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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.

SAC Chairman PM Senior General Min Aung Hlaing attends erecting the victorious post at focal point of Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal in Cocogyun Township

Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing presses the button to unveil the victorious post at the focal point of the Andaman Sea and the Bay of Bengal on 9 April 2023.

CHAIRMAN of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, accompanied by wife Daw Kyu Kyu Hla, Council Joint Secretary Lt-Gen Ye Win Oo and wife, Council members and Union Ministers, attended the ceremony to erect the victorious post at the focal point of the Andaman Sea and the Bay of Bengal in Cocogyun Township yesterday morning.

At the airport lounge, the Senior General and wife presented lunch for local people through officials.

An official reported on emergence of the victorious post at the focal points of the two seas. The Chief Minister of Yangon Region and the Commander-in-Chief (Navy) cut the ribbon to unveil the victorious post.

The Senior General pressed the button to unveil the victorious post at the focal point of the Andaman Sea and the Bay of Bengal. The Commander-in-Chief (Navy) presented a commemorative gift to the Senior General.

The Senior General, wife and party sprinkled scented water on the victorious post and had documentary photo taken.

Cocogyun Township is formed with Mingalar Island, Slipa Island, Rat Island, Jerry Island and Cocolay Island. It is located 242 nautical miles from Yangon and 125 nautical miles from Hainggyikyun. In accord with the guidance of the Senior General on his inspection tour to Cocogyun on 28 December 2021, the victorious post was erected. The Bay of Bengal is a northeastern part of the Indian Ocean, northwest to India, east to Myanmar, south to the Andaman and Nicobar Island. The Andaman Sea, northeastern part of the Indian Ocean is located

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Yangon Mayor oversees preparations for city's Maha Thingyan festival

Sanitation is being carried out at People's Park in Yangon on 8 April.

YANGON City Development Committee Chairman Yangon Mayor U Bo Htay inspected the construction of pavilions, stalls, installation of sprinklers, sprinkler guns and water pipelines at the People's Square and People's Park 8 April.

Next, the mayor and party viewed sanitation at the Maha Wizaya Pagoda by municipal workers. He also checked the repaving of asphalt concrete (AC) along Anawrahta Road in Botahtaung and Kyauktada townships, the construction of Yangon Mayor Maha Thingyan Pavilion and Walking Thingyan between Maha Bandoola Road and Merchant Road.

Then, the mayor addressed the coordination meeting with officials from the Myanmar Motion Picture Organization, Myanmar Theatrical Association and Myanmar Music Association at the City Hall, and fulfilled the necessary things. — MNA/KZW

Mandalay to hold Walking Thingyan activity

IT is known that the Walking Thingyan will be added into the 2023 Myanmar traditional Thingyan Festival in Mandalay for locals to enjoy.

Starting from the eve of Thingyan festival on 13 April, entertainment programmes, pavilions to donate refreshment, water-throwing pavilions and other great recreational programmes will be included in the Mingala Mandalay Myanmar Traditional Walking Thingyan and the Walking Thingyan along 26th street from 66th to 78th streets in the Chanmyathazi Township, Mandalay.

Mandalay Maha Thingyan Pavilion.

Preparations being made for holding Mingalar Mandalay Walking Thingyan festival along 26th Street between 66th and 78th Street in Mandalay.

The Mingala Mandalay Myanmar Traditional Walking Thingyan is held on the 73rd Street during Thingyan festival to preserve Myanmar traditional culture against disappearance. The main pavilion and six zones have been set inside the walking Thingyan, said Deputy Managing Director U Soe Naing Oo of Mandalay Management Corporation Co, Ltd.

Snacks and cold drinks will be served in the Mingalar Mandalay Walking Thingyan, and the entertainment programme is scheduled every day from 9 am to 12 pm and one more from 3 pm to 6 pm, Daw Zin Mar Tun, Business Development Director of New Starlight Group of Companies said.

Similarly, there are six pavilions including the Mandalay Mayor Maha Thingyan Central Pavilion at the walking Thingyan festival along 26th Street between 66th Street and 78th Street. It will be decorated with the atmosphere of Myanmar traditional culture, and it will also be held in a lively manner with entertainment programmes featuring famous singers and artistes.

In addition, there are 11 pavilions around the Mandalay Moat including Mandalay Mayor Maha Thingyan Pavilion, five water-throwing and entertainment pavilions in downtown and 16 pavilions for refreshments around the moat. In the northern and western sections of the moat, arrangements have been made for the revellers to enjoy the festival with water pumps, and the Zaychothu water pavilion is set up near the clock tower of the Mandalay Zaygyo Market to the accompaniment of Myoma Band. — Maung Aye Chan/CT

No new case of COVID-19 reported on 9 April, total figure registers 634,098

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases registered **634,098** after **no** new case was reported on 9 April 2023 according to the Ministry of Health. The total number of patients who have recovered from COVID-19 in the country reached **614,596**.

The death toll from COVID-19 in the country remained unchanged at **19,490** on 9-4-2023 with no new death reported from the pandemic. The country has vaccinated **30,990,358** people aged 18 and above for COVID-19 vaccines and **6,848,699** people aged under 18 till 8 April 2023. — GNLM

Multiparty democratic system will be implemented under the political trend

THE multiparty democratic system will be implemented under the political trend whereas the administrative system will be a combined system of democratic administration and federal administration. It is an administration all ethnic people and citizens aspire to.

(Excerpts from the speech delivered by State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at the meeting with Union ministers, the Nay Pyi Taw Council chairman, chief ministers of regions and states and chairpersons of self-administered zones and division on 6 January 2023)

SAC Chairman PM Senior General Min Aung Hlaing attends erecting the victorious post at focal point of Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal in Cocogyun Township

Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing views the documentary video clip on underwater natural scenes and water creatures cast in the Myanmar seas at the local naval base yesterday.

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east to Myanmar's coast in the Mottama gulf, Thai coast and Malayan peninsula, and west to the Andaman and Nicobar Island. The sea is connected with the Malacca strait. Some 8,000 foreign going vessels pass the Preparis water course in north of Cocogyun and Coco water course in the south yearly. Hence, such an area is important not only for international maritime trade measure but for the maritime interests of Myanmar.

The Senior General and party inspected construction of an earthen road between Byaing Island and Jerry Island.

The Senior General views renovation of the old detention centre in Cocogyun in its original works yesterday.

The Senior General and party also viewed renovation of the old detention centre in Cocogyun in its original works.

At the local naval base, the Senior General viewed the documentary video clip on underwater natural scenes and water creatures cast in the Myanmar seas.

In his instruction, the Senior General stressed the need to systematically supervise underwater natural resources of the country not to be lost. Exploration of underwater natural resources and scene will help improve tourism industry. Officials need to take preventive measures against illegal fishing and the acts to harm water creatures in the Myanmar waters. It is necessary to put rare water creatures of the Myanmar waters on record. Moreover, the video records should be screened on underwater natural resources and water animals of the Myanmar sea for raising knowledge of the people. — MNA/TTA

Illegal timbers, consumer goods, industrial materials, electronics, auto parts and vehicles confiscated

THE on-duty teams under the supervision of the Customs Department confiscated 19 kinds of goods including 903 kilogrammes of Porcelain cups and 2,298 kilogrammes of glassware cups that were taken over 61 days of VPA worth K55,426,875 and 19.6 kilogrammes of Super kids supplement medicines worth K672,266 without import licences from three containers at the Asia World Port Terminal container checkpoint on 5 April and five kinds of goods including 24 work clothes jackets and 898 kilogrammes of Neuro-B plus supplement medicines worth K5.57 million without import licences from luggage at the Yangon International Airport (Import Desk) on 6 April. The action was taken under Customs procedures.

