harps in entertainment at Yangon Chinese Culture Centre on 28 March. PHOTO: MYO MIN THURA

IN collaboration with Yangon Chinese Culture Centre and Myanmar Chinese Calligraphy and Painting Association, opening of the summer Chinese calligraphy course, flowery cultural course and Yunnan cuisine cookery course in collaboration with Qin He Lou Restaurant took place at

Yangon Chinese Culture Centre in Ahlon Township, Yangon, from 28 to 30 March.

The programme aims to increase Myanmar-China cultural exchange relations and for Myanmar students to learn cultural knowledge during the summer vacation.

Ms Xu Ling, in charge of Chinese Culture Centre (Yangon) and Daw Nwe Ni, the director of Wang Florist, gave opening remarks at the event.

Then, after showing an introduction video about Yunnan food, the President of the Myanmar Chinese Art and Painting Association, U Mawli Shwe, gave a demonstration of Chinese brush calligraphy, and the students of Chen Guang Training School played the harp.

The Chinese Culture Centre (Yangon) is located at No 39, 2nd Floor, Min Ye Kyaw Swa Street, (in front of Central Women's Hospital) Ahlon Township, Yangon.

In addition, cultural art and intangible cultural heritage, Wushu and traditional Chinese medical education and cookery courses are conducted for Myanmar audiences free of charge.

Yangon Chinese Culture Centre is open from Tuesday to Saturday from 9 am to 12 pm and 2 pm to 5 pm.

People wishing to study at the centre must follow the rules of the Yangon Chinese Culture Centre.— Myo Min Thura/KZL

Public Notice for Elimination of Violence

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

2. Not encouraging, supporting, or assisting “CRPH”, “NUG”, and “PDF” terrorists, who are intimidating and killing people and committing destructive activities, is to protect the lives and property of the general public.

3. Giving information secretly to the authorities on terrorists and on the possession and transport of weapons/ammunition is tantamount to protecting the lives and property of innocent people.

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

The entire ethnic national people are to keep Our Three Main National Causes in their soul

IN order to ensure the perpetuity of the regained independence, the entire ethnic national people need to take great care with the national cause so as to prevent instigations and pressure committed by internal and external destructive elements. Moreover, the entire ethnic national people are to keep Our Three Main National Causes in their soul in striving for building the Union based on the genuine, disciplined-flourishing democratic system and federalism for its perpetuity as long as the world exists.

(Excerpts from the message sent by State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Senior General Thadoe Maha Thray Sithu Thadoe Thiri Thudhamma Min Aung Hlaing to ceremony of 75th Anniversary (Diamond Jubilee) Independence Day which falls on 4 January 2023)

Mr Wang Ning, Member of CPC Central Committee and Secretary of CPC Yunnan Provincial Committee, pays a working visit to Myanmar

AT the invitation of U Ko Ko Hlaing, Union Minister for International Cooperation of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, a delegation led by Mr Wang Ning, Member of CPC Central Committee and Secretary of CPC Yunnan Provincial Committee of the People's Republic of China, paid a working visit to Myanmar from 1 to 3 April 2023.

During the visit, while in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday at Horizon Lake View Hotel, the Union Minister for International Cooperation of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and the Member of CPC Central Committee and Secretary of CPC Yunnan Provincial Com-



The signing ceremony of agreements and MoUs between Myanmar and Yunnan in progress on 2 April.

mittee of the People's Republic of China witnessed the signing and exchanging ceremony of the agreements and memoranda of understanding between Myanmar and Yunnan, namely, the Agreement of Grain Supply Chain Cooperation, the Agreement of Fertilizer Supply

Chain Cooperation, Kyaukphyu Future Mobile Clinic Project, Memorandum of Understanding on the import cooperation of agricultural produce in Myanmar and Power Purchase Agreement for Dapein 1 Hydropower Plant. The ceremony was attended by Union Ministers from the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation, the Ministry of Electric Power, the Ministry of Energy and the Ministry of Commerce and officials concerned.

Afterwards, Union Ministers and the Chinese delegation led by Mr Wang Ning attended the dinner hosted by the Union Minister for International Cooperation. — MNA

MoEP Union Minister inspects power plant projects in Magway Region



The photo shows solar+gas engine machinery for the hybrid power plant in Magway Township.

UNION Minister for Electric Power U Thaung Han along with ministers from Magway Region Government and responsible persons made an inspection tour of power plant projects in Magway Region on 1 April.

First, the Union minister inspected the Solar+Gas Engine Hybrid power plant project site capable of generating 120MW near Magway Township and attended the meeting on the supply of electricity in the region.

Company officials briefed the Union Minister on the project data and project implementation, and the Union minister stressed the need to generate electricity on schedule despite some difficulties in the project. Moreover, he said that in order to meet the specified quality, and if there are any diffi-

culties, the ministry will provide necessary support.

In addition, the Union minister inspected land preparations, progress of engine foundation, arrivals of generators, completion of Construction Power site, fencing and construction of an entrance road to the project.

The project site is located on 490 acres of land near Tahbyesan Village of Magway Township. Upon completion, the power plant installed with 120 MW generating capacity will send electricity to the national grid through 132KV Magway main power station.

Afterwards, the Union minister also attended a meeting with the Magway Region chief minister and officials on power distribution in the region. — MNA/MKKS

Training of trainer second batch for EVs concludes at AGTI (Insein)



THE closing ceremony for the second batch of Training of Trainers for EVs was held on 1 April at the Government Technical Institute (Insein).

Deputy Director-General Dr Nyan Win Than of the Department of Technical, Vocational Education and Training delivered a concluding speech and explained conducting the EV courses, plans to provide teaching aid, and further multiplier courses on ToT.

The Training of Trainer course in second batch included subjects on Electronic Power Train, Electrical Power System, Practical Approach to Electronics in EV, Sensor and Networking Technology, Automotive Material, and Theory of Automobile.

— MNA/KZW

The conclusion ceremony of ToT second batch in progress at Insein GTI on 1 April.

Reference wholesale price of palm oil published as K4,545 per viss

AS the Committee for the Supervision of the Import and Distribution of Edible Oils under the Ministry of Commerce is working to regulate the domestic palm oil prices in accordance with the global price changes, it publishes the wholesale reference price of palm oil for the domestic market by monitoring the FOB prices in Malaysia and Indonesia daily. The transportation costs, bank expenses and taxes are also taken into consideration.

According to market and price in the world's palm oil exporters this week, the committee has announced the basic Yangon reference wholesale price of palm oil is K4,545 per viss within 3 and 9 April.

In addition, it has been notified that action will be taken under the Essential Supplies and Services Law if any fraudulent activities are carried out for the purpose of price manipulation in the domestic market.

The basic wholesale quotes are available on the Department of Consumer Affairs website: www.doca.gov.mm and on the Facebook page of the Myanmar Oil Traders and Oil Entrepreneurs Association. — MNA/CT

More EVs arrive at Yangon port

UNDER the permission of the National Leading Committee on Electric Vehicles and Related Industries, 10 BYD E2 type electric vehicles imported by Grand Sirius Co Ltd arrived at Yangon port on 1 April.

The EVs were allowed to be withdrawn from the port in line with Customs procedures, and the import of battery electric vehicles was exempted from Customs duties. —MNA/KZL

ဆက်သွယ်ရန် ဖုန်းနံပါတ်
09 454 237 515

Connection created with migrant workers returning from Thai-Myanmar border with jobs

UMFCCI General Secretary Daw Khaing Khaing Nwe met with International Migration Organization, Mon and Kayin State Chambers of Commerce and Industry from 29 to 31 March in talking about overcoming difficulties in the private sector including migrant workers issue at the successful completion of the workplace-based multiple volunteer (malaria) refresher course.

IOM Chief of Mission Mr Dragan Aleksoski discussed the situation of migrant workers at the Thai-Myanmar border and cooperation in migrant workers issue, encouragement for safe, orderly and legal migration.

