

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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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.

SAC Chairman Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing speaks on occasion of 75th Anniversary (Diamond Jubilee) Navy Day

A ceremony to mark the 75th Anniversary (Diamond Jubilee) Navy Day was held yesterday afternoon in the Thiri Maha Zeya Kyaw Htin Hall of the Naval Training Headquarters in Yangon Region, and State Administration Council Chairman Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing attended the ceremony and delivered a speech.

Present on the occasion were Daw Kyu Kyu Hla, the wife of SAC Chairman Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, the Commanders-in-Chief (Navy) (Rtd) and their wives, the Commanders-in-Chief (Air) (Rtd) and their wives, Chief of General Staff (Army, Navy and Air) General Maung Maung Aye and his wife, Commander-in-Chief (Navy) Admiral Moe Aung and his wife, Commander-in-Chief (Air) General Tun Aung and his wife, high-ranking Tatmadaw officers from the C-in-C Office and their wives, the Yangon Command commander, the commanders of the Naval Base Headquarters and officers and other ranks of the Navy and their families.



State Administration Council Chairman Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing delivered the speech at the ceremony to mark the 75th Anniversary (Diamond Jubilee) Navy Day on 24 December 2022.

Delivering the speech honouring the Diamond Jubilee Day, the Senior General recalled that today is the 75th Anniversary Navy Day. He noted that Myanmar gained independence just

11 days after founding the Navy, that it can, therefore, be said the Navy has brought good luck to the country or it would not be wrong to say that the Navy was born together with independ-

ence and that Tatmadaw is the patriotic Union army made up of the national races. He added that Tatmadaw is an institution which is mainly responsible for the protection of the nation against

internal and external dangers that might befall the country, that Tatmadaw members, bringing to the fore Our Three Main Causes, have sacrificed their lives and

SEE PAGE-3

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All ethnic national brethren urged to safeguard democratic system

OUR government is discharging State duties in line with the Constitution. I'd like to firmly say that our efforts following the Constitution and our standing for it are to safeguard the Constitution which emerged under the democracy and safeguard the democratic system the people aspire to as well. Hence, I'd like to urge all ethnic national brethren to safeguard the democratic system in cooperation with the government and walk on the track of peace.

(The excerpt from the speech made by Chairman of State Administration Council Prime Minister Chairman of the National Solidarity and Peacemaking Central Committee Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at the 7th Anniversary of Signing the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) on 15 October 2022)

Five National Objectives of Diamond Jubilee Independence Day

1. To ensure cementing the discipline-flourishing genuine multiparty democratic system and build the Union based on democracy and federalism;
2. To utmost strive for ensuring prosperity of the nation and food sufficiency as national work processes;
3. To build a better State and socioeconomic life in accord with the theme "Keep Moving Forward to Achieve Our Goal" focusing on interests of the State and ethnic national people;
4. To initiate national solidarity and peace of the Union with a firm vow;
5. To successfully hold the free and fair multiparty democratic general elections and emerge an electoral system in which all ethnic nationals would participate proportionately.

Briefing on PR electoral system and crosschecking on repeated basic voter lists of Rakhine State held



A briefing on the PR electoral system and crosscheck on repeated basic voter lists of Rakhine State was held in Sittway Township of Rakhine State yesterday.

It was attended by Rakhine State Chief Minister Dr Aung Kyaw Min, Union Election Commission Member Daw Nu Mya Zan, Chief Justice and other relevant officials.

First, UEC Member Daw Nu Mya Zan clarified the electoral processes, knowledge of the PR system, provisions in the Constitution, provisions for collection of voter lists stated in the Law, basic voter lists, scrutinized lists, repeated numbers and duplication of identity cards in detail.

Then, she observed the crosscheck processes carried out by the staff of UEC, the

General Administration Department and the Ministry of Immigration and Population using computer software on duplication of ID cards, ones who do not have ID cards/perfect documents, those under age of 18, incomplete date of birth and double date of birth and month together with Rakhine State Social Affairs Minister U Aung Myo. — MNA/KTZH

MYANMARGAZETTE

Head of Civil Service Organization confirmed

THE State Administration Council has confirmed the appointment of Director-General Dr Su Su Dwe of the Department of Traditional Medicine under the Ministry of Health on the expiry of the one-year probationary period.

8 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 24 December, total figure rises to 633,607

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to **633,607** after **eight** new cases were reported on 24 December 2022 according to the Ministry of Health.

The total number of patients who have recovered from COVID-19 in the country reached **608,208** including **10** new recoveries.

The death toll from COVID-19 in the country remained unchanged at **19,489** on 24 December with no new deaths reported from the pandemic.

According to the research, it is found that people who have been vaccinated do not suffer severely from the disease, need not to be hospitalized and unlikely to die. If they have received booster shot, the death rates can be reduced more.

As such, the people need to follow the new normal way in living with COVID. Hence, all the people above five have to fully receive COVID-19 vaccination inoculated by the Ministry of Health free of charge. Six months after the vaccination, they have to take booster jabs at relevant health centres and ward/village administration offices without fail.

Moreover, they have to wear masks while in closed chambers and public places. They need to often wash hands with soap and water or the hand gel containing alcohol (at least 60 per cent) for 20 seconds.

People need to follow the social distancing rule and avoid the crowds as much as possible. While not wearing masks, if they cough and sneeze, they need to cover mouth and noses with elbows in line with the personal hygienic ways. COVID-19 information can be browsed on the internet page moh.gov.mm of the Ministry of Health. — MNA

ဆက်သွယ်ရန် ဓမ္မစာအုပ်တိုက်

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Our historical duty to build a genuine and disciplined democratic State

"It is our historical duty to build a genuine and disciplined democratic State holding pragmatic views on the events experienced in the past and with each of us having understanding and trust."

