

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.

MRF: Necessary arrangements have been prepared in advance regarding storm



The rice depot (Wadan) of Myanmar Rice Federation (MRF).

STOCKPILES of reserve food and rice and the necessary arrangements have been prepared in advance, the Myanmar Rice Federation (MRF) notified. Local and foreign meteorological organizations' warnings regarding the possibility of the current low pressure area in the Bay of Bengal turning into a strong cyclone and the stockpiling of reserve food and rice for natural disaster preparations were issued on 7 May.

Those who work in the rice business should have to properly plan and organize the storage of their rice under shelters and in places that will be safe from natural disasters. Flooding at the bottom inside the warehouse, as water infiltration often occurs, the statement was issued that the floors of warehouses should be raised with the use of dunnage or pallet seats or other suitable ways in advance. Rice millers and rice com-

panies should help farmers as much as possible harvest and store summer paddy from areas where summer paddy has been harvested, is being harvested, or is yet to be harvested through coordination with local administrative bodies and the Department of Agriculture, especially in coastal areas. In order to make an early emergency response in the event of a natural disaster, the statement stressed the need to connect with the head

office of the federation, related associations and brokerages if disaster hits. As there is enough stockpiling of rice and paddy for self-sufficiency, the federation informed the people about purchasing rice with fear, urging the required volume of foods and materials. If they face difficulties to buy the goods with right quality at good prices, they can contact the federation, associated organizations, and depots. — TWA/CT

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Trainees from Basic Youth Aviation Course (junior level) arrive in Meiktila for camp training

WITH the aim of developing the knowledge of new generation students during the summer holidays, spending their holidays efficiently, following their hobbies and ensuring emergence of new generations who are mastered in aviation skills and knowledge, Tatmadaw (Air) has been running the basic youth aviation courses (senior) and basic youth aviation courses (junior) simultaneously at training camps in respective townships since 24 April. A total of 680 trainees from 17 training camps

left for Meiktila by military aircraft from various regions yesterday for taking the group camp training, and the commanders in military commands and officials saw them off at the airports. The trainees are provided a practical, on-site study of the daily routines of the Tatmadaw (Air), RC plane, helicopter, drone driving, excursion tours and competitions. — MNA/KZW

Officers of Tatmadaw (Air) welcome trainees of youth aviation course at the airport on 7 May in Meiktila.



Republic of the Union of Myanmar
State Administration Council
Order No 33/2023
4th Waning of Kason 1385 ME
7 May 2023

Appointment of Judge of Rakhine
State High Court

THE State Administration Council has appointed Daw Mya Aye to the duties of Judge of the Rakhine State High Court under the Section 419 of the Constitution.
By order,
Aung Lin Dwe
Lieutenant-General
Secretary
State Administration Council

Baby white elephant Rattha Nandaka lives happily and healthily with his mother mammal



A baby white elephant Rattha Nandaka seen in shed.

A 33-year-old female elephant called Zar Nan Hla kept by the Myanma Timber Enterprise in Taungup Township of Rakhine State gave birth to one white male elephant at 6:30 am on 23 July 2022. When it was born, the baby elephant was two feet and five inches in height, three feet and one inch in girth and weighed 180 pounds.

The white elephant’s name is Rattha Nandaka. It has pearl-coloured eyes, a plantain branch-shaped back, white hair, a distinctive tail with a tuft of hair at its end, auspicious plot signs on the skin, reddish-brown or pinkish skin, five claws on the front legs, four claws on the back legs and big ears. Therefore, these features conform with seven out of eight characteristics.

At nine and half a months old, the baby white elephant is 3.5 feet in height, six feet and two inches in girth and weighs about 530 pounds. He stays healthy and happy under the human-friendly training system with his mother elephant, according to the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation. — MNA/KZW

Veteran artistes, artistes from MRTV-4 series visit progress of Maravijaya Buddha Image



Carving of marble Buddha image Maravijaya seen in Buddha Park in Dekkhinathiri Township.

A delegation comprising veteran artistes and artistes of MRTV-4 series, who had attended the Myanmar Academy Awarding ceremony, visited the Buddha Park in Dakkhinathiri Township, Nay Pyi Taw, yesterday morning, to pay home to Maravijaya Buddha Image.

An official presented a detailed explanation to the artiste groups on an aim to build the marble Buddha image, excavation of the marble rock, conveyance of the rock, carving of parts of the Buddha image, building the steel tower crane to convey the image onto the



Veteran artistes visit Buddha Park in Dekkhinathiri Township on 7 May.

throne, cultivation of trees and flowerly plants in the park for greening works, construction of religious buildings and progress of works.

After that, the artistes viewed round progress of the Maravijaya Buddha Image and religious buildings in the Buddha Park.—MNA/KZW

149 new cases of COVID-19 reported on
7 May, total figure registers 636,031

MYANMAR’S COVID-19-positive cases rose to **636,031** after **149** new cases were reported on 7 May 2023 according to the Ministry of Health.

Therefore, a total of **10,439,858** laboratory samples were examined and the confirmed COVID-19 cases reached **636,031**.

The total number of patients who have recovered from COVID-19 in the country reached **615,200** including **95** new recoveries. The death toll from COVID-19 in the country registered **19,492** on 7-5-2023 with no new death reported from the pandemic.

COVID-19 information can be browsed on the internet page moh.gov.mm of the Ministry of Health. — GNLM

Public Notice

1. The Anti-Corruption Commission has established corruption prevention units within ministries to effectively curb corruption.

2. The ACC used SMS on the mobile phone to ask the public who seek services at an office of the department of the relevant ministries via Short Code No “1111” for feedbacks, including the Public Feedback Programme-PFP.

3. According to the PFP the right replies of the citizens via Short Code No “1111” will provide the quality of services of each department and the requirements for corruption prevention to be fixed.

4. Therefore, the public should make a reply to the questions of the ACC and corruption prevention units of the ministries via SMS at Short Code No “1111” and such doing is a supportive measure for PFP, and the people are urged to cooperate in the operations.

Anti-Corruption Commission
Answer “1111” to fight against corruption
Answer “1111” to improve services
Let’s work together to eliminate corruption towards prosperity

People need to participate in anti-corruption efforts as a national duty

- Everyone is urged to participate in making anti-corruption efforts as a national duty.
- The government is emphasizing the emergence of a clean government and good governance, improvement of capacity to take prestige and responsibility in administration, and not to harm the society, citizen rights and interests.

(Excerpts from the speech delivered by State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at the ceremony to mark International Anti-Corruption Day on 9 December 2022)

MoBA meets to coordinate emergency work on natural disasters

THE Ministry of Border Affairs' emergency work coordination meeting on natural disasters was held at the ministry yesterday afternoon.

First, Union Minister Lt-Gen Tun Tun Naung recounted that there are warnings that the low-pressure area would develop in the Bay of Bengal the next few days and it may turn into a cyclonic storm and cross into the inland areas of Myanmar.

In accordance with the guidelines of the National Disaster Management Committee, the ministry needs to prepare for the impact of the cyclone as well as related natural dis-

asters in the offices and academic institutions under the ministry's control to minimize loss and damage for the people and infrastructures as much as possible, he stated.

All need to make readiness for medicines, food, clean water, life-saving equipment, and rescue equipment. Officials should prepare the directives of the relevant regional and state governments in a timely manner, he added.

He urged the rescue teams to carry out emergency rescue and relief works under the management of the ministry to cooperate with the affected



Union Minister for Border Affairs Lt-Gen Tun Tun Naung speaking at coord meeting on emergency work on natural disaster on 7 May.

people from the disaster areas when the cyclone strikes. Later, officials presented the conditions of preparedness according to the respective areas, and the Union Minister and deputy ministers coordinated and fulfilled the presentations. — MNA/KZL

UMFCCI MSME Fair 2023 kicks off in Mayangon Township



The opening ceremony of UMFCCI MSME Fair 2023 in progress at Lotte Hotel in Mayangon Township on 7 May.

THE Micro-, Small-and Medium-Sized Enterprises Fair 2023 organized by the UMFCCI at Lotte Hotel in Mayangon Township yesterday morning.

At the opening ceremony, Union Minister for Industry Dr Charlie Than, who is in a capacity of Secretary of the MSME Development Central Committee, disclosed that the government is making preparations to amend the existing policies, law and by-law for development of MSME businesses so as to boom the State economy. He pledged to implement the MSMEs Upskilling and Reskilling Digital Capacity Development Program for Inte-

grating in the Digital Economy with the Mekong-Lancang fund. The Union minister stressed the need to implement development of MSME through tripartite efforts of the government, organizations and MSMEs.