On 6 April, a mobile inspection team at the Myanmar Industrial Port Terminal container checkpoint captured 23,668 kilogrammes of polyester film worth K54,672,294 that were different from the Import Declaration (ID) from a container and the action was taken under Customs procedures.

In addition, an on-duty team at the Mayanchaung permanent checkpoint in Mon State nabbed 8,300 pairs of sandal foam slippers and 2,500 kilogrammes of enamel wire worth K11.65 million that were not declared in the Import Declaration (ID) from a Mitsubishi Fuso super great truck and a Hino Profia truck (approximately K73.5 million heading to Yangon from Myawady. The action was taken under Customs procedures.

Similarly, an inspection team led by the Lashio Township Customs Department seized 44 kinds of goods including warm clothes and computer accessories worth K13,823,995 without official documents from two Mitsubishi Fuso express buses (estimated value of K24 million) heading to Mandalay from Muse on Lashio detour. The action was taken under Customs procedures.

An on-duty team at the 16th-Mile Kyaukchaw checkpoint captured four kinds of goods including 300 motorcycle exhausts worth K8.85 million without official documents from a Mitsubishi Fuso express bus (estimated value of K30 million) heading to Mandalay from Lashio. The action was taken under Customs procedures.

A total of 5.669 tonnes of illegal timbers worth K1,318,440 was seized in Pyu and Padaung townships on 6 and 7 April and the action was taken under the Forest Law.

Therefore, 18 arrests (estimated value of K279,483,870) were made on three consecutive days from 5 to 7 April, according to the Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee. — MNA/MKKS

As Cocogyun region is blessed with natural beauties including the focal point of two seas, efforts should be made for development tourism industry: Senior General

ONLY when local people need to strive for operating manufacturing of agriculture and livestock based products will the region meet development, said Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at the meeting with departmental personnel, local people and town elders at the city hall of Cocogyun Township of Yangon Region yesterday morning.

The Senior General was accompanied by his wife Daw Kyu Kyu Hla, SAC Joint Secretary Lt-Gen Ye Win Oo and wife, and officials.

First, departmental officials and town elders reported regional data and requirements for regional development.

SAC Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing meets departmental personnel, local people and town elders at City Hall of Cocogyun Township on 9 April.

Speaking on the occasion, the Senior General expressed his pleasure for seeing greater progress of Cocogyun region than that of past 11 years. The Senior General said he posted a stone post as a victorious point of the Andaman Sea and the Bay of Bengal. In the tenure of the political government, Cocogyun region delayed in development due to weak unity. The Senior General recounted that he had pledged to provide aid for development of Cocogyun region as much as he can. As Cocogyun region is blessed with natural beauties including the focal point of two seas, efforts should be made for development tourism industry.

Local people warmly and frankly wave to the Senior General.

The Senior General continued to say that coconut plants and cocoa trees are being cultivated on Cocogyun region with conservation of natural beauties for regional development. Cocoa plants will give good results to the local naval base. In fact, such cultivation does not lead to the interests of the Tatmadaw but to the local people. Only when local people need to strive for operating manufacturing of agriculture and livestock based products will the region meet development.

The Senior General sprinkles scented water on departmental staff in Cocogyun on 9 April.

The Senior General stressed the need to teach students to have high critical thinking power and actual knowledge of school education. Only when the students have good critical thinking power will they manage their lives better.

The Senior General urged departmental personnel to apply their experiences and knowledge in their assigned duties so as to develop Cocogyun region and give advice to building tasks.

The Senior General presented foodstuffs for departmental staff of Cocogyun through Chairman of Township Administration Body U Hsan Min.

The Senior General and party enjoyed Myanmar traditional Thingyan festival together with departmental staff, town elders and local people by spraying each other. As the Senior General viewed round the city in a motorcade, local people warmly and frankly waved to the Senior General.—MNA/TTA

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR
www.gnlm.com.mm
www.globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

CIRCULATION & DISTRIBUTION
(+95) (01) 8604532,
Hotline - 09 454237515
ADVERTISING & MARKETING
(+95) (01) 8604530,
Hotline - 09 251022355
marketing@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
subscription@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

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newsroom@gnlm.com.mm, gnlmnews@gmail.com
www.gnlm.com.mm

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Cocogyun region sees much progress due to concerted efforts of local people and local military units rather than assistance of the State leaders: Senior General

SAC Chairman Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing meets Tatmadaw members and families of Cocogyun Station in Cocogyun Township on 9 April.

CHAIRMAN of the State Administration Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and wife Daw Kyu Kyu Hla, and officials yesterday afternoon met with Tatmadaw members and families from Cocogyun Station at the station hall.

In his speech, the Senior General stressed the need to efficiently use summer long holidays for offspring of officers, other ranks and families. They have to give good education legacy to children and systematic supervise them in their childhood. Those children must be arranged to attend classes as usual so as to actually have basic education knowledge.

The Senior General called for happily enjoying the Myanmar traditional Thingyan period and maintaining traditional culture in a systematic manner. Cocogyun region sees much progress due to concerted efforts of local people and local military units rather than assistance of the State leaders. Hence, they all have to continue further development of Cocogyun region through united strength of the local people for serving interests of the region and local people.

The Senior General and wife enjoy traditional Maha Thingyan festival together with Tatmadaw members and families in Cocogyun on 9 April.

The Senior General and wife release three-year-old sea turtle into the sea in Cocogyun Township on 9 April.

The Senior General presented foodstuff for Tatmadaw members and families and his wife, cash assistance to the station maternal and child welfare association through the commander of local naval base and wife.

After the meeting, the Senior General, wife and party splashed officers, other ranks and families hailing Myanmar Traditional Thingyan festival as part of warmly welcoming the New Year.

The Senior General inspected progress of agriculture and livestock farms of Cocogyun Station.

The Senior General inspected thriving 1.66 acres of Cocoa farm-1 and 3.34 acres of the farm-2 being operated by the local naval base and stressed that if cocoa plants can be grown successfully in the region, these plantations will contribute much to regional development.

The Senior General inspected the 7th-mile turtle hatching farm and the turtle farm of local naval base and instructed officials to systematically nurture sea turtles in Cocogyun region.

The Senior General and wife released two three-year-old sea turtles into the sea to mark pre-Myanmar Thingyan festival. His entourage and wives also released sea turtles into the sea.

At the domestic cattle farm of the local naval base, the Senior General instructed officials to operate domestic cattle farming tasks and systematically feed them. — MNA/TTA

Union Minister for Legal Affairs inaugurates new building of Myeik District and Township Law Office

UNION Minister for Legal Affairs and Union Attorney General Dr Thida Oo along with Taninthayi Region Chief Minister U Myat Ko and officials attended the opening ceremony of the new building of Myeik District and Township Law Office on the morning of 7 April.

First, Union Minister and Union Attorney General, the Taninthayi Region Chief Minister, Regional Economic Affairs Minister U Maung Gyi, and Regional Advocate-General U Ohn Than cut the ribbon and opened the new office building.

The four-storey new Myeik District and Township Law Office building is 44 feet long and 59 feet wide.

It was built by Naung Yoe Myanmar Development Company Limited with K452.214 million from the capital fund of the Office of the Taninthayi Region Advocate-General.

The Union Minister met law officers and staff in Taninthayi region, while the Regional Advocate-General explained the operations of the region. The Union Minister stressed the need for law officers to serve their duties without corruption. — MNA/KZL

The opening ceremony of Myeik District and Township Law Office in progress on 7 April.

