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.

It is necessary to give a helping hand to all Myanmar citizens without leaving anyone: Senior General

Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing attends the natural disaster management emergency meeting at the hall of the Commander-in-Chief on 14 May 2023.

CHAIRMAN of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing attended the natural disaster management emergency meeting at the hall of the Commander-in-Chief yesterday morning in order to assign the duties of emergency management, response, rescue and cooperation and readiness with grouping and rehabilitation as cyclonic storm Mocha may enter Myanmar.

Occurrence of the storm moving to Myanmar

Commander-in-Chief (Navy) Admiral Moe Aung reported on situation of cyclonic storm Mocha and impacts of the storm along its route, possible route of the storm and wind speed, early arrival of the storm to Rakhine coast.

In his response, the Senior General said that the red colour storm warning has been issued three days ahead of the schedule as the possible moving of the storm to Myanmar coast is higher according to the forecast. The Senior General stressed the need to minimize loss and damage in the storm prone areas. And, relief and help process must be done in time as storm-hit areas faced loss and waste.

Collection of rice and rations by State and Tatmadaw in advance

Union Minister for Commerce U Aung Naing Oo, Union Minister for Religious Affairs and Culture U Ko Ko, Myanmar Economic Holdings Public Co Ltd Chairman Lt-Gen Hsan Oo, Chairman of Myanmar Economic Corporation Lt-Gen Nyo Saw and Quartermaster-General Lt-Gen Kyaw Swa Lin reported on collection of reserve rice in advance to be sent to the storm-hit areas, collection of rations and corrugated iron sheets by Tatmadaw, stockpiles of instant noodle, dried rations, fuel, personal goods and construction materials, preparations for ancient pagodas in Bagan to face least damage, soonest repairing of damaged monasteries and nunneries and plans to offer meals to monks and nuns.

In his speech, the Senior General stressed the need to make proper packaging for rations for smooth distribution of emergency rations. Priority must be given to repairing the damanged monasteries and schools. Robes and nun robes as well as rice must be collected in advance to offer them if necessary.

Preparations for healthcare services

Adjutant-General Lt-Gen Soe Min Oo reported on preparations of medicines and medical crops by the Tatmadaw.

In his response to the report, the Senior General pointed out that medical crops must be prepared and sea-going hospital vessels must be ready. These vessels must be loaded with emergency rations and personal goods. Medical corps must be sent to the storm-affected areas to provide medical treatments to the people facing diseases in subsequence of the storm and flooding.

SEE PAGE-3

INSIDE TODAY

NATIONAL
Registration for SIM cards notified
PAGE-2

NATIONAL
Rescue operations underway in regions and states due to Cyclone Mocha
PAGE-3

NATIONAL
Illegal industrial materials, agricultural equipment, foodstuffs, consumer goods, and vehicles confiscated
PAGE-6

CURRENT AFFAIRS
Majority of townships across Yangon Region experience incidents of fallen trees
PAGE-7

Those from organizations with various titles including PDFs in armed struggle line invited to return to legal fold

9 May 2023

1. The State Administration Council is discharging the State responsibilities under the Constitution (2008) of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar while implementing the Five-Point Road Map and 12 Objectives to build a Union based on genuine, disciplined democracy and federalism. Meanwhile, as those wishing to politically indoctrinate the people and make attempts to cause the utter devastation of the State unlawfully formed the Committee Representing Pyidaungsu Hluttaw (CRPH), the National Unity Government (NUG) and their subordinate People's Defence Forces (PDFs) and committed armed terror acts, the government declared them as the terrorist groups under the Counter-Terrorism Law.
2. These terrorist groups persuaded innocent people to join the terror organizations with indoctrination based on frightening, sending them to the areas of ethnic armed organizations for attending the explosives courses and participate in the ethnic armed organizations to commit murders in terrorist acts and attacks. A large number of Buddhist monks, State service personnel and innocent people lost their lives in the terror attacks. These terror acts hindered the development of the nation.
3. As the strength of the nation lies within, the nation will reach its goal in a short time only when the development of the nation and construction of the Union based on genuine, disciplined democracy and federalism can be carried out with concerted efforts of the people through might and main. Hence, now is the time to make cooperative efforts to build the State by struggling free from the indoctrination of those who attempt to cause utter devastation to the country, and those involved in terrorist groups including PDF for various reasons and illegal organizations are invited to return to the legal fold for participation in the nation-building tasks. If those who returned to the legal fold committed crimes such as murder, rape and harming others, they would face trials at the court under the law and the government would ease any restrictions over them depending on their crimes under the law.
4. If they return to the legal fold, necessary assistance will go to them, and cash awards will be given to those who bring arms and ammunition as follows:-
   (a) K5 million per gun from the rifle types
   (b) K2 million per gun from pistol types
   (c) K3 million per shotgun
   (d) K7.5 million per mortar, launcher, RPG
   (e) K500,000 per homemade shotgun, homemade mortar, homemade gun
   (f) K300,000 per homemade mine and grenades
   (g) K200,000 per other equipment except for arms and munitions, (e.g., walkie-talkie)
   (h) K5 million per drone which can be used in bombing
5. As such, those wishing to return to the legal fold are invited and urged to contact district and township administration bodies, military camps and police stations.

Information Team
State Administration Council

Notice on licence applications for illegally owned arms and munitions

9 May 2023

1. It is learnt that people illegally carry arms and munitions for their concerns about personal security due to the lethal attacks of terrorists on innocent people today. Although the original intention is for personal security, one's mind can change at any time when in possession of arms and munitions. Moreover, it can cause firearm misuse for possessing illegally and it is not in conformity with the law. Therefore, the State Administration Council will manage to grant licences systematically as per the policy of carrying arms and munitions.
2. In applying for the licence to carry arms and munitions, applicants will not be asked how they get the gun, but they must apply for it together with the arms that they want to carry. Upon the applications, it will review as per the policy of carrying arms and munitions and licences will be granted to those who meet the specific requirements. Action will be taken against those who do not apply for licences together with arms and munitions during the fixed period.

Information Team
State Administration Council

146 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 14 May, total figure registers 637,249

MYANMAR'S COVID-19-positive cases rose to 637,249 after 146 new cases were reported on 14 May 2023 according to the Ministry of Health.

Therefore, a total of 10,510,839 laboratory samples were examined and the confirmed COVID-19 cases reached 637,249.

The total number of patients who have recovered from COVID-19 in the country reached 615,996 including 133 new recoveries.

The death toll from COVID-19 in the country registered 19,494 on 14-5-2023 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

Registration for SIM cards notified

Photo shows registration process of a mobile phone in progress.

THE Department of Post and Telecommunications notified that the filling data such as name and citizenship scrutiny card-CSC number when registering SIM cards are checked in line with the information in the National Database of the Ministry of Immigration and Population.

Upon their incorrect registration data, SIM card users will receive a notification message (SMS) requiring them to re-register correctly within 30 days.

Phone services such as outgoing calls, outgoing SMS and data usage will be suspended for those who have not re-registered with valid CSC numbers within 30 days. Furthermore, SIM cards of those who fail to re-register with accurate information within 90 days will be confiscated.

The notification called for SIM card users to re-register with correct CSC information in the application, website, relevant mobile operators and stores. — TWA/KZW

Trade Mark Ads Call 09251022355,09974424848

Collective efforts needed to achieve advanced socioeconomic goal

Every nation and individual strives to advance their socioeconomic status. Our collective efforts are necessary to achieve this overarching goal. Dedicated work and determination enable us to achieve any goal we set.

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

It is necessary to give a helping hand to all Myanmar citizens without leaving anyone: Senior General

FROM PAGE-1

Formation in advance to undertake evacuation, transport and reconstruction

Commander-in-Chief (Air) General Tun Aung, Quartermaster-General Lt-Gen Kyaw Swa Lin and Director of Military Engineers Brig-Gen Zaw Naing Oo reported on formation of 10 groups comprising medics, engineers and information officials, collection of military bailey bridges, sending of helipads for emergency landing of helicopters, water purifiers and generations.

