

# THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

Vol. IX, No. 114, 12<sup>th</sup> Waxing of Wagaung 1384 ME

www.gnlm.com.mm

Monday, 8 August 2022

## Five-Point Road Map of the State Administration Council

1. The Union Election Commission will be reconstituted and its mandated tasks, including the scrutiny of voter lists, shall be implemented in accordance with the law.
2. Effective measures will be taken with added momentum to prevent and manage the COVID-19 pandemic.
3. Actions will be taken to ensure the speedy recovery of businesses from the impact of COVID-19.
4. Emphasis will be placed on achieving enduring peace for the entire nation in line with the agreements set out in the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement.
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.

## Republic of the Union of Myanmar Message from Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister on the occasion of the 55<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of ASEAN 8 August 2022

**T**ODAY marks the 55<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). On this auspicious occasion, I take great pleasure in extending my warmest greetings and best wishes to our fellow citizens and to the peoples of the ASEAN Member States.

The commemoration of ASEAN Day gives us a timely opportunity to reflect on the achievements of ASEAN over the past 55 years in building a politically cohesive, economically integrated, socially responsible and truly people-oriented, people-centred community.

When ASEAN was established on 8 August 1967 with its original five Member States, the Cold War loomed over all countries and the region was rife with tensions and conflicts. There was scepticism about the continued existence of the Association and lingering doubts about meeting its aspirations and commitments. However, over five decades, ASEAN was able to prevent the escalation of conflicts in the region through peaceful means and diplomacy.

In this regard, ASEAN has grown from strength to strength with its re-

Over the years, we have built together a Community which has experienced economic development, and social progress raising the living standards and well-being of our peoples. Today, ASEAN has made significant progress to become the third largest economy in Asia and the sixth largest in the world.

markable expansion to ten Member States in 1999 while strengthening its external relations with eleven Dialogue Partners, four Sectoral Dialogue Partners and four Development Partners. In 2021, ASEAN established the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership

(CSP) with the People's Republic of China and the Commonwealth of Australia further deepening meaningful, substantive and mutually beneficial relations with respective countries.

It is encouraging to note that ASEAN has formally established fifty-five

ASEAN Committees in Third Countries and International Organizations (ACTCs) in the national capitals and other key cities across the world in order to promote ASEAN's interest and identity as well as to facilitate further strengthening ASEAN's external relations.

Moreover, the growing number of interested parties pursuing to engage with ASEAN and to accede to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC) demonstrates that ASEAN's norms and values are increasingly embraced by the international community. Nowadays, ASEAN has become a successful model of regionalism in maintaining peace, security and stability and has evolved into an important regional organization in global affairs.

Over the years, we have built together a Community which has experienced economic development, and social progress raising the living standards and well-being of our peoples. Today, ASEAN has made significant progress to become the third largest economy in Asia and the sixth largest in the world.

**SEE PAGE-3**

### INSIDE TODAY

#### NATIONAL

Delegation led by SSPP Vice-Chairman (1) departs from Nay Pyi Taw

**PAGE-2**

#### NATIONAL

UCSB Chairman joins Heads of Civil Service Meeting for 21<sup>st</sup> ACCSM, Sixth Heads of Meeting for ACCSM Plus Three in Hanoi, Viet Nam

**PAGE-4**

#### LOCAL BUSINESS

Shwe Padauk fish market sees daily inflow of 250,000 viss of fishery products

**PAGE-5**



#### CURRENT AFFAIRS

1,871 foreign tourists paid visit to Shwedagon Pagoda in July

**PAGE-6**

## Reference wholesale price set as K3,525 per viss of palm oil

IT was announced yesterday that it would take action under the Important Goods and Services Act if the persons raise prices, illegally store goods and commit scams in the domestic market.

The Committee for the Supervision of the Import and Distribution of Edible Oils under the Ministry of Commerce has issued a statement in a bid to manage the domestic palm oil prices.

Depending on the daily monitoring of FOB prices in Malaysia and Indonesia, transportation costs, bank expenses, and basic wholesales reference

price to be traded in the local market are taken into account, including taxes for setting the proper prices.

According to market and price in the world's palm oil exporters this week, the committee has announced the basic Yangon Reference Wholesale Price of palm oil is K3,525 per viss within 8 and 14 August.

These basic wholesale quotes are available on the Department of Consumer Affairs website: [www.doca.gov.mm](http://www.doca.gov.mm) and on the Facebook page of the Myanmar Oil Traders and Oil Entrepreneurs Association. —MNA

## Announcement for opening reception centres to receive CDM staff, students and youths

THE State Administration Council has been striving for the all-round development of the country including economic, social, education and health sectors. In addition, security forces are performing their duties day and night so that the entire mass of national people in various regions across the Union should be able to lead their lives and earn their living in the peace of mind. The State Administration Council gives priority to achieving genuine and perpetual peace, building up the united strength of the national brethren.

In order to prevent the unnecessary loss of human resources, the State Administration Council has publicly invited the basic education staff who are absent from duty to resume their duties and those who take part in armed resistance under various names of groups, including PDFs, to return to the legal fold if they wish to, and is systematically receiving the returnees.

It is found that, due to the persuasion, instigation and coercion of CRPH and NUG terrorist groups, some CDM staff, students and youths went to the strongholds of some ethnic armed organizations and received training in arms, ammunition and explosives.

It is known that some of those who have completed the training no longer want to be involved in terrorist attacks and so they fled to the regions within and without the country and are working there for their living. When they see terrorist attacks with their own eyes, they cannot accept such terrible acts at all. On the other hand, they have come to believe in the government's five-point roadmap and its endeavour for durable peace. Moreover, they want to live peacefully in their hometowns again with their parents and relatives. Nevertheless, they cannot do so because of the coercion and intimidation by CRPH and NUG terrorist groups and their subordinates, it is learnt.

Therefore, the government is taking measures to be able to open reception centres in border areas for those who would like to return homes to their respective regions. Moreover, those wishing to return home can contact Tatmadaw units and police stations. It is guaranteed that they will be able to lead their daily lives peacefully.

*Information Team  
State Administration Council*

## Public Notification

THE Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee was reconstituted under the State Administration Council's Order No 366/2021 dated 10.12.2021, and action is being taken effectively against illegal trade under the law.

The following telephone numbers, fax and email address can be reached to safely report information in connection with illegal trade.

Auto telephone number - 067 409 883  
Mobile phone - 09 404339969  
Fax - 067 409 886  
Email address - [antiillegaltradeinfo@gmail.com](mailto:antiillegaltradeinfo@gmail.com)  
*Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee*

## Delegation led by SSPP Vice-Chairman (1) departs from Nay Pyi Taw



THE peace delegation led by Vice-Chairman (1) Sao Khur Tai of the Shan State Progress Party (SSPP), which had arrived in Nay Pyi Taw at the invitation of State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, left Nay Pyi Taw by car yesterday.

The delegation was seen off by officials and members of the National Solidarity and Peacemaking Negotiation Committee, departmental

officials and ethnic people of the Department of Fine Arts and locals by holding miniature State flags and placards bearing: "Perpetual peace is the real aspiration of the people", "Achieving peace is the true desire of all citizens", "Let's hold talks for peace in the Union", "Only the ethnic nationalities are in unity, stability, peace and tranquility will be achieved" at Horizon Lake View Resort in Nay Pyi Taw.—MNA

Officials departmental personnel and local people see off peace delegation led by Vice-Chairman (1) Sao Khur Tai of Shan State Progress Party (SSPP) in Nay Pyi Taw on 7 August.

## 8 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 7 August, total figure rises to 614,198

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to **614,198** after **8** new cases were reported on 7 August 2022 according to the Ministry of Health. Among these confirmed cases, **592,998** have been discharged from hospitals. Death toll still stands at **19,434** without more casualties.

COVID-19 vaccine is being injected to those of priority groups in regions and states for prevention and control of the disease. Up to 6-8-2022, a total of **30,243,789** people above 18 have been vaccinated. A total of **6,118,868** people under 18 have been vaccinated. —MNA

## Tatmadaw will implement harmoniously with the people for national politics

WE, soldiers, always have to safeguard our three main national causes: Non-disintegration of the Union, Non-disintegration of the National Solidarity, Perpetuation of Sovereignty as a national duty for the Union in which over 100 ethnic people live. National affairs mean safeguarding national interests, and religion, traditional culture and customs. Let the nation be led by any political system or any government, as our national policy, Tatmadaw has to maintain the Three Main National Causes concerning all nationalities. I would like to urge that Tatmadaw will implement harmoniously with the people for national politics.

*(Excerpt from the message sent by Republic of the Union of Myanmar State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Maha Thray Sithu Min Aung Hlaing on the occasion of 74<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Union Day which fell on 12 February 2021)*

## Republic of the Union of Myanmar Message from Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister on the occasion of the 55<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of ASEAN

### FROM PAGE-1

Despite attaining significant achievements in many areas, ASEAN is facing persisting and emerging regional and global challenges ranging from traditional to non-traditional issues such as trans-national crimes, illicit drug trafficking, trafficking-in-persons, terrorism, cyber security, climate change, emerging infectious diseases, food and energy security.

In this regard, it is most befitting and relevant that Cambodia as the Chair of ASEAN in 2022 has selected "ASEAN A.C.T.: Addressing Challenges Together" as a theme for this year. The ASEAN spirit of "Togetherness" guides us to make further progress towards a more harmonious, peaceful, prosperous and resilient Community as a united family of ten members.

Out of the key challenges facing our region, ASEAN has been tested for its preparedness, responsiveness and resilience amidst the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic adversely affecting regional development and causing immense hardships to people's life since early 2020.

However, due to our collective efforts and resilience, ASEAN has been able to manage the COVID-19 pandemic and associated socio-economic impacts through concrete measures such as implementing the ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework, the ASEAN Travel Corridor Arrangement Framework and the establishment of the ASEAN Centre for Public Health Emergencies and Emerging Diseases for an expeditious, comprehensive and sustainable recovery in our region.