The Union Minister, the Yangon Region Chief Minister and officials visited the fair.

In the afternoon, the Union minister met with officials from factories in Yangon Region at the Industrial Supervision and Inspection Department in Mayangon Township and called for making preparation to minimise loss and damage at factories and buildings. — MNA/TTA

Corrigendum

PLEASE read "... the office of the Disaster Management Centre ..." instead of "... the office of the Disaster Management Committee ..." under the heading of "SAC Vice-Chair ..." in the 2nd last paragraph of the last column on page 3 of this daily issued on 7 May 2023. — Ed

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.

MoH holds coordination meeting on possible storm disasters in Bay of Bengal



Union Minister for Health Dr Thet Khaing Win talks about preparations for disasters to reduce loss of life and property at the ministry on 7 May in Nay Pyi Taw.

THE Public Health and Medical Services Department heads in regions and states and medical superintendents of hospitals held a coordination meeting on possibility of the storm in the Bay of Bengal yesterday morning at the Ministry of Health in Nay Pyi Taw.

At the meeting, Union Minister Dr Thet Khaing Win said that the State Administration Council is working hard to reduce the

loss of property of the people in disasters.

The meetings of the Health Care Management Work Committee on 27 April and 5 May focused on preparedness against the disasters, he said.

Preparedness, emergency response, and rehabilitation must be implemented step by step in accordance with the procedures of the work committee. Region

and State Public Health and Medical Services Departments must carry out close field supervision, he stated.

Public health departments must coordinate with related departments and make preparations in advance under the guidance of the relevant governments. People need to collect clean drinking water in advance for environmental sanitation

and personal hygiene in order to prevent the occurrence of water-borne diseases, including diarrheal disease, which may occur after a natural disaster.

Necessary equipment and personal hygiene items that will be used in emergency situations must be stockpiled in advance, and distributed to disaster-prone areas in time, and health education activities must also be carried out, he added.

Medicines and equipment may be needed in areas prone to natural disasters. Disaster Medical Kits, Family Kits, Clean Delivery Kits and Dignity Kits must be distributed to rural health branches in advance, the Union minister commented.

In hospitals, plans must be implemented to ensure that treatment operations, including emergency surgery and childbirth, should not be delayed or failed, and the necessary emergency medical teams must be formed and prepared in advance, he said.

The routes to transfer emergency patients must also be coordinated with related depart-

ments, and regional and state public health and treatment centers must also cooperate with Tatmadaw medical units, the Union minister stated.

He said that the Public Health Emergency Operations Centre and Public Health Emergency Control Centres in the regions and states have been established so that they have to communicate with each other in a timely manner.

After that, the Deputy Minister for Health Professor Dr Aye Tun discussed that the various levels of health workers have been assigned duties and they must supervise their relevant sectors.

Health officials also discussed specific operations and regional and state hospitals' preparedness status, situations where emergency plans have been schemed, conditions under which public health emergency control centers are open, requirements for the storage of emergency drugs and medical supplies, and collaborations. — MNA/KZL

MYANMAR Daily Weather Report

(ISSUED at 7:00 pm Sunday 7 May 2023)

BAY INFERENCE: According to the observations at (17:30) hrs MST today, a low pressure area may form over the Southeast Bay of Bengal and adjoining South Andaman Sea around (8.5.2023). It is likely to intensify into a Depression around (9.5.2023) then continue to move Northwards and intensify into a Cyclonic Storm over the Central Bay of Bengal and adjoining North Andaman Sea around (10.5.2023). Weather is cloudy over the South Andaman Sea, South Bay and Westcentral Bay of Bengal and a few cloud to partly cloudy over the North Andaman Sea and elsewhere over the Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL AFTERNOON OF THE 8 May 2023: Weather will be partly cloudy in Nay Pyi Taw, Yangon and Ayeyawady regions. Rain or thundershowers will be fairly widespread in Southern Shan State, scattered in Eastern Shan State and isolated in the remaining regions and states. Degree of certainty is (80%).

The Condition of Cumulonimbus Cloud: The Cumulonimbus clouds are developing over the Magway, Bago and Taninthayi

regions and (Southern and Eastern) Shan and Rakhine, Kayah and Kayin states. The area along the Cumulonimbus clouds movement, the weather phenomena such as strong winds accompanied with rain, thunder, lightning and hail may occur and therefore it is recommended to be aware in advance these phenomena.

STATE OF THE SEA: Sea will be slight to moderate in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about (4 - 6) feet off and along Myanmar Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Likelihood of isolated to scattered rain or thundershowers in Nay Pyi Taw, Upper Sagaing, Mandalay, Magway, Bago, Yangon, Ayeyawady and Taninthayi regions and Kachin, (Southern and Eastern) Shan, Kayah, Kayin and Mon states.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 8 May 2023: Partly cloudy.

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 8 May 2023: Partly cloudy.

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 8 May 2023: Partly cloudy.

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.

Mural paintings at Apelyadana Temple attract local and foreign travellers in Bagan

TRAVELLERS can observe mural paintings after visiting Apelyadana Temple, south of Myinkaba Village, beside old Bagan city-Chauk road, when they arrive in Bagan ancient cultural region of NyaungU Township in Mandalay Region, according to the officials of the Department of Archaeology and National Museum in Bagan.

Apelyadana Temple was built by King Kyansittha, according to the ink inscription found in the precinct of Thetawshay Pagoda in Bagan. Apelyadana Temple was built in 11th Century AD. Mural paintings in the temple feature the pictures of Mahayana

Buddhism as well as that of Theravada Buddhism, gods of Hinduism and others. Further mural paintings depicting 550 Jataka stories of the Lord Buddha were also scripted in ink at the temple.

Travellers may pay visits to Nagayon Pagoda in the east of Apelyadan Temple, Soe Min Gyi brick monastery, Soe Min Gyi Pagoda, Kyaukmyethmaw Pagoda and Seinnyet Ama Pagoda in the south, Manuha Pagoda, Nan Pagoda, Myazedi Pagoda, Gubyaukgyi Pagoda and ancient pagodas in the north. They can visit 3,822 other stupas and temples in different cultural heritages in Bagan. — Di Pa Lin/TTA



A Photo shows Apelyadana Temple in Bagan.

Illegal timbers, industrial materials, consumer goods, foodstuffs and vehicles confiscated

THE combined team led by Ayeyawady Region Forest Department captured a total of 0.983 tonne of illegal teaks worth K55,000 in Hinthada district on 2 May and action was taken under the Forest Law.

The combined team led by Shan State Customs Department under the supervision of Shan State Illegal Trade Eradication Task Force confiscated 20 kinds of liquor, including 60 bottles of Royal Solute Blended Scotch Whisky, worth K329.788 million, four kinds of goods, including male sandals (made in Thailand) worth K5,931,200, five kinds of foodstuffs, including 53 cartons of mind rice crispies and chocolate flavor worth K4,496,400, 20 cartons of school dress worth K30 million, two



Illegal liquor



Wai Wai instant vermicelli sachets

kinds of goods, including 200 cartons of Imperial Leather soap worth K22.08 million, two kinds of goods, including 90 cartons of Wai Wai instant vermicelli worth K10.53 million, two kinds of goods, including 5,000 API-Pyrine Foil pills worth K10.48 million, 6,000 bottles of Vita milk worth K48 million and 4,500 cartons of Napoli cigarette worth K45 million from a Nissan Diesel truck (approximately K30 million) on

Mwaytaw Kakku-Kyauktalon road. The action was taken under the Customs Procedures.

On 5 May, a total of 0.676 tonne of illegal teak worth K647,080 was seized in Thayawady district. The action was taken under the Forest Law.

Therefore, 12 arrests (estimated value of K493,807,680) were made on 2, 4 and 5 May, according to the Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee. — MNA/MKKS



Seized illegal teak logs.

Commerce Ministry: Uncut diamonds not allowed for export

PIECES of Rough diamond before cutting and polishing as diamond jewellery are classified as restricted items for exports, according to Notification No 28/2023 released by the Ministry of Commerce.

The Commerce Ministry restricted 31 items by maritime trade and 32 through land borders under the directive No 10/1999 dated 26 November 1999. After that, some commodities prohibited to export have been amended following the situation of local market conditions, with 15 items allowed in 2008 and more items in 2011, 2014, 2016, 2017 and 2018.

The goods prohibited via all three modalities of transport (by air, border and sea) are diamond, crude oil, ivory, elephant, horse and rare animals, antiques, and arms and ammunition, as per the directive No 10/1999 and the notification No 59/2020.