UMFCCI has been providing aid for enhancement of skills and creation of job opportunities for migrant workers.

Officials of Mon and Kayin State Chambers discussed mutual benefits by informing and connecting with the returnee migrant workers in the private sector.

They also discussed assistance for returnee migrant workers and their families to do business on their own, raising awareness about infectious diseases, need for sharing knowledge and cooperation from the entrepreneurs.

Next, they focused on development of MSMEs and brother associations to participate in Corporate Social Responsibilities following the Governance guidelines.—Aung Myint (IPRD)/KZL



UMFCCI General Secretary Daw Khaing Khaing Nwe meets IOM and chambers of Commerce and Industry of Mon and Kayin states on 29 March.

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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.

LOCAL BUSINESS

Service fees for trademark registration applications defined

IN accordance with the trademark law, the fees to be paid according to the types of service related to the trademark registration application were published on 1 April.

According to sub-section (j) of Section 8 of the Trademark Law, the fees to be paid for the type of service in connection with the application for trademark registration in line with the agreement of the Union Government are: K150,000 for the examination of acceptance of trademark registration application (TM-1), K100,000 for the review of reinstatement of an application due to failure of prescribed rules (TM-3) and K50,000 for the amendment

of request for correction of error in an application (TM-4).

In addition, K50,000 for the request to limit the list of goods/services in an application (TM-6), K100,000 for the request to divide an application for registration (TM-7), K150,000 for the application to oppose a trademark application (TM-8), K50,000 for the request for certified copy of registration certificate (TM-9), and K50,000 for the request for amendment of registration of a trademark (TM-10), will be charged.

Furthermore, K300,000 for the application for renewal of trademark registration (TM-11), K100,000 for the application to



The Ministry of Commerce in Ottarathiri Township, Nay Pyi Taw.

register a transfer of ownership (TM-12), K100,000 for the application to register a licence of trademark (TM-13), K150,000 for the application for invalidation of a registered trademark (TM-15), K100,000 for the application for

cancellation of a registered trademark (TM-16), K20,000 for the request for change of representative or agent (TM-17), K50,000 for the request for extension of time (TM-18), and K500,000 for the application for appeal (TM-19)

must be paid. It is announced that the fees for the types of services related to trademark registration applications will be revised and published from time to time. — TWA/CT

Palm oil price spikes despite arrival of around 75,000 tonnes of imported oil



Palm oil in various packaging system seen in the market.

THE delivery order (DO) price of palm oil is still high even with the massive arrival of imported oil before Thingyan holidays, according to the oil dealers.

There are around 30,000 tonnes of imported oil in the edible oil tanks in Thilawa and Yangon region till 1 April. According to the oil market reports, eight oil tankers carrying 35,000 tonnes of edible oil, and two more oil tankers loading 11,000 tonnes of palm oil, will dock at the ports before and after the Thingyan holidays

respectively. The DO price of palm oil still stood at K6,400-K6,450 per viss on 1 April due to various reasons.

In the same period of previous year when there is a regular import of edible oil, one tonne of imported oil was priced at US\$1,749 with the exchange rate of K2,038. The base price per viss was K5,417 and the reference wholesale price was K5,525 per viss.

It is reported that the relevant authorities are checking

whether palm oils are being stored or distributed with the intention of manipulating the palm oil price.

With around 70 small mobile market trucks, the amount of edible oil that can be sold to consumers daily at the reference retail price in the townships of Yangon can be around 2,000 tonnes.

According to an oil dealer, most of the consumers still have to purchase edible oil at a price of K2,000 per viss more than the retail reference price. — TWA/CT

Niger seed from hilly regions favoured in Mandalay market

IT is known from the Mandalay traders that Niger seeds grown in hilly regions were fetching good prices in Mandalay market. Due to the favourable weather condition, the seeds yielded well this year.

The largest purchaser of the seed is India and followed by China. At the same time last year, the opening price of the seeds started K95,000 per 45-viss bag (73 kilogramme). However, the price has gone up to K175,000 per bag.

“These niger seeds are bought at home and abroad.

They are ground into oil and used as frying oil in some snacks by bakeries. In foreign countries, besides its use as an edible oil, it is also used in the manufacturing of cosmetics and medicine.

Therefore, local farmers of Shan State are expanding their cultivation of a main crop and expecting to become their source of income,” said U Soe Win Myint, owner of Soe Win Myint brokerage in Mandalay.

“Compared to the last year’s price, the prices of niger doubled this year, but the seeds



Thriving niger plants bearing flowers seen on hilly region. PHOTO: MIN HTET AUNG

purchasing does not stop. In December, in Shan State areas, you can see the yellow flower niger fields as beautiful as a painting,” he added.

The niger can be grown as a winter crop only one season a year. Such a crop, which is a source of foreign income, is cultivated only in hilly areas.

They are grown in northern and southern Shan State, Kayah State, Kachin State and upper Sagaing Region. —Min Htet Aung (Mandalay Sub-printing House)/KZL

CURRENT
AFFAIRS



The picture shows trucks rolling near Bayintnaung wholesale market.

Demand for goods increases
for Thingyan holidays

ALL major commodity centres will shut down during the long Thingyan holidays.

Dry grocery markets will be suspended. Rice volume delivered to regions outside Yangon dropped significantly.

Traders from regions outside Yangon are stockpiling goods. This being so, the demand goes up in the first week of April. Some are also observing possible price rises on high demand.

However, rice retailers are doing a roaring trade. The price has not changed much.

For the edible oil market, despite inflows of oil from international markets, the price stays on the rise. The delivery order price of palm oil in the Yangon market is K6,450-K6,500 per viss. Majority of the traders who kept the stocks in hand purchased palm oil at above K7,000 per viss before.

There is less chance for the price increase of dry groceries. The prices of onions are around K900 per viss, except for Myittha onions. Potatoes from Sinbyukyun and Aungban areas are priced at around K1,500 per viss. The price of newly harvested Shan garlic is still declining.

The price of chickpeas which are mostly used in charity feasts during the Thingyan Festival is estimated at K4,600-K4,800 per viss in the wholesale market. Yangon market sees a bustling trade of chickpeas.

The prices of sugar, dried chilli pepper, tamarind and jaggery remain unchanged. The demand for sugar jaggery this year is weak, unlike in previous years. The inflation of commodities is usual in the pre-Thingyan Festival, yet this year, the price is quite stable. — TWA/EM

Myanmar workers in Korea can file
complaints for loss of rights to ACRC

MYANMAR nationals who employ in Korea have the option to officially submit a complaint via the e-people system, which has been established by the ACRC, if they lose their rights at workplaces.

It was reported on 31 March that the ambassador of the Myanmar Embassy in Seoul, Korea, was granted for the rights of Myanmar workers through a meeting with the chairman of the Anti-Corruption and Civil Rights Commission (ACRC) of Korea.

On the e-People system web page, Myanmar employees can choose anything of 14 languages, including My-



Some Myanmar workers seen at Yangon airport through EPS system in 2022.

anmar, and fill out a written complaint as directed, and after receiving the complaint, the committee will release replies within 14 days by contacting the

relevant departments.

In addition to the e-People system, employees may file the complaints by phone, dialing 100 of Call Centre.—TWA/KZW

Companies in Japan to recruit some 900
Myanmar workers



Employees working at electronic factory in Japan.

ABOUT 900 Myanmar workers will be recruited to work at companies in Japan, according to the Myanmar Embassy to Japan in Tokyo.

During the period from 16 to 31 March, a total of 490 job offer letters were dispatched by Japanese authorities. Currently, the embassy is diligently scrutinizing the demand letters dispatched by the Ministry of Labour through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, ensuring timely verification. For 206 job offers, licensed overseas employment agencies in Myanmar will send Myanmar workers to Japan.—TWA/KZW

Deadline for changing new embossed vehicle number plates
extended until end of April

THE Road Transport Administration Department has announced that the deadline for changing and installing new embossed vehicle number plates has been extended until the end of April.