New generation artistes have to enhance their capacity as much as possible to become successful artistes

Union Minister for Information U Maung Maung Ohn speaking at the meeting to hold Myanmar motion picture outstanding awarding ceremony in Yangon on 9 April.

IT is necessary to strive for successfully holding the film outstanding awarding ceremony with goodwill, said Union Minister for Information U Maung Maung Ohn at the meeting on holding motion picture outstanding award presentation ceremony for 2019, 2020 and 2022 at the Motion Picture Promotion Branch of the Information and Public Relations Department on Kokkine Avenue in Bahan Township yesterday morning.

Myanmar motion picture outstanding awards and fashion awards must be chosen correctly. The awards are not scrutinized by the Ministry of Information but by film artistes and other artistes.

Unscrupulous persons and terrorist groups are attempting to blame and hamper the Myanmar motion picture awarding ceremony. Hence, it is necessary to strive for successfully holding the film outstanding awarding ceremony with goodwill. Whatever they all face difficulties, they all have to hold the motion picture awarding ceremony in unison on a grand scale.

Meeting participants discussed their plans for holding the ceremony in their respective sectors.

In the afternoon, the Union Minister viewed artistic performances of youths who will contribute to the awarding ceremony at Myanmar Motion Picture Organization Office.

In meeting with the youths, the Union Minister expressed his belief for emergence of famous artistes from those youths. The artistes should emphasize artistic works only, serving the interests of the State and the people. They all have to revilative the film artistic arena. The Union Minister stressed new generation artistes have to enhance their capacity as much as possible to become successful artistes.—MNA/TTA

Union Information Minister U Maung Maung Ohn meets the youths who will contribute to film oustanding award presentation ceremony on 9 April.

A Cherry ferry running along Pansodan-Dala route.

Pansodan-Dala ferry to reduce services during Thingyan holidays

ACCORDING to the Delta Branch of the Inland Water Transport (IWT), the Cherry Pansodan-Dala ferry schedules will be reduced during the Thingyan holidays.

The ferries depart from Dala jetty at 5:30 am and run until 6:40 pm and leave Pansodan jetty at 6 am and run until 7 pm with 80 plies per day as usual.

During the Thingyan holidays from 13 to 17 April, the ferries will operate 20 plies per day. They will start to leave Dala jetty at 6 am and ferrying will finish at 6:30 pm. The ferries will begin operating from Pansodan jetty at 6:30 am and plying will complete at 7 pm. The ferry fee is K200 per ticket as before. A notice for passengers is posted at the entrance to the ticket office at the jetty. — TWA/MKKS

LOCAL BUSINESS

Bayintnaung wholesale commodity depots to be reopened on 18 April

TRADE activities at the Bayintnaung wholesale commodity depots will resume on 18 April.

The market was closed from 8 April. However, the wholesale market will see some trading activities depending on the demand from regions outside Yangon until 12 April before the Thingyan Festival days. Yet, the demand will drop for sure. Highway freight forwarders will stop running during the long Thingyan holidays. The market will be reopened in the post-Thingyan period (on 18 April). Bayintnaung market saw a supply of onions and potatoes at that time.

The long holidays affect banking services so the traders cannot make bank transfers. The warehouses of rice and edible oil will shut down the businesses.

The Bayintnaung wholesale market bustling with trade activities will be temporarily suspended from 13 to 17 April (four Thingyan Festival days and Myanmar New Year Day).

The commodities prices are usually inflated when the Thingyan holidays approach. This year, the prices of some commodities including rice and edible oil climbed. The authorities concerned made the imports of edible oil double for food security. Nonetheless, there is a high price difference of around K2,000 per viss between the market price and the wholesale reference price. – TWA/EM

The photo shows some commodity depots at the Bayintnaung Wholesale Market.

Goods overflow at highway bus terminals in Yangon amid approaching Thingyan

SINCE the Thingyan holidays are approaching, the amount of goods delivered to Yangon has decreased, reducing the number of highway trucks entering Yangon. Therefore, there is a shortage of trucks in Yangon, according to truck owners.

There are no shipments of regular products from around the regions these days since depots and brokerage houses in Yangon will be closed for the Thingyan holidays. Truck owner Ko Htaw told the Global New Light of Myanmar that most of the trucks going to Yangon are parked in other regions.

Some highway trucks are seen running to Yangon.

Yangon highway bus terminals are faced with difficulties in shipping goods to other regions and states due to a small number of trucks and a large number of goods to be exported, most of the highway bus terminals stated.

Although traders in Yangon have offered to pay higher fares than usual to deliver goods to other regions and states, trucks from those areas cannot come to Yangon without any goods to be delivered to Yangon as higher fares do not cover their expenses. Therefore, highway bus terminals are receiving goods with care, depending on the number of trucks available.

Since traders from other regions and states have ordered goods from Yangon to sell during Thingyan holidays, the number of goods to be shipped from Yangon's highway terminals to those areas is larger than usual.

If the goods cannot be shipped before the holiday, it is the responsibility of the highway bus terminal. Therefore, the goods to be shipped from the highway bus terminal are being accepted with caution. — TWA/CT

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100-basket of Shwebo Pawsan paddy price rises to K2.5 mln

ONE hundred baskets of newly harvested Shwebo Pawsan paddy price has increased to K2.5 million, according to Myanmar Shwebo Pawsan Farming, Milling and Trading Association.

At the end of 2022, when the freshly harvested Shwebo Pawsan paddy was brought into the market, the cost of 100-basket paddy was merely K1.6 million. Since then, the price has been gradually increasing, and its current price has increased to K2.5 million per hundred baskets.

Hence, along with the price increase of the newly harvested Shwebo Pawsan paddy, the price of Shwebo Pawsan rice has also increased.

The price of new Pawsan rice from Shwebo area has increased to K93,000 per bag in Yangon market currently. In addition, the prices of various types of rice in the Yangon market were also on the rise, and currently the prices of Pawsan rice from Myaungmya, Pathein and Pyapon areas stand at K75,000 per bag, Dedaye area at K73,000 and various areas at K72,000. Similarly, the price of low-grade rice stayed between K79,000 and K53,000 per bag depending on different varieties (Kyapyan, Dedaye Kyapyan, Khunni, Ngasein, Emahta, Pawkywe and Theepu), according to the Rice Commodity Exchange (Wadan), Myanmar Rice Trader's Association.

Starting from 3 August 2022, Myanmar Rice Federation, Myanmar Rice Trader's Association, Myanmar Rice Millers Association, and traders and brokers engaged in Wadan and Bayintnaung rice wholesale centres have been working together to offer fair prices for Shwebo Pawsan from K75,000-K77,000 per bag, Ayeyawady Pawsan from K52,000-K55,000 per bag, Kyapyan from K55,000-K60,000 per bag and short-mature rice varieties (90 days) from K35,000-K37,000 per bag. Each household can buy only one bag. Those traders and retailers are not entitled to buy them. — NN/KZL

OPINION

Reduce the use of plastic products for beautifying the environment

THE plastic product which is essential utensils for society becomes an environmental problem at present due to plastic pollution throughout the world. It is because plastic products cannot be easily decayed similar to paper and leave a bit to exist for many years.

Plastics can exist underground or in the water for a long time and cause harm to the environment in combing with other chemicals. As such, plastic debris may cause water creatures, to destroy ecosystems. In society, the use of plastic materials in which foods are kept for consumption, especially taking away tea or hot soup in plastic bags can be harmful to humans.