The Senior General instructed officials to make preparations for Sittway Airport transport relief aids and admit landing of aircrafts at night. It is necessary to form two more groups in addition to 10 emergency rescue vehicle teams.

Efforts for releasing real time information

Union Minister for Information U Maung Maung Ohn and Director of Public Relations and Psychological Warfare Maj-Gen Zaw Min Tun reported on releasing of storm news and storm warnings in time through backpacking satellite communication system and broadcasting of storm news on TV and through radio as well as on website.

The Senior General highlighted it is necessary to inform the people about danger of flooding and landslide in storm prone areas and disseminate storm news to all the people in various ways and means.

Undertaking rescue and relief for natural disaster-hit areas in cooperation with international community

Union Minister for Investment and Foreign Economic Relations Dr Kan Zaw presented cooperation with international organziations to perform rescue and relief in the disaster-hit areas.

The Senior General stressed that Ministries of Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation and Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement must cooperate with each other on time as well as with AHA Centre.

Protection for all citizens without leaving anyone

After giving guidance, the Senior General stressed need for relevant ministries, region and state governments, Tatmadaw (Army, Navy, and Air) and military commands to harmoniously cooperate with each other in rescue, relief and rehabilitation measures. It is necessary to give a helping hand to all Myanmar citizens without leaving anyone. Efforts must be made for minimizing loss and manage to overcome dangers of the storm. — MNA/TTA

Rescue operations underway in regions and states due to Cyclone Mocha

Lamp-post falls on the road in flooding triggered by Cyclone Mocha in Minbu Township on 14 May.

CYCLONE MOCHA, which is extremely powerful in the Bay of Bengal, is causing high tides, strong winds, heavy rains and flash floods.

Due to the speed of the cyclone yesterday, houses and trees were destroyed and roads were blocked in the villages of Nay Pyi Taw Council Area, and branches of trees also fell on the Dawna Road in Thakin Ba Thaung Ward, Seikkyi-Khanaungto Township, Yangon Region.

Eucalyptus trees and lamp-posts fell in Thegon Township of Bago Region while houses collapsed and roofs blew off in Monyo Township.

Inundation in lowland crops and damage to roads due to water erosion were found in Minbu (Sagu) Township, Magway Region, and many damages were occurred in Pwintbyu, Kyaukpyu, Pantanaw and Wakema townships.

Similarly, houses and trees were destroyed and roads blocked Pantanaw, Bogale, Hainggyikyun, Kyaunggon and Kangyidaunt townships.

In the places where the damage was caused by the cyclone, the people are being evacuated to safe places by the social organizations.

Relevant officials fulfilled the needs of these areas. — MNA/KZL

Rescue members clear fallen trees in Seikkyi-Khanaugto Township on 14 May.

SAC Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing attends 75th anniversary (Diamond Jubilee) ceremony of founding bilateral relations and diplomatic relations between Myanmar and India

Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing addresses at the 75th anniversary (Diamond Jubilee) ceremony of founding bilateral relations and diplomatic relations between Myanmar and India at the National Theatre in Yangon on 14 May 2023.

CHAIRMAN of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing attended the ceremony to mark the 75th anniversary (Diamond Jubilee) ceremony of founding bilateral relations and diplomatic relations between Myanmar and India organized by the Myanmar-India International Business Federation and the Myanmar-India Friendship and Development Association at the National Theatre in Yangon yesterday evening.

The Senior General and the Indian Ambassador pressed the button to launch the 75th anniversary (Diamond Jubilee) ceremony to mark the founding bilateral relations and diplomatic relations between Myanmar and India and had documentary photos taken together with attendees.

The Senior General and party viewed round the photo gallery to mark the ceremony.

Then, a video clip on 75th anniversary (Diamond Jubilee) ceremony of founding bilateral relations and diplomatic relations between Myanmar and India was shown.

Speaking on the occasion, the Senior General said that Myanmar and India established the diplomatic relations on 4 January 1948 when Myanmar regained independence. So, it turned 75 years. Before the diplomatic relations, both countries have been preserving the traditions on religious, culture and social affairs for hundreds of years and both countries are sharing long borders.

Chairman of the SAC Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing views round the photo gallery to mark the ceremony on 14 May.

It can be seen that as both countries have been relating with each other since yore due to same religions, culture and customs, literature, fine arts, architectural and building sciences, ration, clothing and utensils as well as trading, many usage of these materials are the same.

Both Myanmar and India fell under the colonial yoke of British and they strived for independence struggling. In this regard, leaders of both countries communicated with each other and their fighting together plays a key role in bilateral relations. General Aung San, who is Myanamr national leader as well as independence architect, and Indian national leader Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru were respectful to each other. Before going to England to sign the Aung San-Atlee treaty which is important for Myanmar independence, both leaders held a meeting in New Delhi of India. Nehru gave his coat to General Aung San to endure weather of England showing their fraternity and attachment.

As both countries have common historical and geographical conditions, they cooperate with each other in trade and culture sectors based on bilateral relations of leaders from both countries. Peoples from both countries are also communicating with each for development.

Moreover, India gave arm assistance to Myanmar in the internal armed conflicts in the post-independence period. In 1951, Indian Prime Minister Nehru fully stood for Myanmar to fight against invasion of Kuomintang. In addition, India actively supported Myanmar in submitting the objection on invasion of Kuomintang to the United Nations. Myanmar never forgets the gratitude of India.

Myanmar and India signed the Treaty of Peace and Friendship on 7 July 1951. India as a good friend sold 900,000 tonnes of rice to Myanmar which faced economic crises in 1954. India is the fifth trade partner. Myanmar sends beans and other products to India which also exports medicines and industrial products as well as provide technical assistance to Myanmar.

Indian government donated cash to the fund for renovation of Bagan pagodas in 2016 and sold 13.4 million doses of Covishield and donated 1 million doses of Covaxin to Myanmar.

Currently, the two countries implement the Kaladan Multi Model Transit Project which will help emergence of Sittway Special Economic Zone based on Sittway port included in the Kaladan project.

The India Centre opened in Yangon in December 2021 is a symbol of bilateral relations which cements relations of both countries and mutual understanding between Myanmar and India.

During the period from 2013 to 2021, Myanmar sent more than 6,600 personnel as scholarship to India as a milestone between the two countries. Those personnel are now serving at the Union level and departmental heads of the country.

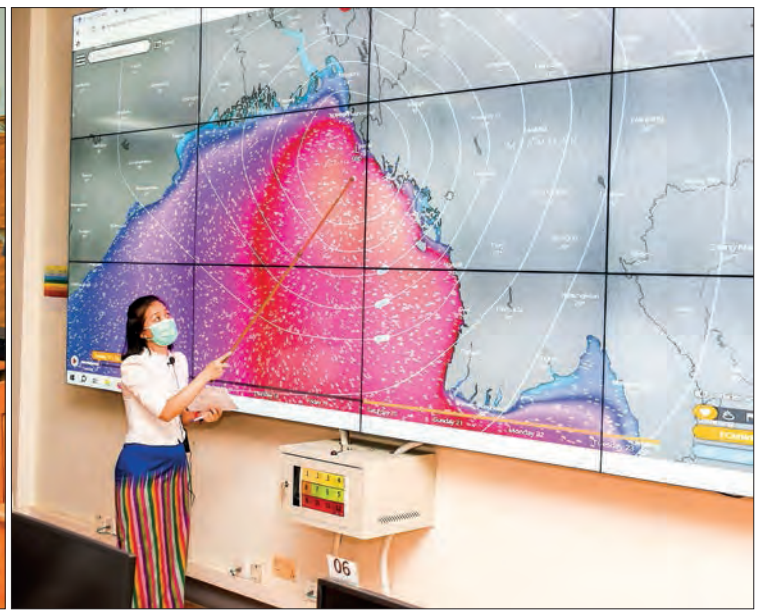
In fact, 75 years is a long time. During the period, it should actually take pride in preserving the the relations between the two countries recognizing sovereignty of both countries and mutual respect based on fraternity.