(Excerpt from the message sent by Chairman of the State Administration Council
Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing to the 74th Anniversary
of the Shan State Day on 7 February 2021)



Scenic Beauty of Bagan. PHOTO BY U NAY LINN (IPRD)

SAC Chairman Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing speaks on occasion of 75th Anniversary (Diamond Jubilee) Navy Day

FROM PAGE-1

limbs with their hands joined by the people and that Myanmar abounds in precious natural resources. He emphasized the fact that Myanmar has very long nautical miles – 144,912 square miles, which is more than half of the land area, that the coastal areas and the beaches are famous for their beauty, that Myanmar territorial waters play an important role in the effectuation of the national economy. He went on to say that Myanmar is endowed with natural barriers that are serving as choke points and that Myanmar is important for the United States, China and India because of America's Indo-Pacif-



State Administration Council Chairman Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing presses the button to open the building of the HQ office of the Coast Guard on 24 December 2022.



SAC Chairman C-in-C of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing looks into the documentary photos.

ic Strategy, China's Two-Marine Strategy and India's Act East Policy respectively.

Next, the C-in-C said that it is essential to review the political, economic and military situations in the context of the said three superpowers' military strategies, that Myanmar's Navy has a long tradition, that Myanmar Navy has joined hands with the Army

and the Air Force in the fight against armed insurgents, that Myanmar Navy can now build the big naval crafts for conventional battles, that arrangements have been made to build the cruisers under the Active Defence Strategy and the Two-Sea Strategy, that Myanmar Navy can now be proud of its ability to wage the conventional war within the

Exclusive Economic Zone with the use of the frigates and to contribute to enforcing the rule of law, that Myanmar Navy has been modernized with the use of Stealth Technology to boost its combat capacity and that the naval vessels can now move at a speed of 40 nautical miles per hour thanks to the use of waterjet propulsion system.

He added that the naval crafts cruising in the rivers have been equipped with the armour plate to make them able to launch effective attacks, that he would like to appreciate the naval engineers for their strenuous effort, and that in this regard, he had honoured a naval architect called Saya Shan by naming the floating docks after him and that these floating docks bearing the architect's name have already been commissioned.

Then, the Senior General proudly said that the Navy has implemented the mission, "From Buyer to Builder" and that Myanmar Navy has stood tall among the other navies in the region because it now possessed two submarines.

Concerning Sea Shield, the naval exercises were first started in 2014, he said. Since then, the Senior General has been attending the naval exercises. In addition to its main duty to safeguard Myanmar, the navy is also engaged in humanitarian

assistance activities. Additionally, Myanmar Navy is providing healthcare services to the people inhabiting the coastal areas. In conclusion, the Senior General said that Myanmar Navy has gone through 75 years, that it has now become a Three Dimensional Combat Ready Navy) and that he would like to urge the new generation to perform their duties to their utmost.

Afterwards, the video documentary marking the diamond jubilee was shown, followed by the musical performance programme.

Next, the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services greeted the attendees in a friendly manner. Then the Senior General and entourage attended the ceremony to formally open the building of the HQ office of the Coast Guard by unveiling the signboard. Next, they splashed the archive slab with the scented water. The Senior General and party were then conducted round the area for observation. —MNA

SAC Chairman Defence Services C-in-C Senior General Min Aung Hlaing attends ceremonies to commission war vessels into services for Tatmadaw (Navy), hand over war vessels to Myanmar Coast Guard



State Administration Council Chairman Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing makes the speech at the ceremonies to commission warships into services for Tatmadaw (Navy) and hand over warships to the Myanmar Coast Guard in Yangon yesterday.

CEREMONIES to commission war vessels into services for Tatmadaw (Navy) and hand over war vessels to the Myanmar Coast Guard took place at No 3 Naval Jetty in Yangon yesterday, attended by Chairman of the State Administration Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing.

Also present were Daw Kyu Kyu Hla, wife of the Senior General, retired commanders-in-chief (Navy) and (Air) and their wives, Chief of the General Staff (Army, Navy and Air) General Maung Maung Aye and wife, Commander-in-Chief (Navy) Admiral Moe Aung and wife, Commander-in-Chief (Air) General Tun Aung and wife, Union-level officials and Union ministers and their wives, Russian Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Nikolay Listopadov, Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Navy Vice-Admiral Igor Mukhametshin and party, senior military officers, Tatmadaw members and families of Tatmadaw (Navy).

Chief of Staff (Navy) Vice-Admiral Zwe Win Myint reported on facts about the commissioning of warships. The commander of Naval Dockyard Command handed over documents related to warships to

the commander of the Naval Fleet. Likewise, the commander of Panmawady Naval Command presented documents related to warships handed over by Tatmadaw (Navy) to the director-general of the Myanmar Coast Guard.

The Commander-in-Chief (Navy) presented scale models of war vessels and the emblem to mark war vessels commissioned within 11 years to the Senior General.

The Senior General and party viewed round two landing

craft utilities, one water tanker and two fast patrol crafts commissioned into service for Tatmadaw (Navy) and vessels handed over to the Myanmar Coast Guard as well as submarine Minye Theinkhathu.

The Senior General from warship Mottama took a salute of the Guard of Honour and inspected it. Meanwhile, war vessels Yan Taing Aung and Yan Gyi Aung conducted a 21-shot salute.