The MoC issued Notification No 59/2020 for amendment for the exercise of the power conferred by Section 13 (B) of the Export and Import Law.

The ministry made changes to pieces of rough diamond which have not been made into jewellery in stanza 3 (A) of Notification No 59/2020. — NN/EM

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CURRENT
AFFAIRS

Action to be taken against catching fish/
shrimp in sheltered areas during bad weather



Hainggyi Island in Ngaputaw Township designated as a weather shelter.

ACTION will be taken if fish/ shrimp are caught in places in the shelters which allowed trawlers during bad weather, announced by the Department of Fisheries of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation. The designated places as

weather shelters are Mingan creek in Sittway Township, Phayongar island in Pauktaw Township, Ngalapwae creek in Kyaukpyu Township, Singaung port and Thabyugyaing in Thandwe Township, Thinbawseik in Taungup Township, Amawgyaing in Tintaw Village-tract of Gwa Township in Rakhine State. In Ayeyawady region, Hainggyi island and Chaungwa village in Ngaputaw Township, Kadonkani village in Bogale Township, Wah Island in Ye Township in Mon State, Maugmakanbok island and Launglonbok island in Launglon Township, Thaninthayi Island in Myeik Township and Pyinsabu Island in Kyunsu Township are designated as weather shelters. — TWA/KZW

Supporting actor
dies returning
from academy
awarding
ceremony

SUPPORTING actor U Aung Tha, aged 74, passed away aboard the ferry for artistes at 8:20 am on 7 May on his way from the Academy Awards ceremony. “After taking a seat in the car, he suddenly fainted. When the doctors rushed to him, he was not alive. It is known that he had been having loose bowels since last night. He lived in Shwepyitha Township together with his elder sister. Now we have contacted her,” said a colleague. The dead body will be brought back to Yangon with the help of the Social Association. — TWA/KZW

Plan underway to conduct
basic safety training courses
for fishermen during three-
month non-fishery period

ACCORDING to the Department of Fisheries, basic training courses will be conducted to ensure the safety of fishermen during the three-month closure of offshore fishing. The offshore fishing site in Taninthayi Region will be closed during April, May and June. The training aims to provide basic safety training for fishermen. Such a course will be opened in Dawei, Myeik and Kawthoung. The training course will comprise prevention of environmental pollution regarding the disposing into the sea. The course also includes life safety measures, calculation, fire extinguishing and emergency measures for outbreak of fire. The officials are continuously doing educational activities to avoid throwing garbage into the sea. — TWA/KZW



Some fishermen seen at a port.

Palm oil wholesale price declines to
around K5,800 per viss



A palm oil retail outlet in the oil market.

ON 5 May, the delivery order (DO) price of palm oil was K5,900-K5,950 per viss in the Yangon edible oil market. On 6 May, wholesale palm oil was traded at K5,800-K5,850 per viss in the Nyaungpinlay oil market, Ko Swe Aung, an oil trader, told the GNLM. From 2 to 7 May 2023, the wholesale reference price of palm oil in Yangon was K4,570 per viss, which decreased by K110 per viss from the previous week and dropped by K220 per viss compared to the reference price from 10 to 23 April. As the reference price, foreign market price, and capital prices are falling, the prices of oil are also falling in the Yangon oil market. The wholesale palm oil price of K6,000 per viss, which was traded in the external oil market in March, has not only fallen after more than a month but has even fallen below K6,000, according to an oil dealer. During the more than two weeks period, the DO price of the external market also dropped to around K400 per viss as the wholesale reference price fell by K220 per viss. It is known that the oil dealers in the Yangon market, including the regional markets, are only buying as much as they need because the price is falling. However, around the second week of May, a storm warning was issued, and preparations for the storm have been made at the national level. On stormy days when there is a

problem with the import of oil from abroad, the Yangon oil market tends to raise the prices of oil. As a result, the storm that will pass now will cause changes in the price of edible oil in Yangon, according to an oil dealer, Ko Wai Lin Oo. Even so, there were 75,000 tonnes of oil in the country during Thingyan, and imported oil from abroad continued to arrive in late April and early May. Thus, there may have been around 90,000 tonnes of oil locally from April until now. Therefore, even if there were some difficulties in accessing oil from abroad due to the storm in May 2023, there is speculation that there may be enough oil in the domestic market. — TWA/CT

INTERVIEW

ASEAN Business Advisory Council (ASEAN-BAC) Chairman Mr Arsjad Rasjid P M and his delegation have recently paid a three-day visit to Myanmar and held the “ASEAN-BAC Indonesia Roadshow Business Forum” at the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI), incoming chairmanship of ASEAN-BAC Myanmar.

The Global New Light of Myanmar (GNLM) had an Exclusive Interview with Mr Arsjad Rasjid P M, Chairman of KADIN (Indonesian Chamber of Commerce and Industry) and ASEAN-BAC 2023, on 2 May 2023.

The GNLM: When was the ASEAN Business Advisory Council (ASEAN-BAC) established? What is its mandate? Kindly explain its background briefly.

ASEAN-BAC Chair: The ASEAN Business Advisory Council (ASEAN-BAC) was established in April 2003 as a platform for private sector feedback and guidance to boost ASEAN’s efforts towards economic integration.

Since its establishment, the council has played a vital role in promoting private sector engagement. By providing feedback, ASEAN-BAC helps to identify priority areas for consideration by ASEAN leaders. This ensures that the needs and concerns of the private sector are considered in the formulation of policies and strategies to promote economic development in the region. By fostering closer cooperation between businesses across ASEAN, ASEAN-BAC helps to facilitate trade and investment, create jobs, and drive innovation in ASEAN.

The GNLM: As you mentioned that the ASEAN-BAC had been rolling out legacy projects since 2015, please tell us further information about them.

ASEAN-BAC Chair: ASEAN BAC has been working on various legacy projects since 2015, and each year we incorporate Private Public Partnership (PPP) to promote human capital development and entrepreneurship.

Under our five priorities, Indonesia has developed eight different legacy projects. The first priority is Digital Transformation, and under this, we have developed the ASEAN QR Code, Marketplace Lending platform, and Wiki Entrepreneur.

The second priority is Sustainable Development, and we have developed the ASEAN Net Zero Hub and Carbon Centre of Excellence.

For Health Resilience, we have the ASEAN One Shot Campaign. And for Food Security, we have an inclusive closed-loop model for Agricultural Products. Finally, under Trade & Investment, we have developed the ASEAN Business Entity.

Each of these legacy projects has been designed to promote economic integration and benefit the region as a whole.

By bringing together the public and private sectors, we aim to create sustain-



The GNLM Exclusive Interview with ASEAN-BAC Chair

able solutions that will drive development in ASEAN.

The GNLM: We are aware that the ASEAN-BAC, on Indonesian Chairmanship, is launching into the Myanmar Roadshow during your three-day visit. We would appreciate it if you could kindly expand our knowledge of the Myanmar Roadshow more profoundly.

ASEAN-BAC Chair: The ASEAN-BAC has been conducting a roadshow across ASEAN countries since February to promote business, enhance connectivity, and support economic recovery. The Myanmar visit is the sixth, and we are meeting with key business leaders, including the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry and the Myanmar Investment Commission.

As part of Indonesia’s ASEAN BAC Chairmanship, we hope to strengthen cooperation and trust between ASEAN and Myanmar and explore potential economic partnerships. We believe that ASEAN businesses, particularly in Myanmar, can play a crucial role in promoting people-to-people engagement and building bridges of understanding towards a prosperous future for both Myanmar and ASEAN. Myanmar is a country with vast potential for economic growth and development.

For example, the country has significant solar and wind energy potential, with an estimated 26.96 GW and 33.83 GW, respectively. Additionally, Myanmar’s rich reserves of critical minerals are crucial for the growth of various industries, including

the solar panel, lithium battery, and electric vehicle industries in ASEAN. Overall, Myanmar’s potential presents a strong foundation for growth and development, with ample room to expand further.

The GNLM: We are also keen on the ASEAN-BAC Set Ambitious Agenda, especially Food Security. Kindly elaborate on this particular agenda in the context of Myanmar.

ASEAN-BAC Chair: ASEAN-BAC is committed to addressing food security in the region and we acknowledge that achieving food security requires collaboration between businesses and communities.

The private sector plays a crucial role in promoting sustainable agriculture practices, investing in agribusiness, and creating innovative solutions to address food insecurity. To do this, ASEAN-BAC 2023 creates a single narrative that includes commodity profiling, commodity balance sheet, key success factors & roadmap, and key policies to address food security. The single narrative approach enables ASEAN members to customize policies and strategies to address their unique challenges.