No one can deny that plastic is essential for society. But the plastic materials disposed of by society may block the proper flow of water in drains in monsoon. When these wastes reach the rivers, creeks, seas and oceans, it is very dangerous for water creatures. As such, global people need to take care of using plastic materials and reducing the use of plastic products not to harm the environment as well as living beings including human beings on the land and in the waters.

Some reliable statistics mentioned that plastic debris floating in the oceans may be weighing between 4.8 million tonnes and 12.7 million tonnes. Hence, 60-80 per cent of the waste which harms the ecosystem is plastic debris. If global countries miss chances to control the inflow of plastic debris into the oceans and seas, the volume of plastics may be larger than water creatures from the waters.

Some global countries prohibit the use of plastic products in various ways and mean. This being so, Myanmar needs to reduce the use of plastic products and plastic packaging materials as part of controlling environmental pollution. Moreover, it is necessary to lever up recycling plastic products as much as possible and produce personal goods.

Plastic products are cheap, portable and easy to package but bring bad impacts on society. Hence, people need to reduce the use of plastic bags in daily life. They should use easily decayed packaging materials such as leaves and paper in shopping and daily work processes.

No one can deny that plastic is essential for society. But the plastic materials disposed of by society may block the proper flow of water in drains in monsoon. When these wastes reach the rivers, creeks, seas and oceans, it is very dangerous for water creatures. As such, global people need to take care of using plastic materials and reducing the use of plastic products not to harm the environment as well as living beings including human beings on the land and in the waters.

The environment inhabited by all living beings including global people will be lovely and beautiful. In consequence, people will have greater improvement in health and lifestyle year after year, and some undesirable diseases will disappear from the world. If so, everybody can see a prosperous, beautiful and lovely environment in harmony with living beings in the coming years.

ARTICLE

WHO calls for concerted, urgent efforts to bridge gaps accentuated by Covid-19 pandemic

ON the occasion of World Health day this year, World Health Organization (WHO) has called for concerted, urgent efforts to bridge gaps accentuated by Covid-19 pandemic.

WHO celebrates 75 years of improving public health and well-being in the South-East Asia Region and globally, fully committed to achieving Health for All through universal health coverage (UHC) — when all people can access essential health services, without financial hardship, stated an official release of WHO.

Primary health care (PHC)

As per the release, for decades — and since even before the 1978 Declaration of Alma-Ata — high-level leaders and policymakers from across the Region have recognized the critical role that access for all to quality, affordable and comprehensive primary health care (PHC) can play in achieving UHC and therefore Health for All.

This has been well reflected in the Region's renewed, decade-long push to achieve UHC, which since 2014 has been one of eight Flagship Priorities of the Region.

Between 2010 and 2019, the Region increased its UHC service coverage index from 47 to 61. Between 2000 and 2017, the Region reduced the number of households impoverished or further impoverished from out-of-pocket spending on health from 30 per cent to 6 per cent. Since 2014, the density of doctors, nurses and midwives in the Region has improved by over 30 per cent — a tremendous achievement.

Sustainable Development Goal

WHO Regional Director for South-East Asia, Dr Poonam Khetrapal Singh said that five countries of the Region have already achieved the Sustainable Development Goal targets for under-five and neonatal mortality. Between 2000 and 2020, the Region achieved a 34 per cent decline in TB incidence rates, and by the end of 2020 had met each of the Global Technical Strategy for Malaria milestones for mortality and morbidity.

She said that since 2016, six countries of the Region have eliminated at least one neglected tropical disease and all countries continue to strengthen PHC services to prevent, detect, control and treat noncommunicable diseases.

"Impressively, the Region has maintained its polio-free status and continues to have eliminated maternal and neonatal tetanus as a public health problem. Five countries of the Region have eliminated measles, two have eliminated rubella, and four have controlled hepatitis B through immunization," said Poonam Khetrapal Singh.

She said that the Region has many more mountains to climb.

Essential health services

"Today, in the shadow of the COVID-19 crisis, around 40 per cent of people in the Region are unable to access essential health services. In 2017, around 299 million people in the Region faced catastrophic health spending, and an estimated 117 million people in the Region were pushed or further pushed below the purchasing power parity poverty line of US$ 1.90 a day — a figure that has since been exacerbated," she said.

As highlighted by the Region's 2021 Strategy for Primary Health Care, as well as the Region's vision to build back better from the COVID-19 pandemic, whole-of-government, whole-of-society action is needed to drive rapid and sustained progress towards UHC and Health for All. We must all contribute.

High-level leaders should maintain and strengthen political and financial commitments to achieve UHC, accelerating momentum ahead of the second UN General Assembly meeting on UHC in September this year.

"The COVID-19 crisis has shown that investments in UHC and health system resilience underpin not just health, but social and economic security, as well as the achievement of an array of Sustainable Development Goals," said Poonam Khetrapal Singh.

Region's Strategy for PHC

Policy makers and programme managers must continue to implement the Region's Strategy for PHC. Of specific focus should be strengthening public health infrastructure, workforce and financing, while at the same time increasing equity for those at risk of or who are already being left behind. Shared learning must continue to be a core priority, leveraging the full power of the Region's new Forum for PHC-Oriented Health Systems.

She further added that people and communities must increasingly assert their voice and Right to Health, including by directly engaging in local health decision-making processes.

As highlighted by the 2021 WHO handbook on social participation for UHC, as well as the Region's recently adopted resolution on enhancing social involvement in support of PHC and UHC, individuals and communities can play a key role in monitoring health service performance and holding health providers and policymakers to account.

Source : ANI

This photo taken on 1 September, 2021, shows how sweat samples are tested using a novel device that detects the COVID-19 coronavirus through specific odours, as it is being developed by Chulalongkorn University's chemistry department in Bangkok. **PHOTO: FOR REPRESENTATIONAL PURPOSE ONLY/ AFP**

Japan will end the current border control measures on travellers from overseas on 8 May in line with its decision to categorize COVID-19 as a common disease the same day, the government said on 3 April, in a major shift toward normalizing social and economic activities. **PHOTO: KYODO**

Asia Pacific region to grow faster on easing pandemic restrictions: ADB

ECONOMIC growth in developing economies in Asia and the Pacific in 2023 is going to be faster as the continued easing of pandemic restrictions boosts consumption, tourism, and investment, according to Asian Development Bank (ADB).

In its Asian Development Outlook (ADO) April 2023, it said the reopening of China after the pandemic is the main factor brightening Asia and the Pacific region's growth prospects.

Developing Asia

Excluding China, developing Asia is expected to grow 4.6 per cent this year and 5.1 per cent in 2024.

The region's inflation is forecast to moderate gradually toward pre-pandemic levels. It will decelerate to 4.2 per cent in 2023 and 3.3 per cent in 2024 after reaching 4.4 per cent last year.

Improved consumption and investment are boosting recovery in many regional economies, offsetting the impacts of elevated food and energy prices caused by the Russian invasion of Ukraine and other global factors.

According to the ADB report, tourism and remittances too are firm as pandemic restrictions ease further. In many tourism-dependent economies, visitor arrivals are steadily improving toward pre-pandemic levels.

Further, noting that tighter global financial conditions, combined with the increase in debt over the past decade and during the pandemic, have elevated financial stability risks, which it said is evident in the recent banking sector turmoil in the US and Europe.

It asserted these risks must be carefully monitored and proactively addressed.

Economies in Asia and the Pacific

"Prospects for economies in Asia and the Pacific are brighter, and they're poised for a strong recovery as we return to normalization following the pandemic," said ADB Chief Economist Albert Park.