ASEAN must be resilient, united and

ASEAN must be resilient, united and strong against the pressure and influence stemming from rising geo-political confrontations and economic competition among major powers to further promote an open, transparent, inclusive and rules-based regional architecture that is based upon ASEAN-led mechanisms.

strong against the pressure and influence stemming from rising geo-political confrontations and economic competition among major powers to further promote an open, transparent, inclusive and rules-based regional architecture that is based upon ASEAN-led mechanisms.

During such challenging times, it is crucial that ASEAN Centrality, unity and solidarity are upheld based on the fundamental principles and norms of ASEAN as stipulated in the ASEAN Charter, the TAC and the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP). Promoting those ASEAN principles would also help strengthen ASEAN-led mechanisms and ASEAN-centred regional architecture

promoting peace, stability, security and prosperity for the peoples in Southeast Asia and the wider Asia-Pacific and Indian Ocean regions or the Indo-Pacific.

There is no doubt that key enablers such as the mutual respect for independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, equality and non-interference, along with the consensus-based approach not only bind all ASEAN Member States as a strong family of "Unity in Diversity" but also bring about many fruitful benefits to our peoples in the region.

In realizing the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and our regional integration commitments, it is essential for all ASEAN Member States to enhance ASEAN

identity and raise ASEAN awareness while strengthening more inclusive human resource development, empowering women and youth as well as promoting people-to-people bonds across the region.

Since her admittance to the Association's membership on 23 July 1997, Myanmar has proven to be a responsible, proactive and constructive member of ASEAN and a strong supporter of the ASEAN Community-Building efforts.

Myanmar is committed to advancing the ASEAN Community building process and its key initiatives under the three ASEAN Community Blueprints 2025, including the Initiative for ASEAN Integration Work Plan IV (2021-2025) and the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity 2025.

While working closely with Cambodia as ASEAN Chair in 2022 and with all ASEAN Member States, Myanmar will continue to stand on the fundamental principles and norms enshrined in the ASEAN Charter, the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC) and the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP) by promoting constructive cooperation with all ASEAN Member States and external partners including with our Dialogue Partners aiming to achieve our common goals for the benefit of all our peoples in the region.

On this auspicious 55<sup>th</sup> anniversary of ASEAN, I would like to encourage all our citizens to actively join us in realizing ASEAN's aspirations and in contributing to the advancement of our community-building efforts that will promote peace, stability and prosperity in our region and beyond.

### Daily newspapers available online

FOR those who would like to read the Myanmar Alinn, the Kyemon and the Global New Light of Myanmar, published daily by the Ministry of Information, please visit [www.moi.gov.mm/mal](http://www.moi.gov.mm/mal), [www.moi.gov.mm/km](http://www.moi.gov.mm/km), [www.moi.gov.mm/nlm](http://www.moi.gov.mm/nlm) and [www.gnlm.com.mm/e-paper](http://www.gnlm.com.mm/e-paper).

## UCSB Chairman joins Heads of Civil Service Meeting for 21<sup>st</sup> ACCSM, Sixth Heads of Meeting for ACCSM Plus Three in Hanoi, Viet Nam

A Myanmar delegation led by U Than Swe, Chairman of the Union Civil Service Board attended the meeting for the Heads of Civil Service for the 21<sup>st</sup> ACCSM and the Sixth Heads of Meeting for the 21<sup>st</sup> ACCSM Plus Three held in Hanoi of Viet Nam from 3 to 5 August, 2022.

The meetings were conducted with the theme of “Modernizing Civil Service toward a Cohesive and Responsive ASEAN Community” and on 4 August, Forum on Good Governance with the theme of “Renovation of Civil Servants Training and Upgrading for Building Capacity and Meeting International Integration Requirements”.

Heads of Civil Service discussed civil service affairs particularly and confirmed upon the implementations of



Leaders of Civil Service from ASEAN countries pose for documentary photo on 5 August in Hanoi of Viet Nam.

individual countries under the ACCSM Work Plan (2021-2025) and ACCSM Plus Three Work Plan (2021-2025), enhanced the cooperation and collabo-

ration with plus there countries China, Japan and Korea, reviewed the recommendations and decisions concerned with ACCSM and other relat-

ed meetings, exchanged views on the cooperation of ACCSM Framework Strategic Partnership, made discussions on the plan of follow-up actions to the

“Declaration on fostering the civil service’s adaptability to the new challenges” and then, shared information of challenges and achievements experienced within each organization of the respective Member States, exchanged views on the follow-up activities and cooperation with the Australian Public Service Commission (APSC), ASEAN Dialogue Partner and then, conducted the ceremony for handover of alternative Chairmanship of 22<sup>nd</sup> ACCSM to Brunei Darussalam and reporting its preparations for the ACCSM and other related meetings during its term by the heads concerned. Heads of Civil Service of ASEAN and Plus Three countries called on Deputy Prime Minister Mr Pham Binh Minh of the Vietnamese Government.—MNA

## 25,868 applications sold for JLPT

A total of 25,868 applications were sold for the Japanese Language Proficiency Test (JLPT) to be held in December 2022, the Myanmar Association of Japan Alumni (MAJA), and the JLPT Examination Organizing Committee (JLPT) announced on 6 August.

In the announcement, applications sold to students at N3, N4 and N5 levels for the Yangon

Examination Board are 25,868.

There are 999 forms for N3 Level for students who submitted online forms in July 2022 test, 2,084 for N4 Level and 18,035 to schools.

It is about a half of the total number planned to be sold for Yangon. It is reported that the number forms for individuals at N5 Level sold is 4,750.

Similarly, the number

of applications form sold at individual level for Mandalay is 100 at N1 Level, 300 at N2 Level and 556 at N3 Level, totalling 956.

Since 5 August, the sale of exam applications has been suspended, and will no longer be sold, and the remaining test applications will only be accepted through the online system.

Currently, the test organizing committee is negotiating to increase the number of examinees to be accepted through the online system. It is reported that officials will announce such number in the near future. MAJA has announced on 5 August that applications for the JLPT in December 2022 at N4 Level in Yangon will be accepted through the online system as more than 5,000 young people rushed to purchase applications for the N4 Level test at 4:00 am. causing a crowd.—TWA/GNLM



People are waiting for purchasing Japanese Language Proficiency Test application forms on 6 August in Yangon.

## Illegal cooking oil, construction materials, vehicles impounded

SUPERVISED by the Anti-Illegal Trade Steering Committee, effective action is being taken to prevent illicit trade under the law.

A combined inspection team under the supervision of the Customs Department, led by on-duty custom team investigated at Myanmar Port Container checkpoint on 5 August. They seized seven vehicles (estimated K164.6 million), which are imported without compliance with the rules and regulations and action was taken under the Customs Law.

Similarly, under the supervision of the Anti-Illegal trade special task force of Sagaing Region, led by the Myanmar Police Force on 5 and 6 August. They seized two vehicles (estimated K4 million), which are without license in Kanbalu and Sagaing townships and action was taken under Import and Export Law.

Likewise, under the supervision of Customs Department, a combined team searched at Mayanchaung permanent checkpoint on 6 August. They found Ceiling Boards (estimated K1,776,000), which are carried more than declaration ID on a truck, which is driven from Myawady to Yangon. And a Nissan Diesel Tractor Head (estimated K60 million). And the

team searched an express bus, which is driven from Myawady to Mandalay. They found vegetable oils valued at about K6 million, without official documents and a Sunlong vehicle estimated K40 million, which is carrying illegal goods. Also, the team searched an express which is driven from Mawlamyine to Yangon and they found vegetable oil estimated K7.9 million, without official documents and an Anhui Ankai vehicle estimated K40 million, which is carrying the goods. Total worth of seizures amounted to K155,676,000 and action was taken under the Customs Law.

And then, under the supervision of the Anti-Illegal task force of Bago region, led by the Myanmar Police Force searched at mileposts No (6/3) and (6/4) on Yangon-Mawlamyine highway near Thabyekan village in Kawa township on 7 August. The team seized two Toyota Probox Succeed vehicles worth K6 million and action was taken under the Export and Import Law.

So, a total of 18 cases (estimated value of K330,276,000) were taken action from 5 to 7 August, according to the Anti-illegal Trade Steering Committee.—MNA

# LOCAL BUSINESS

## Shwe Padauk fish market sees daily inflow of 250,000 viss of fishery products

SHWE Padauk Fish Market in Hline Township, Yangon Region, a distribution hub across the country, accumulates 200,000 viss of freshwater fishery products and 50,000 viss of saltwater fishery products per day.

Earlier, the daily sales volume was estimated at 300,000-500,000 viss. Amid low supply and decline in sales, about 250,000 viss of fishery products are circulated per day in the first week of August. High feedstuff cost, decline in reproduction, low profitability for freshwater fish farmers, declining number of small and medium sized farming businesses, exports of large fish to Thailand, inflow of small fish to the market and running fish landing facilities in Sittway and Dawei for Yangon market hiked up fish and shrimp prices in Yangon.

“The prices of fishery products have risen. Yangon



Male workers seen at Shwe Padauk Market. PHOTO: KANU

Port generally sees unloading of small fish. It has been nearly one month that inflow of saltwater fish significantly dropped. Increasing feed prices forced small farming businesses to shut down and only large entrepreneurs

can run the business for now. The department concerned and Market Development Committee are working on it together to keep trade flow amid supply and demand shocks. Extreme loss can result in suspension of fish

depots,” said U Shin Saw, chair of Shwe Padauk Fish Market Development Committee.

The aquatic products are daily delivered to the mountain regions, border areas and upper Myanmar regions through

Shwe Padauk and Sanpya fish markets in Yangon. Fish supply shortage, increase in livestock input cost and low demand can negatively affect those stakeholders engaged in supply chain, including general workers and entrepreneurs. Therefore, they all are trying to keep surviving in the long term.