Then, the Indian Ambassador made a speech.

The Senior General and the Indian Ambassador enjoyed variety dances, songs and entertainments of cultural troupes of both countries and presented flower baskets to these troupes.

Later, the Senior General and wife, the Indian Ambassador and wife and attendees had dinner in honour of the 75th Anniversary friendly relations and diplomatic relations between Myanmar and India. — MNA/TTA

Relevant departments have to make preparations to give helps to the people for unexpected measures in the aftermath of the storm: Vice-Senior General



Chairman of Natural Disaster Management Committee SAC Vice-Chairman Deputy Prime Minister Vice-Senior General Soe Win views moving of storm Mocha to Myanmar in map presented by an official at SWRR Ministry in Nay Pyi Taw on 14 May.

SAC Vice-Chairman Deputy Prime Minister Vice-Senior General Soe Win seen at the second emergency meeting of National Natural Disaster Management Committee on 14 May.

THE second (emergency) meeting of the National Natural Disaster Management Committee took place at the Natural Disaster Management Centre of the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning, with an address by Chairman of the Committee Vice Chairman of the State Administration Council Deputy Prime Minister Vice-Senior General Soe Win.

Speaking on the occasion, the Vice-Senior General said that cyclonic storm Mocha was at 80 miles west-southwest of Sittway and 85 miles from Maungtaw according to the observation of the Department of Meteorology and Hydrology. Its wind speed hit 130-137 miles per hour. Storm tidal may reach 20 feet high in minimum.

Since 6 May, the rehearsals on preparedness against danger of the storm have been conducted. Relevant departments have to make preparations to give helps to the people for unexpected measures in the aftermath of the storm. Relevant ministries should slate the plans of rescue and relief measures along the route of the storm.

Deputy Director General Daw Tin Yi of the DMH reported on current situation of the storm.

Vice Chairs of National Natural Disaster Management Committee Union Minster Lt-Gen Soe Htut and Dr Thet Thet Khaing reported on undertakings of the Natural Disaster Management Centre, formation of teams for the searching and rescue works, evacuation of the people to the safer places, release of weather news, collection of reserve rice to be distributed to the disaster hit areas, stockpiles of medicines, basic foods and relief supplies and performing the rescue works in the disaster hit areas.

Union ministers and deputy ministers explained offers of some countries to give aid through AHA centre, possible flooding and landslides, broadcasting of information to the people, immigration measures, healthcare services, transport and spending of funds.

The chairman of Nay Pyi Taw Council, chief ministers of Kachin and Chin states, Sagaing, Magway and Ayeyawady regions and officials reported on preparations for searching and recue works, rehabilitation and reconstruction measures, health measures, establishment of livelihoods, stockpiling of foods and relief supplies, opening of the disaster management offices, transport and information measures and sending of rescue and relief teams from the Tatmadaw.

The Vice-Senior General heard reports on emergency response to the storm Mocha and coordinated necessary measures. Later, the meeting ended with the remarks of the Vice-Senior General.—MNA/TTA

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

Rakhine State govt, social organizations provide aid to storm-hit people

DEPUTY Minister for Information U Ye Tint on 13 May arrived at Kyeintali Department of Information and Public Relations and inspected damage of the drain and blockage of soil in its at the back of the office.

Then, he instructed officials to submit a report to the head office for repairing the drain to have proper flow of water without harming the office building.

In meeting with 187 local people from Ale Village who take shelter at the MyoU Taungpaw monastery, the deputy minister encouraged them and presented instant dried noodle and eggs provided by the Township Administration Body to them.

Three monasteries and Ale Village Basic Education Middle School accommodate 338 people from 83 families living in the wards and seashore in Gwa Township. It is reported that the state government as well as relevant departments and social organizations provide aid to those disaster-hit people. —MNA/KZW

Deputy Minister for Information U Ye Tint presents aid to storm-affected people in Kyeintali of Rakhine State on 13 May.

Illegal industrial materials, agricultural equipment, foodstuffs, consumer goods, and vehicles confiscated

Officials check illegal goods in truck.

UNDER the supervision of the Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee, effective action is being taken to prevent illegal trade under the law. On 11 May, inspections were carried out by joint task forces under the management of the Kayin State Illegal Eradication Trade Task Force at the Thanlwain Bridge Combined Checkpoint, and 1,650 Ray power banks (approximately K31.2 million) without any official documentary evidence and a Toyota Hiace microbus carrying those items (estimated value of K15 million) heading from Myawady to Yangon were seized. On 12 May, 40 (81) electric rice cookers that were not declared in the import declaration (ID) (estimated value of K2.4 million) were impounded from a vehicle driving from Myawaddy to Yangon at the Kawkareik (Tadakyoe) combined inspection station. The action was taken under customs procedures.

Similarly, on 11 May, inspections were carried out by joint task forces under the management of the Customs Department and nabbed 3,300 silicone phone cases (estimated value of K3.3 million) with more than 61 days of arrival at the airport before obtaining an import licence from cargo containers at the import section of the Yangon International Airport. The task force also confiscated 480 toy small remote control cars without the import decleration (an approximate value of K3.12 million) from a container at the Asia World Container Inspection Station.

On 12 May at the Mayanchaung Permanent Checkpoint, a Mitsubishi Fuso truck (estimated value of K25 million) headed from Myawady to Mandalay and two new implements for four-wheel tractors (worth around K5 million that exceeded the ID, two products including 9,000 bottles of lactasoy milk (estimated value of K3.75 million) without any official document evidence, and a Sun Win bus carrying these items (an approximate value of K20 million) driving from Mawlamyine to Yangon, were confiscated. A total of 22,590 kilogrammes of ceramic mugs (an estimated value of K28,463,400) that are different from what is declared in the import declaration were also seized from a container at the Hteedan Port Terminal. A total estimated value of K88,633,400 was seized, and action is being taken in accordance with customs procedures.

In addition, a joint task force under the management of the Mon State Illegal Trade Eradication Task Force conducted inspections on 12 May and seized four products worth K9,265,000, including 1,150 bottles of M-150 drink without any official documents, and nine items, including 1,560 Jele Beautie (approximated value of K11.04 million), from two vehicles: a Golden Dragon bus (estimated value of K15 million) and a Sunlong bus (worth around K20 million), after sending the vehicles to the office of the chief of Mawlamyine Customs Department for detailed inspection. Thus, a total (estimated value of K55,305,000) was confiscated and action is being taken in accordance with customs procedures.

Therefore, 14 arrests (estimated value of K192,538,400) were made on 11 and 12 May, according to the Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee. — MNA/CT

MRTV to broadcast Myanmar Women's Football Team final match, rivals' third place match live

THE final match of Women's Football Event in the XXXII SEA Games to be played between Myanmar and Viet Nam, plus rival teams' third place match will be broadcast live on MRTV Channels today.

The third place match between Cambodia and Thailand starting from 3:30 pm Myanmar Standard Time, and the final match between Myanmar and Viet Nam starting from 7 pm MST will be broadcast live on MRTV-HD, MRTV Sports, MRTV Parliament, MRTV Farmers' Channel, and tuned live on Radio Myanmar, and streamed live via online.

Thus, MRTV-HD's regular 8:00 pm news will be broadcast only at 9:00 pm.—MNA/KZL

CURRENT AFFAIRS

Majority of townships across Yangon Region experience incidents of fallen trees

Fire brigade members clear debris of fallen trees in townships of Yangon Region on 14 May.

ON the morning of 14 May, heavy rain and strong winds hit the majority of townships in Yangon region due as the speed of cyclone Mocha caused some road blockages with fallen trees. Clearing of debris was carried out according to the statements of the Myanmar Fire Brigade.

The trees falling processes happened at the corner of Zaygyi street and Bo Thura street, Panhlaing Street and Zaygyi west ward, Taw Win Street and Kayin Amyotha ward in Kyeemyindaing Township on 2:30 am on 14 May. Similarly, incidents of trees falling were reported in various locations, including Mayangon Township, K Ward of North Okkalapa Township and some streets in Seikkyi/Khanaungto Township.