Three frigates, one corvette, offshore patrol craft,

fast patrol craft and fast attack crafts in single line formation and line abreast formation saluted the Senior General.

The Senior General presented certificates of honour and cash awards to officers and other ranks who participated in the saluting ceremony and ship-building projects through officials.

In his address, the Senior General said that on the significant occasion, the fifth and the sixth Super Dvora fast patrol crafts, two landing craft utili-

ties and one water tanker were commissioned into service for the Tatmadaw (Navy) as part of adding further strengths. Currently, Tatmadaw (Navy) is able to build missile carrier frigates on its own.

Now, Tatmadaw (Navy) is at the level of Three Dimensional Combat Ready Navy with a prospect to be Adjacent Force Projection Navy/ Regional Navy and then to be Blue Water Navy Ambition. As such, it is necessary to build large and powerful war vessels to have the capability to become Adjacent Force Projection Navy/ Regional Navy. Hence, training must always be given to naval men to have combat power and combat capacity for handling advanced warships so that Tatmadaw (Navy) possesses higher combat power.

As Tatmadaw (Navy) has experience in building Super Dvora crafts, it is necessary to build further war vessels with larger sizes and high capacity. As the sea shapes the future interests of the State, Tatmadaw (Navy) is primarily responsible for protecting the sea. As the diamond jubilee Tatmadaw (Navy) Day falls today, Tatmadaw (Navy) is marching to the ambition with the reliance of the State and Tatmadaw and

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The Senior General cordially greets the Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Navy.

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SAC Chairman Defence Services C-in-C Senior General Min Aung Hlaing attends ceremonies to commission war vessels into services for Tatmadaw (Navy), hand over war vessels to Myanmar Coast Guard



State Administration Council Chairman Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing takes the salute of warships at the event.

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people thanks to the fine traditions of Tatmadaw members who built war vessels.

Then, the Senior General left No 3 Naval Jetty for Ayeyawady Naval Command Headquarters by war vessel Ya-

danabon. On the way, the Senior General and wife Daw Kyu Kyu Hla cut the birthday cake to mark the Diamond Jubilee Tatmadaw (Navy) Day onboard the vessel.

Commander-in-Chief (Navy) Admiral Moe Aung

presented diamond jubilee Tatmadaw (Navy) day emblems to the Senior General, retired commanders-in-chief (Navy), retired commanders-in-chief (Air), and Commander-in-Chief (Air) General Tun Aung respectively.

The Senior General and his wife cut the ribbon to open the Diamond Jubilee Tatmadaw (Navy) Day exhibition and visited there.

The Senior General and party enjoyed the entertainment of the Navy Band, variety

show and traditional dances and presented the flower basket and cash awards to them.

Then, they viewed fireworks launched to mark the Diamond Jubilee Tatmadaw (Navy) Day. — MNA



The Senior General views round the war vessels.



The Defence Services Commander-in-Chief poses for the documentary group photo in front of the newly commissioned submarine "Minye Theinkhathu".

SAC member pays observation tours in Thilawa

ACCOMPANIED by the chairperson of the Thanlyin district administration body, State Administration Council Member Mahn Nyein Maung visited the Wilmar Myanmar company in Yangon's Thilawa port and observed operations of rice mills, edible oil industry, wheat industry and electricity generation from the rice-husk fuel.

General manager Mr Chen Pan explained the operations run with rice-husk fuel and managing director U Maung Kyay conducted round the company processes.

As Wilmar Myanmar company is undertaking the modern multi-purpose international jetty and land development works at Thilawa port under the BOT contract. It also produces wheat, edible oil and its related products, rice and rice-related products with the electricity generated from the rice-husk power plant.

— MNA/KZW

SAC Member Mahn Nyein Maung views the products at the Wilmar Myanmar Co.



Myanmar needs to build resilient recovery while stakeholders endeavour to revive COVID-stricken economies

Following is an interview with Dr Soe Tun, an executive of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI)



Dr Soe Tun

By Htun Htun (GNLM)

THE UMFCCI's 31st annual general meeting was held on 22 December 2022 at Pan Pacific Hotel (Ballroom) on Shwedagon Pagoda Road, in Yangon. This meeting was attended by all the members of the federation. The Global New Light of Myanmar had an interview with Chairperson Dr Soe Tun of the Myanmar Vehicle Production, Distribution and Sale Entrepreneurs Association, who is also an executive of the UMFCCI, regarding the federation and current economic outlook for the country.

Q: First of all, I would like to know your view on this event.

Ans: This event is an annual general meeting of the UMFCCI. The federation has been established for years. Holding such an event, I feel delighted with

it. As we can see all executives and members at the event, we can expand our network.

The UMFCCI stands firm for the private sector. The federation provides a platform which brings together actors of the public-private partnership and builds a bridge towards connectivity with international institutions and business partners.

Q: What is a significant factor of this year's event?

Ans: We are no longer conducting meetings virtually. This in-person meeting allowed us to have more fluid talks and build deep relationships. It is the key factor.

Q: The federation has been undertaking international forums, workshops and signing events in December more than ever. Is this the process of improvement?

Ans: What I pointed out earlier, following the ease of virus policy, the in-person meeting reaps fruitful results. We have connected with international organizations as well. This is a good prospect. Connectivity can support expanding the scope of the business. It is an act of improvement for economic development.

Q: After a workshop "SBA Resources for Myanmar Small Businesses in the US" held in LA on 9 December, what are the first steps and future plans of the

UMFCCI? Could it contribute towards positive changes in the country's economic growth?