Fifteen species of freshwater fish and prawns and seven species of seawater fish and prawns enter Shwe Padauk fish market. The prices stand at K40,000-50,000 per viss of hilsa, K30,000 for lobster, K20,000 for prawn, K8,000 for large sturgeon, K7,000 for small one, K4,500 for striped catfish, K3,000 for white pomfret, K5,500 for catla fish, K4,500 for rohu, K27,000 for cuttlefish, K19,000 for squid, K18,000 for octopus, K3,000 for mackerel and K12,000 for Japanese threadfin bream.—Nyein Thu (MNA)/GNLM

## Myanmar trade deficit shrinks to over US\$22.8 mln in nearly four months

MYANMAR'S trade gap has significantly narrowed to US\$22.825 million between 1 April and 29 July of the current financial year 2022-2023 from just \$81.37 million registered in the corresponding period of the 2021-2022 FY, according to data provided by the Ministry of Commerce.

In the past four months, Myanmar's external trade soared to \$11 billion from \$8.76 billion recorded in the year-ago period.

While exports were estimated at \$5.49 billion, imports were valued relatively high at \$5.5 billion during April-July period. Compared to the FY 2021-2022, exports showed an increase of over \$1.15 billion, while import value was up by \$1.1 billion.

Myanmar's maritime trade climbed up yet the country witnessed a drop in border trade as cross-border trade with the main trade partner China has not returned to normalcy amid the strict virus policy. Red tape and Myanmar's exchange rate policy resulted in border trade suspension as well.

Myanmar exports agricultural products, animal products, minerals, forest products, and finished industrial goods, while it imports capital goods, raw industrial materials, and consumer goods.

Myanmar's lower imports and higher exports in the past six-month mini-budget period (Oct 2021-Mar 2022) resulted in a positive trade balance of US\$169 million. Moreover, import fall led to the largest trade surplus of \$677 million in the FY 2020-2021, with \$15.36 billion worth of exports outperforming \$14.69 billion worth of imports, according to data provided by the Ministry of Commerce

The country's export sector relies more on the agricultural and manufacturing sectors. The Ministry of Commerce is trying to reduce the trade deficit by screening luxury import items and boosting exports. The country mainly imports essential goods, construction materials, capital goods, hygienic material and supporting products for export promotion and the import substitution.—KK/GNLM

## 2,800 companies struck off registration in past seven months due to absence of AR: DICA

A total of 2,800 companies have been struck off the registration in the past seven months as they failed to submit annual returns (AR) through the online registry system, MyCO, according to the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA).

The DICA has notified any registered company which fails to submit its AR on MyCO are to be suspended, under Section 430 (f) of Myanmar Companies Law, based on the DICA's notification.

This being so, 400 companies each in January, February and March, 300 in April, 500 in May and 400 each in June and July did not file annual returns on MyCO respectively, totalling 2,800 companies which failed to submit AR, according to the DICA.

The registration and re-registration of companies on the MyCO website commenced on 1 August 2018, in keeping with the Myanmar Companies Law 2017.

All registered companies need to file AR on the MyCO registry system within two months of incorporation, and at least once every year (not later than one month after the anniversary of the incorporation), in accord with Section 97 of the law.

According to the Section

266 (a) of the Myanmar Companies Law 2017, public companies must submit annual returns and financial statements (G-5) simultaneously.

All overseas corporations must submit ARs in the prescribed format on MyCO within 28 days of the financial year ending, as per Section 53 (a-1) of the law.

As per DICA's report, thousands of companies were suspended for failing to submit AR forms within the due date. Newly established companies are required to submit ARs within two months of incorporation or face a fine of K100,000 for filing late returns.

The DICA has notified that

any company which fails to submit its AR within 13 months will be notified of its suspension (I-9A). If it fails to submit the AR within 28 days of receiving the notice, the system will show the company's status as suspended. Companies can restore their status only after shelling out a fine of K50,000 for AR fee, K100,000 for restoration of the company on the Register, and K100,000 for late filing of documents, totalling K250,000.

If a company fails to restore its status within six months of suspension, the registrar will strike its name off the register, according to the DICA notice.—NN/GNLM



DICA manages local and foreign investments and company affairs of the country.

# CURRENT AFFAIRS

## 1,871 foreign tourists paid visit to Shwedagon Pagoda in July



A total of 1,121 male and 750 female foreign tourists, totalling 1,871 visited the Shwedagon Pagoda in July, according to the pagoda board of trustees. Most of them came from Asia.

At the same time, 10,834 members of the Sangha, 7,340 nuns, 504,414 men and 591,587 women as local travellers also visited the pagoda.

During the COVID-19, the board of the pagoda suspended the visits of local and foreign travellers. But, the visit of travellers to the pagoda was allowed from 6 am to 6 pm as of 17 April 2021. Due to

increasing number of travellers, the authorities extended the travel period from 5 am to 6 pm as from 30 October 2021. Starting from 27 November, the travel time of the pagoda was extended from 5 am to 7 pm on Saturday and Sunday as well as significant days. On 26 March 2022, the visit to the pagoda for convenience of local travellers increased from 5 am to 8 pm.

More than 1.28 million local travellers including some 1,000 foreigners paid visit to the pagoda in May.—TWA/GNLM

Foreigners visiting Shwedagon Pagoda.

## 16 Bengalis without official documents arrested under the law

THE authorities arrested 16 Bengalis without legal evidences under the immigration law in Mindon Township of Thayet District on 6 August.

Acting on tip-off that five suspects were detained near Sapan Village of Mindon Township at 3 pm on 6 August, a combined team comprising departmental officials inspected them. Meanwhile, the NgakhuOh village administrator informed officials about finding 11 more suspects near NgakhuOh village, eight miles northwest of Sapan village.

Those 16 suspects were taken to the office of Mindon Township Police Force and placed under investigation. They were Muhamnur (a) Zaw Zaw, 18, Nurmamauk (a) Shwe Maung, 22, Muhamud Ining (a) Aye Naing, 22 and Hadir Husawn (a) Kyaw Kyaw Naing, 18 from Thantawli Village of Sittway Township, Zamau Alein (a) Aung Kyaw Hla, 13 from Tansat Village of Minbya Township, Zawya Laudein (a) Zaw Zaw, 18, Sauzutir, 22, Adulalee, 20, and Nusachap (a) Maung Maung, 22, Mamedtumong (a) Maung Maung Soe, 19 from Butalon Village of MraukU Township, Abutahir (a) Maung Maung Lay, 19, Mamattahir (a) Maung Maung Che, 27, Ussothe (a) Kyaw Naing, 26, Mutarik (a) Kyaw Win Maung, 18, Mamed Saulem (a) Maung Maung Kyaw, 18 and Armadulla (a) Nay Myo Khaing, 15 from Tansat Village of Minbya Township.

According to the investigation, as they entered the region without any documents, the Township Irrigation Department took action against them under Sections 6 (2) and 6(3) of the Myanmar Registration Act 1949.—TWA/GNLM



Photo shows suspect arrestees who illegally entered the region without any documents.

## Arrival of kitchen goods at Bayintnaung warehouse decreases

THE arrival of trucks carrying rice, onions, and pepper, and edible oil at Yangon market in early August is getting less and less, according to the brokers and local buyers.

Around 25 vehicles per day, totalling 155 vehicles carrying onions from all over the country entered the market within the first week of July, but only 130 vehicles entered the market during the six opening days of early August. In the past, there were 40 to 50 onion trucks per day.

The rice and broken rice sent from all over the country are not only transported to Bayintnaung but also to rice warehouses in the industrial zone and rice shops in the city. In the previous month, vehicles carrying rice came from Shwebo area but the arrival decreased in early August. Arrival of rice from the Ayeyawady Region, especially from Patheingyi has decreased.

The new monsoon rice has not come out yet, and only the old low grade rice is flowing into the Yangon market. Rice trucks along the Pyay-Yangon Highway often enter Yangon's Bayintnaung market when the new rains arrive.

In addition to the rice sent by waterway, the high grade rice from Shwebo is stored not only in Bayintnaung but at warehouses of Yangon Wadan Port.

There are also direct exports from the port to rice shops in the



Very few traffics are seen on the road to the Bayintnaung Brokerage in Yangon on 6 August.

townships of Yangon Region.

As most of the rice and edible oil shops in Bayintnaung are doing well, the workers' wages are still being paid almost daily by the brokers. In particular, some palm oil shops are temporarily closed. The number of tankers drawing out oil from palm oil storage tanks in Yangon has decreased and the number of cars distributing oil to the countryside has also decreased.

Vegetables and fruits from Shan State are shipped directly to Danyingon Market and New Thiri Mingala Market, and the goods for returns of vehicles are usually loaded at Bayintnaung bus terminal. At the beginning of August of this year's rainy season, when the arrival of kitchen goods is low, the cross-border export is almost stopped.

Despite the nature of the rainy season, there is more con-

sumption in the first rainy season this year, said a highway truck operator. Most of the foreign exports and imports are decreasing in these days and the trucking business is also decreasing.

Cargo terminals are located not only in Bayintnaung, but also in Yangon. It is seen that vehicles are often cleared at the potato and onion warehouses in Bayintnaung. Business people in Bayintnaung said that in recent months, the scenes of loading and unloading vehicles parked on the road in Bayintnaung brokerage are no longer seen.

It is said that during the rainy season, when crops are being exported abroad, there will be an increase in the number of cars incoming and outgoing to Bayintnaung brokerage, and they are waiting for development of brokerage and bus terminal operation businesses.—TWA/GNLM

## ASEAN should be a more integrated, inclusive, and responsive community

**DIRECTOR-GENERAL U Aung Myint, Department of Historical Research and National Library, Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture, Myanmar SOCA Leader, ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community Pillar**

**Q. How would Myanmar be continuing to support the ASEAN Community-Building process?**

**A.** ASEAN Leaders who adopted ASEAN visions, roadmaps, respective ASEAN Blueprints, the ASEAN Charter accordingly, and ASEAN member countries are committed to implementing those implementation mechanisms, are very crucial regard to building the ASEAN Community-Building process.