Previously, 31 March was announced as the deadline for all vehicles to change new embossed number plates. Due to the fact that some vehicles have not been changed number plates beyond the deadline yet, the entire month of April will be set as an educative period and changing of the number plate will continue.

If the educative period is



A sample of the embossed number plate that will be installed on vehicles.

over, vehicle owners have to contact the relevant offices of the Road Transport Administration Department and install new embossed number plates as soon as possible.

It is reported that almost 100 per cent of State-owned departmental vehicles, highway buses, city buses, taxis and trucks have been installed with new embossed number plates.

According to the Road Transport Administration Department, the total number of privately owned passenger vehicles in Myanmar is over 600,000.—TWA/KZL

PDF terrorists drop drone bomb into onion farm in Sagaing Township

SO-CALLED PDF terrorists under NUG and CRPH are extorting money, robbing and intimidation the public to commit terrorist acts and use them for their own interests.

While villagers were picking out onions in an onion farm about 800 metres northwest of Kywepon Village, Sagaing Township, Sagaing Region, PDF terrorists demanded extorted money from the farm owner but did not receive the payment.

Hence, those terrorists at-

tacked the onion field with a drop bomb at 2 pm on 29 March. In the incident, one man and one woman, who were picking out onions, were injured and the injured were taken to the rural dispensary for treatment.

It is reported that the security forces are continuing to take security measures in order to take effective action against the PDF terrorists, who commit intention of instilling fear in the innocent civilians who are peacefully working and doing their own business. — MNA



A google map shows the site where a drop bomb exploded, 800 metres northwest of Kywepon Village in Sagaing Township at 2 pm on 29 March.

PDF terrorists attack non-military bus, leaving one boy and one woman dead, two monks, two people injured



A google map shows the site where PDF terrorists attacked a passenger bus between Taninthayi and Kanmalaing village in Taninthayi Region at 8 pm on 1 April.

SO-CALLED PDF terrorists under NUG and CRPH fired on a bus unrelated to the military at around 8 pm on 1 April.

The incident occurred that during Myat Mandalar Tun express bus carrying 16 passengers, driven by U Kyaw Soe Lwin, was driving from Yangon to Kawthoung.

Between mileposts No 84/1 and 84/2 between Taninthayi and Kanmalaing village, Taninthayi Region at 8 pm on 1 April, PDF terrorists attacked the bus with small arms from about 200 metres east of the road for without reasons.

One innocent 7-year-old boy and one woman were killed and two monks and two men were injured due to the terrorist attacks.

The injured were taken to the Taninthayi Township People's Hospital, where necessary medical treatment is being provided. The injured are under treatment at Taninthayi Township People's Hospital.

It was reported that the security forces are cooperating with the dutiful people to arrest so-called PDF terrorists under NUG and CRPH as soon as possible, who attacked the innocent people who were traveling peacefully without any relations to the military.—MNA

Over K900 mln worth Happy Water seized in Tachileik

OVER K900 million worth 8.4 kilogrammes of Happy Water was seized in Tachileik Township, eastern Shan State, according to the Myanmar Police Force.

A combined team consisted of members of Drug Enforcement Division searched Sai Oo Maung who arrived at Wainyauk ward in Tachileik by motorcycle due to information at 8:30 pm on 31 March. Officials seized 8.4 kilogrammes Happy Water worth K900 million from him.

According to the investigation, it was found that the seized Happy Water was brought from Tahley city in eastern Shan State to Tachileik City and distributed to young people during the Myanmar traditional Thingyan festival. The crime offenders are under investigation.—MNA/KZW



A suspect seen with seized Happy Water and a motor cycle in Tachileik.

Drugs seized in North Oakkalapa, Mingaladon townships

A combined team comprising members of Drug Enforcement Division raided the Maung Maung Kyaw's house in Shwepaukkan ward 12, North Oakkalapa Township, at 3 pm on 1 April and seized 4,000 stimulant tablets from his house.

Similarly, officials searched Naing Chan Myae Aung (aka) Ko Chan's house on Paungku street in North Oakkalapa Township at 4 pm. They nabbed 2,838 stimulant tablets from the house. Moreover, officials found suspicious Maung Maung Nu (aka) Mohamed Russt and nabbed 20,000 stimulant tablets from him.

They are prosecuted under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law, the Myanmar Police Force stated. —MNA/KZW

OPINION

Raise public awareness about human rights in Universal Declaration

THE preamble of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights mentions that “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”.

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.

Currently, the Myanmar National Human Rights Commission has, since its establishment, 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.

In this regard, the Constitution (2008) also features provisions for the Citizens, Fundamental Rights and Duties of the Citizens. These provisions grant the citizens for enjoying fundamental rights and duties related to political, economic, social and other various sectors. But, they all need to follow the prescribed laws, rules and disciplines so as to enjoy the fruits of these fundamental rights and duties.

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 Commission carry out its educative activities. The commission has been organizing educative talks, workshops and training courses from 2011 to date. In this regard, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was consistently included as a major subject.

Moreover, the commission published the text of the Universal Declaration of Human rights in Myanmar and English as well as 21 ethnic languages for distribution to the national races so as to raise public awareness about the declaration.

In addition, the posters and pocket booklets of the Declaration were published in 2018 and 2021 for the people to have easy access to knowledge about human rights. Likewise, the Declaration was also published in Braille letter in 2022 for sharing knowledge with those from the School for the Blind (Kymyindine).

Up to now, 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 for enabling the people to comprehensively know missions and visions as well as human rights concerned with all global people.

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COVID lab-leak hypothesis politically motivated rather than science-based

It is obvious that political motivation has played a decisive role in the lab-leak theory, which has been hyped up by an intelligence report made with “low confidence,” despite scientific evidence pointing in the opposite direction.

LAB-LEAK hypothesis of coronavirus is the latest episode of the political games that have again been revived by certain US politicians to attack China under the guise of tracing the origins of COVID-19.

The scientific community and scientific evidence related to the matter, which should have been at the center of focus, have been absent or neglected in this repeated farce.

The US House of Representatives held a hearing on the origins of COVID-19 on 8 March, following a classified intelligence report by the US Department of Energy suggest-

ing that the virus probably came from a lab leak, despite the fact that the department made its updated judgement with “low confidence.”

A heavy dose of political theatre

“The hearing itself, however, offered a heavy dose of political theatre, giving a preview of sessions to follow in the weeks and months to come,” the scientific journal Nature reported.

According to the report, three out of four witnesses at the hearing supported the lab-leak hypothesis, but their credibility is doubted by the scientific community.

“Not one of those witnesses had any scientific record of investigating and publishing peer-reviewed research on the origins of this virus in quality journals,” said Michael Worobey, a biologist at the University of Arizona who has studied genetic evidence since the early days of the pandemic.

Science, another major academic publisher, reported on the hearing under the headline “Science takes back seat to politics in first House hearing on origin of COVID-19 pandemic.”

It is obvious that political motivation has played a decisive role in the lab-leak theory, which has been hyped up by an

intelligence report made with “low confidence,” despite scientific evidence pointing in the opposite direction.

“Low confidence” means the information obtained “is not enough or is too fragmented to make a definitive analytic judgement or that there is not enough information available to draw a more robust conclusion,” according to a CNN report.

A science-based report

A science-based report published by an expert panel in Science magazine in October 2022 overwhelmingly supported zoonotic hypotheses and concluded that the COVID-19

virus likely spread naturally in a zoonotic jump from an animal to humans, without help from a lab.

Fabian Leendertz, a zoonotic disease expert, said that a laboratory leak as the possible origin of the COVID-19 pandemic is a “purely politically motivated” theory, and that political power games are behind it.