Ans: We cannot say for sure. As we are doing business, the first key factor is networking. Then, we will step up to reach a Memorandum of Understanding or sign a contract. The international workshop helps us have a better understanding of business, investment, trading and manufacturing. We have to go step by step towards growth. However, we are not sure about what will happen in the future. Anyway, taking the first step is a positive direction that matters in success.

Q: Could you reveal some remarkable events in 2023?

Ans: We have to focus on the economy more. Global countries are striving to revive pandemic-hit economies. Myanmar's economy was bitterly battered by the negative impacts of the pandemic and other circumstances. The efforts to take a step to build a resilient recovery are requisite. Job opportunities and other interests will follow in this process for sure.

Q: Would efforts result in success?

Ans: We anticipate hard work would pay off.

The GNLM: We appreciated the time you gave us for this interview.

Dr Soe Tun warmly replied, "It's my pleasure."

Illegal timbers, industrial materials, car parts and vehicles confiscated

A combined team under the supervision of the Bago Region Anti-Illegal Trade Task Force conducted inspections at the Shwethanwin tollgate on 20 December.

Officials captured K5,440,000 worth of car parts without official documents from an Isuzu car (estimated value of K40 million) and the action was taken under Customs procedures. In addition, officials nabbed a total of 18.8608 tonnes of illegal teak and hardwood worth K7,444,412 in Toungoo district and the action was taken under the Forest Law.

On 22 December, an on-duty team confiscated 50 kilogrammes of concentrated acid for rubber worth K300,000 without official documents from a golden dragon mini-bus (approximately K9 million) at the Pauptine bridge checkpoint. The action was taken under Customs procedures.

An unregistered Toyota Wish and an unregistered Honda fit (estimated value of K10,500,000) were seized at the Pyinwa combined checkpoint in Ngaphe township and an un-

registered Subaru Sambar TT2 car (approximately K3.5 million) was seized in Magway township. The action was taken under the Export and Import Law.

Similarly, a total of 1.5046 tonnes of illegal sawn teak worth K993,036 was captured in Thayet township and the action was taken under the Forest Law.

The on-duty teams made inspections under the management of the Sagaing Region Anti-Illegal Trade Task Force.

Officials confiscated an unregistered Toyota Dyna car (approximately K1 million) in Kanbalu township on 22 December, a total of 35.1206 tonnes of illegal timbers worth K5,268,090 in Katha township on 22 December and a total of 2.948 tonnes of illegal timbers worth K442,200 on the Tamu-Chaungzon Road on 23 December. The action was taken under the Export and Import Law and the Forest Law.

Therefore, 13 arrests (estimated value of K83,887,738) were made on 20, 22 and 23 December, according to the Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee. — MNA/MKKS



Seized illegal timbers in Sagaing Region.

LOCAL BUSINESS

Myanmar ships about 150,000 tonnes of rice to Bangladesh under G-to-G pact

ACCORDING to the Government-to-Government pact between Myanmar and Bangladesh, Myanmar has conveyed over 150,000 tonnes of white rice to Bangladesh, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

Myanmar and Bangladesh inked a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on rice trade on 8 September this year.

According to this MoU, Bangladesh has agreed to buy 250,000 tonnes of white rice and 50,000 tonnes of parboiled rice from Myanmar between 2022 and 2027.

In accordance with the MoU, Bangladesh's Directorate General of Food and Myanmar Rice Federation signed a sales contract for 200,000 tonnes of Myanmar's white rice to be exported to Bangladesh. As per the sales contract, Myanmar has exported approximately 15,000 tonnes of white rice to Bangladesh as of 19 December 2022. The remaining

will be delivered by the deadline.

As per the MoU between Myanmar and Bangladesh on the rice trade, 48 companies, under the supervision of the Myanmar Rice Federation, are to export 200,000 tonnes of rice to Bangladesh with Chinese yuan payment between October 2022 and January 2023.

In line with the contract, white rice (ATAP) GPCT Broken STX variety will be delivered. The FOB prices were 2.78856 Yuan per kilogramme and 2788.56 Yuan per tonne.

The Export/Import division of the Trade Department issued 42 export licences worth over 534 million Yuan for 41 companies to convey 191,700 tonnes of rice to Bangladesh.

Since 7 September 2017, Myanmar and Bangladesh have engaged in rice trade under the government-to-government pact. That MoU stated that Bangladesh has agreed



Myanmar sent 100,000 tonnes of rice to Bangladesh each in 2017 for the first time and 2021 for the second time.

to buy Myanmar's white rice (250,000 tonnes) and parboiled rice (50,000) tonnes between 2017 and September 2022.

Bangladesh's Directorate General of Food and MRF signed the sales contracts as per the MoU and Myanmar sent 100,000 tonnes of rice to Bangladesh each in 2017 for the first time and 2021 for the second time, as per the sales contract. — NN/EMM

Myanmar ships rice worth \$82.33 mln to foreign countries in Nov

MYANMAR generated earnings of US\$82.33 million from rice and broken rice exports in November 2022, according to the Ministry of Commerce's statistics.

Myanmar's seaborne rice exports to international trade partners amounted to \$47.64 million from over 122,150 tonnes in November 2022, with over 105,750 tonnes to Asian countries and over 16,390 tonnes to European Union member countries.