In light of this, Myanmar as a member of ASEAN would support creating a more seamless community in terms of drafting and developing the ASEAN Community Post-2025 vision and the new respective three blueprints to ensure tangible benefits to the peoples of ASEAN.

For the time being, ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community submitted the proposed core elements

of the ASEAN Community's Post-2025 Vision in line with the new emerging issues to the ASEAN secretariat through the High-Level Task Force on the ASEAN Community's meeting which was held in Bangkok, Thailand on 23-24 June 2022.

**Q. How should ASEAN tackle the emerging challenges together with ASEAN Spirit?**

**A.** ASEAN should tackle maintaining regional peace and security, further promoting regional integration and economic growth, advancing a people-centred ASEAN Community as well as increasing ASEAN's resilience and ability in addressing emerging challenges together with ASEAN spirit.

Apart from this, ASEAN should be a more integrated, inclusive, and responsive community in advancing the implementation of emerging challenges pertaining to engagement with dialogue partners, development partners, international organizations, and other key stakeholders by strengthening ASEAN's centrality and identifying fundamental challenges.



## One project of ASEAN, "The Protection of Women and Children, and the Promotion of the Rights of Women and Children" can be favourably done and role of women can be improved

**DIRECTOR-GENERAL Dr San San Aye, Department of Social Welfare, Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, Member of the ASEAN Women Peace and Registry**

**Q: Can you explain national measures taken by Myanmar in contribution to promoting gender equality, women empowerment and youth participation in ASEAN Community Building?**

**A:** Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement is cooperating with ASEAN Member States (AMS), International Non-governmental Organizations (INGOs), Non-governmental Organizations in the nation and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) to implement the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 which aims to protect the rights, to get the equal opportunities and to promote the lives of children, women, elderly and disabled persons.

In cooperation with ASEAN, the Department of Social Welfare (DSW), Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement (MSWRR) is undertaking and participating as a Focal Point in "ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Social Welfare and Development - AMMSWD", "ASEAN Senior Official Meeting on Social Welfare and Development- SOMSWD", "ASEAN Commission on Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children - ACWC" and "ASEAN Committee on Women - ACW" which are the sub-sectors of the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community Pillar.

Department of Social Welfare is also consequently operational-



izing the National Strategic Plan for the Advancement of Women, NSPAW (2013-2022) in line with ASEAN Commitments, Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Guidance of MNCW for Gender-equality, women empowerment.

The Strategic Plan includes 12 Priority Areas which are related to Women and Livelihoods, Women, Education, Training, Women and Health, Violence Against Women, Women and Emergencies, Women and the Economy, Women and Decision-Making, Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women, Women and Human Rights, Women and the Media, Women and the Environment, and the Girl Child.

In 2016, the Department of Social Welfare developed NSPAW mapping analysis report in cooperation with the national

and international organizations for women's development. For Violence Against Women and Girls, it has been implementing the activities of strengthening National Mechanism, developing Prevention and Protection of Violence against Women Law (POVAW Law) and GBV-related laws, and strengthening One Stop Support Center-OSWSC and Helpline services and awareness activities.

For Gender Mainstreaming, it has been implementing the activities to do Gender analysis, conducting awareness raising and Gender mainstreaming in media and environment.

In accordance with the Myanmar Sustainable Development Plan (MSDP), the Department of Social Welfare is conducting Gender, CEDAW, NSPAW, UNSCR-1325 and Gender-Based Violence Awareness Training in Ministries, 53 Districts, 50 Townships and 75 Basic Education High Schools.

Moreover, practitioners from Myanmar Women Affairs Federation (MWAFF) are appointed as the National Coordinator for the projects "Enhancing Gender Responsive Treatment of Women Offenders and Women Prisoners in ASEAN" and "Study on Women's Political Participation and Leadership in ASEAN" which are developed by ASEAN Secretariat to protect the rights of women and to promote the women's leadership.

Continuously, the Department of Youth, the Ministry of Sports and Youth is undertaking as a Focal Point in "Senior Official Meeting on Youth (SOMY) which intends the youths to participate in building ASEAN Community. The youths and volunteers (youth) are participating in the meetings which are related to the ASEAN Youth and volunteers (youth). Besides that, the "Youth Policy" is introduced on 5.1.2018 for the purpose of all youths' development and participation in all fields.

This includes 16 youth development areas which are Health, Education, Drugs, sports and Recreation, Job opportunities, Economics, Politics, Literature, Arts and Culture, Research, Science and Technology, Good Citizenship, Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation, Peace and Security, Gender Equality, International Relations and Human Rights.

**Q: Can you explain whether or how the works of ASEAN with the governmental bodies and meetings bring benefits to grass-root citizens?**

**A:** Governmental organizations in ASEAN and the service providers of ASEAN Meetings like service personnel, the delegates from non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and civil society organizations (CSOs) participate in ASEAN Meetings.

By doing so, they can get knowledge more about safe life, development, enhancing capacity, the protection of rights, social work education, and gender equality which can be affected children, women, the elderly and disabled persons. And then, they can support the best for the public in providing the services since their capacities improve more.

The one project of ASEAN, "The Protection of Women and Children, and the Promotion of the Rights of Women and Children" can be favourably done and the role of women can be improved. Besides, youths can get much profit to develop all aspects of them like their physical capacity, intelligence, etc., and ASEAN people receive invaluable benefits.

Linking up the Governments and the Organizations in ASEAN Region can easily eradicate the dangerous vice fields such as human trafficking, and trading drugs and psychotropic substances. Because of that it can extraordinarily care for the health of ASEAN people (especially young society) and also prevent human resources damage. Cross-bordered crimes can be solved by making discussions and identifying in government-to-government.



# OPINION

## Implement ASEAN ACT: Addressing Challenges Together

It is encouraging to note that ASEAN has formally established fifty-five ASEAN Committees in third countries and international organizations (ACTCs) in the national capitals and other key cities across the world in order to promote ASEAN's interest and identity as well as to facilitate further strengthening ASEAN's external relations.

ASEAN must be resilient, united and strong against the pressure and influence stemming from rising geo-political confrontations and economic competition among major powers to further promote an open, transparent, inclusive and rules-based regional architecture that is based upon ASEAN-led mechanisms.

Since her admittance to the association's membership on 23 July 1997, Myanmar has proven to be a responsible, proactive and constructive member of ASEAN and a strong supporter of the ASEAN Community Building efforts.

Now is the time for Myanmar citizens to keep abreast of other ASEAN member States in all arenas in modernizing the nation, especially enhancing the socio-economic status of the people who are from the basic strata of the country in line with this year's ASEAN theme: ASEAN A.C.T.: Addressing Challenges Together.

in global affairs.

Moreover, the growing number of interested parties pursuing to engage with ASEAN and accede to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC) demonstrates that ASEAN's norms and values are increasingly embraced by the international community.

In realizing the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and our regional integration commitments, it is essential for all ASEAN Member States to enhance ASEAN identity and raise ASEAN awareness while strengthening more inclusive human resource development, empowering women and youth as well as promoting people-to-people bonds across the region.

On this auspicious 55th anniversary of ASEAN, it is necessary to encourage all Myanmar citizens to actively join the government in realizing ASEAN's aspirations and in contributing to the advancement of our community-building efforts that will promote peace, stability and prosperity in our region and beyond.

Now is the time for Myanmar citizens to keep abreast of other ASEAN member States in all arenas in modernizing the nation, especially enhancing the socio-economic status of the people who are from the basic strata of the country in line with this year's ASEAN theme: ASEAN A.C.T.: Addressing Challenges Together.

On 8 August 2022, ASEAN celebrates the 55<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of its founding. The year 2022 is significant not only for ASEAN but also for Myanmar because it marks the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, the Silver Jubilee of its joining ASEAN in 1997.

It is an opportune time for Myanmar to recount its contributions to the ASEAN Community over the past 25 years and to envision its future as a member of the ASEAN family.

Myanmar has been a responsible member of ASEAN since it joined the organization. The country is actively involved in the activities of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) which has gradually evolved from an Association to a more rules-based regional entity.

Despite the challenges of western sanctions during the early days of Myanmar's membership in ASEAN, Myanmar contributed to its best by undertaking its obligations in ASEAN. ASEAN's 'constructive engagement has also been instrumental in realizing Myanmar's targets set in the Seven-step Roadmap of 2003 towards disciplined democracy and development.

Although the country passed over its turn to chair ASEAN in 2006 due to important domestic preoccupations, it performed its role as ASEAN Chair in 2014 paving the way for the ASEAN Community in 2015.

During Myanmar's ASEAN Chairmanship in 2014, the country was able to contribute, along with the ASEAN Member States, to building a strong foundation for the ASEAN Community. ASEAN in 2014 was able to undertake reviews on the status of ASEAN Works for Community Building and on the implementation of the ARF Vision Statement. It was also able to articulate ASEAN visions beyond 2015 by introducing initiatives to vitalize ASEAN and promote ASEAN's external relations. The two 'Nay Pyi Taw Declarations' serve as the guides for the realization of the ASEAN Community in 2015 and for the formulation of the post-2015 Vision.<sup>1</sup>

As the ASEAN Chair, Myanmar paid great attention to promoting ASEAN Unity and preserving ASEAN centrality in its relations with the dialogue

partners. Delicate handling of the South China Sea issue at that time helped reduce the tension in the region. A standalone statement of the ASEAN Foreign Ministers on developments in the South China Sea in May 2014 highlighted the importance of maintaining peace and stability, maritime security, and freedom of navigation in and over flight above the South China Sea.

Myanmar's experience of ASEAN chairmanship provides a great impetus for the country to contribute more actively to achieving the visions and missions of the ASEAN Community.