Thus, the Council has developed a food security programme based on an inclusive closed-loop model for the agriculture sector. The closed-loop model for agricultural products will empower medium and small agricultural enterprises by providing them with access to finance, knowledge, technology, and new markets. The ultimate goal of these efforts is to ensure that everyone in the ASEAN

region has access to safe, nutritious, and affordable food.

In the context of Myanmar, the agricultural sector plays a vital role in the country’s economy, with over 48 per cent of the labour force engaged in farming.

However, despite the abundance of agricultural resources, many farmers lack access to business resources such as financing, technology, and markets, which hinders their ability to increase productivity and profitability.

This creates a gap between the potential of the agricultural sector and its actual contribution to the country’s economy.

Thus, there is a need to develop inclusive business models, such as the closed-loop model for agricultural products, that can empower small and medium agricultural enterprises and provide them with access to the resources they need to thrive.

The GNLM: We’d like to know more about the Net Zero target.

ASEAN-BAC Chair: The Net Zero target is an important goal that every country should strive to achieve.

And it is well-established that the private sector has a critical role to play in promoting sustainable development and driving progress towards Net Zero.

Therefore, at ASEAN-BAC, our focus is on supporting the private sector in its journey towards carbon neutrality. To this end, ASEAN-BAC is executing two legacy projects that aim to mainstream sustainable development in the region. The first is a pan-regional Net Zero Hub that aims to assist the private sector in its journey towards carbon neutrality, focused on promoting best practices and developing innovative solutions. The second is a Carbon Centre of Excellence that will provide research and expertise on carbon reduction strategies. Our ultimate goal is to support the private sector in achieving carbon neutrality and help the region move towards a sustainable future.



OPINION

Make preparations against natural disasters in the pre-monsoon period

THE impacts of climate change have been remarkably occurring in the whole world since the 21st Century. Hence, global countries are facing unusual climatic conditions and incidents. Climate change brings bad impacts to society with severe natural disasters.

Indeed, climate change is based on global warming which is triggered by humans. Greenhouse gases from the societies take a large position in the atmosphere which causes high temperature due to hotness. It is not difficult to reduce the emission of greenhouse gases which are primarily reflecting climate change.

All humans need to carefully protect trees and jungles as part of reducing the impacts of greenhouse gases. Moreover, they all need to grow trees elsewhere. The jungles filled with

large and small trees including bushes, shrubs and herbs can maintain underground water and various kinds of water sources as well as fertile soil. These trees are useful for making clean and cool breezes.

The natural environment and natural resources are gifts of the Universe for the global people. Naturally, geographical conditions are actual underground water tanks for the whole world. Rainwater drops into the ground via trees and then hilly areas and trees store such rainwater in underground areas. Hence, cutting trees and setting fire to the forests should not be done carelessly as forests are valuable natural resources.

In the pre-monsoon period, Myanmar faces high temperatures in the daytime, instability of the atmosphere, and the occurrence of clouds. Some parts of the nation will expectedly be hit

by strong winds, lightning, striking lightning, falls of hailstones, torrential rains, flooding, landslides, inundation and so on.

Regrettably, some people were dead and 109 people were injured in the tornado which hit the Aungmyingon and TadaU villages of Lewe Township on 21 April. In the incident, monasteries, schools and rural dispensaries were also damaged by the tornado.

Meteorologists carefully predict weather forecasts so that people to make preparations for their families and workplaces in time to be free from the danger of bad weather. Hence, people need to check weather forecasts through radio and on TV on time and they have to really know how to overcome and how to make preparations against the disasters.

As some rough impacts of disasters may fall in the pre-monsoon period, people need to take exercises for performing rescue and relief works whenever the people fall under disasters. Moreover, the government should carry out rehabilitation for the disaster-hit victims without delay with provisions of food, clothing and shelter.

As some rough impacts of disasters may fall in the pre-monsoon period, people need to take exercises for performing rescue and relief works whenever the people fall under disasters. Moreover, the government should carry out rehabilitation for the disaster-hit victims without delay with provisions of food, clothing and shelter.

The Role of Traditional Medicine in Achieving Universal Health Coverage: Developing Countries Perspectives

By Dr Than Lwin Tun

ACCORDING to the definition of the World Health Organization (WHO), Traditional Medicine is “the total of the knowledge, skills, and practices based on the theories, beliefs, and experiences indigenous to different cultures, whether explainable or not, used in the maintenance of health as well as in the prevention, diagnosis, improvement or treatment of physical and mental illness.”

Traditional medicine, also known as indigenous or alternative medicine, has been used for centuries in developing countries to treat and prevent illnesses. In many developing countries, traditional medicine is often the primary or only source of healthcare for a significant portion of the population. Therefore, it plays a vital role in achieving universal health coverage (UHC) in these countries.

Across the world, traditional medicine (TM) is either the mainstay of healthcare delivery or serves as a complement to it. In some countries, traditional medicine or non-conventional medicine may be termed complementary medicine (CM). Traditional medicine (TM) is an important and often underestimated part of health services. TM has a long history of use in health maintenance and in disease prevention and treatment, particularly for chronic disease.

UHC is the goal of ensuring that all people have access to

quality health services without suffering financial hardship. The World Health Organization (WHO) recognizes traditional medicine as an essential component of primary healthcare and has developed guidelines for its integration into the national healthcare system.

UHC has a direct impact on a population’s health. Access to health services enables people to be more productive and active contributors to their families and communities. It also ensures that children can go to school and learn. At the same time, financial risk protection prevents people from being pushed into poverty when they have to pay for health services out of their own pockets. Universal health coverage is thus a critical component of sustainable development and poverty reduction and a key element of any effort to reduce social inequities. Universal coverage is the hallmark of a government’s commitment to improving the well-being of all its citizens.

Universal coverage is firmly based on the WHO Constitution of 1948 declaring health a fundamental human right and on the Health for All agenda set by the Alma-Ata declaration in 1978. Equity is paramount. This means that countries need to track progress not just across the national population but within different groups (e.g. by income level, sex, age, place of residence, migrant status and ethnic origin).

The World Health Assembly

resolution on Traditional Medicine (WHA62.13), adopted in 2009, requested the WHO Director-General to update the WHO Traditional medicine strategy 2002-2005, based on countries’ progress and current new challenges in the field of traditional medicine. The WHO Traditional Medicine Strategy 2014-2023 thus reappraises and builds on the WHO Traditional Medicine Strategy 2002–2005, and sets out the course for TM and CM (T&CM) in the next decade. T&CM is an important and often underestimated part of health care. T&CM is found in almost every country in the world and the demand for its services is increasing. TM, of proven quality, safety, and efficacy, contributes to the goal of ensuring that all people have access to care. Many countries now recognize the need to develop a cohesive and integrative approach to health care that allows governments, health care practitioners and, most importantly, those who use health care services, to access T&CM in a safe, respectful, cost-efficient and effective manner. A global strategy to foster its appropriate integration, regulation and supervision will be useful to countries wishing to develop a proactive policy towards this important - and often vibrant and expanding - part of health care.

“Traditional medicine practitioners remain the primary health-care providers for millions of people in South-East Asia, especially in rural areas”, said Dr

Poonam Khetrapal Singh, Regional Director for WHO South-East Asia Region. “Every country in the Region has a unique history of traditional medical practices, most of which are still actively practised. To ensure that people are receiving quality traditional medicines in a safe and affordable way, it is important to hold these practices to rigorous standards to ensure that there is regulation of practice, product and practitioners. If appropriately integrated into the existing health systems, traditional medicines can play an important role in achieving UHC, she added.

In order to meet the increasing demand for and improve the quality, safety and efficacy of traditional medicine, WHO launched the Traditional Medicine Strategy: 2014-2023 with a three-pronged objective: to build a knowledge base and formulate national policies; to strengthen the safety, quality and effectiveness of traditional medicines through regulation; and to support UHC through appropriate integration of traditional medicine services.

The integration of traditional medicine into the national healthcare system can bring several benefits, such as increased access to healthcare services, improved health outcomes, and reduced healthcare costs. Traditional medicine is often more affordable and accessible than Western medicine, especially in rural areas



The integration of traditional medicine into the national healthcare system can bring several benefits, such as increased access to healthcare services, improved health outcomes, and reduced healthcare costs. PHOTO : ILLUSTRATION: REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE/INFORANJAN/FREEPIK

where there may be limited access to modern healthcare facilities. Moreover, traditional medicine can help bridge cultural gaps and improve trust between patients and healthcare providers. Many people in developing countries have deep cultural and spiritual connections to traditional medicine, and its use can help improve patient satisfaction.