"People are starting to travel again for leisure and work, and economic activities are gathering pace. Because many challenges remain, governments in the region need to stay focused on policies that support stronger cooperation and integration to promote trade, investment, productivity, and resilience."

Coming to India, its economy is estimated to expand by 6.4 per cent this year and 6.7 per cent next.

Strong tourism performance and robust domestic demand are boosting Southeast Asian economies like Indonesia, the Philippines, and Viet Nam, with the subregion projected to grow by 4.7 per cent this year and 5.0 per cent in 2024.

Established in 1966, ADB said it is committed to achieving a prosperous, inclusive, resilient, and sustainable Asia and the Pacific.

Source : ANI

CURRENT AFFAIRS

Sule Pagoda Road traffic seen on normal days.

Some parts of Yangon's Maha Bandoola Road, Sule Pagoda Road to be temporarily closed during Thingyan festival

THE Yangon Region Government has announced that certain areas of Maha Bandoola Road and Sule Pagoda Road in Yangon will be temporarily closed from 13 to 16 April due to the Thingyan Festival.

Plans are underway to hold water-throwing festival and Thingyan choral dances at the Mayor pavilion in front of the Yangon City Hall. As such, Maha Bandoola Road will be temporarily closed from Sule Pagoda Road to Pansodan Road and Sule Pagoda Road from Anawrahta Road to Merchant Road from 7 am to 6 pm during the period from 13 to 16 April. The Yangon Region government has issued a notification for motorists to use the detours on these days.—TWA/KZL

Myanmar aims to achieve an average per capita GDP of K2.45 million

IT is enacted in the National Planning Law 2023-2024 as a project objective to make the average gross domestic product of individuals (Per Capita GDP) to be more than K2.45 million at annual prices.

The average GDP is expected to increase by K400,000 over the 2022-2023 financial year. It is included in the National Planning Law signed and enacted by State Administration Council Chairman Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, on 31 March.

The National Planning Law, which takes effect on 1 April, is expected to increase gross domestic product and services (GDP) by 4.1 per cent at regular prices. More than K8,300 billion will be invested from the role of State, and it has been determined that only projects that benefit the state and citizens must be implemented.

In the last draft of the National Planning Law 2022-2023, the average gross domestic product of each individual (Per Capita GDP) was targeted to increase from K2,052,528 to K2,222,230 at annual prices.

In the current National Planning Law, the participation ratio of the agricultural sector, the industrial sector and the service sector in the total value of gross domestic product and services in annual prices are expected to reach 2.5 per cent, 4.8 per cent and 6.7 per cent respectively.

Some freight workers are seen at a port.

If the Union Government verifies that the submitted projects do not generate interest, the projects will see rejection, suspension and less approval, the National Planning Law stipulates. — TWA/CT

Plan underway to send about 280 Myanmar workers to South Korea in last week of April

Some Myanmar workers who worked in South Korea under EPS system last year seen at Yangon International Airport.

ABOUT 280 Myanmar workers will be sent to South Korea in the last week of April, according to the Public Overseas Employment Agency (POEA).

A total of 105 regular workers and 43 re-entry workers will be sent to South Korea and 132 more re-entry workers on 26 April. On recent days, the Public Overseas Employment Agency (POEA) announced that re-entry workers who will return to work in South Korea must report as soon as possible to renew their passports.

In addition, the restricted goods from Myanmar re-entry workers were seized at the entrance to Incheon International Airport on 29 March. They were fined and passport records have been processed.

There are some 50,000 Myanmar workers working in South Korea, and in March this year, 253 Myanmar workers with EPS system and 86 skilled welders with E-7-3 visa went to Korea to work. —TWA/KZW

Yangon Zoological Gardens to host Walking Thingyan Festival for three days

THE Walking Thingyan Festival will be held for three days from 10 to 12 April, with the aim of allowing visitors to Yangon Zoo to experience the taste of Thingyan festival in advance according to the Yangon Zoological Gardens.

Children's sing and dance performances, model show, dancer groups' dancing performances, music concerts, animal show and magic show will be presented at the Walking Thingyan.

In addition, plans to take pictures with cute animals, game programmes and Q&A session where gifts will be awarded. Yangon Zoological Gardens will be open from 8 am to 5 pm during Thingyan period, and the entrance fee is K2,500 per adult and K1,500 per children. —TWA/KZW

An advertisement on walking Thingyan seen at Yangon Zoological Gardens.

HEALTH/WELLNESS: WORLD

Amazon forests save $2bn in pollution healthcare: study

RAINFORESTS on Indigenous lands in Brazil's Amazon protect millions of people from heart and lung diseases by absorbing pollution and save $2 billion a year in healthcare costs, researchers said in a study published Thursday, urging increased protection against deforestation.

The article in the journal Communications Earth & Environment measured the forests' capacity to absorb smoke pollution from fires that are intentionally started to clear land for farming.

Combined analysis of 10 years of data on disease, forest cover and pollution found that each hectare of forest burned generates health costs of $2 million (1.8 million euros) a year due to lung and heart infections, they said.

The Yanomami are a group of approximately 35,000 indigenous people who live in some 200–250 villages in the Amazon rainforest on the border between Venezuela and Brazil. **PHOTO: REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE/ UNITED NATIONS**

They estimated that forests in Indigenous territories by absorbing pollution particles prevent a potential 15 million smoke-related respiratory and cardiovascular infections per year. Inhabited areas with large areas of forest had fewer infections than those with low cover, with particulate matter in the air reduced by the greenery, they wrote.

Lead author Paul Prist of the New York-based non-profit EcoHealth Alliance told AFP that to reduce the threat from fires it was necessary "to reduce deforestation, strengthen environmental legislation, increase the penalty for those who deforest and burn the forest and strengthen the agencies responsible for the management and control of fires."

The Amazon region is home to half of the world's remaining tropical forests. Indigenous territories make up more than a fifth of its land. — AFP

Most EU states back Brussels over Hungary anti-LGBTQ law

FIFTEEN of the EU's 27 member states are backing legal action by Brussels against Hungary over a law Budapest has passed that is deemed discriminatory against LGBT+ people.

On Thursday, France and Germany added their names to the list supporting the lawsuit brought by the European Commission to the Court of Justice of the European Union.

The other EU countries ranged against Hungary's contentious law are Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Greece, Ireland, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden.

The European Parliament has also joined the suit.

With the extensive line-up against Hungary, the lawsuit is "the largest human rights case in EU legal history," a Belgian rights group, Forbidden Colours, said on Friday.

A French lawmaker in the European Parliament, Pierre Karleskind, who is on the legislature's LGBTI intergroup, said it and the 15 EU countries backing the action "are clearly on the side of freedom". — AFP

Activists wear shirts reading "Love is a human right" as they fly a giant heart balloon in rainbow colours during a flashmob in order to protest against a new law in front of the parliament in Budapest on 8 July 2021. **PHOTO: ATTILA KISBENEDEK /AFP/FILE**

Int'l secondary school students experience traditional Chinese medicine in Malta

Zhang Yilong, a member of the 18th Chinese Medical Team for Malta, gives a lecture on traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) to a group of secondary school students from Germany and Luxembourg who are on a cultural exchange trip in Paola, Malta, 5 April 2023. **PHOTO: CHEN WENXIAN/XINHUA**

OVER 20 secondary school students from Germany and Luxembourg on Wednesday experienced traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) during their cultural exchange trip to Malta.

The students visited the Mediterranean Regional Centre for Traditional Chinese Medicine (MRCTCM) in Paola, Malta, where doctors from the 18th Chinese Medical Team for Malta demonstrated TCM treatments, such as moxibustion, cupping and massage, and explained their effects in an easy-to-understand way.