### Myanmar's Contribution to ASEAN Political-Security Community

Myanmar attaches great importance to the role of ASEAN in promoting regional peace and stability. Therefore, it is actively contributing to the implementation of the action lines under the Blue Print of the ASEAN Political and Security Community by adhering to and promoting the principles for harmonious inter-state relations enshrined in the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC) for the ASEAN Member States and its external parties.

As the challenges to regional security go beyond traditional threats of nuclear and armaments, Myanmar values ASEAN's active work in areas of transnational crimes, counter-terrorism, cybercrimes, maritime security, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief exercises in addition to the defence and military cooperation, implementation of the Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ Treaty), pursuing preventive diplomacy and confidence-building measures of ASEAN Regional Forum.

Greater regional integration would bring expected benefits to regional countries only if transnational challenges are carefully checked and efficiently addressed. ASEAN's collective works in addressing transnational crimes are well in progress. Myanmar chaired the ASEAN Senior Officials' Meeting on Transnational Crime (SOM-TC) for the year 2019-2020.

In the field of ASEAN Defence cooperation, Myanmar



Map and flag of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations countries. PHOTO: FOR REPRESENTATION PURPOSES ONLY /RIZKYJOGJA / WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

# Myanmar in ASEAN: Celebrating Silver Jubilee

By Thidar (ASEAN)

had co-chaired with India in ADMM Plus Expert Working Group on Military Medicine (ADMM Plus EWG on MM) and during the 2017-2020 periods, conducted exchanges, Table Top and Field Training Exercises among the participants of the ADMM Plus. And currently, here Myanmar is co-chairing with Russia in ADMM Plus EWG on Counter-Terrorism (ADMM Plus EWG CT) for the period of 2021-2023.

### Myanmar's Contribution to ASEAN Economic Community

Myanmar is also actively contributing to the works of the

ASEAN Economic Community (AEC). As of July 2022, the national implementation rate of the 2021 Annual priorities of AEC stood at 75 per cent as 104 out of 147 measures are implemented at the national level. Myanmar also actively participated in the negotiation of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Agreement. Myanmar is one of the countries which have ratified the Agreement at an early date. The RCEP agreement is in force for Myanmar with Cambodia and Thailand on 1 January 2022, with Brunei, Laos and Singapore in March 2022 and with Malaysia on 18 March 2022 and

with China on 1 May 2022.

For the success of AEC, ASEAN encourages greater linkages among private sectors of member states and business-to-business engagements and exchanges. ASEAN Women Entrepreneurs' Network (AWEN) is one of such networks. Myanmar women entrepreneurs have been taking the turn of Chairmanship of AWEN for the year 2020-2022.

To come together as one with ASEAN Community, Myanmar's domestic policies and goals are closely aligned with regional goals. For instance, Myanmar Sustainable Development Plan was structured

to complement the ASEAN's Community building efforts, particularly the action lines of the ASEAN Economic Community. Myanmar's foreign trade and investment laws and regulations were formulated by giving much consideration to foreign businesses and investors including those from ASEAN. The improved laws and regulations have strengthened the seamless movement of investment, skilled labour, businesses and capital in the region which will contribute towards ASEAN economic integration and a single market agenda. Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations opened up the opportunity

for ASEAN businesses to invest more within ASEAN.

### Myanmar's Contribution to ASEAN's External Relations

The ASEAN Community is a work in progress to become an outward-looking community serving greater peace, stability and prosperity in the region and beyond. As such, it is important to ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of ASEAN-led forums, such as the East Asia Summit (EAS), ASEAN Regional Forums (ARF) and ASEAN-Defence Ministerial Meetings with Plus Countries (ADMM Plus) involving globally important players.

Myanmar is serving a coordinating role for ASEAN and China Dialogue relations for three years starting from 2021 to 2024 and for ASEAN-CELAC (The Community of Latin American and the Caribbean States) relations for the year 2022.

### Myanmar's Contribution to ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC)

Implementation of actions under the ASCC blueprint is important in fulfilling ASEAN's peoples' aspirations and achieving a people-centred ASEAN Community.

In 2019, Myanmar led the areas of rural development and poverty eradication by hosting the 11<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Rural Development and Poverty Eradication (RDPE) and 16<sup>th</sup> SOMRDPE.

Likewise, Myanmar hosted the 16<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Working Group Meeting on CITES<sup>2</sup> and the 16<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Working Group Meeting on Forest Management in 2021. Myanmar is also actively contributing to the implementation of the ASEAN Enabling Master Plan 2025 aiming to mainstream the rights of Persons with Disabilities in the ASEAN Community and Regional Action Plan to empower Older Persons.

In the past few years, our region faced unprecedented challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic and devastating impacts on the socio-economic lives of our peoples. To respond to and recover from those impacts, Myanmar is working hands in hands with ASEAN member states in implementing COVID-19 initiatives including the ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Frameworks and also making contribution to the ASE-

AN COVID-19 Response Fund.

In areas of ASEAN's works in digitalization and embracing 4IR technologies, Myanmar is working with the ASEAN Member States in formulating an Implementation Plan for the ASEAN Consolidated Strategy on the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR).

Having stated Myanmar's contribution to ASEAN Community, this article would like to conclude by emphasizing Myanmar's commitments to further cooperate with ASEAN member states and its external partners to achieve the goals and targets in broader aspects of collaboration in the ASEAN Community for a longer period.

Considering the geo-economic and geo-political landscapes are shifting in a dynamic way, it is apparent for Myanmar and ASEAN to sustain ASEAN's Unity and Centrality so that the vision for a peaceful and prosperous ASEAN Community can be fully realized.

Myanmar's bond with ASEAN goes beyond the context of geographical proximity. Shared visions, norms and values, and policy directions led the regional countries to work together as a grouping. As such, the vision of ASEAN's founding fathers to pursue regionalism in Southeast Asia cannot be complete without the involvement of Myanmar.

Therefore, Myanmar will continue to work together with the ASEAN Member States through greater collective commitments to ASEAN principles, stronger dedication and better-coordinated actions for the realization of the visions for a cohesive, inclusive and resilient ASEAN Community.

Foot Note:

1. Nay Pyi Taw Declaration on Realization of the ASEAN Community by 2015, NPT, 10 May 2014 and Nay Pyi Taw Declaration on the ASEAN Community's Post-2015 Vision, NPT, 12 November 2014.
2. Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora and Wildlife Enforcement (CITES)

# ENVIRON WORLD

## Austrian scientists race to reveal melting glaciers' secrets



Such ice formations are a unique time capsule. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

JUMPING from rock to rock over a creek formed off Austria's Jamtal glacier, scientist Andrea Fischer worries that precious scientific data will be irreversibly lost as the snow and ice melt faster than ever.

"I couldn't have imagined that it would ever melt as dramatically as this summer... Our 'archive' is melting away," says the glaciologist.

Fischer — vice director of the Institute for Interdisciplinary Mountain Research at the Austri-

an Academy of Sciences — has spent more than 20 years surveying Jamtal and four other Alpine glaciers across Austria's highest peaks for the oldest areas of ice.

For scientists looking to reconstruct the Earth's climate in the distant past, such ice formations are a unique time capsule stretching back thousands of years.

The glaciers contain an invaluable treasure trove of data — as they grew, the ice encapsulated twigs and leaves, which

can now be carbon-dated, Fischer explains.

And based on the age of such material and the depth where it was found, scientists can infer when ice grew during colder periods, or when warmer conditions caused it to melt. But now the glaciers are melting rapidly — including the one in the remote and narrow Jamtal valley, not far from where tourists found the stunningly preserved 5,300-year-old mummy of Oetzi, the Iceman, in the 1990s. —AFP

## France to give vitamins to beluga stranded in the Seine

FRENCH authorities were preparing Saturday to give vitamins to a beluga whale that swam way up the Seine river, as they raced to save the malnourished creature, which has so far refused food.

The visibly underweight whale was first spotted Tuesday in the river that flows through Paris to the English Channel. On Saturday it had made its

way to around 70 kilometres (44 miles) north of the French capital.

"It's quite emaciated and seems to be having trouble eating," Isabelle Dorliat-Pouzet, a senior police official in the Eure department in Normandy, which is overseeing the rescue operation, told journalists.

Rescuers had tried feeding it frozen herring and then live

trout, but it did not seem to accept either, she said.

It is hoped that injecting the animal with vitamins will stimulate its appetite, she said.

Authorities were deciding whether to keep the animal in the waterway so it could regain its appetite or guide it back toward the sea, she said, adding that no decision has yet been taken. —AFP

## When the sun switches off the solar panels

THE more the sun shines in the southern German town of Aurach, the more likely it is that Jens Husemann's solar panels will be disconnected from the grid — an exasperating paradox at a time when Germany is navigating an energy supply crisis.

"It's being switched off every day," Husemann told AFP during a recent sunny spell, saying there had been more than 120 days of forced shutdowns so far this year.

Husemann, who runs an energy conversion business near Munich, also owns a sprawling solar power system on the flat roof of a transport company in Aurach, Bavaria.

The energy generated flows into power lines run by grid operator N-Ergie, which then distributes it on the network.

But in sunny weather, the power lines are becoming overloaded — leading the grid operator to cut off supply from the solar panels.

"It's a betrayal of the

population," said Husemann, pointing to soaring electricity prices and a continued push to install more solar panels across Germany.

Europe's biggest economy is eyeing an ambitious switch to renewables making up 80 per cent of its electricity from 2030 in a bid to go carbon neutral. But Russia's invasion of Ukraine has put a spanner in the works.

Moscow has cut gas supplies to Germany by 80 per cent, in what is believed to be a bid to weaken the European powerhouse's resolve in backing Ukraine.

As a result, Berlin has been scrambling for alternative sources across the world to replace the shortfall.

This makes it all the more frustrating for Husemann, whose solar panels normally generate enough electricity for 50 households. With the repeated shutdowns, he suspects they will only supply half of their capacity by the end of the year.—AFP



In sunny weather, power lines are becoming overloaded — leading the grid operator to cut off supply from the solar panels. **PHOTO: AFP**

## Rare flooding traps 1,000 people in US Death Valley

MAJOR flooding in California's Death Valley on Friday stranded approximately 1,000 people, buried cars and shut down all roads into and out of the famously parched national park.