The expert, who participated in the World Health Organization’s (WHO) search for the origins of the coronavirus, recently told the German Press Agency that he is aware of no new data that would strengthen the laboratory hypothesis. “It remains the most unlikely



A pedestrian wearing a face mask passes in front of Pfizer's World Headquarters in New York, United States, on 23 August 2021. **PHOTO: MICHAEL NAGLE/XINHUA**

hypothesis of all.”

Chinese evolutionary biologist Wu Chung-I said claims that SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, was made by humans represent a terrible regression in scientific thinking — a regression to the level of a priest more than 200 years ago.

No factual or scientific basis

Polish virologist Agnieszka Szuster-Ciesielska recently said in an interview that the COV-

ID-19 lab-leak theory, which has been reshaped by the US Department of Energy and the FBI, is sensation-seeking and has no factual or scientific basis.

Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson Mao Ning has urged the United States to immediately cease its political manipulation of COVID-19 origins-tracing, and voluntarily share its data on suspected early cases in the United States

with the WHO.

For some time now, the United States has been politicizing, weaponizing and instrumentalizing COVID-19 origins-tracing, Mao said. It has allowed a matter of science to become dominated by lawmakers and the intelligence community, and it has spread myths such as the lab-leak theory without any evidence in order to discredit and attack China.

Source : Xinhua

Disney Cruise Line makes Singapore its 1st home port in Asia

Singapore's cruise liner industry has shown strong signs of recovery from what became a near-standstill after border closures and travel restrictions were implemented due to the COVID-19 pandemic.



Disney Parks, Experiences and Products Chairman Josh D'Amato speaks at an event in Singapore on 29 March 2023, during which he announced Disney Cruise Line has chosen Singapore for its first home port in Asia. **PHOTO: KYODO**

SINGAPORE'S tourism board and a Walt Disney Co. subsidiary have agreed to make the Southeast Asian country the first Asian homeport for one of the company's cruise ships.

The Singapore Tourism Board and Disney Cruise Line have signed a memorandum of understanding to homeport the new vessel exclusively in Singapore for at least five years, they said.

Disney cruises are operating in the Caribbean, Europe and elsewhere but not in Asia.

“We obviously are going to focus a lot on the Southeast Asian markets here, but it's the first one in Asia, absolutely,” said Disney Signature Experiences President Thomas Mazloum, who oversees the cruise

line, at a news conference on Wednesday.

Singapore's Transport Minister S. Iswaran noted the significance of Disney choosing Singapore, saying, “It speaks volumes of our region's significant potential for cruise tourism and to become, as some have described it, the ‘Caribbean of the East’.”

It also “affirms our position as the region's premier cruise hub,” and makes the country a “major player in cruise tourism” due to its strategic location, world-class air connectivity and port infrastructure, Iswaran said.

The 208,000-gross-ton ship is estimated to be able to carry 6,000 passengers and 2,300 crew members. Alongside peo-

ple traveling to the country by air, having the ship in Singapore creates the potential to bring in “millions of local and foreign cruise passengers” over the five-year period, the company said in a statement.

Singapore's cruise liner industry has shown strong signs of recovery from what became a near-standstill after border closures and travel restrictions were implemented due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The country saw 1.2 million cruise passengers last year compared to more than 1.8 million in 2019, the year before the pandemic. Over 400 cruise ships called at Singapore's ports in 2019.

Source : Kyodo



MYANMAR DAILY WEATHER REPORT

(ISSUED AT 7:00 PM SUNDAY 2 APRIL 2023)

BAY INFERENCE: Weather is partly cloudy to cloudy over the Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL NOON OF THE 3 April 2023: Rain or thundershowers will be widespread in Kachin and Southern Shan states, fairly widespread in Upper Sagaing Region and Northern Shan, Chin and Rakhine states, scattered in Nay Pyi Taw, Lower Sagaing, Mandalay and Magway regions and Eastern Shan State and isolated in Bago and Taninthayi regions and Kayah State. Degree of certainty is (80%). Weather will be partly cloudy in the remaining regions and states.

STATE OF THE SEA: Sea will be slight to moderate in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about (4 - 7) feet off and along Myanmar Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Likelihood of isolated to scattered rain or thundershowers in Upper Sagaing Region and Kachin, Northern Shan, Chin, Rakhine, Kayin and Mon states.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 3 April 2023: Likelihood of isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (60%).

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 3 April 2023: Partly cloudy.

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 3 April 2023: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (80%).

Dutch refinery to feed airlines’ thirst for clean fuel

SCAFFOLDING and green pipes envelop a refinery in the port of Rotterdam where Finnish giant Neste is preparing to significantly boost production of sustainable aviation fuel.

Switching to non-fossil aviation fuels that produce less net greenhouse gas emissions is key to plans to decarbonise air transport, a significant contributor to global warming.

Neste, the largest global producer of SAF, uses cooking oil and animal fat at this Dutch refinery.

Sustainable aviation fuels are being made from different sources such as municipal waste, leftovers from the agricultural and forestry industry, crops and plants, and even hydrogen.



Neste, the largest global producer of SAF, uses cooking oil and animal fat at this Dutch refinery. **PHOTO: AFP**

These technologies are still developing and the end product is more expensive. But these fuels will help airlines reduce CO2 emissions by up to 80 per cent, according to

the International Air Transport Association.

Global output of SAF was 250,000 tonnes last year, less than 0.1 per cent of the more than 300 million tonnes of aviation fuel used during that period.

“It’s a drop in the ocean but a significant drop,” said Matti Lehmus, CEO of Neste.

“We’ll be growing drastically our production from 100,000 tonnes to 1.5 million tonnes next year,” he added. There clearly is demand.

The European Union plans to impose the use of a minimum amount of sustainable aviation fuel by airlines, rising from two per cent in 2025 to six per cent in 2030 and at least 63 per cent in 2050. — AFP

NGOs slam missed chance to prevent seabed mining



NGOs fear industry may soon be given the green light for undersea mining in the absence of solid environmental rules. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

OCEAN advocates warned on Friday that the door may fly open for undersea mining in the near future in the absence of solid environmental rules that more and more nations

demand.

As two weeks of negotiations concluded Friday over possible environmental rules restricting large-scale mining of the seabed, NGOs voiced

fear that industry may soon be given the green light.

Several nations called for a moratorium on such mining at the International Seabed Authority (ISA) council meeting.

“The first thing to highlight is that the political atmosphere has shifted quite radically since that time last year,” Emma Wilson of the Deep Sea Conservation Coalition told AFP.

“There wasn’t a single state at that point that had stood up and said no to mining.”

But as the two-week meeting wrapped up, she remained “very worried” the door could be opened to mining applications later this year. —AFP

Dominican border wall threatens environment, mangroves

THE anti-migrant wall being built in the northwest of the Dominican Republic crisscrosses a thick mangrove forest and threatens the ecosystem by depriving it of water, environmental groups warn.

The Dominican government wants to build a 160 kilometer (100 mile) concrete fence along the 380 kilometer border with Haiti to prevent illegal

migrants from entering, and to “protect” the country from Haitian gangs with growing influence.

Each year, between 100,000 and 200,000 Haitian immigrants are deported (171,000 in 2022) in an atmosphere of xenophobia and high tension between the two neighbours that share the mountainous Caribbean island of Hispaniola.

But the Dominican Academy of Sciences believes that the damage to the wetlands in Monte Cristi National Park in the northwest of the country is simply “irreparable.”

The Ministry of Defence, which is carrying out the work, asserts that “only 6 square kilometers (2.3 square miles) have been affected”, or 0.04 per cent of the wetlands. — AFP

NEWS IN BRIEF

Austria glaciers retreat ‘more than ever’: measurement

AUSTRIAN glaciers last year retreated “more than ever”, the country’s Alpine Club said Friday, as climate change threatens glaciers around the globe.