Last month, Myanmar sent 66,050 tonnes to Bangladesh, 23,120 to the Philippines, 15,130 to China, over 870 to Malaysia, over 230 to Hong Kong, over 130 to Viet Nam, 125 to Lebanon and 40 to Australia while a small volume is delivered to Chinese Taipei and Singapore. Moreover, Myanmar conveyed over 5,150 tonnes of rice to Poland, 1,480 to Bulgaria, 1,620 to Romania, over 1,700 to Slovenia, 1,750 each to Lithuania and Spain, 750 to Italy, over 600 to Germany, over 300 to Greece, 250 to Portugal, 200 to Croatia, 500 to England and



Rice bags are seen to be exported to foreign markets.

small volume to other European countries respectively.

Myanmar's rice export by sea was up by 19,600 tonnes in November from over 102,500 tonnes in October.

In November, Myanmar exported a total of 157,950 tonnes of rice to China by sea and border channels. The export volume indicated an increase of 47,900 tonnes from October.

Last month, Myanmar maritime trade saw 37,590 tonnes of broken rice exports valued at \$13.657 million, with 30,690 tonnes to EU countries, 6,508 to

Asian countries and 390 to New Guinea. The export volume was down by 6,400 compared to that of last month.

On the other hand, over 22,680 tonnes of broken rice worth \$8.146 million were exported via cross-border points in November, with over 21,358 tonnes flowing to China and 1,325 to Thailand.

The overall broken rice exports through maritime and border trade routes were estimated at 60,270 tonnes, which was down by 1,000 tonnes from October's export volume. — TWA/EMM

Prices of fuel oil, gold and dollar on 24 December 2022

Fuel Oil Price (Yangon)

| | |
|----------------|--------|
| Octane 92 | K1,970 |
| Octane 95 | K2,055 |
| Diesel | K2,300 |
| Premium Diesel | K2,380 |

All of the prices are based on per litre.

Gold Price

| | |
|---|----------------------|
| The reference price of high-purity gold set by YGEA | K2,118,000 per tical |
| High-purity gold in the gold market | K2,687,000 per tical |

Dollar Price

| | |
|--|------------------|
| A US dollar set by the Central Bank of Myanmar | K2,100 |
| A US dollar in the forex market | K2,830 to K2,850 |

The above prices may change from time to time.

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OPINION

ARTICLE BOOKRACK

Pay deep respect to doyen literati

IN ACCORD with a maxim which goes: "Only when literature improves will the nationals have to enjoy higher integrity", literature plays a key role in the daily life of human beings. Literature is the lifeblood of nationality. The disappearance of literature will reflect the lineage of humans.

Fiction and non-fiction will contribute to the literacy sector of the nation. The non-fiction brings cultural customs and traditions of the nation and the nationals, economic measures, and progress of the nation. Meanwhile, fiction expresses the nature of human beings and the dos and don'ts of society. Literature contributes much to the revitalization of national spirit, preservation of national culture, forging of national unity, and enhancement of morality.

In truth, paying respect to the doyen literati is a fine tradition of the Myanmar literary arena as part of honouring the attributes of those literati. So, new generation people of all strata and those in the literary arena need to give a helping hand and pay respect to honourable doyen literati year after year.

Nobody can stay away from literature in the knowledge age. They all have to study the advancement of literature in successive eras till the current literary affairs if necessary. In fact, although political and governing systems have been changing one after another in successive eras, the literary arts should not be changed against the nature of Myanmar but the customs and culture of the nation and historical heritages can be observed in the literary works created by doyen literati.

In truth, paying respect to the doyen literati is a fine tradition of the Myanmar literary arena as part of honouring the attributes of those literati. So, new generation people of all strata and those in the literary arena need to give a helping hand and pay respect to honourable doyen literati year after year.

Hence, respect is paid to doyen literati who have been creating fiction and non-fiction works throughout their lives. In so doing, the literary workers paid respect to doyen literati eight times from 1980 to 1988, literary and periodicals organizations 18 times from 1994 to 2011 and the writers association eight times from 2012 to 2019, totalling 34.

During the period of the outbreak of Covid-19, the ceremony to pay respect to 247 doyen literati could not be held but the 35th respect-paying ceremony to doyen literati took place in 2022. During the period, 95 doyen literati passed away. The age of the doyen literati to attend the respect-paying ceremony is set at more than 80 years old.

The first ceremony of respect-paying occasion held in Yangon Region in 1980 was attended by 10 doyen literati. In the 34th ceremony which was inclusive of those from the whole nation in 2019, attendees paid respect to 276 doyen literati.

Every citizen is responsible for the improvement of Myanmar's literature standard.

Covid-19 vaccine protects patients with blood cancer: Study

The study focused on patients with two kinds of blood cancer: B-cell lymphoma and multiple myeloma.

PEOPLE with blood cancer usually have a weak immune system, putting them at an increased risk of becoming very ill from Covid-19. Furthermore, several cancer treatments cause these individuals to develop little or no antibodies against SARS-CoV-2 after Covid-19 vaccination. On the other hand, vaccination can activate T cells, which are responsible for the long-term immune response. A team led by physicians Dr. Andrea Keppler-Hafkemeyer and Dr. Christine Greil from the Medical Center-University of Freiburg and virologist Prof. Oliver T. Keppler from LMU Munich has now characterized in detail the course over several months of the immune response of patients with blood cancer who had received a total of three vaccinations against COVID-19. The results

allow inferences to be made about the protection that vaccination gives these patients against serious illness from SARS-CoV2.

Two kinds of blood cancer

The study focused on patients with two kinds of blood cancer: B-cell lymphoma and multiple myeloma. "Our results show that almost all study participants had a strong T cell response to Covid-19 vaccination," explains Dr. Andrea Keppler-Hafkemeyer. "This could be one reason why breakthrough infections turned out to be mild to moderately severe even in study participants who had been unable to form any specific antibodies after vaccination because of their therapy," adds Dr. Christine Greil.