No injuries were reported, according to the National Park Service, but around 60 cars were bogged down under several feet of debris.

"Unprecedented amounts of rainfall caused substantial flooding," the National Park Service



Intense and rare rainfall in California's famous Death Valley caused major flooding. **PHOTO: NATIONAL PARK SERVICE/AFP**

said in a statement, adding that "there are approximately 500 visitors and 500 staff currently unable to exit the park," which is in Eastern California's Mojave Desert.

The floodwaters tore up sections of paved roads and pushed dumpster containers into parked cars, causing the vehicles to collide. The rain also flooded offices and hotels, the park said.

The park service added that all roads serving the park will

remain off-limits until officials can determine the extent of the damage.

A total of 1.46 inches (3.7 centimeters) of rain fell in the park's Furnace Creek area, almost tying the previous daily record of 1.47 inches. The average annual rainfall is less than two inches a year. Higher temperatures caused by climate change mean the atmosphere holds more moisture, unleashing more rain.—AFP

# HEALTH/PANDEMIC WORLD

## 2022 MONKEYPOX OUTBREAK

### Cyprus detects two more monkeypox cases

TWO more confirmed cases of monkeypox have been detected in Cyprus, raising the total to three, the country's Health Ministry said on Saturday.

The patients are two men aged 20 and 30 who arrived recently from abroad.

Earlier this week, a 40-year-old man with a travel history was confirmed positive for monkeypox.

All three are being treated in a special unit at the Nicosia General Hospital. The Health Ministry said their condition is good.

The announcement of the two new cases coincided with the arrival of the first batch of 1,260 doses of monkeypox vaccines earlier on Saturday.

A spokesman of the Health Ministry said that the vaccines

will be given to contacts of confirmed patients and to health professionals on a voluntary basis.

The vaccine delivery was brought forward from the end of August as a result of coordinated efforts between Health Minister Michalis Hadjipantela and EU Health Commissioner Stella Kyriakides, the Health Ministry said.

"Today we successfully received 1,260 doses, amidst a great deal of demand from other countries," director of the pharmaceutical services Elena Panayiotopoulou said upon the arrival of the vaccines.

She said monkeypox vaccines are very limited in Europe and distribution is done according to each country's incidents.—Xinhua

### Canada confirms 957 monkeypox cases

THE Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) confirmed 957 cases of monkeypox in the country as of Friday.

The health agency said that of the confirmed cases, 449 cases are from Ontario, 407 from Quebec, 81 from British Columbia, 16 from Alberta, and two each from Saskatchewan and the Yukon.

In the wake of the World Health Organization and the United States' declaration of monkeypox as a public health emergency, questions are being raised about whether Canada should follow suit.

A PHAC official said that the federal government has

treated monkeypox as a priority since the beginning of the outbreak in May, local media reported.

According to the report, the agency has deployed more than 80,000 doses of Imvamune vaccine to provinces and territories and is supporting decentralized testing by providing control material and protocols to lab partners around the country.

Experts say monkeypox is a viral disease that can spread from person to person through close contact with an infected person, including through hugs, kisses, massages or sexual intercourse.—Xinhua



There are now 81 active cases of monkeypox in British Columbia, the bulk of which are in the Vancouver area, according to the B.C. Centre for Disease Control. PHOTO: DON MACKINNON/AFP

## COVID-19 SITUATION UPDATE WORLDWIDE

### Over 80,000 tourists trapped in 'China's Hawaii' after Covid outbreak



Tourism hotspot Sanya is a city of more than a million people on the southern island of Hainan, where 483 Covid cases were reported Sunday. A duty-free mall in Sanya, China.

PHOTO: GUO CHENG/XINHUA

OVER 80,000 tourists are stranded in a resort city popularly known as "China's Hawaii" after a Covid flare-up led authorities to impose

strict travel restrictions.

Tourism hotspot Sanya is a city of more than a million people on the southern island of Hainan,

where 483 Covid cases were reported Sunday.

All flights out of the city were cancelled over the weekend, with authorities also halting train ticket sales. Tourists who want to leave must test negative in five PCR tests over seven days, health authorities said.

Hotels in the city have been asked to offer guests a 50 per-cent discount until the travel restrictions ease, an official said during a news briefing Saturday.

China is the only major economy still holding fast to a zero-Covid strategy with snap lockdowns and long quarantines, battering local tourism.

The country's borders have also remained largely closed since early 2020, halting international tourism.—AFP

### US stuck in "horrible plateau" of COVID-19 deaths: report

THE pace of COVID-19 deaths has remained relatively steady since May in the United States, despite an uptick in July to about 400 a day, USA Today reported on Wednesday.

"We're sitting on this horrible plateau," Daniel Griffin, an infectious disease specialist

with Pro Health Care in New York and a clinical instructor of medicine at Columbia University, was quoted as saying.

The number of COVID-19 deaths is similar to that of influenza deaths normally reported during peak season, the report said, citing David Dowdy, epi-

demologist at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. A bad flu season in the United States could see more than 50,000 deaths. Spread over the course of a year, there would be about four times as many COVID-19 deaths as flu deaths, Dowdy said.—Xinhua

## Medical Research News

### Scientists revive cells and organs in dead pigs

SCIENTISTS announced Wednesday they have restored blood flow and cell function throughout the bodies of pigs that were dead for an hour, in a breakthrough experts say could mean we need to update the definition of death itself.

The discovery raised hopes for a range of future medical uses in humans, the most immediate being that it could help organs last longer, potentially saving the lives of thousands of people worldwide in need of transplants.

However it could also spur debate about the ethics of such procedures — particularly after

some of the ostensibly dead pigs startled the scientists by making sudden head movements during the experiment.

The US-based team stunned the scientific community in 2019 by managing to restore cell function in the brains of pigs hours after they had been decapitated.

For the latest research, published in the journal Nature, the team sought to expand this technique to the entire body.

They induced a heart attack in the anaesthetised pigs, which stopped blood flowing through the body. This deprives the body's cells of oxygen — and without oxygen, cells in mam-

mals die.

The pigs then sat dead for an hour.

**'Demise of cells can be halted'**

The scientists then pumped the bodies with a liquid containing the pigs' own blood, as well as a synthetic form of haemoglobin — the protein that carries oxygen in red blood cells — and drugs that protect cells and prevent blood clots.

Blood started circulating again and many cells began functioning including in vital organs such as the heart, liver and kidney, for the next six hours of the experiment.—AFP

# ECONOMY WORLD

## Japan lends over 300 mln USD to Cambodia for Sihanoukville deep-sea port expansion

JAPAN on Saturday signed up to provide a loan of 306 million US dollars to Cambodia for the expansion of a new container terminal at the Sihanoukville Port, according to a press release from the Cambodian foreign ministry. Cambodia's Foreign Minister Prak Sokhonn and his visiting Japanese counterpart Hayashi Yoshimasa exchanged notes and related documents on the extension of the loan under the presence of Cambodian Prime Minister Samdech Techo Hun Sen. The loan agreement for the project was signed between Cambodia's Economy and Finance Ministry Secretary of State Hem Vandy and Kamei Haruko, chief representative



Aerial view of Sihanoukville Port. PHOTO: KHMER TIMES

of the Japan International Cooperation Agency Cambodia office, according to the note.

"This loan will substantially contribute to the expansion and modernization of the Sihanoukville Autonomous Port and the transformation of the port into a principal deep-sea port

noukville Autonomous Port and the transformation of the port into a principal deep-sea port

for Cambodia and in the region in line with the commitment made by the prime ministers of the two countries earlier this year," Cambodian foreign ministry's spokesman Chum Sounry said in the press release. Located in the southwestern province of Preah Sihanouk, the Sihanoukville Autonomous Port is the sole international and commercial deep-sea port of Cambodia. The listed seaport made a gross revenue of 93.2 million dollars in 2021, up 17.6 per cent year-on-year, according to the Ministry of Public Works and Transport. The port handled 6.9 million tons of containerized cargos last year, up 6 per cent year-on-year, the ministry added.—Xinhua

## China's marine economy stabilizes in first half



Photo taken on 13 October 2020 shows the dredging vessel Tian Kun Hao at a port in Shenzhen, south China's Guangdong Province. The manned submersible Jiaolong, its mothership Shenhai Yihao (DeepSea No. 1), and dredging vessel Tian Kun Hao were displayed during the China Marine Economy Expo (CMEE). PHOTO: XINHUA/MAO SIQIAN/FILE

CHINA'S marine economy recovered steadily in the first half of 2022, as the country has been striving to respond to COVID-19 and pursue economic and social development in a well-coordinated manner, according to the Ministry of Natural Resources.

According to preliminary calculation, China's gross ocean product grew 1.2 per cent year on year to 4.2 trillion yuan (about 623.1 billion US dollars) in the first half.

For traditional marine industry, the output of offshore crude oil and natural gas increased by 7.4 per cent

and 12.4 per cent from a year ago, respectively.

Cargo and container throughput at coastal ports reported year-on-year growth of 0.1 per cent and 3 per cent, respectively, said the ministry.

China's marine emerging industries showed sound growth momentum during the period, with 57.7 per cent of companies seeing their revenues up from a year ago.

The country's marine foreign trade also rose steadily, with the total value of sea-borne imports and exports jumping 18.2 per cent year on year.—Xinhua

## Kenya candidates vow economic revival in final push for votes

FLANKED by cheering crowds and blaring vuvuzela horns, the frontrunners in Kenya's presidential election vowed to revive the country's troubled economy Saturday as they made their final push for votes ahead of the August 9 polls.

Deputy President William Ruto and Raila Odinga, a veteran opposition leader now backed by the ruling party, are fighting for the chance to lead the East Af-

rican powerhouse as it grapples with a cost-of-living crisis.