Then, incidents occurred at the Tamway, Kamayut, Yankin, Mingaladon, Sangyoung, Thanlyin and Hlegu townships at 3:30 am and 6:15 am. The Myanmar Fire Brigade is currently providing assistance in removing fallen trees in the affected areas in many townships to prevent traffic congestion and mitigate any potential hazards that may arise in close proximity to residential areas. —TWA/KZW

Tatmadaw dispatches rescue convoys to areas anticipated to be impacted by Cyclone Mocha

ON 13 May, the State Administration Council issued a press release stating that the National Disaster Management Committee intends to deploy military rescue convoys to the regions forecasted to be affected by Cyclone Mocha.

The cyclone "Mocha" has made landfall as a powerful cyclone and is presently moving in the direction of the Myanmar coast. It was anticipated to approach Sittway on 14 May. A military convoy made up of 112 vehicles, including machinery, was organized into 10 groups on 12 May and was sent to deliver supplies and aid that cannot be transported by helicopter. The supplies include tools for repairs, communication device, food for emergency and clean water.

The convoys left Yangon for Gwa, An and Kyauktaw, as well as Pathein and Magway as a backup group. Similarly, the World Food Program (WFP) announced on 13 May that it has pre-positioned enough food for one month for more than 400,000 people in Rakhine State and nearby areas that could be affected by the "Mocha" storm.

The WFP has additionally reported that humanitarian partners have established transportation and communication systems have been created by humanitarian partners for use during storm readiness and response. — TWA/KZW

People from beach areas are being evacuated to temporary shelters in Taungup Township on 12 May.

CMP garment export earns over US$ 300 mln in April

ACCORDING to the statistics of the Ministry of Commerce, the domestic garment industry brought in more than US$300 million from exports in April. Garment products on a CMP basis were sent to China, Thailand, and European countries.

The garment industry exported goods worth about US$200 million through the border and about US$184 million through the sea.

According to the Myanmar Garment Manufacturers Association, there is a total of 700 factories producing bags, sportswear, sports shoes, and socks, among which there are 505 garment factories and 48 socks factories. These garment factories exported goods using the CMP system.

In the financial year 2022-2023, the garment industry pocketed more than US$1.5 billion. — TWA/CT

Storm "Mocha" puts up domestic palm oil price

OIL dealers said that the price of palm oil is rising as news of a coming severe storm called "Mocha" in Myanmar has come out in the past few days.

The Yangon oil market tends to raise the price of palm oil on the grounds that it is difficult for oil tankers to enter the country when there is news of a storm coming into the country, U Htwe Yi, an oil dealer, told the GNLM.

During the news of the storm, around 10 and 11 May, two oil tankers each carrying around 5,000 tonnes of oil from abroad docked at Yangon and Thilawa oil ports. Domestically, there are around 90,000 tonnes of imported oil from April to mid-May, and the price of imported oil is also continuously decreasing this month.

The CIF price of imported palm oil at Yangon Port was US$1,088 per tonnes in the second week of April 2023, US$1,063 by the end of April, US$1,038 in early May, and only US$1,022 in the second week of May. Similarly, the wholesale reference price per viss decreased from K4,790 in the second week of April to K4,500 in the second week of May. However, in the Yangon oil market, the wholesale price of palm oil went from K5,850 per viss on 6 May to K6,100 per viss on 9 May, and K6,300 per viss on 11 May.

Sale of cooking oil seen at a relail oil shop.

Due to the news of the storm this week, water transport has been temporarily suspended. The price of palm oil is still rising despite the lack of demand in the Yangon Commodity Market and regional markets. — TWA/CT

OPINION

Nurture generations to become nation builders

EVERY country wishes for development. So, they are striving for enjoying the fruits of development. To be able to do so, the whole country needs to have peace and stability as well as the rule of law. In Myanmar, the government implements the five-point roadmap as its authentic aim for the entire people to enjoy peace, stability and the rule of law.

In so doing, the government focuses on the prosperity of the nation and food security while undertaking an act of strengthening the disciplined, multiparty democratic system. Moreover, preparations are being made to hold a free and fair multiparty democratic election in order to pave the way for the nation to reach its national goal.

In this regard, it is necessary to shape the country from generation to generation. Human resource is crucial for implementing the development projects one after another in the nation. Hence, everybody needs to realize that the education sector must be improved for the development of human resources. Actually, any country can be built by educated persons in order to stand tall among the global countries.

> Nurturing a generation can be defined as shaping the country in an era. Everything and every move must be beneficial for all. So, nurturing every youth must be beneficial for themselves as well as the whole nation. It is important that those youths must become well-versed in human resources as nation-builders.

Currently, the government sets an education goal as the implementation of the KG+9 education scheme because middle school education is compulsory education for all school-age children. Only when the students complete the KG+9 education scheme will they have basic education to further learn vocational courses and vocational schools in order to operate businesses on their own with experiences and knowledge from the aforesaid courses.

In fact, schools must not be just a teaching avenue but these must be the locations where student youths must be taught ethics of citizen and social ethics in addition to various kinds of knowledge and critical thinking capacity.

Due to the heart-to-heart connection, educated youths can share their knowledge and experiences with other youths. If they all are in the same heart, they can do everything successfully. If so, they all will have the chance to enjoy the fruits of their endeavours. But, doing everything must be based on knowledge accumulated from experiences of the society and education learnt from the schools. Whatever it may be, both knowledge and education can be applied in nation-building endeavours.

Nurturing a generation can be defined as shaping the country in an era. Everything and every move must be beneficial for all. So, nurturing every youth must be beneficial for themselves as well as the whole nation. It is important that those youths must become well-versed in human resources as nation-builders.

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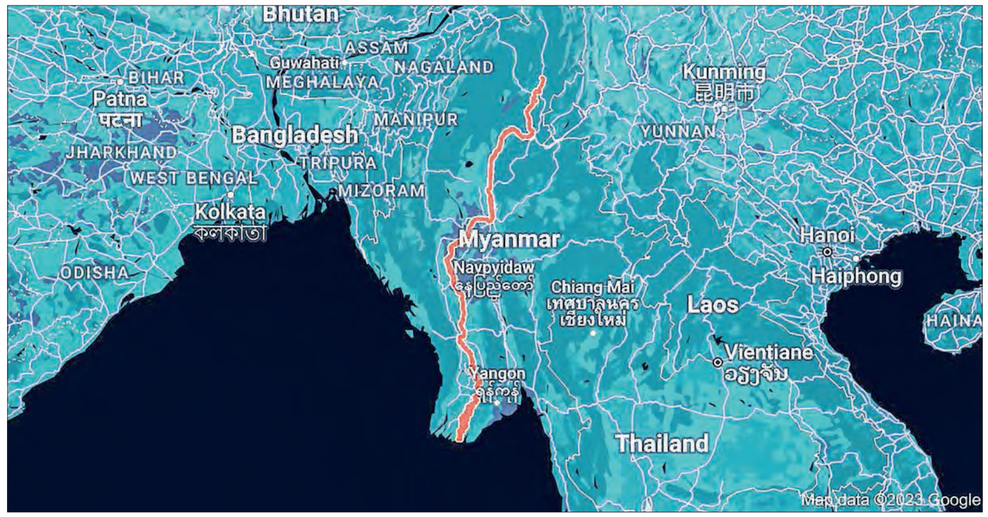
May The Ayeyawady River exist For Ages?

By Min Zan



THE Ayeyawady River, also known as the Irrawaddy River, is a lifeline for the people of Myanmar. Spanning over 2,170 kilometres and flowing from the northern Himalayas down to the Andaman Sea, it is the country's longest and most important river. There are many rivers in the world that share their advantages and disadvantages with the neighbouring countries. However, the most useful parts of The Ayeyawady are located just in the boundary of Myanmar. It is both unique and special. It is one of the largest free-flowing rivers in Southeast Asia.