However, it is essential to

note that traditional medicine should be used in conjunction with modern medicine, not as a replacement. Traditional medicine practitioners should be trained and regulated to ensure that their practices are safe and effective. Additionally, there is a need for more research to better understand the safety and efficacy of traditional medicine and to develop evidence-based guidelines

for its use.

In conclusion, traditional medicine has an important role to play in achieving UHC in developing countries. Its integration into the national healthcare system can increase access to healthcare services, improve health outcomes, and reduce healthcare costs. However, this must be done in a manner that ensures patient safety and quality

of care, and with the recognition that traditional medicine should complement, not replace modern medicine. Therefore quality traditional medicine can deliver Universal Health Coverage.

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US Food and Drug Administration recalls some COVID-19 at-home tests over bacteria risks

THE US Food and Drug Administration has issued a warning to consumers and health providers to discontinue using and discard recalled Pilot COVID-19 At-Home Tests made by SD Biosensor, Inc, CNN reported.

The US FDA stated that the decision was taken over “significant concerns” of bacterial contamination.

SD Biosensor is recalling all impacted tests, which were distributed by Roche Diagnostics to

various retailers to stop the spread of COVID-19 cases. The US FDA asked people to throw out any pilot tests from the affected lot numbers and do not pour the liquid solution down the drain.

The US FDA in the statement

said, “The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is warning consumers and health care providers to stop using and throw out certain lots of recalled SD Biosensor, Inc. Pilot COVID-19 At-Home Tests, distributed by Roche Diagnostics.” It further said, “The FDA has significant concerns of bacterial contamination in the Pilot COVID-19 At-Home Test liquid

solution, provided in the test kit. Direct contact with the contaminated liquid solution may pose safety concerns and the bacterial contamination could impact the performance of the test.”

The US FDA in the statement noted that approximately 500,000 tests were distributed to CVS Health and 16,000 tests to Amazon.

Source : ANI



Pilot COVID-19 At-Home Tests made by SD Biosensor, Inc. PHOTO : ILLUSTRATION: COURTESY OF SD BIOSENSOR, INC.

ENVIRON
WORLD

Boom and bust: Quakes define legacy of Türkiye’s ‘Erdomonics’



The latter years of Erdogan’s rule have seen the growth of loss-making projects that went bankrupt. PHOTO: AFP

THE earthquake’s frightening rumble came deep in the night. Its ferocity killed thousands of people in their sleep and helped bring down a Turkish government.

Fury over the scale of the 1999 disaster fed into broader economic discontent that ultimately propelled Recep Tayyip Erdogan to power.

The Turkish leader now hopes a similar mix of economic despair and anguish over an even deadlier pre-dawn quake in

February does not push him out in elections next Sunday.

“They came with an earthquake and they might leave with an earthquake,” Ankara University assistant professor Melih Yesilbag said of Erdogan’s Islamic-rooted party.

“The AKP took power after an earthquake. Modernising the infrastructure was one of its main promises from the start. And 20 years later you see this happen,” he said.

The 1999 calamity killed

more than 17,000 people and put the shoddiness of Türkiye’s buildings on soul-crushing display. But it also made a more profound impact.

The AKP’s election victory in 2002 and the rise of Erdogan a year later heralded a new economic model based on construction that changed the way Türkiye worked.

The vast country entered a building frenzy that became central to a growth policy dubbed “Erdomonics”. — AFP

Four decades of protection of east China bay ecosystem pays off

JIAOZHOU Bay in east China’s Shandong Province is among the country’s first to carry out comprehensive and systematic marine ecological surveys.

“We’ve observed the bay’s environment since the 1980s and set up 14 long-term monitoring spots here. Starting from 2003, our monitoring frequency has increased to once a month, covering the major ecological areas of Jiaozhou Bay,” said Sun Xiaoxia, a researcher at the Institute of Oceanography under the Chinese Academy of Sciences.

Over the past four decades, the bay, in the coastal city of Qingdao, has witnessed tremendous progress in its ecological environment preservation.



Vehicles run smoothly on the Jiaozhou Bay Bridge, the world’s longest cross-sea bridge, in Qingdao, East China’s Shandong province, 1 October 2012. PHOTO: ZIHENG/ XINHUA

Thanks to a series of eco-friendly policies and restoration efforts, the local government has continuously improved the bay’s environmental health and recovered the aquatic plant population.

“The health of the bay’s ecosystem has been steadily recovering since 2003, reaching its historical best over the past two decades in 2021,” Sun said. —Xinhua

Colombia nabs over 300 tonnes of illegally caught fish in a decade

COLOMBIA has seized more than 334 tonnes of illegally caught shark, rays and other species between 2012 and 2022, authorities said on Friday.

Most of the confiscations were made in the Pacific, around remote Malpelo and Gorgona islands, two protected natural parks with a great deal of threatened biodiversity, a Defense Ministry statement said.

The Pacific region in particular is home to environmental “multi-crimes,” which involve both illegal fishermen and timber traffickers, said

Captain Javier Augusto Bermudez, of the Colombian Navy.

Photos released by the ministry show dozens of headless fish regularly collected by authorities.

Fauna and flora off the Caribbean coast are also seriously threatened, Bermudez said.

In rivers such as the Orinoco, whose basin Colombia shares with Venezuela, pink dolphins are also victims of illegal fishing.

Colombian law punishes illegal fishing with up to nine years in prison. — AFP



A Colombian National Navy photo of fish confiscated from illegal fishermen, 5 May 2023, on the island of Malpelo, Colombia. PHOTO: COLOMBIAN NATIONAL NAVY/AFP

NEWS IN BRIEF

April heat in western Med ‘almost impossible without climate change’

THE extreme heat that engulfed the Iberian peninsula and parts of North Africa last week would have been “almost impossible without climate change”, an international scientific study found on Friday.

The “exceptional early heatwave” involved “local temperatures up to 20 degrees hotter than normal and April records being broken by up to 6 degrees”, said the report by the World Weather Attribution (WWA), whose scientists study the link between extreme weather events and climate change. — AFP

Record sea surface heat sparks fears of warming surge

WITH sea surface temperatures swelling to new highs in recent weeks, scientists warn that humanity’s carbon pollution has the potential to turn oceans into a global warming “time bomb”.

Oceans absorb most of the heat caused by planet-warming gases, causing heatwaves that harm aquatic life, altering weather patterns and disrupting crucial planet-regulating systems.

While sea surface temperatures normally recede relatively quickly from annual peaks, this year they stayed high, with scientists warning that this underscores an underappreciated but grave impact of climate change. — AFP

HEALTH/WELLNESS: WORLD

China refines medical bill settlement policy to benefit migrant population

CHINA has further enhanced the mechanism for cross-provincial on-the-spot settlement of medical bills through basic medical insurance accounts, benefiting more migrant individuals when seeking medical treatment.

Under the current basic medical insurance scheme, rural migrant workers, elderly people who relocate to be with their children, and other migrant individuals are allowed to settle their medical expenses incurred outside their home provinces.

On-the-spot settlement of cross-provincial outpatient medical bills was realized at about 364,400 designated medical institutions nationwide, with over 17.4 million applications for settlement approved during the first three months of 2023, according to figures released by the National Healthcare Security Administration.

There are hospitals desig-



People line up to pay in a hospital in Beijing in August 2005. Beijing municipal officials have introduced new rules on hospital billing, banning the markup of prescription drug prices and the imposition of consulting fees on patients. **PHOTO: IC/XINHUA /FILE**

nated for cross-provincial settlement of outpatient bills in all county-level areas across China, the administration said.

From January to March, the total number of direct settlements of cross-provincial inpatient medical bills reached

2.1 million, the official figures showed.

China's basic medical insurance schemes provide coverage to approximately 1.36 billion people, with the coverage rate staying above 95 per cent of the total population. — Xinhua

Nicaraguan paradise draws Americans, Europeans despite political strife



The Pacific coastal town of San Juan del Sur, Nicaragua, which has drawn a community of Americans and Europeans, despite political repression by the government of President Daniel Ortega. **PHOTO: TERRA NICARAGUA / AFP**

TUCKED away in a southern corner of Nicaragua, far from the political persecution of the opposition by President Daniel Ortega, a tiny colony of Americans and Europeans have carved out a new home on the Pacific, lured by the area's natural beauty, security and tranquility.

San Juan del Sur, on the Pacific coast 140 kilometres (85 miles) south of Managua on the border with Costa Rica, is an ideal place to retire or set up a business.