On average, 89 Austrian glaciers observed by the organization have become 28.7 metres (94.2 feet) shorter, compared to 11 metres in 2021, it said in a statement, sounding a “red alert”.

“Never before in the history of the Alpine Club’s glacier measurement service, which dates back to 1891, has there been a greater loss of glaciers,” it said.

“The drastic glacier retreat undoubtedly makes the consequences of the anthropogenic massively intensified climate change clear,” it added, warning that glaciers in Austria would disappear at the latest in 2075.

It urged the better protection of glaciers in the ski-mad Alpine nation. — AFP

Deadly storms and tornadoes sweep through US

THE death toll from a major storm system that has lashed the south-central and eastern US with devastating winds and powerful tornadoes has risen to 22, with dozens of others injured, officials said Saturday.

A spokesperson for the emergency management agency in Tennessee, one of the states hardest hit since the storms began Friday, confirmed seven weather-related fatalities.

That came on top of 15 deaths reported in Arkansas, Mississippi and Alabama in the south, Indiana and Illinois in the Midwest, and Delaware in the mid-Atlantic.

The storm system on Saturday was bearing down on the US east coast, with thunderstorms, hail and powerful winds predicted through late Sunday.

The storm had sent multiple tornadoes — some of exceptional size and power — sweeping through Arkansas, where they killed at least five people, the state’s governor said. — AFP

HEALTH/PANDEMIC WORLD

Pope to preside over Palm Sunday after hospital stay

POPE Francis will preside over mass in St Peter's Square Sunday as he kicks off events leading to Easter, just a day after leaving hospital following a bout of bronchitis.

The 86-year-old's admittance to hospital on Wednesday with breathing difficulties sparked concerns he may not be well enough to attend a series of rites in what is the most important week in the Christian calendar.

But as a smiling Francis left Rome's Gemelli hospital Saturday after a three-night stay, he told well-wishers he would be presiding over a Palm



Pope Francis addresses the media as he leaves the Gemelli hospital on 1 April 2023 in Rome, after being discharged following treatment for bronchitis. **PHOTO: AFP**

Sunday ceremony, which will be followed by the Angelus prayer.

Though his voice was weak at times, when asked how he was feeling the pope quipped twice "I am still alive!"

Palm Sunday marks the arrival of Jesus in Jerusalem before his crucifixion. Easter Sunday on 12 April celebrates his resurrection from the dead.

The head of the world's 1.3 billion Catholics has suffered from increasing health issues over the past few years, including knee problems which have forced him to use a wheelchair and walking stick.

During both the Palm Sunday and Easter masses, Francis is expected to remain seated while a cardinal conducts the ceremony at the altar.

The Vatican said this was an arrangement adopted prior to the pope's latest illness, as he is no longer able to stand for long periods.

Francis felt unwell Wednesday following a general audience in St Peter's Square, but his condition improved after he was given antibiotics.

The hospitalisation was his second since 2021, when he underwent colon surgery, also at Gemelli. — AFP

Art evokes emotions in human body

PEOPLE all around the world are drawn to creating and consuming art, and human emotions play a central subject in visual artworks as well as in music and performance art. However, the mechanisms underlying the feelings that art evokes remain poorly characterised.

A new study reveals how viewing visual art affects our emotions. The research subjects viewed different kinds of artworks and described the feelings that the art stimulated in their bodies.

The researchers recorded the subjects' eye movements while they viewed the art. In addition, the subjects assessed what kind of emotions each piece of art evoked.

"Viewing the art evoked many different kinds of feelings and emotions in people.

Even though many of the pieces handled sad or scary topics, the emotions that the people experienced were mainly positive," says Professor Lauri Nummenmaa from the Turku PET Centre at the University of Turku, Finland.

"The bodily sensations evoked by art also contributed to the emotions: the stronger the body's reaction was to the artwork, the stronger were the emotions experienced by the subject," he added.

"In the artworks, human figures were the most interesting subject and were looked at the most. People have a tendency to empathise with each other's emotions and this is probably also the case when we view human figures in art," says Academician Riitta Hari from Aalto University. — ANI



A new study reveals how viewing visual art affects our emotions. The research subjects viewed different kinds of artworks and described the feelings that the art stimulated in their bodies. **PHOTO: AFP**

Japan tourism promotion held in Beijing to boost post-COVID demand

THE Japanese Embassy in Beijing hosted a tourism promotion event Friday targeted at local industry officials as demand slowly recovers after China ended its strict "zero-COVID" policy and reopened its borders earlier this year.

The event, attended by about 350 people including Chinese tourist agency and airline representatives, also took place as Japan awaits China's remaining COVID-19 restrictions including for group tours to be lifted.

The gathering featured a Japanese Awa Odori dance and Okinawan "sanshin" string instrument performance as well as sampling of the country's



Photo taken 31 March 2023, shows Okinawan "sanshin" string instrument performance at a tourism promotion event hosted by the Japanese Embassy in Beijing. **PHOTO: KYODO**

food and drink including sushi, rice cakes and sake. A tuna cutting demonstration drew a large crowd. Japanese Ambassador to

China Hideo Tarumi said he was "glad to host the gathering at a time when cherry blossoms are in full bloom." — Kyodo

Short night-time sleep doubles risk of clogged leg arteries

GETTING enough sleep is essential for maintaining optimal health and well-being. According to research published in the European Heart Journal - Open, an ESC journal, sleeping less than five hours each night is linked to a 74 per cent increased risk of developing peripheral arterial disease (PAD).

"Our study suggests that sleeping for seven to eight hours a night is a good habit for lowering the risk of PAD," said study author Shuai Yuan of the Karolinska Institute, Stockholm, Swe-

den. More than 200 million people globally have peripheral artery disease (PAD), 2 where arteries in the legs are clogged, restricting blood flow and increasing the risk of stroke and heart attack. Yuan said, "Insufficient night-time sleep and daytime napping have previously been associated with a raised risk of coronary artery disease which, like PAD, is caused by clogged arteries. In addition, sleeping problems are among the top ranked complaints in PAD patients. There are limited data on the impact

of sleep habits on PAD and vice versa, and our study aimed to fill that gap."

The study included more than 650,000 participants and was conducted into two parts. First, the researchers analysed the associations of sleep duration and daytime napping with the risk of PAD. In the second part, the investigators used genetic data to perform naturally randomised controlled trials — called Mendelian randomisation — to examine causality of the associations. — ANI

ECONOMY WORLD

Spanish imports of Chinese cars 20 times higher in 2022

CHINESE car brands are gaining a strong foothold in the Spanish market, with exports to Spain 20 times higher in 2022.

Figures published this month by the Spanish association of automobile manufacturers (ANFAC) show that Chinese vehicles worth 1.39 billion euros (1.51 billion US dollars) were sold in Spain in 2022, up from 68 million euros a year before.

This huge rise in sales means China replaced the United Kingdom as the fourth-largest exporter of cars to Spain, behind Germany, France and the Czech Republic.

One reason for the increase is that unlike European manufacturers, Chinese car makers are not struggling to regain competitiveness after the pandemic, said the Federation of Automotive Dealers Associations



A worker is busy on the production line of new energy vehicles (NEVs) at a factory of Chinese automaker Chery Holding Group Co, Ltd in Wuhu City, east China's Anhui Province, 12 October 2022. **PHOTO: ZHOU MU/XINHUA**

(Faconauto).

"Chinese brands are managing to take advantage of the gaps in the European market,

in this case in Spain, and they are creating a customer base that feels somewhat overlooked by other international brands,"

Raul Morales, director of communications at Faconauto, told Xinhua.

"Chinese technology is a

step ahead of the technology in the rest of the world, and they are also offering a good product, and at a price that is competitive compared to other manufacturers," Morales added.

Brands like MG, Lynk and Co, Aiyas and Maxus have all seen sales in Spain go up. MG sold 6,901 vehicles last year in Spain, an 825 per cent rise in sales, and ANFAC says that the market share of Chinese cars now represents 7.3 per cent of car imports.