Although the river is "free-flowing", it is not pristine. The Ayeyawady is the engine of the Myanmar economy. It feeds the country's population with fish and rice and enables goods to be transported to people up and down the river. Its waters are used to power turbines for electricity, while sand from its basin is a key component for infrastructure like houses, offices, and roads.

This document attempts to identify how the Ayeyawady River is important to Myanmar's economy and society. It also aims to highlight the importance of balanced development that will ensure the naturally functioning systems within the river continue to support growth and development, as they have for hundreds of years. It is a culmination of perspectives and inputs from stakeholders along the river regarding their perceived risks and opportunities.

The document shows that it is evident that the Ayeyarwady Basin provides the majority of economic value to the country. It is also evident that some of these sectors are contributing to the degradation of ecosystem goods and services provided by the river. Although economic growth and social development are needed in Myanmar, this does not have to be at the cost of the river's health.

WWF (World Wide Fund for Nature) cares about people and nature being able to thrive alongside each other. This is what they believe in Myanmar too. They would like to support economic and social growth in Myanmar without jeopardizing the integrity of the rivers. The Ayeyawady River provides goods and services to enable a majority of economic and social activities that take place within Myanmar. Without these river services, Myanmar's economy would not be the same. With looming decisions around hydropower development, industrial expansion, fisheries, and in general, economic growth in the country, decision-makers cannot afford to operate in isolation. Without a common vision for the future, all sectors will compete with one another and miss opportunities for holistic efficient development. Highlighting major risks and opportunities for different sectors through a series of short narratives and numbers shows what is at stake when taking a narrow view of planning – and all that can be gained through a more thoughtful, long-term, and integrated approach.

Their call to action for a sustainable, free-flowing Ayeyawady Basin is as follows:

Economic planning decision-makers need to investigate the connections and trade-offs between different development pathways and how they interact with the natural capital and ecosystem services that the people of Myanmar depend on.

The private sector needs to ensure that they act as good water stewards in the country, even though in some cases there is uncertainty in terms of regulations. Reducing water-related risks, whether physical, regulatory, or reputational in the broader Ayeyawady Basin is critical for their long-term business ambitions.

Civil society needs to continue its demand for transparent dialogue between decision-makers, the private sector, and civil society regarding preferable options for sustainable development in the Ayeyarwady Basin.

Finally, coordinating strategies and plans are critical as Myanmar continues on its economic growth and social development trajectory. This is true not only for the Government of Myanmar but also for development assistance in the country. River basin planning in particular has an important role to play in supporting the coordination of an entire spectrum of economic activities – from mining to tourism and from the upper catchment to the delta. It is important that this planning takes place in a coordinated manner to ensure that the unique position of the Ayeyawady River, home to the endemic Irrawaddy Dolphin, productive fisheries, industry, and mining is able to continue providing the basis of the Myanmar economy.

However, in recent years, the Ayeyawady River has been facing numerous dangerous conditions that threaten the livelihoods of millions of people who depend on it for their daily lives and economic activities.

One of the most pressing issues affecting the Ayeyawady River is the unchecked development of hydropower projects. Myanmar has seen a surge in dam construction along the river and its tributaries, with the aim of generating electricity to meet the growing energy demands of the country. However, these dam projects often lack proper environmental impact assessments and social safeguards, leading to devastating consequences for the river ecosystem and local communities.

One of the major concerns is the loss of biodiversity and habitat destruction. The Ayeyawady River is home to a diverse array of species, including critically endangered Irrawaddy dolphins, freshwater turtles, and migratory fish species. The construction of dams disrupts the natural flow of the river, alters the sediment and nutrient dynamics, and destroys critical habitats, leading to the decline of these species and the overall ecological health of the river.

Furthermore, the displacement of local communities due to dam construction has resulted in the loss of land, livelihoods, and traditional ways of life. Many indigenous and rural communities along the Ayeyawady River rely on fishing, farming, and other river-based activities for their sustenance and income. The forced resettlement of these communities without adequate compensation and alternative livelihood options has led to social and economic hardships, exacerbating poverty and inequality in the region.

Another perilous condition faced by the Ayeyawady River is pollution. Rapid industrialization, urbanization, and agricultural activities have resulted in increased pollution in the river, including untreated sewage, chemical runoff, and solid waste. This pollution not only poses health risks to people who depend on the river for drinking water and bathing but also harms aquatic life and ecosystems.

Climate change is also affecting the Ayeyawady River, with rising temperatures and changing rainfall patterns. Increased temperatures accelerate glacial melting in the Himalayas, affecting the river's water flow and sedimentation patterns. Changing rainfall patterns result in unpredictable water levels and alter the river's hydrological regime, further impacting agriculture, navigation, and livelihoods along the river basin.

In addition, unregulated sand mining is another pressing issue facing the Ayeyawady River. Sand mining has increased to meet the demand for construction materials, but it has resulted in excessive riverbank erosion, loss of river habitats, and increased vulnerability to natural disasters, such as floods and landslides.

To address these dangerous conditions, urgent and coordinated efforts are needed. This includes strengthening environmental regulations, conducting comprehensive and participatory environmental impact assessments for all development projects, ensuring meaningful engagement and consent of local communities, and implementing sustainable river management practices. It is also crucial to invest in alternative renewable energy sources, promote sustainable agriculture and fisheries practices, and raise awareness about the importance of the Ayeyawady River and its conservation among local communities and policymakers.

In sum, the Ayeyawady River in Myanmar is facing multiple dangerous conditions that threaten its ecological health, the livelihoods of local communities, and the country's sustainable development. Addressing these challenges requires immediate action and a holistic approach that prioritizes environmental sustainability, social equity, and economic resilience. It is crucial to protect and restore the Ayeyawady River, which is not only a vital natural resource but also a cultural symbol and the lifeline for the people of Myanmar.

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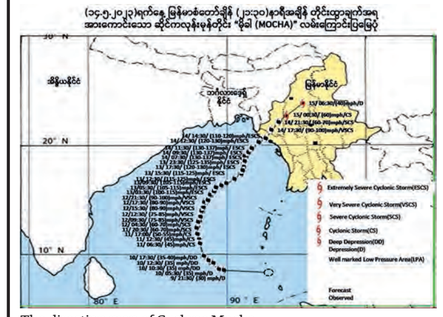
ARTICLE

WEATHER REPORT

Severe Cyclonic Storm Warning, No.32, 2023

14 May, 2023 22:30 MST Today



The direction map of Cyclone Mocha.

Severe Cyclonic Storm Condition

According to the observations at (21:30) hrs MST today, the Very Severe Cyclonic Storm "MOCHA" which crossing interior near Paletwa, Chin State (Myanmar) and moved North-Northeastwards. It is weakened into a Severe Cyclonic Storm "MOCHA". It is continue to moving North-Northeastwards near Matupi.

It is continue to moving near Matupi, Chin State (Myanmar), the present stage of the Very Severe Cyclonic Storm is coded brown stage.

During next (24) hours forecast

The Severe Cyclonic Storm "MOCHA" is likely continue to move North-Northeastwards and towards Chin State and Northern Magway, Sagaing and Northern Mandalay regions as a Cyclonic Storm "MOCHA" during next (9) hours, towards Kachin and Northern Shan states as a depression during next (24) hours.