SOURCE: ANI



HOPE in the MIDST of DESPAIR

By K. L. Paul

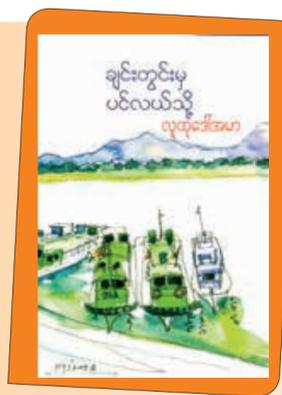
2020-2022 has been for so much darkness of covid pandemic crisis and it was followed by different forms of racism, poverty, war and persecution. Looking back to the last two years seems that walking through the valley of the shadow of death and losing hope. In this Christmas season, we are still dominated by the pandemic, of course but much has changed since then, some sectors of the economy and the ministry of the churches breathe a sigh of relief, albeit cautiously but unfortunately, we still

have a long way to go to return the normality.

As we have experienced, the pandemic has forced us to slow the growth of our strategic planning, locking ourselves in, and breaking our social relationships. At this time, we can only dream of the traditional kind of Christmas that we're all used to. Although these things might leave us feeling helpless, we are reminded of the child's legacy in the manger is God of HOPE and the PRINCE of PEACE (Rom-15:13). Therefore, the messages of

Christmas encourage us that we can glimpse the birth of Jesus in a dissolute Bethlehem at the margin of the Roman empire, the fragile beginning of our redemption. As people of HOPE, LOVE and JOY, we glimpse into the birth of Jesus, the birth of new possibilities and new life. So, let us join with the angels praying for PEACE on EARTH and let us redouble our own effort to bring reconciliation, dignity and HOPE in the MIDST of DESPAIR for all people in our world today.

"MERRY CHRISTMAS & HAPPY NEW YEAR"



| | |
|------------------|--|
| Book Title | - Chindwin Hma Pinle Thoe |
| Author | - Ludu Daw Ahma |
| Publishing House | - Kye Pwa Yay (Ludu) |
| Publication Date | - September 2022 (4 th Edition) |
| Price | - K5,500 |

Chindwin Hma Pinle Thoe

THIS book is a travelogue. As its name suggests, the book provides knowledge on the places that attract both the tourists and the local travelers. Additionally, this book makes the readers familiar with the cultural mores and customs of Myanmar. My choice of this book for review has arisen from my goodwill to make the readers know the social life of those days.

The title of this book is 'Chindwin Hma Pinle Thoe' written by Saymagyi Ludu Daw Ahma. She went to Chindwin around 1980s on board a ship. This was a riverine cruise, about which she wrote articles for six consecutive months in Thway Thauk

Monthly Magazine under the title, 'Thadin Kye Dat Chindwin Khayee'. In 1982, she also visited Myeik and Dawei, and again she wrote travelogues in Sanda Monthly Magazine for 14 successive months under the title, 'Ahnyathu Myar Pinle Thwar'. She combined the two series of travelogues into one, which she published in the book form under the title, 'Chindwin Hma Pinle Thoe'.

Her style of writing is simple, candid and open. As she usually writes in the spoken style, the travelogues are entertaining. During her riverine cruise, she had got a chance to behold the mountain ranges situated along the bank of the river. She recalled her unfor-

gotten experience like this:

"When I was riding on board the ships up and down Salween River, I could enjoy the scenic beauty of rocky mountains and rocks. Before that, I thought mountains are quite big. From my experience, the Shan Hills I have been looking at when living in Mandalay are rather big. And this makes me think mountains must be big enough to be true to their name. Only when I conducted voyages along River Salween, did I realize that the mountains can be big or small, ranging from the size of hillocks to the giant ones. Kalama Mountain is of the giant size while there are small ones which are of an ele-

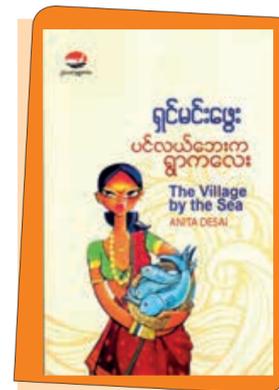
phant's height. Some hillocks are located on the river bank while some are a bit far from the river. The mountains, the hills and the hillocks are giving the pleasures to the beholders.

Pages 56 to 210 are filled with the travelogues, depicting the voyages to Myeik and Dawei towns. The readers will have a feeling that they are travelling by themselves.

The readers will be able to learn the social patterns of the local people in that region while they can also widen their scope of knowledge.

The readers are guaranteed that they will read to their amazement the historical background of the pagodas and temples in that region, the biographies of well-known persons like Mee Bon Pyan U Kyaw Yin and artist U Ngwe Gaing, production process of bird nests and rubber, the pearl culture, the ethnic Salon people and hunting of sharks, the king of the sea etc.