"In the next few years we can expect the market share of Chinese brands to rise significantly, not only in the Spanish market but also in the European market. This has happened in other markets such as South America, where right now Chinese brands predominate," said Morales. — Xinhua

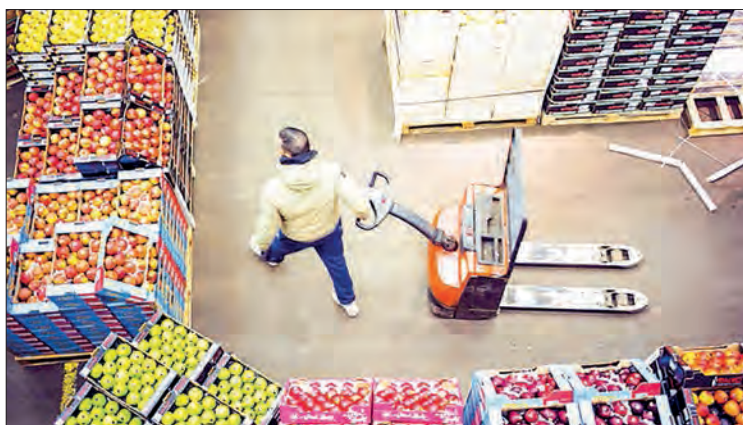
Eurozone and US inflation slow, bringing respite to policymakers

EUROZONE inflation slowed sharply in March while US price increases eased last month as well, official data showed Friday, offering some relief to policymakers.

The data released on both sides of the Atlantic will provide central banks some respite as they carefully balance taming inflation with interest rate rises, against the risks that more hikes could hurt their banking sectors.

Consumer prices rose by 6.9 per cent on an annual basis in the eurozone, down from 8.5 per cent in February, according to the European Union's statistics agency.

It is the lowest rate recorded in a year, and a lower figure



Food prices rose 15.4 per cent in the eurozone in March. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

than analysts expected as well.

But the eurozone's core inflation, which excludes volatile food and energy prices, edged up to 5.7 per cent in March from 5.6 per cent a month earlier.

Core eurozone inflation "is still significantly too high", European Central Bank president Christine Lagarde told students in Italy on Friday after the figures were released. — AFP

US VP Harris calls for 'speedy' Zambia debt resolution

US Vice President Kamala Harris reiterated calls for a "speedy finalization" of Zambia's debt restructuring on Friday, as she visited the country in the last stop of a continental tour.

The United States has been pushing for creditors, which prominently include China, to provide relief to Zambia, which in 2020 became the first

African country to default on its foreign debt — estimated at \$17.3 billion — since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic.

"We will continue to advocate for a speedy finalization of Zambia's debt treatment and restructuring," Harris told a press conference in Lusaka, after a meeting with Zambian President Hakainde Hichilema.

"The international com-

munity needs to help countries such as Zambia regain their footing. So I will reiterate a call that we have made now many times for all bilateral official creditors to provide a meaningful debt reduction."

Harris is the second top US official to visit the country in a few months. Treasury chief Janet Yellen toured the nation in January. — AFP

US expands access to EV subsidies in proposed rules

US officials proposed Friday guidelines that widen access to electric vehicle subsidies, bringing relief to countries like Japan and potentially the EU amid their fears of being excluded from Washington's spending bonanza.

President Joe Biden's ambitious climate action plan, the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), funnels some \$370 billion into subsidies for America's energy transition, including tax breaks for US-made electric vehicles (EVs) and batteries.

Guidelines released Friday by the Treasury Depart-

ment spell out requirements that EV batteries have to meet for vehicles to qualify for a full \$7,500 consumer tax credit.

While the IRA stipulates that a percentage of critical minerals in the battery must be sourced from America or countries it has free-trade pacts with — initially leaving Japan and the European Union in the cold — Friday's announcement signals room for maneuver.

The rule "could include newly negotiated critical minerals agreements," said the Treasury Department in a statement. — AFP



Guidelines released Friday by the Treasury Department spell out battery requirements for electric vehicles to qualify for a full consumer credit. **PHOTO: AFP**

Barcode turns 50 but its days might be numbered

THE patch of irregular vertical lines that revolutionised checking out at the supermarket and facilitated the globalisation of retail is turning 50.

But as the barcode celebrates its birthday on Monday, its days might be numbered as it faces competition from the younger QR code, the information-filled squares used in smartphones.

The trademark beep as a product is scanned is heard about six billion times per day across the world as around 70,000 items are sold each second.

It has become so integrated in the shopping experience that it is easy to forget how much the technology revolutionised retail by speeding up the checkout process and giving retailers the ability to trace

products and better manage inventory.

The barcode not only identifies a product, but “gives professionals in stores access to other functionalities”, said Laurence Vallana, head of France de SES-Imagotag, a company that specialises in electronic tagging.

Chewing gum to fruit

Barcodes were initially patented by Norman Joseph Woodland and Bernard Silver in the United States in 1952.

But it wasn’t until nearly two decades later, in 1971, that US engineer George Laurer perfected the technology and moves towards its commercialisation began.

On 3 April 1973 the standard to identify products was agreed by a number of large

retailers and food companies. It later became known as EAN-13, which stands for European Article Number and the number of digits in the barcode.

The following year, on 26 June in the US state of Ohio, the first product was scanned: a pack of chewing gum that is now in the National Museum of American History in Washington.

Today, the non-governmental organisation Global Standard 1 manages the barcode system and counts about two million firms as members.

It provides companies with a unique “global trade item number” for each product, which is then translated into the barcode. Each firm must pay an annual fee based on their sales, up to nearly \$5,000 per year. — AFP



A barcode or bar code is a method of representing data in a visual, machine-readable form. Initially, barcodes represented data by varying the widths, spacings and sizes of parallel lines. **PHOTO: AFP**

ICBC profit expands in 2022



Local residents walk past a service outlet of the Argentine subsidiary of the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China in Buenos Aires, capital of Argentina. **PHOTO: LI MING/XINHUA**

THE Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (ICBC), China’s biggest commercial lender, reported a net profit increase of 3.5 per cent last year.

The company’s net profit attributable to shareholders stood at 360.48 billion yuan (about 52.46 billion US dollars) in 2022, according to its annual report.

Its business revenue

dropped 2.6 per cent year on year during the period, according to the report.

Last year, the ICBC provided over 6.4 trillion yuan of financial support to the real economy.

By the end of 2022, its non-performing loan ratio stood at 1.38 per cent, down 0.04 percentage points from the end of 2021. — Xinhua

European aviation sector fears CO2 rules could clip its wings

EUROPEAN airlines fear losing out to rivals based outside the EU that can ignore the bloc’s emissions-reduction rules to become carbon neutral by 2050.

The “Fit for 55” package sets out an initial goal of reducing emissions by 55 per cent in 2030 compared with the 1990

level.

This involves bloc-level obligations to scale up the use of sustainable aviation fuels (SAFs) to be blended with fossil fuels in all flights departing from European airports.

SAFs come from sources such as municipal solid waste,

leftovers from the agricultural and forestry industry, used cooking oil, crops and plants, and hydrogen.

These technologies are still developing and the end product is more expensive, thereby placing additional costs on airlines obliged to use them while passengers will have to pay more for flights. The aviation sector is growing in Asia and the Middle East and companies based there could benefit greatly as they are not subject to these constraints, industry experts say.

“The European airline industry has to live with the fact that it’s cheaper to bypass environmental reduction ideas if you hop outside of Europe,” Carsten Spohr, CEO of German carrier Lufthansa, said at the Airlines for Europe (A4E) aviation summit in Brussels on Wednesday. — AFP



European airlines fear losing out to rivals based outside the EU that can ignore the bloc’s emissions-reduction rules to become carbon neutral by 2050. **PHOTO: AFP**

Iraq Kurd oil exports to resume Monday under Baghdad supervision

IRAQ’S autonomous Kurdistan region is to resume oil exports though Turkey Monday but in the future they will be supervised by the federal government in Baghdad, officials from both

sides said.