General caution

1. Due to the Severe Cyclonic Storm "MOCHA", rain or thundershowers will be widespread in Nay Pyi Taw, Sagaing, Mandalay, Magway, Bago, Yangon, Ayeyawady and Taninthayi regions and Kachin, Shan, Chin, Rakhine, Kayah, Kayin and Mon states and fairly widespread in Taninthayi Region with regionally heavyfalls in Sagaing, Mandalay, Magway and Bago regions and Kachin, Chin and Rakhine states and isolated heavy falls in Nay Pyi Taw, Yangon and Ayeyawady regions and Shan State from tonight to (15.5.2023).
2. Frequently squalls with rough to very rough seas will be experienced in Deltaic, off and along Rakhine Coast. Surface wind speed in squalls may reach (50-60) mph and wave height will be about (10-14) feet in Deltaic, off and along Rakhine Coast.
3. The maximum wind speed may reach (50-70) mph in Sagaing, Mandalay and Magway regions and Kachin, Shan, Chin and Rakhine states and (40-50) mph in Nay Pyi Taw, Bago, Yangon and Ayeyawady regions and Kayah State.
4. The areas along the Severe Cyclonic Storm "MOCHA" movement, people should be aware of strong wind, heavy rain, flash flood and landslide in the hilly areas, near small rivers and also domestic flight. The trawlers, vessels and ships do not go out off and along Myanmar Coasts. Therefore, people should watch the forecasts of the Department of Meteorology and Hydrology and make the necessary preparations.

Images on loss and damage in Cyclone Mocha-hit areas

Broken trees, damage buildings and collapsed houses in MraukU Township of Rakhine State on 14 May.

Photo shows broken tower triggered by Cyclone Mocha in Sittway of Rakhine State on 14 May. **PHOTO: DMC**

A transformer fell in residential ward in Gwa Township of Rakhine State on 14 May.

Cyclone Mocha causes damage to houses in Yangon on 14 May.

Roofs blown off at a basic education school in Einme in Ayeyawady Region on 14 May.

Images on clearing of debris and relief for storm victims

Personnel and volunteers clear debris of broken branch from road in Kyaukpyu on 14 May.

Volunteers remove fallen trees from road in Dagon Myothit (North) Township on 14 May.

Tatmadaw members and local people clear debris in residential ward in Taungup Township on 14 May.

Local authorities present bags of rice and cooking oil to locals in Pauktaw and MraukU townships on 14 May.

Storm-affected people being served with foods, relief supplies in Bogale, Kyauktalonggyi and Pyay townships on 14 May.

ECONOMY
WORLD

G7 finance chiefs move to diversify supply chains

Chipmakers have been overwhelmed by the sharp increase in demand across the car, medical devices and consumer electronics industries. **PHOTO: REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE/ AFP**

THE G7 plans to launch a partnership scheme to diversify supply chains this year, ministers from the group said Saturday following finance talks in Japan ahead of a major summit next week.

The ministers did not directly mention efforts to reduce reliance on trade with China or Russia as motivation for the new framework, which focuses on clean energy technology.

But after meeting her Japanese counterpart, US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen pointed to recent shocks to the global economy.

"Spillovers from Russia's war against Ukraine and disruptions caused by the pandemic have made clear the importance of diversified and resilient supply chains," she told reporters.

The Group of Seven's finance ministers and central bank chiefs highlighted the "urgent need to address existing vulnerabilities within... highly concentrated supply chains".

In a joint statement, they said they hoped to launch the partnership in collaboration with the World Bank "by the end of this year at the latest".

The scheme, dubbed RISE — Resilient and Inclusive Supply-chain Enhancement — builds on guidance released in April, and will offer interested developing countries "finance, knowledge and partnerships", the ministers said. Their three-day meeting in Niigata, a coastal city in central Japan, took place just days before the leaders of the group of major developed economies gather May 19-21 in Hiroshima. — AFP

Iraq awaits Türkiye's response to resume Kurdish oil exports

IRAQ is still waiting for a formal response from Türkiye to resume oil exports from the autonomous Kurdish region, Kurdish officals said Friday, a day after Baghdad announced they were to resume Saturday.

The Kurdish regional government had for years earned billions of dollars in revenues exporting crude oil to Türkiye without the Iraqi federal government's approval.

But the exports were suspended in late March when international arbitrators ruled in favour of the Iraqi federal government's right to control oil exports going through Türkiye.

Iraq's Oil Minister Hayan Abdel Ghani had on Thursday said that crude exports from the Kurdish region through the Turkish port of Ceyhan would resume Saturday.

But on Friday the Kurdish natural resources minister, Kamal Mohamed, told a Kurdish television channel that the resumption of exports was still awaiting approval from Ankara.

"We are waiting for a decision from Turkey regarding the date for the resumption of exports," he told the Rudaw news channel.

"Iraq is ready to resume exports," he said, noting that Iraq had sent a letter on Wednesday informing Turkey of the decision to resume exports and was awaiting a response on the date. — AFP

An Iraqi oil employee checks pipelines at the Bai Hassan oil field, west of the multi-ethnic northern Iraqi city of Kirkuk. **PHOTO: AHMAD AL-RUBAYE / AFP/FILE**

New York scrambles to handle influx of migrants as Title 42 expires

THE US state of New York and multiple counties in the state have declared a state of emergency, and New York City has suspended shelter rules, ahead of anticipated influx of migrants from the US-Mexico border as Title 42 pandemic restrictions expired starting from Friday.

Tensions also rise as New York City works to send some migrants to neighboring counties.

On Tuesday, New York Governor Kathy Hochul signed an executive order and declared a disaster emergency in the state, allowing the state to mobilize more National Guard members and to quickly react to food and supply needs.

The state would mobilize an additional 500 National Guard members, as around 1,000 National Guardsmen were already deployed.

Immigrants seeking asylum in the US stand in line for processing by Border Patrol agents after crossing into Arizona from Mexico. **PHOTO: AFP**

With some local laws temporarily suspended or modified, the executive order would be effective from 9 May to 8 June.

New York City has temporarily suspended some local rules that require the city to provide shelter to asylum seekers, according to an emergency executive order signed by Mayor Eric Adams on Wednesday. — Xinhua

Battery makers turn northern French region into 'electric valley'

GLOBAL battery makers are turning a formerly depressed northern French region into a 21st-century manufacturing hub and a key European source of new energy technology.

Taiwanese battery maker Prologium became the latest group on Friday to announce a plant in the Hauts de France region, home to many struggling towns that have spent decades in the doldrums after the collapse of the local steel and mining industries.

The 5.2-billion-euros ($5.7-billion) investment in the port of Dunkirk follows similar moves from rival power cell producers in the area, which borders Belgium and boasts good road and port connectivity.

European producer ACC — a tie up between Stellantis, TotalEnergies and Mercedes — has chosen the town of Billy-Berclau for its plant, while Chinese-Japanese group Envision opted for Douai, around 30 kilometres (20 miles) to the south of regional hub Lille.

France-based Verkor also picked Dunkirk, a deep-sea port famous for being the scene of a chaotic Allied retreat in the early stages of World War II. — AFP

31 Japan hotels certified as climate-friendly SDG locations

Photo shows the certification mark by Sakura Quality for accommodation facilities. **PHOTO: SAKURA QUALITY / KYODO**

A total of 31 hotels and "ryokan" traditional inns across Japan have been certified as locations striving to achieve U.N. sustainable development goals amid a growing global trend for environment-friendly travel.

The recognition of the 31 locations, given as of the end of April by a Japanese organization, comes as more facilities aim to attract inbound travelers and revitalize the tourism industry badly hit by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Tokyo-based organization oversees the evaluation of accommodation facilities. Under its "Sakura Quality" scheme, an establishment is judged using criteria that include decarbonization and cutting down on waste.

The group said it has received requests for evaluations from about 200 facilities and hopes to certify around 2,000 establishments in the future. The environment-friendly credentials are given after checking how the facilities meet the 17 goals of the SDGs outlined by the United Nations. The SDGs cover areas such as gender equality, sustainable cities and communities, and climate change. — Kyodo

Former exec at TikTok parent firm sues, citing 'lawlessness'

A former US-based executive of ByteDance, the Chinese company that owns TikTok, has sued it for wrongful dismissal, saying he was fired for sounding the alarm over what he called its "culture of lawlessness."

The suit, filed by Yintao Yu in a San Francisco court, comes as political pressure has been growing in the US to ban TikTok. Critics say the popular platform allows Beijing to covertly collect users' data and influence their opinions — something the company denies.