While Ortega's political

opponents are thrown in jail or forced into exile — a "continuum of repression," in the words of a recent Amnesty International report — this little corner of tropical paradise attracts foreigners to enjoy its bars, restaurants, whale watching and landscapes.

Many expats first visited as tourists before deciding to stay permanently, while other more recent arrivals were attracted by lax Covid-19 vaccine rules.

American Christina Alty came 10 years ago to surf and has since set up an estate

agency.

"I like the lifestyle of Nicaragua in general, it checks all my boxes for all the outdoor things that I enjoy: the beaches, the hiking, the scenery," said Alty.

Her clients "just enjoy the different lifestyle change.

"It's a lot slower pace of life here than wherever they came from," added the 37-year-old mother of two children who study in a bilingual school in the town of 17,000 inhabitants.

While Alty strolls along the beach, tourists lounge on chairs, lie on the sand, play sports or enjoy a dip in the sea.

The space to be children

Two bilingual schools combine formal education with open air classes.

"We are in a very natural environment, we're four kilometers (2.5 miles) from the center of San Juan del Sur, we're surrounded by mango, almond and plum trees," Jaime Lynn Hunter, director of the Adelante school, told AFP. — AFP

Mobile phone calls associated with increased risk of high blood pressure

ACCORDING to new research published today in European Heart Journal - Digital Health, a journal of the European Society of Cardiology (ESC), talking on a cell phone for 30 minutes or more per week is associated with a 12pc increased risk of high blood pressure compared to less than 30 minutes.

"It's the number of minutes people spend talking on a mobile that matter for heart health, with more minutes meaning greater risk," said study author Professor Xianhui Qin of Southern Medical University, Guangzhou, China. "Years of use or employing a hands-free set-up had no influence on the likelihood of developing high blood pressure. More studies are needed to confirm the findings."

Almost three-quarters of

the global population aged 10 and over own a mobile phone. Nearly 1.3 billion adults aged 30 to 79 years worldwide have high blood pressure (hypertension). Hypertension is a major risk factor for heart attack and stroke and a leading cause of premature death globally.

Mobile phones emit low levels of radiofrequency energy, which has been linked with rises in blood pressure after short-term exposure. Results of previous studies on mobile phone use and blood pressure were inconsistent, potentially because they included calls, texts, gaming, and so on. This study examined the relationship between making and receiving phone calls and new-onset hypertension. The study used data from the UK Biobank. — ANI



A USA fan looks at her mobile phone at the Al-Thumama Stadium on 29 November 2022. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

US FDA approves first respiratory syncytial virus vaccine

THE US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved the first respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) vaccine on Wednesday.

The vaccine, named Arexvy, is approved for the prevention of lower respiratory tract disease caused by RSV in individuals 60 years of age and older.

RSV is a highly contagious virus that causes infections of the lungs and breathing passages in individuals of all age groups.

In older adults, RSV is a common cause of lower respiratory tract disease, which affects the lungs and can cause life-threatening pneumonia and bronchiolitis, according

to the FDA.

Each year, RSV leads to approximately 60,000 to 120,000 hospitalizations and 6,000 to 10,000 deaths among adults 65 years of age and older in the United States, according to the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

"Today's approval of the first RSV vaccine is an important public health achievement to prevent a disease which can be life-threatening and reflects the FDA's continued commitment to facilitating the development of safe and effective vaccines for use in the United States," said Peter Marks, director of the FDA's Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research. — Xinhua

Japan’s seafood imports from Russia hit record 155 bil. yen in 2022

JAPAN imported a record 155.2 billion yen (\$1.2 billion) worth of marine products from Russia in 2022, data from the Finance Ministry showed Friday, highlighting the country’s continued reliance on Moscow for its seafood supply despite a deterioration of relations over the war in Ukraine.

While Japan did impose economic sanctions, including banning imports of vodka and lumber, on Russia following its invasion of Ukraine last year, marine products were exempted as Tokyo deemed the adverse effect on domestic businesses would be too great.

Japan’s poor catches and

Russia’s larger volume in waters around disputed islands, known as the Northern Territories in Japan and the Southern Kurils in Russia, were factors in last year’s imports hitting the highest since 1992, a year after the collapse of the Soviet Union.

The previous record high was logged in 2018 when Japan imported 140.2 billion yen of marine products from Russia. It is estimated that Japan imports around 40 percent of the seafood consumed in the country, with Russia ranking third after Chile and the United States by import value in 2022.

By product, snow crab ac-

counted for the highest value of imports from Russia last year at 32.6 billion yen. The increase is likely due to Russian exporters shifting to Japan after being banned from the U.S. and other Western markets, according to sources in the fisheries industry.

The figure was also boosted by Japan’s need for new import sources due to a U.S. suspension of snow crab fishing in the Bering Sea due to declining stock, the sources said.

Imports of pollack paste, the raw ingredient for “kamaboko” fishcakes, increased roughly seven-fold from the previous year



Photo shows frozen Russian king crab on sale at a fresh fish store in Tokyo on 2 May 2023. **PHOTO: KYODO**

to 7.4 billion yen in 2022. Poor fishing conditions in Japan also resulted in an increase in im-

ports of sea urchins, salmon and trout from Russia, among other products. — Kyodo

Iran islanders hope to cash in on Gulf’s shifting geopolitics



Merchants on Iran’s Qeshm island, some 150 kilometres (93 miles) from the United Arab Emirates’ commercial hub Dubai, are closely watching regional shifts since Tehran’s March deal with Saudi Arabia. **PHOTO: ATTA KENARE/AFP**

YEARS of sanctions on Iran have taken their toll, but on the strategically located island of Qeshm, people can still find goods from major global brands otherwise out of reach.

Off Iran’s southern coast, some 150 kilometres (93 miles) from the United Arab Emirates’ commercial hub of Dubai, Qeshm’s merchants have been closely watching regional shifts since Tehran’s landmark rapprochement with Saudi Arabia in March.

“The main thing in life is to

have good relations with your neighbours,” said 50-year-old retailer Mohammad Bazmandegan, who imports electric appliances from Dubai.

He has been following the diplomatic developments since his government resumed ties with Riyadh after a seven-year freeze, a shift affecting the entire Gulf region.

Along with Saudi Arabia, Tehran is also seeking to mend relations with other neighbours including the UAE and Bahrain, which also severed ties

in 2016.

“If relations with our neighbours improve, they will also improve with other parts of the world,” said another trader in Qeshm, Hassan Ebrahimi, 52.

Located in the Strait of Hormuz, the Gulf’s key maritime corridor, the island of 150,000 residents has long served trade with the Arabian Peninsula, South Asia and Africa’s eastern coast — but this has also made Qeshm sensitive to the vagaries of geopolitics.

Trust’ in face of instability

For 40 years, Hassan Roshtam has plied the waters between Qeshm and the UAE in his lenj, a traditional wooden ship synonymous with the ports of the Gulf.

The weathered-faced captain loads vegetables in Iran’s ports and returns from Dubai with “dried fruits and other products”, he said.

Despite restrictions following the diplomatic break in 2016, the tradition of business, traffic and trade in the Gulf has not stopped.

The retailer Bazmandegan said that even if “the market has become more unstable... relations of mutual trust, the

fruits of years of cooperation”, allowed Iranian and Emirati traders to continue their exchanges.

He imports fans, coffee makers and washing machines from Western manufacturers like Philips, Tefal and Toshiba.

The goods arrive “thanks to our Emirati intermediaries”, Bazmandegan said, adding that “90 percent of the products come from Dubai”.

But the international sanctions and diplomatic ruptures have meant Qeshm’s traders have struggled in recent years, pushing some of them into bankruptcy.

“One competitor died after a heart attack due to daily price changes,” Bazmandegan said.

Tourism on the horizon

Nooradin Tata, who owns a guesthouse in central Qeshm, said the personal lives of islanders have also suffered amid the diplomatic troubles.

Hundreds of thousands of Iranians live in the UAE and Tata said people from Qeshm with family abroad are “stressed” by the onerous administrative and logistical hurdles to “bringing or going to visit family members” living in Gulf countries. — AFP

South China fishing village thrives through surfing

WHEN Li Jing first arrived in Tianxin a decade ago, she never imagined the small fishing village would transform itself into a bustling surfing resort.

Located just a few hundred meters from Riyue Bay, a premier surfing spot in Wanning City in southern China’s Hainan Province, Tianxin has reaped the benefits of surfing’s development and morphed into a surfer’s paradise in recent years.