In addition to TCM treatments, the students had the opportunity to taste traditional Chinese food, make dumplings and learn about the liver-cleansing and detoxifying effects of chrysanthemum tea.

The activity was organized by the Confucius Institute Trier in Germany, with support of the Confucius Institute at the University of Malta. — Xinhua

Abortion pill at centre of escalating US court battle

FEDERAL judges in Texas and Washington on Friday issued dueling rulings that intensified the legal battle over abortion and a commonly used medical abortion drug.

The legal battle over the pill mifepristone has grown more intense since the US Supreme Court last year tossed out the federal right to the procedure.

The abortion pill was at the center of two conflicting federal court rulings on Friday.

In one ruling, a federal judge in Texas halted Food and Drug Administration approval of the abortion pill, pending a seven-day window to give the Justice Department time to appeal.

Then Friday night, in a dramatic lurch in a different legal direction, a federal judge in Washington state said that the FDA must keep the abortion pill available in at least 12 liberal states.

Here is background on the abortion pill and its use.

How widespread is abortion pill use?

According to the Guttmacher Institute, the pill accounted for more than half — 53 per cent — of the 930,160 abortions documented by the reproductive health research and policy organization in the United States in 2020. — AFP

ECONOMY
WORLD

China-Laos Railway cross-border passenger service to boost Laos' economic recovery

THE arrival of Chinese visitors is "a boon" for businesses that depend on tourism, said Noy Savanh, a food vendor at a night market in this capital city.

"Chinese tourists are valued guests in terms of their large number and strong spending power," Noy said.

"I believe that the cross-border passenger service on the China-Laos Railway will bring a lot more Chinese tourists to Laos and will be a strong boost to Laos' economy and tourism," she said, telling Xinhua that she is preparing for the arrival of Chinese travellers by learning some Chinese and providing Chinese menus.

Cross-border passenger service on the China-Laos Railway will notably boost Laos' tourism, the country's top priority in revitalizing its economy.

The tourism industry, a main source of foreign currency, has been viewed as a key sector to bolster the Lao economy, Deputy Head of the Prime Minister's Office Thipphakone Chanthavongsa has said at a meeting recently.

The meeting called for preparations for the planned start of cross-border passenger trains on the China-Laos Railway, which has become an important driver of the Lao tourism.

The first cross-border passenger service between the Lao capital Vientiane and Kunming, the capital city of southwest China's Yunnan province, will be operational on 13 April ahead of the Lao New Year holiday, which falls on 14-16 April.

The cross-border passenger train is a great advantage for Laos because it facilitates tourist travel. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

More than 200 Chinese tourists are expected to arrive in Laos on the first cross-border passenger train.

In February, Director General of the Tourism Development Department Phonemaly Inthaphome presented a draft plan on preparations for Chinese tourists, outlining the general situation and future outlook concerning the Chinese tourism market. — Xinhua

S Korea logs current account deficit for 2nd month in February

SOUTH Korea logged a current account deficit for the second consecutive month in February due to export fall and travel account deficit, central bank data showed Friday.

Current account balance, the broadest measure of cross-border trade, posted a deficit of 520 million US dollars in February, after registering a record deficit of 4.21 billion dollars in the prior month, according to the Bank of Korea (BOK).

It marked the first time in 11 years since 2012 that the country recorded the current account deficit for the second consecutive month. Trade deficit for goods came to 1.3 billion dollars in February, staying in red for the fifth straight month.

This photo taken on 7 March 2023 shows a wharf at the port of Busan, South Korea. The port of Busan is the largest seaport in the country. **PHOTO: WANG YILIANG/XINHUA**

Export declined 6.3 per cent from a year earlier to 50.52 billion dollars in February, while import gained 4.6 per cent to 51.82 billion dollars.

Services account deficit amounted to 2.03 billion dollars in February, turning downward from a surplus of 90 million dollars in the same month of last year. — Xinhua

Dockworker shortage shuts California ports

TWO of the busiest ports in the United States were shuttered Friday because not enough dockworkers turned up for work, a shippers representative said.

The shutdown comes as part of a long-rumbling dispute between shippers and the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) focused on pay and the role of automation.

"The largest ILWU local on the West Coast has taken a concerted action to withhold labour at the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach, resulting in widespread worker shortages," said a statement from the Pacific Maritime Association, the umbrella group that represents shippers.

"The workers who did show up were released because there was not a full complement of ILWU members to operate the terminals.

"The action by the Union has effectively shut down the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach — the largest gateway for maritime trade in the United States."

The ILWU insisted the only no-shows were those marking the Christian festival of Good Friday. — AFP

Russia threatens to scrap Ukraine grain deal

RUSSIAN Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov on Friday threatened to abandon a landmark grain deal with Ukraine if obstacles to Moscow's exports remained.

Negotiated in July by Turkey and the United Nations, the agreement allows Ukraine — one of the world's top grain producers — to export grain through a safe corridor in the Black Sea. "If there is no further progress in removing barriers to the export of Russian fertilizers and grain, we will think about whether this deal is necessary," Lavrov told a news conference in the Turkish capital Ankara, alongside his counterpart, Mevlut Cavusoglu.

The agreement has so far allowed the export of more than 27 million tonnes of grain and agricultural products.

It was renewed twice. When it was extended in March, Russia said it would be valid for 60 days instead of the 120 days in the original agreement.

Moscow has been complaining that its side of the agreement, promising the right to export fertilizer, is not being respected.

Turkey is pushing for a 120-day extension although it acknowledges that the agreement has not been fully implemented.

"We value the continuation of the agreement which is also important in terms of reducing the global food crisis," Cavusoglu said. — AFP

A UN-chartered ship loaded with 23,000 tonnes of Ukrainian wheat destined for Ethiopia. **PHOTO: HUGH RUTHERFORD / WFP VIA AFP/FILE**

Japan firm launches foie gras alternative using chicken liver

JAPANESE meatpacking firm NH Foods Ltd. recently began selling a foie gras alternative on a trial basis, using chicken liver to create a product at a price roughly one-third of the French delicacy.

The company uses a production technique that uses chicken liver, which typically sees a drop in demand during the cold season, to mimic the distinct taste and texture of the pricy delicacy without relying on a controversial poultry farming method used to produce foie gras, according to NH Foods.

Each package contains 120 grams of the product, named "Gras Foie," and a special balsamic vinegar sauce for 3,218 yen ($24). It is initially being offered on a shopping website run by crowdfunding service firm Makuake Inc, but will also become available on NH Foods' e-commerce website in June. To recreate the rich, creamy texture, pork fat and egg yolk are mixed with chicken liver and other ingredients, the company said.

Production of foie gras has recently been in decline and has been banned in several countries, including Britain, Germany and Italy, due to welfare concerns about geese and ducks, which must be force-fed to make foie gras, the French term for "fatty liver." —Kyodo

NH Foods proposes various recipes for its newly launched foie gras food alternative, made mainly from chicken liver, as seen in this photo taken 29 March 2023, in Tokyo. **PHOTO: KYODO**

Ads Call 09974424848

Sri Lanka sees increase in tourism earnings in first quarter

SRI Lanka has seen an increase from tourism earnings with around 530 million US dollars being received in the first three months of 2023, according to the latest data from the country's central bank.

Sri Lanka earned 198.1 million dollars in March, bringing tourism earnings in the first quarter to 529.8 million dollars, the data showed. In the first three months of 2022, Sri Lanka earned 482.3 million dollars from tourism.

A tourism official said earlier this month that Sri Lanka's tourism industry is aiming to attract 2 million visitors in 2023, compared to the previous target of 1.5 million.