In his suit, Yu says that he discovered shortly after being hired in 2017 that ByteDance "was stealing" videos published on rival sites like Instagram and Snapchat and presenting them as its own.

Yu, who was ByteDance's US head of engineering, says he notified company leaders about the problem, but the "intellectual property infringement continued unabated."

He was fired in November 2018.

On Friday, Yu submitted an amendment to his original complaint — which was filed May 1 — accusing ByteDance of serving "as a useful propaganda tool for the Chinese Communist Party."

He said he had seen ByteDance give prominence to content expressing "hatred for Japan," while playing down posts supporting pro-democracy protesters in Hong Kong. — AFP

Passenger flight routes launched between Xi'an and Turkmenistan's Ashgabat

THE first passenger flight route between Xi'an, capital of China's northwestern Shaanxi Province, and Ashgabat, capital of Turkmenistan, was officially launched on Saturday.

The route, together with a similar route between Xi'an and the Tajik capital of Dushanbe to be launched on May 18, will mark the complete linkage of passenger flight routes from Xi'an, the starting point of the ancient Silk Road, to the five countries in Central Asia.

Flight attendants conduct safety inspections before the first passenger flight of the Xi'an-Urumqi-Ashgabat route takes off in Xi'an, northwest China's Shaanxi Province, 13 May 2023. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

For the Xi'an-Urumqi-Ashgabat route, flight CZ5085 will depart from Xi'an at 17:30 Beijing time (0930 GMT) every Saturday and arrive in Ashgabat at 23:10 local time (1810 GMT). On the return journey, flight CZ5086 will depart from Ashgabat at 00:40 local time (1940 GMT) the next day and arrive in Xi'an at 12:30 Beijing time (0430 GMT).

The Xi'an-Urumqi-Dushanbe route will operate every Thursday starting from May 18 with flight number CZ5083/4. Flights will depart from Xi'an at 19:05 Beijing time (1105 GMT) every Thursday and arrive in Dushanbe at 00:55 local time the next day (1955 GMT). The return flight will depart from Dushanbe at 01:35 local time (2035 GMT) the next day and arrive in Xi'an at 12:30 Beijing time (0430 GMT).

Most passengers on this flight route are business travelers, with tourism travel expected to rise in the future, according to Li Jiuquan, deputy general manager of the Xi'an branch of China Southern Airlines. — Xinhua

As net tightens, Iranians pushed to take up homegrown apps

As many as 89 million people have signed up to Iranian messaging apps including Bale, Ita, Rubika and Soroush, the government says, but not everyone is keen on making the switch. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

BANNED from using popular Western apps, Iranians have been left with little choice but to take up state-backed alternatives, as the authorities tighten internet restrictions for security reasons following months of protests.

Iranians are accustomed to using virtual private networks, or VPNs, to evade restrictions and access prohibited websites or apps, including the US-owned Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. The authorities went as far as imposing total internet blackouts during the protests that erupted after the September death of 22-year-old Mahsa Amini, following her arrest for an alleged breach of the Islamic republic's dress code for women. — AFP

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
M.V HANSA SIEGBURG VOY.NO. (317W)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V HANSA SIEGBURG VOY.NO. (317W)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **15-5-2023** 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 SEALAND MAERSK ASIA PTE LTD.

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
M.V UNI ACCORD VOY.NO. (0293-748N)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V UNI ACCORD VOY.NO. (0293-748N)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **15-5-2023** 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 EVERGREEN MARINE (ASIA) PTE LTD.

GLOBAL AFFAIRS

Voters go to polls in Thailand's general election

THAI voters went to the polling stations on Sunday in the Southeast Asian country's general election.

The polls started at 8:00 a.m. (0100 GMT) and will continue until 5:00 p.m. local time (1000 GMT) on Sunday. More than 52 million Thai citizens are eligible to vote in the election.

Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha, who is seeking reelection, turned up at a polling station in the capital Bangkok in the morning to cast his ballot.

He called on Thai people to vote in the election to exercise their right.

In the run-up to the polling day, parties in Prayut's government were trailing behind in the opinion polls behind major opposition parties, including the Pheu Thai Party links to former PM Thaksin Shinawatra and the Move Forward Party which has been popular among young voters.

Under the two-ballot system with one vote for the 400 constituency members of parliament (MPs) and another for their preferred party vying for the 100 party-list MPs, voters will elect a total of 500 members to the House of Representatives, or lower house of the parliament.

The Election Commission is expected to announce an unofficial result late Sunday. — Xinhua

People wait to cast their votes at a designated polling station in Bangkok, Thailand, 7 May 2023. **PHOTO: RACHEN SAGEAMSAK/XINHUA**

Türkiye decides Erdogan's future in knife-edge vote

TÜRKIYE on Sunday voted in a momentous election that could extend President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's 21-year grip on power or put the mostly Muslim nation on a more secular course.

The presidential and parliamentary ballot has turned into a referendum on Türkiye's longest-serving leader and his Islamic-rooted party.

It is also the toughest of more than a dozen that Erdogan has confronted — one that polls suggest he might lose.

The 69-year-old has steered the nation of 85 million through one of its most transformative and divisive eras in the post-Ottoman state's 100-year history.

Türkiye has grown into a military and geopolitical heavyweight that plays roles in conflicts stretching from Syria to Ukraine.

A pro-Erdogan rally: Türkiye's ruling AKP has its roots in political Islam. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

The NATO member's footprint in both Europe and the Middle East makes the election's outcome as critical for Washington and Brussels as it is for Damascus and Moscow.

But Erdogan's first decade of economic revival and warming relations with Europe was followed by a second one filled with social and political turmoil.

He responded to a failed 2016 coup attempt with sweeping purges that sent chills through Turkish society and made him an increasingly uncomfortable partner for the West. — AFP

Ecuador fishermen increasingly fall prey to drug gangs

"CAPTAIN, bring your boat closer," shouts an Ecuadoran naval officer aboard a launch patrolling the Gulf of Guayaquil on a route traffickers use to ferry drugs to the high seas.

Guayaquil, on Ecuador's southern Pacific coast, has become a strategic point for the shipment of hundreds of tons of drugs, mostly cocaine, to the US or Europe.

Since the rightist government of Guillermo Lasso came to power in 2021, Ecuador has seized some 500 tons of drugs.

"This is a routine inspection," the naval officer shouts, as his rifle-bearing colleagues check the crew's documents and crates on the small boat. In one of his several attempts to contain the illicit traffic, Lasso declared criminal gangs to be terrorists, thereby granting the military a policing role without having to declare an emergency.

A fisherman who said he was afraid to give his name said he and his counterparts are at the mercy of the criminal gangs navigating the Gulf of Guayaquil, at the entrance to Ecuador's main commercial port.— AFP

Ecuadoran naval police check the documents of the crew of a small boat intercepted near the port of Guayaquil on 11 May 2023. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

WORLD: TOP HEADLINE

Ukraine's Zelensky arrives in Germany for visit

UKRAINIAN President Volodymyr Zelensky announced his arrival in Berlin for an official visit Sunday, having flown out of Rome after meetings with Pope Francis and Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni.

"Already in Berlin," he wrote on Twitter. "Weapons. Powerful package. Air defense. Reconstruction. EU. NATO. Security."

Zelensky's schedule for Germany has not yet been officially confirmed but, according to local media reports, he is expected to meet in the morning with Chancellor Olaf Scholz and German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier.

He may also head to the western German city of Aachen, which this year is awarding him and the Ukrainian people the Charlemagne Prize — an honour awarded for efforts to foster European unity. —AFP

GLOBAL AFFAIRS

Britain's Sunak set to push 'UK priorities' at Europe, G7 meets

BRITISH Prime Minister Rishi Sunak will embark next week on a "diplomatic drive to push UK priorities on the world stage", attending summits in Iceland and Japan, his office said Saturday.

Sunak will undertake "a packed tour of international engagements", heading to a Council of Europe meeting Tuesday in the Icelandic capital Reykjavik before visiting Tokyo and then Hiroshima for a G7 gathering.