The outcome, thrashed out in talks between federal and regional officials, spells the end of independent oil exports by the Kurdish regional government

and marks a clear limit to its autonomy.

Ankara had stopped handling Iraqi Kurdish oil last month after an international tribunal ruled in a nine-year-old dispute

that Baghdad was right to insist on overseeing all Iraqi oil exports.

“Sales of Kurdistan crude will be managed from now on by the State Oil Marketing Organization,” a federal government

official told AFP on Saturday.

A “joint committee” formed by the federal and regional governments will supervise the export process, the official added. — AFP

Hun Sen nominates his son as general election candidate

CAMBODIAN Prime Minister Hun Sen's ruling party has nominated his eldest son to be a candidate in the general election in July, its document showed Saturday.

In a decision letter, a copy of which was seen by Kyodo News, Hun Manet, already endorsed by the Cambodian People's Party as future prime minister, is the first of 12 candidates on the party's list for 23 July election for the National Assembly.

Hun Sen, who has ruled the country since 1985, has hinted at stepping down but repeatedly said that he will stand again as the only candidate for prime minister in the



In this file photo taken on 18 June 2020, Cambodian Armed Forces deputy commander-in-chief Lieutenant General Hun Manet walks past the honour guard during a ceremony to deploy 290 purchased Chinese military trucks to its security forces at the National Olympic stadium in Phnom Penh. PHOTO: TANG CHHIN SOTHY / AFP/FILE

upcoming election. Some government sources said Hun Sen might consider transferring power to his son, most likely after a Senate election that will be held in 2024. Hun Manet, 45, is holding several positions including the commander of the Royal Cambodian Army and the head of the country's anti-terrorism forces. According to the Constitution, a prime minister has to be a member of the National Assembly. In the 2018 election, Hun Sen's ruling party won all 125 seats in the lower house. Cambodia holds a general election every five years. — Kyodo

Ecuador declares emergency rule in major port to combat crime



This handout picture released by the Ecuadorian Communication Secretary shows Ecuador's President Guillermo Lasso speaking during a nationwide simultaneous TV broadcast in Quito on 30 March 2023. PHOTO: BOLIVAR PARRA / ECUADORIAN COMMUNICATION SECRETARY / AFP

ECUADOR on Saturday declared a state of emergency in the nation's major port and other areas reeling from drug-related

crime. The decree permits security forces to set up checkpoints and conduct warrantless searches of

people and property. Speaking in a televised address to the nation, President Guillermo Lasso said he had declared a state of emergency in the port of Guayaquil and the neighboring districts of Duran and Samborondon, as well as in Santa Elena and Los Rios provinces. Lasso added that the state of emergency included a nightly curfew from 1 am to 5 am in the affected areas. Last year, Lasso declared similar temporary states of emergency three times for Guayaquil, which has faced a sharp spike in organized-crime-related killings. — AFP

Biden may visit to Japan chip plant on G-7 summit sidelines

US President Joe Biden may visit a cutting-edge semiconductor factory operated by a US chip giant in western Japan when he visits for the Group of Seven summit in Hiroshima in May, according to diplomatic sources. In a show of close bilateral co-operation in the semiconductor field, he will be accompanied by Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida to the plant run by Micron Technology Inc.'s Japanese unit, the sources said.

The US administration is providing huge subsidies to expand its domestic chip industry,



Photo taken on 22 March 2023, shows a semiconductor factory of Micron Memory Japan K.K., a subsidiary of US chip giant Micron Technology Inc, in Higashihiroshima in the western Japan prefecture of Hiroshima. PHOTO: KYODO seeing it as important to national security and providing a competitive edge in the confrontation with China. — Kyodo

WORLD: TOP HEADLINES

Israelis protest now-frozen judicial reform for 13th week

THOUSANDS of Israelis protested in Tel Aviv Saturday for a 13th straight week against a controversial judicial overhaul now frozen by the government while talks are held with party representatives. Carrying Israeli flags, people marched through the centre of Israel's commercial hub, chanting "democracy" and carrying placards condemning the hard-right government of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. Smaller rallies were taking place in other cities. Demonstrations erupted in January after the coalition announced its reform package, which the government says is necessary to rebalance powers between lawmakers and the judiciary. The proposed reforms would curtail the authority of the Supreme Court and give politicians greater powers over the selection of judges, which opponents say could imperil Israeli democracy. On Monday, Netanyahu announced a "pause" in the passage of the necessary legislation through parliament, in the face of a crippling general strike triggered by his announcement that he was firing Defence Minister Yoav Gallant for calling for just such a pause. — AFP

Protesters face off in Kyiv as clergyman's home raided

PROTESTERS faced off outside a historic monastery in the Ukrainian capital on Saturday after the home of a leading clergyman was raided by the security services. Metropolitan Pavlo of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, which has been accused of links with Moscow despite renouncing them, was called in for questioning on charges of inciting religious hatred. The SBU security service said Pavlo is suspected of "justifying and denying the aggression by the Russian army against Ukraine and of glorifying its members" as well as "violating the equality of citizens on racial, national, regional and religious grounds". "The law and the responsibility for violating it are the same for everyone and a cassock is no guarantee of pure intentions," SBU chief Vasyl Maliuk said in a statement, accusing Russia of using religion "to promote propaganda and divide Ukrainian society". The SBU said it had raided the home of Pavlo, who was later taken to court for a hearing to decide whether or not he should be detained, an AFP reporter saw. —AFP

Montenegro votes in presidential runoff

MONTENEGRINS headed to the polls Sunday to elect their next president in a vote that could see a young upstart unseat incumbent Milo Djukanovic, who has dominated the country's political scene for decades.

The outcome of the contest will likely determine the balance of power in the Balkan nation ahead of a snap parliamentary vote due in June, following months of gridlock after the government collapsed in August.

Montenegro's president, elected for a five-year term, has a mostly ceremonial posi-



Montenegro President Milo Djukanovic is facing a stiff election challenge from a rising political star. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

tion and most of the political power resides with the prime minister.

Polls opened at 7:00 am (0500 GMT) local time and close at 8:00 pm. Unofficial results are expected late Sunday evening.

The runoff comes two weeks after the first round, where Djukanovic beat back a range of opponents hoping to shake up the political scene, garnering 35 per cent of the vote compared to 29 per cent for his main challenger, Jakov Milatovic.

However, analysts have

largely favoured Milatovic to win the presidency, arguing the pro-European economist is likely to appeal to a large number of voters desperate for change after decades of rule by Djukanovic and his Democratic Party of Socialists (DPS).

"Milatovic offers a different vision, economic prosperity and cooperation," Dragan Vucacic, a 66-year-old radio and TV presenter, told AFP.

The DPS has been hit by repeated setbacks since the party suffered their first major defeat in the 2020 parliamentary elections. — AFP

WORLD: TOP HEADLINES

Venezuela corruption probe nets 42 officials

MORE than 40 people have been arrested in Venezuela in an anti-corruption drive sweep of state oil company PDVSA and other related government bodies, the prosecutor's office said Saturday.

The crackdown began on 17 March following a communique issued by the anti-corruption police, who called for the prosecution of officials who "could be involved in serious acts of corruption and embezzlement."

So far, the country's powerful oil minister, Tareck El Aissami, has resigned over the graft probe, while the anti-corruption drive has targeted officials in PDVSA as well as other public entities.

The prosecutor's office has so far arrested "42 subjects linked to various corruption schemes that have sought to embezzle... the national economy," Attorney General Tarek William Saab said on Twitter.