She concluded her book, saying that her husband Ludu U Hla has left the world never to return, leaving to her his tasks. She continued to say that she will also have to leave this world someday never to return. As she prophesied, she has already left this earth. This is in fact not a happy ending as readers expect it to be.



| | |
|------------------|---|
| Book Title | - Pinle Bay Ga Ywa Galay |
| Author | - Shin Min Phwe |
| Publishing House | - Udaya Kyay Ywa |
| Publication Date | - November 2022 (1 st Edition) |
| Price | - K5,000 |

Pinle Bay Ga Ywa Galay The Village by the Sea – Anita Desai

BEFORE talking about the writer of the story, I would like to introduce the translator first. The translator is called Shin Min Phwe, who is a new pen. Although she is a new addition to the field of translators, she was born to well-known writers Ne Win Myint and Khin Khin Htoo. There is, therefore, no wonder she started to translate at 16. Despite being only a matriculate, she is able to translate her first book, which is titled, 'The Village by the Sea.' Out of her profound love for the English language and literature, she keeps her own page on the social network onto which she has been uploading movie reviews and novel reviews in the English Language. Although she had

intended to translate a book by Margaret Atwood, her parents were worried about the inconveniences that can occur to their daughter in the latter's attempt to translate the works of Atwood. They encouraged their daughter to attempt the work of Anita Desai. And thus, she tried her pen, translating this book, titled, 'The Village by the Sea.' Like the translator; the original writer started to write at the very early age of seven. At 9, Anita managed to write her first novel. Her books were on the shortlist three times of the Booker Literary Award Selection Committee. Fire on the Mountain (1978) won her the Indian National Literary Academy Award. The Village by the Sea also won Anita

the Guardian Children Literature (Fiction Genre) Award in 1983. Additionally, the same book won her the Lifetime Award presented by the British Children Literature Writers' Association.

The novel's action takes place in a fishing village near the sea named Thul. The novel follows the life of a small family. The mother is sick and bedridden whereas the father is given to drink and dissolution. This being so, Lila, Hari, Kamal and Belu had to take care of themselves.

Despite leading a poor life, the people from that village are free from worries, living a simple life. They are earning their livelihood, fishing and cultivating paddy and palm. Such a pacific

village was disturbed by the entrepreneurs who arrived at their village to build a chemical fertilizer factory. The villagers were worried about the impact on the soil that can degrade as well as the flora and fauna. The villagers left their village for Bombay to launch a strike and to complain to the Prime Minister. The main characters' family had no own fishing boat or farm to grow the plants on. They owned a shattered hut only. Despite being small children, Lila and Hari assumed the role of the adults in their family. The troubles they are in, their emotions and their hopes will break the hearts of the readers. The reading comprehension skill of the translator is good enough to grasp the message given by the original writer, and her translation skill is great in terms of exchanging the syntax of the two different languages. The readers will feel as if they are watching an Indian movie.

Dr Aung Gyi who wrote the foreword for this translated book said that as Phwe Phwe was born to great writers and brought up in the literary field, she is sensitive to the literature. She has sharp ears and sharp eyes. She is good at choosing the proper words. In a nutshell, she can be said to have inherited great literary skills from her parents.

CURRENT AFFAIRS

Application date for oil mill loan extended to 27 Jan 2023



The peanut oil home business is pictured in Pakokku.

THE loan application period for Myanmar's private oil millers has been extended by one month, according to the study and analysis team on loan needs for the oil industry.

It was announced that the loan application for oil mill operators would be closed on 27 December, but it has been extended by one month until 27 January 2023.

Relevant loans are provided with an aim to ensure domestic oil sufficiency, reduce imports and produce quality edible oils, and meet investment requirements for the expansion and upgrading of domestic oil mills and the construction of new modern oil mills, stated the announcement.

Applicants can download loan proposal forms from the websites of the Department of Industrial Supervision and Inspection under the Ministry of Industry and the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation.

The closing date is set on 27 January 2023. The loan proposal and documents are placed in a sealed envelope and submitted to the study and analysis team at Office No 37.

To reduce the foreign currency spent on importing palm oil from abroad, the Oil Mills Association requested the State to lend the necessary cost in order to increase domestic oil production by up to one million tonnes.

There are more than 3,000 officially registered oil mills in the country whereas more than 1,000 unregistered oil mills run in rural areas. — TWA/KZL



The CMP garment factory in Myanmar.

Trade with Germany reaches over US\$472 mln in 7 months

THE trade volume of Myanmar with Germany reached over US\$472 million in seven months until October of 2022-2023FY, according to the data of the Myanmar Trade Promotion Organization.

In October, the country earned 188.127 million euros from exports of the garment on a CMP basis, footwear and other machinery and imported 4.545 euros.

In September, the export volume to Germany reached over 214.458 million euros and so the volume decreased by over 26.331 million euros compared to the volume of October -188.127 million euros.

During the six-month mini-budget period of the 2020-2021FY and 2021-2022FY, the bilateral trade volume was nearly \$900 million while over \$562 million in 2020-2021FY. — TWA/KTZH

Asia-Europe underwater cable communication system to be repaired

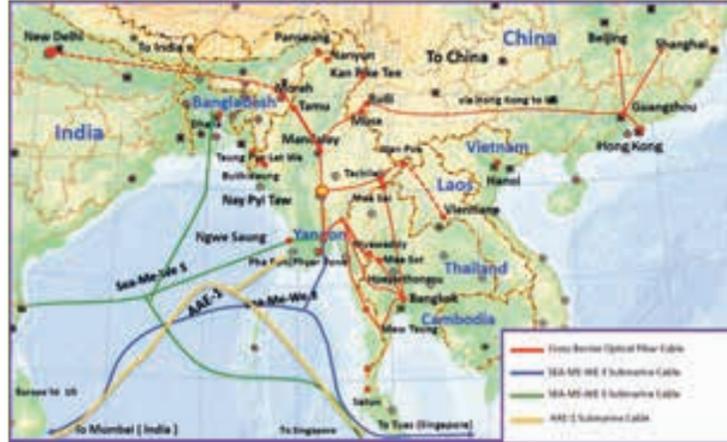
THE Department of Fisheries announced a warning for fishing boats to follow maritime warnings when the Asia-Europe underwater cable communication system will be repaired from 20 December 2022 to 1 February 2023.