Tourism, one of Sri Lanka's leading foreign exchange earners, suffered a setback due to the COVID-19 pandemic as well as economic and political crises in the country. —Xinhua

Sri Lanka earned 198.1 million dollars in March, bringing tourism earnings in the first quarter to 529.8 million dollars. **PHOTO: REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE/ AFP**

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
M.V TI2 APPLE VOY.NO. (017E)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V TI2 APPLE VOY.NO. (017E)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **10-4-2023** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **HPT** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S TI2 LOGISTICS PTE LTD

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
M.V SINAR BANDA VOY.NO. (281N)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V SINAR BANDA VOY.NO. (281N)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **10-4-2023** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MIP** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S SAMUDERA SHIPPING LINES

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
M.V METHI BHUM VOY.NO. (387W)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V METHI BHUM VOY.NO. (387W)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **10-4-2023** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MITT/MIP** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S REGIONAL CONTAINER LINES

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
M.V GSS YANGON VOY.NO. (167N)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V GSS YANGON VOY.NO. (167N)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **10-4-2023** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **AWPT** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S NEW GOLDEN SEA SHIPPING PTE LTD

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
M.V VASI STAR VOY.NO. (192W)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V VASI STAR VOY.NO. (192W)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **10-4-2023** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **AYIT** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S VASI SHIPPING LINE PTE LTD

GLOBAL AFFAIRS

AUKUS nuclear submarine cooperation seriously jeopardizes peace, stability in Asia-Pacific: embassy

THE United States, Britain and Australia have been pressing ahead with nuclear submarine cooperation despite being widely questioned, which creates nuclear proliferation risks and undermines the international non-proliferation system, the Chinese Embassy in Britain has said.

In response to a question concerning the trilateral Australia-UK-US (AUKUS) cooperation on nuclear submarines, the embassy said on Friday that such cooperation will exacerbate the resurgence of the Cold War mentality, trigger a new round of arms race, and further provoke regional security and military confrontation, seriously jeopardizing regional peace, stability and prosperity.

BAE Systems Submarines, is a wholly owned subsidiary of BAE Systems, based in Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria, England, and is responsible for the development and production of submarines. **PHOTO: REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE/ AFP/FILE**

The Asia-Pacific is now the most dynamic and fastest growing region in the world, which hasn't come easily, the embassy said in a press release. "The AUKUS cooperation is designed to serve the US geopolitical agenda to introduce group politics and Cold War confrontation into the Asia-Pacific with military deterrence. It is aimed at creating a NATO-replica in the Asia-Pacific, which runs counter to peace and stability in the region." — Xinhua

Iraq condemns Türkiye 'bombardment' near Kurdistan airport

THE Iraqi president on Saturday condemned Türkiye for bombarding an airport in the autonomous Kurdish region, while the commander of the Kurdish-led and US-allied Syrian Democratic Forces was present.

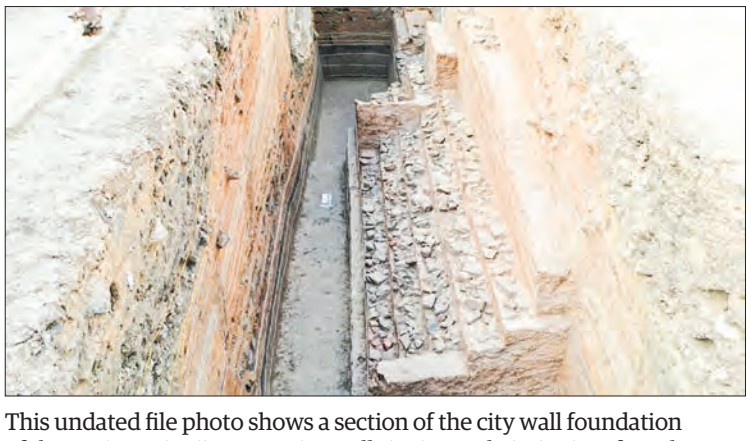
US forces were also present during the incident in Sulaimaniyah, the SDF said, and the Pentagon in Washington confirmed that "a convoy including US military personnel" was struck.

This picture shows the departure lounge and control tower of Sulaymaniyah International Airport. **PHOTO: SHWAN MOHAMMED/ AFP/FILE**

"Turkish military operations against the Kurdistan region continue to take place, the last being the bombardment (Friday) against Sulaimaniyah civilian airport," Iraqi President Abdel Latif Rashid said in a statement.

The bombardment caused an explosion near the airport wall and led to a small fire which was quickly brought under control, a statement from airport security said at the time. — AFP

Ancient city wall relics found in north China's Tianjin


This undated file photo shows a section of the city wall foundation of the ancient Tianjin's east city wall site in Nankai District of north China's Tianjin. **PHOTO: TIANJIN MUNICIPAL CULTURAL RELICS PRESERVATION CENTER/HANDOUT VIA XINHUA**

OVER 2,000 porcelain, pottery, metalware, and other relics dating back to the Yuan Dynasty (1271-1368) have been uncovered in an ancient city wall site of north China's Tianjin Municipality.

Located in today's Nankai District of Tianjin, the ancient Tianjin's east city wall site boasts various ruins, including the city wall foundation, roads, and railway tracks built between the Ming (1368-1644) and Qing (1644-1911) dynasties and the period between 1911 and 1949. — Xinhua

WORLD: TOP HEADLINES

Four dead in Thailand shooting: police

AT least four people were killed in a shooting in southern Thailand on Saturday, police said, with local media reporting that officers were still searching for the suspect.

The attack started at about 5 pm (1100 GMT), in Khiri Rat Nikhom district in Surat Thani province – roughly 600 km south of the capital Bangkok.

"Four people died," local head of police Kriangkrai Kraikaew said, declining to give further details.

The shooting happened near the home of a former village head, local media reported.

Thailand has high rates of gun ownership and there has been a steady trickle of violent incidents in the past 12 months, including one of the deadliest attacks in recent history.

The kingdom was stunned in October after a former police sergeant murdered 36 people, 24 of them children, in the north-eastern Nong Bua Lam Phu province. – AFP

Iran police plan 'smart cameras' to nab unveiled women

POLICE in Iran said on Saturday they plan to use "smart" technology in public places to identify and then penalise women who violate the country's strict Islamic dress code.

A statement said the force would "take action to identify norm-breaking people by using tools and smart cameras in public places and thoroughfares".

Police will then send "the proof and warning messages to the violators of the hijab law" to "inform them about the legal consequences of repeating this crime".

The number of women in Iran defying the compulsory dress code has increased since a wave of protests following the death in custody of Kurdish-Iranian Mahsa Amini, 22, for allegedly flouting it.

"From next Saturday, people who remove their veil will be identified by using smart equipment," Iran's police chief Ahmad-Reza Radan said in an interview with state television. – AFP

GLOBAL AFFAIRS

Saudi delegation in Iran after historic deal

A Saudi delegation arrived in Tehran Saturday to discuss reopening the kingdom's diplomatic missions in the Islamic republic, two days after a historic meeting in Beijing between their foreign ministers.

The visit follows the unprecedented meeting between their heads of diplomacy in China on Thursday after they agreed last month to restore diplomatic ties.

The Saudi diplomatic delegation arrived in Iran to discuss the reopening of its missions after a seven-year absence, Riyadh's foreign ministry said.

The now shuttered Saudi embassy in Tehran will soon be reopened. **PHOTO: AFP**

Cited by the official Saudi Press Agency (SPA), the ministry called the visit part of "implementing the tripartite agreement" reached on March 10 between the two regional powers, brokered by China, to restore ties ruptured in 2016.