The most recent high-profile arrest was Pedro Maldonado, president of state-owned Corporacion Venezolana Guayana, as well as officials from metals firm SIDOR. — AFP

Two die after hot-air balloon catches fire in Mexico

TWO people have died after a hot-air balloon flying near Mexico's famed Teotihuacan archeological site caught fire, the government said Saturday.

"The passengers jumped from the balloon," the government of the state of Mexico said in a statement, adding that a child suffered burns.

It identified the victims as a 39-year-old woman and a 50-year-old man, without providing their names. It said the minor had suffered second-degree burns to the face as well as a fracture of the right femur. It did not say whether there were any other passengers on the balloon.

A video posted on social media shows the balloon's gondola on fire, in a perfectly clear sky.

Several tour operators offer balloon flights over Teotihuacan, some 45 miles (70 kilometers) northeast of Mexico City, for around \$150.

With its Pyramids of the Sun and the Moon, and its Avenue of the Dead, Teotihuacan is a popular tourist destination, a surviving monument to the pre-Columbian period. — AFP

Uzbekistan tries to garner backing for controversial vote

ON stage in front of a few hundred people, an entertainer desperately tries to sell a controversial April referendum that could extend the rule of Uzbekistan's autocratic leader until 2040.

The 30 April vote is on a constitutional amendment that would introduce seven-year presidential terms and allow President Shavkat Mirziyoyev to run for two new terms.

This would allow Mirziyoyev, in power since 2016, to potentially rule for two more decades.

"Will you come to vote?" the entertainer asks the mostly young crowd.

Few doubt the outcome of



Few doubt the outcome of the referendum, billed as ushering in an 'era of development'. **PHOTO: AFP**

the referendum, billed as ushering in an "era of development".

Some of the students at the event in Jizzakh in central Uzbekistan told AFP their professors forced them to come and even provided them with flags, banners and caps. — AFP

Police bust multi-billion dollar Brazil-Europe drug ring



Brazil's Minas Gerais State Federal Police stand in front of a seizure of more than a ton of cocaine, which was concealed in a truck carrying cat litter, on 7 October 2022. **PHOTO: MINAS GERAIS STATE FEDERAL POLICE / AFP/FILE**

BRAZILIAN and European police have busted a drug-trafficking ring that shipped more

said Friday. After a two-year multi-national investigation, police arrested 15 suspects Thursday in a series of raids and seized more than \$87 million (\$80 million euros) in assets, said Brazilian federal police and the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation (Europol).

"In a significant victory for the war on drugs, law enforcement in Latin America and Europe have taken down one of Brazil's most active drug trafficking organisations inundating Europe with multi-tonnes shipments of cocaine," Europol said in a statement. — AFP

than 17 tonnes of cocaine worth billions of dollars from South America to Europe, authorities

Hun Sen nominates his son as general election candidate

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SPORT

Myanmar to face Iran in Paris Olympic Women's Football Qualifiers

WOMEN'S OLYMPIC FOOTBALL TOURNAMENT PARIS 2024™
ASIAN QUALIFIERS ROUND 1

5 APRIL 2023 | 4:00 PM
IR IRAN vs MYANMAR

8 APRIL 2023 | 4:00 PM
MYANMAR vs IR IRAN

LIVE ON SKY NET HD CHANNELS

PHOTO:MFF

PREVIOUSLY, host Myanmar is in the first stage of Group (B) of the 2024 Paris Olympic Women's Football Tournament Asian Zone Qualifiers with Iran, Bangladesh, the Maldives and Bangladesh.

As Bangladesh, and the Moldovan teams withdrew from the tournament, only the host Myanmar and the Iran will continue to compete.

After the Asian Football Confederation accepted the withdrawal of Bangladesh and

the Maldives, the fixture list was revised.

According to the re-drafting of the schedule, team Myanmar and Iran will have to compete in two matches as the home and away matches system, and all these two matches will be played only in Myanmar.

Team Myanmar will play against Iran on 5 and 8 April at 4:00 pm Myanmar time at Thuwunna Stadium.

The team with the most points from two matches will

advance to the second round of the Asian Zone qualifiers for the 2024 Paris Olympic Women's Football Tournament.

If the score is the same after playing two games on 8 March, overtime will continue for 30 minutes.

If there is no result of winning or losing, the penalty decision must be taken.

The matches will be broadcast live on SKY NET Channel, Myanmar Football Federation stated. — KZL

Joshua says Fury clash is the fight the 'boxing world needs'



Oleksandr Usyk (left) fights Anthony Joshua on 3 September 2022 in London, England. PHOTO: AFP/FILE

ANTHONY Joshua has insisted a "Battle of Britain" with Tyson Fury is the bout "the boxing world needs" after he came through a "do or die" fight with American heavyweight Jermaine Franklin.

Former world champion Joshua enjoyed his first professional victory since 2020, albeit in somewhat grinding fashion,

with a unanimous points decision success at London's O2 Arena late on Saturday.

Following successive defeats by Oleksandr Usyk, who deprived the now 33-year-old of his world titles across London in Tottenham two years ago, another loss could have meant the end of Joshua's career.

Joshua, however, prevailed over Franklin with a decisive 118-11, 117-111, 117-111 success on the scorecards of the three judges, repeatedly landing with his left jab and hitting his opponent with several powerful right-handed punches. There has long been talk of Joshua fighting undefeated WBC champion Fury. — AFP

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

- 1. Political affairs**
 - (a) To build a Union based on democracy and federalism, through a disciplined and genuine multiparty democratic system that is fair and just.
 - (b) To prioritize the achievement of enduring peace for the entire nation in line with the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA).
 - (c) To continue implementing the principle of peaceful co-existence among countries through an independent, active, and non-aligned foreign policy.
 - (d) To ensure peace, stability, rule of law, and the safe and smooth functioning of transport networks across the Union.
- 2. Economic affairs**
 - (a) To enhance development based on agriculture and livestock using modern production techniques and to strengthen all-round development in other sectors of the economy.
 - (b) To develop a stable market economy and promote international investment in order to enhance the economic development of the entire National people.
 - (c) To assure support for the sustainability of Micro-, Small- and Medium-Sized Enterprises (MSMEs) that prioritize import substitution, export production, and the use of domestically produced raw materials, in order to increase domestic production and generate employment opportunities.
 - (d) To advance the socioeconomic life of the people, in order to ensure the country's prosperity and food security.
- 3. Social affairs**
 - (a) To ensure a strong and dynamic Union spirit, the genuine spirit of patriotism.
 - (b) To respect and promote the customs and traditions of all National people and preserve and safeguard their faiths, beliefs, culture, and characteristics of patriotic nationalism.
 - (c) To strengthen basic health care in order to achieve the emergence of a health system that enhances the longevity and health of the entire nation.
 - (d) To comprehensively promote the education sector to make it capable of producing the human resources necessary for building a modern, developed, and progressive democratic nation.

Newcastle up to third after beating Man Utd

NEWCASTLE avenged their League Cup final loss against Manchester United as Joe Willock and Callum Wilson clinched a 2-0 win that lifted the Magpies into third place in the Premier League on Sunday.

Eddie Howe's side were beaten 2-0 by United at Wembley five weeks ago in their first major final for 24 years.

But Newcastle might swap silverware for a lucrative Champions League berth and second half goals from Willock and Wilson at a raucous St James' Park moved them closer to that ambition.

Newcastle's third successive league win — and their first against United since 2019 — took them above their fourth

placed opponents on goal difference.

They sit one point ahead of fifth placed Tottenham, who visit Everton on Monday, as the race hots up to qualify for next season's Champions League via a top four finish.

It is 46 years since Newcastle last finished above United, but the Magpies, fuelled by Howe's astute management and the financial backing of their Saudi owners, now have a rare chance to emulate that feat.

United are without a win in their last three league games, thrashed 7-0 at Liverpool and then held to a goalless draw by lowly Southampton before this setback on Tyneside. — AFP