He will focus on driving economic growth and investment in the UK, as well as shoring up support for Ukraine and addressing "critical global challenges like illegal migration", Downing Street added.

Sunak, who became premier in October, departs Britain undr growing domestic political pressure following disastrous local election results last week that saw his Conservative party routed. Meanwhile, the worst cost-of-living crisis in a generation shows little sign of abating, with inflation remaining stubbornly high and fuelling industrial action as workers demand pay increases to match rising prices.

A general election is due next year and Sunak has tied his fortunes to several key aims, including halving inflation and curbing illegal cross-Channel migration in small boats.

"I will be travelling from Reykjavik to Hiroshima to drive global action on our most pressing priorities," he said in a statement. — AFP

Iceland is hosting a Summit of Heads of State and Government from the organization's 46 member states on 16 and 17 May in Reykjavik. This is the 4th Summit of the Council of Europe since its creation in 1949. **PHOTO: REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE/ COUNCIL OF EUROPE/FILE**

Sudan announces to extend airspace closure

SUDAN'S Civil Aviation Authority on Saturday extended the closure of Sudanese airspace until 23 May amid continued armed conflict between the Sudanese Army and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF).

"The Civil Aviation Authority has decided to extend the closure of Sudanese airspace until 23 May, excluding humanitarian aid and foreign nationals' evacuation," the authority said in a notice to airmen (NOTAM) on Saturday.

Since the outbreak of the clashes on 15 April, the country's airspace has been closed as air navigation systems at Khartoum International Airport have been affected by the clashes between the two warring sides in the vicinity of the airport, according to the authority.

Video clips on social media showed the damage to the Khartoum International Airport due to the fighting between the warring sides. Heavy smoke bellows above buildings in the vicinity of the Khartoum's airport on 15 April 2023, amid clashes in the Sudanese capital. **PHOTO: AFP**

Video clips on social media showed the damage to the Khartoum International Airport due to the fighting between the warring sides. Rubble scattered throughout the airport, where the destruction included parts of the airport corridors, halls, devices and equipment. — Xinhua

Kenya starvation cult death toll exceeds 200

THE death toll in an investigation linked to a Kenyan cult that practised starvation has climbed to 201, as search teams on Saturday unearthed 22 more bodies from a coastal forest, a government official said.

Police believe most of the bodies found in a forest near the Indian Ocean town of Malindi belong to followers of Paul Nthenge Mackenzie, a taxi driver-turned-preacher who is accused of inciting them to starve to death "to meet Jesus".

Coast Regional Commissioner Rhoda Onyancha, who announced the latest figures, said 26 people have been arrested over the deaths, including Mackenzie and an "enforcer gang" tasked with ensuring that no one broke their fast or left the forest hideout alive.

She said investigators would halt exhumations for two days to reorganise their efforts, with the process to resume on Tuesday.

Mackenzie has not yet been required to enter a plea but a court on Wednesday ordered him to be detained for three more weeks pending further investigations over what has been dubbed the "Shakahola Forest Massacre".

The 50-year-old founder of the Good News International Church turned himself in on 14 April after police acting on a tip-off first entered Shakahola forest. — AFP

An abandoned house in the forest that buried bodies have been exhumed in Shakahola, outside the coastal town of Malindi. **PHOTO: YASUYOSHI CHIBA/AFP**

WORLD: TOP HEADLINE

Moscow says Russian forces advancing inside Bakhmut

RUSSIA said Saturday that its forces were still pushing inside the frontline town of Bakhmut and had wrested control of an area in the eastern Ukrainian city. "In the Donetsk direction, assault detachments liberated a block in the northwestern part of the city of Artemovsk," the defence ministry said, referring to Bakhmut by its Russian name.

The announcement came after the head of Russia's Wagner paramilitary group, which is leading the assault for Bakhmut, claimed that regular Russian troops were fleeing the flanks of the town and exposing his forces in its centre.

The defence ministry had said earlier that it had redeployed forces north of Bakhmut, suggesting a possible pulling back of forces from the front. — AFP

SPORT

GLOBAL AFFAIRS

Voters go to polls in Thailand's general election

PAGE-14

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.

CAMBODIA 2023 — 32nd SEA GAMES — 12th ASEAN PARA GAMES

32nd SEA Games: Cambodia bags 192 medals as of May 13

CAMBODIA has clinched a total of 192 medals — 59 gold, 53 silver and 80 bronze — at the 32nd SEA Games as of 13 May at 10:00 pm, ranking thus third on the Medal Table, according to the latest update of the Cambodian SEA Games Organizing Committee (CAMSOC).

Cambodia is behind Vietnam which tops the list with 253 medals (87 gold, 79 silver and 87 bronze) and Thailand which occupies the second place with 206 medals (78 gold, 52 silver and 76 bronze).

Indonesia and Singapore were ranked fourth and fifth with 56 gold, 53 silver and 72 bronze medals; and 41 gold, 33 silver and 43 bronze medals, respectively.

The Philippines came in sixth with 37 gold, 64 silver and 77 bronze medals, followed by Malaysia with 28 gold, 37 silver and 73 bronze medals; Myanmar with 17 gold, 16 silver and 47 bronze medals; Laos with 6 gold, 17 silver and 48 bronze medals; Brunei with 2 gold, 1 silver and 6 bronze medals; and Timor-Leste with 4 bronze medals.

A 1,203-strong Cambodian delegation, including 896 athletes, have been taking part in the 32nd SEA Games that the Kingdom is hosting for the first time in 64 years under the motto "Sport: Living in Peace" from 5 to 17 May.

Cambodia won 63 medals — 9 gold, 13 silver and 41 bronze — in the 31st SEA Games in Vietnam in 2022. — KHMER TIMES

Cambodia has clinched a total of 192 medals - 59 gold, 53 silver and 80 bronze - at the 32nd SEA Games as of May 13 at 10:00 pm, ranking thus third on the Medal Table. **PHOTO: KHMER TIMES**

Myanmar female weightlifter Zin May Oo standing on the first position with gold medal in women's 45-kg weightlifting event on 13 May.

XXXII SEA Games: Myanmar wins one gold each in Weightlifting, Traditional Boat Race, one silver in Sepak Takraw

MYANMAR'S sport teams claimed one gold medal in Weightlifting, one more gold in Traditional Boat Race, and one silver medal in Sepak Takraw during the XXXII South-East Asian Games held in Phnom Penh, Cambodia on 13 May.

Myanmar's Zin May Oo grabbed one gold medal in the Women's 45-kg Weightlifting competition against the Philippines, Laos, Thailand, and Cambodia held at Olympic Taekwondo Hall, Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

Next, Myanmar team won one more gold in the Men's U-24 5-Oar 250-m Event of Traditional Boat Race, by beating host Cambodia, Thailand, Malaysia, and the Philippines at the Perk Kampot, Kampot City, Kampot Province.

Similarly, Team Myanmar secured one silver medal in the Mixed U-24 12-Oar 250-m Event of Traditional Boat Race.

Sepak Takraw events continued at Basketball Hall NSTC, and Myanmar men's squad garnered one more silver in the Men's Double Regu event.

Meanwhile, semifinals of Men's 9 Ball Pool Double continued at Aeon Hall, Aeon Mall Sen Sok, and Myanmar's Maung Maung (alias) Bhone Myint Kyaw and Thaw Zin beat the Philippines team by 9-7, and advanced to the final game.

In the final match, they will face team Malaysia.

On 13 May, Myanmar competed in Sepak Takraw, E-sports, Badminton, Billiard, Traditional Boat Race, Weightlifting, Judo, Taekwondo, Volleyball and football games and grabbed two gold and two silver medals.

On 14 May, Myanmar athletes participated in Traditional Boat Race, E-Sports, Sepak Takraw, Cricket, Volleyball, Judo, Billiard, Weightlifting, Taekwondo, and Vovinam events.

In the XXXII SEA Games, Myanmar has so far collected 81 medals: 17 golds, 16 silvers, and 48 bronzes. — MNA/KZL