The two longtime Middle East rivals have now pledged to work together.

When Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan and his Iranian counterpart Hossein Amir-Abdollahian met in Beijing on Thursday they vowed to bring security and stability to the turbulent Gulf region.

"The two sides emphasised the importance of following up on the implementation of the Beijing Agreement and its activation in a way that expands mutual trust and the fields of cooperation and helps create security, stability and prosperity in the region," a joint statement said.

On Saturday, a Saudi "technical delegation" met Iran's chief of protocol, Mehdi Honardoust, at the foreign ministry in Tehran, SPA said. — AFP

WORLD: TOP HEADLINES

Marseille building collapse injures five, fire hampers search

THE collapse of a four-storey residential building in Marseille on Sunday left at least five people from surrounding structures injured, but a fire was preventing rescue workers in their search for victims, officials said.

The collapse of the building in the port city in southern France occurred around 12:40 am (2240 GMT), Marseille mayor Benoit Payan told reporters, damaging parts of the two surrounding buildings.

So far, five people were injured from two residences next to the collapsed building in the central La Plaine district, he said, but the fire in the rubble was "ongoing".

"(The fire) is extremely difficult to control... The firefighters are judging minute by minute how best to put out this fire because there are potentially people alive inside," Payan said.

"We have to be prepared to have victims in this terrible tragedy."

The streets around the collapsed building were cordoned off and choked with dust. Firefighters could be seen attempting to work their way through the building debris. — AFP

Authorities halt auction of Peruvian artifacts

OFFICIALS in Peru and Canada have moved jointly to stop the virtual auction of 20 ancient pieces from Peru's pre-Hispanic Chancay culture, the Foreign Ministry in Lima announced Saturday.

It said Peru's embassy in Canada and the Consulate General in Toronto had taken the action together.

Waddington's, a Toronto-based Canadian auction company, had obtained the pieces through a web portal called The Saleroom, the statement said. The planned sale came to the attention of Peru's Culture Ministry.

Among the archeological objects was a necklace made of seeds.

The pre-Incan Chancay culture developed in the valleys of Peru's central coast between the years 1200 and 1470.

The Foreign Ministry in Lima has been working to recover cultural assets taken from the country.

Both Peru and Canada are signatories of the 1970 Unesco convention that promotes the fight against illicit traffic in cultural artifacts. — AFP

Israeli army launches strikes in Syria after rocket fire

ISRAEL launched artillery strikes on Syria Sunday morning, the Israeli army announced, after several rockets were fired from there and landed in the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights.

Israel's retaliatory strike to rocket attacks from Syria — which no one has claimed — is the latest episode in escalating violence in the region.

"In response to the rockets fired from Syria at Israel earlier today, IDF Artillery is currently striking in Syrian territory," the military tweeted.

A drone was also "currently striking the launchers in Syria from which rockets were launched into Israeli territory".

Six rockets were launched towards Israel Saturday night, with two landing in the Golan Heights, the army said. At least one was intercepted by the Israeli air-defence system.

Israeli police gather next to a car used in a deadly ramming attack in Tel Aviv. **PHOTO: AFP**

The 1,200 square kilometre (460 square mile) region — patrolled by Israeli soldiers and bordering Lebanon — was seized from Syria in the 1967 Six-Day War. Israel later annexed it in a move that was never recognised by the international community. — AFP

Omani mediators in Yemen to try to broker new truce

OMANI mediators arrived in Yemen Saturday to discuss a new truce between the Iran-backed Huthi rebels and Saudi Arabia, an airport source said, amid renewed moves to end the conflict.

Diplomatic efforts to resolve the conflict have multiplied since the Yemeni government's main foreign backer Saudi Arabia signed a Chinese-brokered deal to restore relations with Iran last month.

The top Saudi and Iranian diplomats met in Beijing Thursday, resuming diplomatic relations and pledging to work together to bring "security and stability" to their turbulent region.

Nearly a decade of war in Yemen has claimed hundreds of thousands of lives, both directly and indirectly, and triggered what the United Nations has called the world's worst humanitarian crisis.

The Huthis seized the capital Sanaa in 2014, triggering the conflict with the government which has been backed for eight years by a military coalition led by regional heavyweight Riyadh.

The rapprochement between the two great regional rivals, Shiite-majority Iran and mainly Sunni Saudi Arabia, has fuelled hopes of reduced tensions in the Middle East, particularly in Yemen.

"A delegation from Oman has arrived in Sanaa to hold talks with Huthi leaders about the truce and the peace process," a source at the capital's airport, who requested anonymity as he is not authorised to speak to journalists, told AFP. — AFP

SPORT

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AUKUS nuclear submarine cooperation seriously jeopardizes peace, stability in Asia-Pacific: embassy

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Myanmar football squad is seen celebrating in the international competition. **PHOTO:MFF**

11 teams including Myanmar to compete in ASEAN U-23 Championship

THE ASEAN Football Federation will hold the ASEAN U-23 Championship at the end of this year, with participation of 11 teams, including Myanmar.

The ASEAN Football Federation has confirmed the tournaments to be held in 2023, and the ASEAN U-23 tournament will last from 31 October to 12 November.

The tourney will be hosted by Thailand, and all 11 Southeast Asian countries will compete in it.

The ASEAN Football Federation started holding this tournament in 2005, but it was not held regularly in the following years, so it was held only three times in 2005, 2019 and 2022.

The Myanmar team only competed twice in 2005 and 2019, and withdrew from the 2022 competition.

The Myanmar U-22 team will compete in many international competitions this year and will start competing in the 32nd SEA Games in May.

After half a year, they will continue to compete in the Asian Cup U-23 qualifiers, the ASEAN U-23 Championship and the Asian Games. — Ko Nyi Lay/ KZL

If Madrid have switched off, it's because of us says Barca coach

BARCELONA coach Xavi Hernandez believes if Real Madrid have given up on La Liga, it is because of his side's superb season, he told a news conference Sunday. Champions Madrid lost 3-2 at home against Villarreal on Saturday and league leaders Barca can move 15 points clear of Los Blancos with a win at home against Girona on Monday.

Madrid thrashed Barcelona 4-0 last week to reach the Copa del Rey final, despite the gap between the teams in La Liga.

"I don't know if they've switched off or not, but if they have, it's thanks to us," said Xavi.

"Tomorrow it's important to increase the gap to 15 points. It won't mean anything is sealed, but it would be a spectacular distance. "It doesn't interest me if Madrid do something or don't, what interests me is what we do."

Madrid are in the Copa del Rey final and face Chelsea on Wednesday in a Champions League quarter-final first leg clash. Xavi said he thinks Barcelona winning the top flight for the first time since 2019 would be a magnificent achievement which some are trying to "minimise". — AFP

Barcelona coach Xavi during the Copa del Rey semi-final defeat to Real Madrid. **PHOTO: 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.

'Disapppointed' Woods withdraws from Masters with injury

FIVE-TIME winner Tiger Woods, who limped through an awful, bogey-strewn start to his rain-halted third round of the Masters, pulled out of the tournament with a foot injury organizers said on Sunday.

"I am disappointed to have to WD (withdraw) this morning due to reaggravating my plantar fasciitis," he posted on Twitter shortly after organisers had announced his decision.

"Thank you to the fans and to @TheMasters who have shown me so much love and support. Good luck to the players today!" It is the second time in the past year that Woods has been forced to withdraw from a major championship citing injury. — AFP

Tiger Woods withdrew from the final day of the Masters on Sunday citing injury. **PHOTO: AFP**