Previous polls have been marred by violence — including inter-ethnic clashes — and continue to cast a dark shadow over the country, where 22.1 million voters will now choose the next president, as well as senators, governors, lawmakers, woman representatives and county officials.

The battle for votes has been

dominated by mud-slinging, tit-for-tat claims of rigging and a freebie bonanza for supporters, who have been showered with umbrellas, groceries and cash for attending rallies.

After months of frenetic campaigning across the vast country, the two candidates staged their final offensive in the capital Nairobi, addressing thousands of flag-waving supporters.—Xinhua

## Tonnes of fruit stranded in EU, S Africa battle of oranges

MILLIONS of boxes of oranges are spoiling in containers stranded at European ports as South Africa and the European Union lock horns in a dispute over import rules, citrus growers have said.

South Africa, the world's

second largest exporter of fresh citrus after Spain, filed a complaint with the World Trade Organisation (WTO) last month after the EU introduced new plant and health safety requirements that orange farmers say threaten

their survival.

The measures came into force in July as ships were already at sea carrying hundreds of containers full of South African fruit to Europe, resulting in them being held up on arrival, South Africa's Citrus Growers' Association (CGA) says. "It's a complete and utter disaster," CGA's CEO Justin Chadwick told AFP by phone. "Food that has fantastic quality and is safe is (just) sitting there — and this at a time when people are worried about food security." The EU rules aim at tackling the potential spread of an insect called the false codling moth, a pest native to sub-Saharan Africa that feeds on fruits including oranges and grapefruits.—AFP



South Africa is the world's second largest citrus exporter and farmers are scrambling to find other markets before the fruit spoils. PHOTO: AFP/FILE

## Pfizer in talks on \$5 billion acquisition: media

AMERICAN drugmaker Pfizer is close to a deal to purchase Global Blood Therapeutics, which manufactures a recently approved drug against sickle-cell anemia, for \$5 billion, the Wall Street Journal has reported.

Pfizer, one of the top makers of Covid-19 vaccines, hopes to conclude talks with GBT within days, the newspaper said Friday, citing people close to the negotiations.

But it said other takeover candidates remain in the running. GBT's sickle-cell treatment, marketed as Oxbryta, was authorized for those over 12 years old in 2019 but gained federal approval in December for children aged four to 11. The blood disorder affects millions.

Sales of Oxbryta helped the laboratory generate first-quarter turnover of \$55 million (up 41 per cent), while the company registered a net loss of \$81.4 million.

GBT, which is based in San Francisco, California, is to publish its second-quarter numbers on Monday.

Pfizer, for its part, saw its second-quarter turnover jump by 47 per cent — to a record \$27.74 billion — boosted by sales of its Covid vaccine and pills. Its net profit soared by 78 per cent, to \$9.9 billion. —AFP



Paxlovid, a Pfizer's coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pill, is seen manufactured in Freiburg, Germany, in this undated handout photo. **PHOTO: HANDOUT/PFIZER/AFP**

## Surprise US job surge lifts employment back to pre-Covid levels

THE US jobs market grew much faster than expected in July, lifting employment back to pre-pandemic levels, in news welcomed by President Joe Biden as he faces tough midterm elections — but which also fuels concerns over sky-high inflation.

Even the White House had predicted job gains would slow last month, which Biden had said was part of the natural downshift after the rapid rebound of the world's largest economy from the pandemic downturn.

Instead, US job growth jumped in July,

as the economy added a surprising 528,000 positions, more than double what economists were expecting, according to official data released Friday. That took the jobless rate back to the pre-pandemic level of February 2020.

"Today, the unemployment rate matches the lowest it's been in more than 50 years: 3.5 per cent," Biden said in a statement. "More people are working than at any point in American history... there's more work to do, but today's jobs report shows we are making significant progress for working families."—AFP

## Cambodia, Timor-Leste pledge to promote trade, tourism cooperation



A truck is exiting the Special Economic Zone in Phnom Penh. **PHOTO: CHHOR SOKUNTHEA / WORLD BANK**

CAMBODIA and Timor-Leste on Saturday pledged to promote bilateral cooperation in trade and tourism for mutual benefits, a Cambodian spokesman said.

The pledge was made during a meeting between

Cambodian Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Prak Sokhonn and Timor-Leste's Foreign Minister Adaljiza Albertina Xavier Reis Magno here on the sidelines of the 55th ASEAN foreign ministers' meeting and related meet-

ings in Phnom Penh, said foreign ministry spokesman Chum Sounry.

"Both sides emphasized the need to deepen bilateral relations through regular consultations and early conclusion of a pending memorandum of un-

derstanding on trade and tourism cooperation," he said in a news release.

Magno congratulated Cambodia for the success in hosting the above-mentioned meetings, the spokesman said, adding that she also thanked Cambodia for supporting Timor-Leste's application for the membership of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. The two ministers also discussed the suitable date and preparations for the state visit of Timor-Leste's President Jose Ramos-Horta to Cambodia and agreed to organize some events to celebrate this year the 20th anniversary of diplomatic relations between the two countries, Sounry said. —Xinhua

## Syria more than doubles petrol prices: ministry

SYRIA'S internal commerce ministry has announced a petrol price hike of around 130 per cent in the war-torn country facing fuel shortages and extended power cuts.

The cost of a litre of subsidised fuel will rise to 2,500 Syrian pounds, from 1,100 previously, a rise of 127 per cent, the ministry said in a statement quoted by the official SANA news agency late Saturday.

The cost of non-subsidised petrol will rise from 3,500 to 4,000 Syrian pounds, the ministry added.

The increases represent the third time this year that authorities have increased the price of fuel, as the Syrian pound continues to depreciate.

Syria's currency is trading at around 4,250 to the dollar on the black market, compared to an official

rate of 2,814.

"This measure will hit everyone," said Raed al-Saadi, a warehouse worker. "Our salary is now only enough to get us to the workplace, and not even enough to get us home again."

"Life has become very difficult and I don't where this situation will lead us," the 48-year-old added.

Since the outbreak of war in 2011, Syria's oil and

gas sector has suffered losses amounting to tens of billions of dollars.

The economy has been hit hard by both the long-running war and sanctions imposed against Damascus. A UN commission in March called for a review of sanctions against President Bashar al-Assad's regime because of concerns that the measures were hitting ordinary people too hard. —AFP

### CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V NEGAR VOY.NO. (SCY1132)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V NEGAR VOY. NO. (SCY1132)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **8-8-2022** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MITT** 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 LAND AND SEA INTERMODAL LOGISTICS  
SDN BHD LINE**

### CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V PROGRESS VOY.NO. (N025)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V PROGRESS VOY.NO. (N025)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **8-8-2022** 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 INTER ASIA LINES**

# GLOBAL AFFAIRS

## Cambodian PM scraps development project threatening wildlife sanctuary

CAMBODIAN Prime Minister Hun Sen on Sunday cancelled a controversial satellite-city development around a wildlife sanctuary and zoo near the capital following growing online appeals to halt the project.

Conservationists and locals began voicing their concerns and objections when the development plan around the Phnom Tamao zoo and wildlife rescue centre came to light several months ago.

Developers last week started razing privatised areas around the more than 2,000-hectare Phnom Tamao forest area, an hour drive from capital Phnom Penh, and home to many rare and endangered wildlife including sambar deer at the zoo.

Officials defended the development saying the area's land



The Koh Norea Satellite City in Nirouth, Chbar Ampov broke ground in late 2020. **PHOTO: FOR REPRESENTATION PURPOSES ONLY/KT/KHEM SOVANNARA/AFP**

was too sandy for trees and wild pigs destroyed farmers' crops.

But on Sunday morning,

Prime Minister Hun Sen ordered the project stopped and thanked compatriots for their "construc-

tive comments" and requests to conserve the forest around the Phnom Tamao zoo.

"I order... all permits for land swap and development be cancelled," Hun Sen said in a post on his official Facebook page.

He said that the forest around the zoo must be preserved, ordering the companies to replant trees on dozens of hectares of land they have already cleared.

Wildlife Alliance rescue and care programme director Nick Marx, who has been working at Phnom Tamao for some 20 years, said Hun Sen's decision "demonstrates Cambodia's desire to conserve wildlife." "Phnom Tamao without the forest around is just the zoo. With the forest around, it is a place for real conservation to take place and this is what's important to conserve wildlife," Marx told AFP.—AFP

### RUSSIA - UKRAINE CONFLICT

## Moscow-backed official gravely wounded after attack in Ukraine's Kherson

AN official with the Russian occupying authorities in Ukraine's Kherson region was gravely wounded Saturday after an assassination attempt, local Moscow-backed authorities said.

Russian state news agency TASS quoted an anonymous official in Russia-occupied Kherson

as saying the attack targeted the deputy chief of the Kakhovka district, some 80 km (50 miles) east of Kherson city.

"Vitaly Gur has been the victim of an assassination attempt at his home. He is in hospital with multiple gunshot wounds, in a critical state," the

source said, without providing further details.

The Russian agency that investigates criminal cases in the country and in Russian-occupied areas, on Telegram confirmed there had been an "assassination attempt" against Gur.

Over the past months, several assassination attempts have been reported against officials in Ukrainian regions seized by Russia since the start of its military operation in Ukraine in February.

The occupying administration in Kherson city, meanwhile, on Friday evening said its head Vladimir Saldo had been transported to Moscow for medical treatment. Saldo, 66, had said earlier on Telegram he was suffering from complications from a coronavirus infection.—AFP



In this file photo taken on 21 July 2022, a car moves past a crater on Kherson's Antonovsky (Antonivskiy) bridge across the Dnipro river caused by a Ukrainian rocket strike, amid the ongoing Russian military action in Ukraine. The Russian army has used the Antonivskiy bridge as a key resupply route into Kherson. **PHOTO: AFP**

## Türkiye to pay for some Russian gas in rubles: Erdogan

PRESIDENT Recep Tayyip Erdogan has confirmed that Türkiye will start paying for some of its Russian natural gas imports in rubles.