Li settled in the village in 2013. “The environment here is perfect for me. I adore living by the sea with my dog, surfing under the blue sky and white clouds every day,” she said.

Over the past ten years, Li has taken part in surfing competitions and related activities, witnessing the village’s remarkable evolution.

“In 2013, the village had just one path leading into it, and express delivery services were non-existent. Now, Tianxin boasts five express stations, a gym, and even a skatepark. Life is becoming increasingly convenient,” Li explained. — AFP

Airlines, unions in rare unity on US pilot diversity drive

AIRLINES and unions disagree on many aspects relating to today's tight labor market, but concur on at least one thing: the need to diversify the pilot workforce pool.

At a recent congressional hearing, Regional Airline Association (RAA) President Faye Malarkey Black rued the "very limited diversity" within airline cockpits, echoing remarks from the Air Line Pilots Association's (ALPA)

Jason Ambrosi who noted a dearth of pilots who are women and people of color, saying "that must change."

The alignment stood out because Ambrosi and Black disagreed about key elements in today's employment market, including whether a pilot shortage exists.

The population of US airline pilots and engineers is currently 95.7 per cent white and 9.2 per

cent female, according to US data.

Tapping into under-represented populations has emerged as a solution to the industry's workforce stresses from the surge in travel demand following the Covid-19 downturn, issues that have also affected other corners of aviation.

Over the last 18 months, there has been a scramble for seasoned pilots after thousands of

pilots accepted early retirement while airlines cut costs during the pandemic.

Whereas major US airlines drew 50 per cent of their pilots from the military in the year 2000, that share has dropped to just 15 per cent due to the military's shift to unmanned aircraft. Today, three-quarters of major airline recruits come from regional airlines, according to consultancy Oliver Wyman. — AFP



Pilot Omar Morsi checks controls in the cockpit of a United Airlines Boeing 777 aircraft at Newark Liberty International Airport in Newark, New Jersey. **PHOTO: AFP**

Tianjin Port sees robust trade growth in Q1

NORTH China's Tianjin Port saw its foreign trade top 498 billion yuan (about 72 billion U.S. dollars) in the first quarter of 2023, up 24 per cent year on year, according to Tianjin Customs.

Over the period, its trade with countries along the Belt and Road totaled 180.77 billion yuan, up 49.7 per cent year on year.

The port's trade with its major partners — the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, the European Union, the United States, Australia, the Republic of Korea and Brazil — accounted for 56.9 per cent of its total



The port's trade with its major partners — the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, the European Union, the United States, Australia, the Republic of Korea and Brazil — accounted for 56.9 per cent of its total foreign trade volume in the first three months of this year. **PHOTO: SEA TRADE MARITIME/XINHUA**

foreign trade volume in the first three months of this year.

The port's exports of mechanical and electrical products grew 45.3

per cent to 111.56 billion yuan in the first quarter. — Xinhua

Hollywood strikes inflamed by claim AI could do writers' jobs



The Hollywood writers' strike broke out this week over pay, but the refusal of studios like Netflix and Disney to rule out artificial intelligence replacing human scribes in the future has only fueled anger and fear on the picket lines. **PHOTO: AFP**

THE Hollywood writers' strike broke out this week over pay, but the refusal of studios like Netflix and Disney to rule out artificial intelligence replacing human scribes in the future has only fueled anger and fear on the picket lines.

With their rapidly advancing ability to eerily mimic human conversation, AI programs like ChatGPT have spooked many industries recently. The White House this week summoned Big Tech

to discuss the potential risks. As part of the weeks-long talks with studios and streamers that collapsed Monday, the Writers Guild of America asked for binding agreements to regulate the use of AI.

Under the proposals, nothing written by AI can be considered "literary" or "source" material — industry terms that decide who gets royalties — and scripts written by WGA members cannot "be used to train AI." — AFP

Buffett faults US government handling of banking crisis

INVESTMENT tycoon Warren Buffett said Saturday that messaging from the US government over the regional banking crisis had been "poor," suggesting that is why confidence has not returned among consumers.

Four regional banks have been caught up in crisis since the beginning of March in the United States, three of them subsequently taken over by other institutions with the help of authorities.

For two of them — Silicon Valley Bank (SVB) and Signature

Bank — the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) took the controversial decision to support their uninsured deposits, citing fears of contagion.

By law, the FDIC insures up to \$250,000 of customers' deposits in eligible banks, but for SVB and Signature the body insured all deposits, including those above the legal limit. Yet, despite that extraordinary step, consumers are still worried, Buffett said at a shareholder meeting of his Berkshire Hathaway holding company. — AFP

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V BF TROUT VOY.NO. (0UV1QE1NC)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V BF TROUT VOY.NO. (0UV1QE1NC)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **8-5-2023** 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 CMA CGM ASIA SHIPPING PTE LTD

GLOBAL
AFFAIRS

Japanese PM in South Korea for landmark summit

JAPANESE Prime Minister Fumio Kishida was in Seoul Sunday for a landmark summit with South Korea's president as the two countries seek to mend ties in the face of growing nuclear threats from Pyongyang.

Kishida is making the first official bilateral visit by a Japanese leader to South Korea in over a decade. He first headed to Seoul's National Cemetery — where war veterans, including from the fight against Japanese colonial rule, are buried — to lay flowers and pay his respects.

Kishida then went into summit talks with South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol, who has made resetting ties with Japan a top priority for his administration. Yoon was in Tokyo in March for a fence-mending visit.

The East Asian neighbours, both crucial security allies of the United States, have long been at odds over historic issues linked

to Japan's brutal 1910 to 1945 colonial occupation of the Korean peninsula, including sexual slavery and forced labour.

Kishida said Sunday ahead of his departure that the two leaders were working to resume so-called "shuttle diplomacy" — regular mutual visits and high-level talks — paused for years during a bitter trade spat linked to the forced labour issue.

During their March summit, Kishida and Yoon agreed to end tit-for-tat trade curbs, with Kishida inviting the South Korean leader to a G7 meeting in Hiroshima this month.

Kishida said he was looking forward to "an honest exchange of views" with Yoon, "based on a relationship of trust".

Yoon is expected to host a dinner party at the presidential residence — likely serving Korean barbecue — and he may even cook for Kishida, according to local reports. — AFP



Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida (L) arrives in South Korea as Seoul and Tokyo seek to mend ties in the face of nuclear threats from Pyongyang. **PHOTO: KYODO**

Cuban tourism steadily improves with nearly 1 mln visitors arriving so far in 2023



Tourists pose for a selfie in front of a tourist bus in the area of Old Havana, in Havana, capital of Cuba. **PHOTO: JOAQUIN HERNANDEZ/XINHUA/FILE**

CANADIAN tourist Dorothy Graham arrived in Cuba's capital Havana three days ago on a family getaway.

The 43-year-old resident of Montreal, who is traveling with her husband and two teenage sons, told Xinhua the whole family is keen to learn about Cuba's cultural heritage.

"We have been walking around Havana's Old Quarter, taking pictures of old buildings,"

she said. "People are nice and the food is delicious."

Elsewhere in Havana, Mexican tourist Rodrigo Jaramillo, 28, was waiting for the bus that would take him and his friends to the seaside resort of Varadero in western Matanzas province.

"I am looking forward to drinking a Cuban mojito on the beach and dancing to salsa music," he said. "I am going to make the most of this trip."

Cuba's tourism industry is gradually recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic, which dealt a big blow to an economy already reeling from US economic sanctions.

So far this year, the number of foreign visitors is about to reach 1 million, with Canada still being the country's top source of international tourists, according to Cuban Tourism Minister Juan Carlos Garcia.

"Canadians account for more than 50 per cent of tourist arrivals," he said at Cuba's International Tourism Fair Tuesday, adding it was necessary to increase the number of airlines flying to Cuba to see more growth in the industry.

To that end, the government is already taking steps to attract more travelers from Brazil, Bolivia, Colombia and Argentina, among other countries, he said.

Suyen Rivero, director of business at the Cuban Tourism Ministry (Mintur), said the island is also trying to draw foreign investment to develop the tourism sector. — Xinhua

Thais queue at temples, schools as early voting begins

THAIS queued under the blistering sun outside temples, shopping centres and schools to cast their early ballots Sunday ahead of a much-anticipated election next week.

More than two million Thais nationwide are registered to vote early ahead of the kingdom's 14 May election, which is shaping up to be a clash between army-backed establishment parties and resurgent opposition movements.

Prime Minister Prayut

Chan-o-Cha, who took power in a 2014 coup before cementing control in a controversial 2019 election, has been languishing in opinion polls with voters favouring old-school opposition party Pheu Thai and the more radical Move Forward Party.