The announcement was initially made by Moscow late Friday after more than four hours of talks between Erdogan and Russian President Vladimir Putin in Sochi. The United States is leading international efforts to impose economic sanctions on Russia in response to its February invasion of Ukraine.

But NATO member Türkiye has tried to remain neutral in the conflict because of its heavy dependence on Russian energy.

Russia accounted for about a quarter of Türkiye's oil imports and 45 per cent of its natural gas purchases last year.

"As Türkiye, our door is

open to everyone," Erdogan was quoted Saturday as telling Turkish reporters on his flight home from Sochi.

"One good thing about this Sochi visit is that we agreed on the ruble with Mr. Putin," Erdogan said. "Since we will conduct this trade in rubles, it will of course bring money to Türkiye and Russia." Neither Erdogan nor Russian officials have said what portion of the gas will be covered by ruble payments.

Avoiding paying for the gas in dollars helps Türkiye protect its dwindling hard currency reserves. The Turkish government is reported to have spent tens of billions of dollars in the past year trying to prop up the lira against steep declines during its latest economic crisis.—AFP

## Zelensky condemns Russian 'terror' after damage to nuclear plant

UKRAINE'S President Volodymyr Zelensky on Saturday accused Russia of using the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant "for terror" after the operator of the facility reported major damage at the site.

Energoatom, operator of

the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant in the south of the country, said Saturday that parts of the facility had been "seriously damaged" by military strikes and one of its reactors was forced to shut down.

Friday's strikes had dam-

aged a station containing nitrogen and oxygen and an auxiliary building, Energoatom said on the Telegram messaging service.

As hostilities raged on in the east and south of Ukraine, pro-Moscow authorities in the

Russian-occupied Kherson region reported the assassination of a senior official.

And the head of Amnesty International's Ukraine office announced she had resigned from the organisation over the group's publication of a contro-

versial report that accused the country's military of endangering civilians.

Kyiv and Moscow have blamed each other for the attacks on the Zaporizhzhia plant, Europe's largest atomic power complex.—AFP

## Ivory Coast president Ouattara pardons predecessor Gbagbo

IVORY Coast President Alassane Ouattara announced Saturday that he had pardoned his predecessor, Laurent Gbagbo, who faced a 20-year jail term for a 2018 conviction over political unrest.

“In the interests of strengthening social cohesion, I have signed a decree granting a presidential pardon,” Ouattara said in a speech to mark the 62nd anniversary of the country’s independence.

The president said he had asked that Gbagbo’s bank accounts be unfrozen and that his life annuity be paid.

Ouattara also said he had signed a decree for the conditional release two of Gbagbo’s closest associates, former navy chief Vagba Faussignaux and a former commander of a key



After a decade-long absence, former Ivorian president Laurent Gbagbo returned to Ivory Coast on 17 June 2021. Supporters celebrate Gbagbo’s return to Ivory Coast. PHOTO: JOHN WESSELS/AFP

gendarmerie unit, Jean-Noel Abehi, both convicted for their

role in the post-election unrest. Gbagbo was acquitted by

the International Criminal Court (ICC) for alleged war

crimes committed during the 2011 civil conflict that broke out after he refused to recognise Ouattara’s victory in presidential elections a year earlier.

But in 2018, an Ivorian court handed Gbagbo a 20-year term in absentia over the looting of the Central Bank of West African States (BCEAO) during the country’s post-election crisis.

After his acquittal by the ICC, Gbagbo returned from exile in 2021 and launched a new political party, but he has kept a low profile since, despite having said he wants to remain in politics until his death.

Since his return to the country, there had been no attempt to imprison him on the basis of the 2018 conviction. —AFP

## Colombia’s first-ever leftist president sworn in



Colombia’s President-elect Gustavo Petro won a June 2022 run-off election with 50.4 per cent of the vote. PHOTO: AFP

EX-GUERRILLA and former mayor Gustavo Petro will be sworn in Sunday as Colombia’s first-ever leftist president, with

plans for profound reforms in a country beset by economic inequality and drug violence.

The former senator, 62,

takes over from the deeply unpopular Ivan Duque for a four-year term during which he will enjoy support from a left-leaning majority in Congress. Petro’s hard-fought victory in June elections brought Colombia, long ruled by a conservative elite, into an expanding left-wing fold in Latin America that could be consolidated in October with a likely victory for Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva in Brazil.

At a ceremony in Bogota on the eve of his inauguration, Petro said his government would aim to “bring to Colombia what it has not had for centuries, which is tranquility and peace.”—AFP

## Cuba seeks help to contain depot fire that has killed at least one, injured dozens

CUBA asked for help Saturday to contain a massive fire at a fuel depot that has left at least one person dead, 121 people injured and 17 firefighters missing.

Some 1,900 people have been evacuated from the affected area, according to officials from the western Matanzas province, where lightning struck a fuel tank late Friday, triggering an explosion.

Provincial health official Luis Armando Wong told a press conference Saturday evening a first body had been recovered at the site.

Five people were critically injured, according to an update by the Cuban presidency on

Twitter, with three others in a very serious condition in hospital.—AFP



The fire broke out after a bolt of lightning struck a tank at the depot on the outskirts of Matanzas, a city of 140,000 people. PHOTO: AFP

### NEWS IN BRIEF

#### Canada to investigate police handling of Senegal diplomat

CANADA announced Saturday it will open an investigation into police conduct after Senegal lodged a formal complaint that one of its diplomats in Ottawa was handcuffed and “savagely beaten” in a recent incident.

Senegal’s foreign ministry in Dakar summoned the Canadian embassy’s charge d’affaires this week, accusing Canadian police of having “raided” the diplomat’s home and exercised “humiliating physical and moral violence, in front of witnesses.”

It said it had summoned the Canadian representative to “vigorously denounce and strongly condemn the racist and barbaric act.”

The identity of the diplomat has not been disclosed. —AFP

#### Palestinian militants target Jerusalem as Gaza death toll reaches 29

PALESTINIAN militants in Gaza fired rockets at Jerusalem Sunday for the first time since conflict escalated, as Israel bombarded Islamic Jihad positions for a third day in violence that has left 29 dead.

The updated count from health authorities in the Islamist-run enclave said six children were among those killed since the start of the “Israeli aggression” on Friday, in addition to 253 people injured.

On Sunday Israel pressed on with its bombardment of positions of Islamic Jihad militants who have retaliated with barrages of rockets.

The Israeli army has said the entire “senior leadership of the military wing of the Islamic Jihad in Gaza has been neutralised”, and Prime Minister Yair Lapid vowed Sunday that “the operation will continue as long as necessary”.

In Gaza, the ministry initially said 32 people had died since Friday, but later revised the figure down to 29.

Israel said it had “irrefutable” evidence that a stray rocket from Islamic Jihad militants had been responsible for the deaths of multiple children in Jabalia, northern Gaza, on Saturday.—AFP



**Republic of the Union of Myanmar  
State Administration Council  
Nine 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 emphasize 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.

**2. Economic affairs**

- (a) To enhance production based on agriculture and livestock through modern techniques and 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 promote and support local businesses to create employment opportunities and increase domestic production.

**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 peoples and preserve and safeguard their cultural heritage and national characteristics.
- (c) To enhance the health, fitness and education quality of the entire nation.

**Myanmar U-16 to play decisive match against Cambodia today**

THE final day of Group C of the 2022 ASEAN U-16 Championship held in Indonesia will continue today, and the Myanmar team will play a final match against Cambodia. The match will be played at 2:30 pm and at the same time Malaysia will take on Australia.

After the second day of the group, Malaysia and Myanmar have secured four points each. The Cambodian team winning three points has a chance to qualify for the semi-finals, while the Australian team has lost both of its matches and has lost its chance to qualify for the semi-finals. Group (A) and (B) matches



Myanmar U-16 boy's football team. PHOTO:MFF

ended, and in Group (A), the host Indonesia is the first in the group with nine points. In Group (B),

the Thai team won the first place with seven points and has already qualified for the semi-finals.

According to the format of the competition, the top three teams from the three groups will be allowed to attend the semi-finals, and for the remaining place, only the best of the two second-placed teams from groups (A) and (C) will be allowed to participate. In Group (A), the Vietnamese team has only got six points in three games. Group (C) will be played today, and Malaysia and Myanmar, who have four points each on the last day, will be allowed to enter the semi-finals if they win. Therefore, if the Myanmar team wins today's match against Cambodia, they will be

allowed to enter the semi-finals without having to wait for the results of the other matches, and if the Malaysian team wins, the first place in the group will be decided by goal difference.

In the group matches, the Myanmar team defeated Australia by 3-2 and drew with Malaysia by one goal each. The Cambodian team lost Malaysia by three goals and won Australia by 4:2. The Cambodian team has a chance to reach the semi-finals, but they need to have a clear win against team Myanmar to go to the next stage.—Ko Nyi Lay/GNLM

**Myanmar team face defeat in Viet Nam U-19 Invitational Tourney**

THE second day of the Viet Nam U-19 Invitational Tournament was held on 7 August in Binh Duong, Viet Nam, and the Myanmar team suffered another defeat. In the second match of the group, the Myanmar team played against the Thai team and lost by 0-1. The Myanmar team lost two games in a row, so there was less opportunity to play in the finals. The Myanmar team made some changes to the starting line-up.

The Thai team got an opening or winning goal at the nine minutes from the start and Phuwanat scored. The Myanmar team tried to get a good result in this match and had chances to score, but due to the weakness of the end, the game continued without an equalizer. The last day of the group will continue on 9 August, and Myanmar will take on Malaysia, and Thailand will face host Viet Nam. The tournament was held in a four-team round-robin system, and the two teams with the most points will go to the finals. The two teams with the lowest points will play for a third placed match.—Ko Nyi Lay/GNLM



Myanmar team (red) vies for the ball against Thai players during their Viet Nam U-19 Invitational Tournament group match on 7 August 2022. PHOTO:VFF