But with an electoral system heavily stacked in favour of the army-backed parties, challengers must achieve a landslide victory to have any hope of forming the next government. — AFP



People wait in a queue to cast their ballot during advance voting at a polling station inside a shopping mall in Bangkok on 7 May 2023 a week ahead of the 14 May general election. **PHOTO: MANAN VATSYAYANA/AFP**

Biden, Republicans meet Tuesday to thwart default disaster

WASHINGTON’S power brokers love playing chicken. But the rest of the world will watch in dread Tuesday when President Joe Biden and Republican leaders meet to negotiate the US debt ceiling — praying that one side finally blinks.

The White House summit between Biden, House Speaker Kevin McCarthy and Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell sets in motion the deciding round of a power struggle whose outcome will impact the global economy and could upset the 2024 US presidential election.

The immediate issue is raising the debt ceiling, an arcane budgeting procedure that most years passes with little controversy. Basically, the US government always spends more than has been budgeted but, unlike in most countries, then requires congressional approval to borrow extra.

This year, McCarthy and his radicalized right-wing party have decided to say no, unless Democrats first agree to sweeping budget cuts, giving in to the Republican message that Biden has been profligate and irresponsible. —AFP



A group of Senate Republicans hold a news conference to urge the White House and Senate Democrats to pass the House GOP legislation that would raise the debt limit and cut federal spending outside the US Capitol in Washington, DC, on 3 May 2023. PHOTO: CHIP SOMODEVILLA/AFP

All to blame’: Serbia takes stock after mass shootings

THE arrival of spring is usually a festive, carefree affair in Serbia’s capital Belgrade.

But on Saturday, the onset of the warm season was met with confusion, fear and shock as people wrestled with back-to-back shootings this week that left the country stunned.

People were mulling many questions that ultimately boiled down to a single word — Why?

On Wednesday, the first shooting saw a 13-year-old gun down eight fellow classmates and a beloved security guard at an elementary school in an upscale neighbourhood in downtown Belgrade.

Less than 48 later, it was followed by another shooting spree when a 21-year-old armed with an automatic rifle murdered eight people and injured 14 others in a melee some 60 kilometres (37 miles) south of the capital.

As the weekend began, the trauma wrought by the violence was still palpable.

People continued to queue outside the Vladislav Ribnikar elementary school, where they held calla lilies and waited to sign a condolence book near the school’s entrance, which remains sealed off by police.

The pavement has been transformed into a makeshift



Masked policemen secure an area in the village of Dubona near the town of Mladenovac, about 60 kilometres (37 miles) south of Serbia’s capital Belgrade, on 5 May 2023, in the aftermath of a drive-by shooting. PHOTO: ANDREJ ISAKOVIC / AFP

shrine with mounds of flowers, toys and letters surrounded by pools of melted candle wax.

“I came here with my son, who wanted to pay his last respects to his friends. I think the reality has started to catch up to them,” Zoran Radojicic, a 51-year-old pharmacist, told AFP.

Gun culture

Serbia has the highest level of civilian gun ownership in Europe, with roughly 39 out of 100 people owning firearms, according to the latest study by the Small Arms Survey research group.

Weapons feature heavily in the Balkan country’s culture, where centuries of occupation, rebellion and war have instilled a martial spirit in the fabric of the nation.

Yet despite the high levels of gun ownership, mass shootings have been rare in Serbia, with school shootings in particular almost nonexistent in the country’s recent history.

President Aleksandar Vucic promised immediate action on Friday, vowing just hours after the second shooting to “disarm” Serbia and crack down on gun ownership. —AFP

WFP, UNEP agree to bolster global food, water security

THE UN World Food Programme (WFP) and the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) on Friday signed an agreement in Nairobi, the capital of Kenya, to improve food, water and environmental security of vulnerable communities around the world.

The two UN agencies will work with local communities, governments, regional bodies, UN partners and other stakeholders to restore degraded ecosystems, build and scale

actions to adapt to the climate crisis and support sustainable agricultural practices, according to the agreement.

“If we work more closely together, we can create real, meaningful impact. We can enhance climate mitigation and adaptation. We can support vulnerable populations to address nature-induced conflicts and natural disasters,” said UNEP’s Executive Director Inger Andersen in a joint statement issued in Nairobi. — Xinhua

WORLD: TOP HEADLINE

23,000 flee violence in northeast India, army says

SOME 23,000 people have fled ethnic violence in northeast India that has reportedly killed at least 54 people, the army said Sunday, although there was no new “major violence” overnight.

The unrest in Manipur state erupted after a protest march by a tribal group last week sparked clashes, with vehicles and houses set on fire and authorities firing tear gas.

The military has deployed thousands of troops to the state bordering Myanmar, issued “shoot-at-sight” orders in “extreme cases”, imposed curfews and cut the internet.

The army said on Sunday no major flare-ups were reported overnight and that a curfew was lifted between 7-10 am in Churachandpur district, one of the main flashpoint areas.—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.



Myanmar Vovinam team collect one more gold, seven bronze medals

MYANMAR Vovinam team further won one gold and seven bronze medals in the second day Vovinam Competition of the XXXII SEA Games held on 7 May. The third gold medal for Myanmar was earned by Mana Kui and Tin Htoo Zaw during the Men's duel form event. In this competition, Myanmar won the gold medal with 450 points, Vietnam the silver medal with 446 points, and Cambodia the bronze medal with 439 points. In the Men's 60-kg Fight Event, Aung Khant Zaw won one bronze medal.

Next, Hein Htet Aung, Kyaw Thu Soe Aung, Nay Lin Htet, Khaing Zar Tun, Phyo Ei Kyaw and Thida Min won another bronze medal in the Mixed

Competition.—Ko Nyi Lay/KZL

In the Women's 60-kg event, Hnin Nanda Oo secured one more bronze while Yazar Tun and Tin Htoo Zoo won further bronze medal at Men's Double Machete Form Event.

In the Ying-yang Sword Form, May Honey Aung Lwin picked one more bronze while Myint Sandi Kyaw won another bronze at Cross Form Event.

After the matches on 7 May, the Myanmar Vovinam team have won three gold and 11 bronze medals for the country and will continue to compete on 9 May. — Ko Nyi Lay/KZL

Myanmar's Chinlone Team win gold, silver, bronze each in SEA Games

MYANMAR'S Chinlone Team won one gold, one silver, and one bronze medals during the Chinlone completion in the XXXII SEA Games.

On 7 May, Team Myanmar won the gold medal in the Wom-

en's Sames Stoke-Event-2 competition with a score of 221 points.

In this competition, the Cambodian team earned the silver medal with 182 points and the Lao team bagged the bronze medal with 125 points.

In the Men + Women Sames Stoke-Event-2 competition, the Myanmar team collected the silver medal with a score of 198 points, while the host team Cambodia won the gold medal with 206 points and the Lao team picked the bronze medal with 176 points.

In the men's Sames Stoke-Event-2 competition, the Myanmar team won a joint bronze medal with the host Cambodia team, while the Thai team claimed the gold medal and the Malaysian team garnered the silver medal.

The Myanmar traditional Chinlone sport was first included in the 2013 SEA Games hosted by Myanmar. After participating in the SEA Games again in 2015 and 2017, the game was not found in 2019 and 2021, but it was again included this year. — Ko Nyi Lay/KZL



Myanmar Women's Chinlone Team compete in the XXXII SEA Games on 7 May 2023. PHOTO: MOSYA

SEA Games Men's Football: Myanmar beats host Cambodia 2-0



MYANMAR U-22 men's football team celebrated a 2-0 victory over host Cambodia during the Group A match of the XXXII SEA Games Men's Football Event held at Cambodian National Stadium in Phnom Penh, Cambodia yesterday.

The Myanmar team lost to Indonesia team in the previous group match, so they opened this match with all attacking power.

With strategic play, Myanmar produced a stunning opening goal even at 12-minute mark by star player Hein Htet Aung.

After the icebreaker, team Myanmar continued to attack

and the second or winning goal was beautifully scored by Thet Hein Soe in the 38 minute.

Team Myanmar dominated the first half by two goals.

The Cambodian team, led by coach Honda, played enthusiastically to get equalizers in the second half but Myanmar's counter-play was effective again in the last minutes.

In the final whistle, Myanmar celebrated a 2-0 victory over host team. As a result of the win, the Myanmar team was one step closer to advancing to the next round. Team Myanmar will take on the Philippines on 10 May for a decisive play. — KZL