Repairs will be carried out due to the interruption of the Asia-Europe international communication underwater cable system that is 110 kilometres from the Pyapon Cable Landing Station in the

Ayeyawady Region was broken on 5 November.

The repair work will be underway by the ASEAN Restorer ship which is an underwater cable repaired ship.

The announcement warned that large and small ships, cargo ships, and fishing boats do not pass through, drop anchorage, and lay fishing gear within four kilometres from the places where the repair works are to be carried out. — TWA/MKKS



Submarine Cables and Cross Border Cables in Myanmar, Source: MOTC, Myanmar

FDA Myanmar warns some online foodstuffs without import approval

AS some online foodstuffs have not been approved for importation by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) the quality and safety of the food has not been verified and there is no guarantee, stated FDA on 23 December.

The Food and Drug Administration is constantly working to ensure that the public consume high-quality and safe food. — TWA/KZW

Shan garlic price hits record high within 5 years

IN the same five-year period from 2018 to 2022, the price of Shan garlic on 20 December 2022 hit the highest, according to price comparisons. No price rate in those years competes with the price of 20 December 2022.

The wholesale price of special-size garlic from Shan State, K5,000 per viss (a viss equals 1.6 kilogrammes), has become the highest price in the past five years. The wholesale record price of Kyukok garlic in 2021 and 2022 was K8,000 and K7,000 per viss respectively.

Among the stable market of Shan garlic and tamarind in 2022, a viss of Shan garlic increased by around K1,000 in

price in post-mid-December, a Shan garlic seller said.

New Shan garlic can be seen in the market in the first six months of 2023. Before that happens, the garlic price skyrocketed due to the damage to the remaining stock.

The wholesale price of Shan garlic slightly changed from 3,000 kyats to 4,000 kyats per viss before. On 20 December, it shoots up to K3,700-K5,000 per viss. The price of Kyukok garlic rose from the previous price of K3,150 to K3,450 per viss on 20 December. The highest price rate was so far K4,200 per viss of big-size Shan garlic in 2022.

The rising price of leftover

Shan garlic may bring the high-priced new Shan garlic in early 2023.

In this case, this year's Shan garlic growers will get a

handsome price for crops, like growers of rice, chilli pepper, black gram, chickpea, monsoon onion and sugarcane. — TWA/CT



Shan garlic is seen in the market.

HEALTH/PANDEMIC WORLD

Chinese city seeing half a million Covid cases a day, says official

HALF A MILLION people in a single Chinese city are being infected with Covid-19 every day, a senior health official has said, in a rare and quickly censored acknowledgement that the country's wave of infections is not being reflected in official statistics.

A news outlet operated by the ruling Communist Party in Qingdao reported the municipal health chief as saying that the eastern city was seeing "between 490,000 and 530,000" new Covid cases a day.

The coastal city of around 10 million people was "in a period of rapid transmission ahead of an approaching peak", Bo Tao reportedly said, adding that the infection rate would accelerate by another 10 per cent over the weekend.

The report was shared by several other news outlets but appeared to have been edited by this morning to remove the case figures.

China this month has rap-



Workers make face masks in the workshop of a textile company in Jimo District of Qingdao, east China's Shandong Province, 12 February 2020. PHOTO: LIANG XIAOPENG/XINHUA/FILE

idly dismantled key pillars of its zero-Covid strategy, doing away with snap lockdowns, lengthy quarantines and travel curbs in a jarring reversal of its hallmark containment strategy.

Cities across the country have struggled to cope as surging infections have emptied pharmacy shelves, filled hospital wards and appeared to cause

backlogs at crematoriums and funeral homes.

But the end of strict testing mandates has made caseloads virtually impossible to track, while authorities have narrowed the medical definition of a Covid death in a move experts have said will suppress the number of fatalities attributable to the virus.—AFP

Patients with comorbidities must be careful amid COVID surge, Health expert cautions



Sources said there are currently 10 different variants of Covid-19 in the country, with the latest being BF.7. PHOTO: REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE/AFP

AMID the fresh global surge in COVID-19 cases, a senior consultant physician, on Thursday, cautioned the patients with comorbidity asking them to be careful in the coming days.

Cautioning the patients, senior consultant physician Dr Rajeev Bansal in a conversation with ANI said, "Patients with comorbidities need to be very careful in the coming days as

there is a surge in COVID".

Further advising the comorbidity patients he stated, "Regularly check your glucose levels and blood pressure and follow COVID protocol using masks, hand sanitizers and social distancing".

Notably, In the last six months, India reported four cases of the BF7 Omicron sub-variant, which is driving the cur-

rent surge of infections in China. Sources said there are currently 10 different variants of Covid-19 in the country, with the latest being BF.7.

Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya had on Wednesday chaired a high-level meeting to review the prevailing Covid-19 situation in the country and the preparedness of the public health system for surveillance, containment, and management of the pandemic.

He urged people to follow Covid-appropriate behaviour and get vaccinated against Covid-19.

Emphasizing that the pandemic is not over yet, he asked officials to be fully geared up to challenge and step up surveillance. "Amid a surge in Covid-19 cases globally, the central government has briefed all states to conduct genome sequencing of samples", the additional chief secretary of Health Manoj Agarwal informed on Wednesday.—ANI

New platforms launched to enhance SCO health cooperation

A series of medical and health platforms were launched under the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) on Thursday to provide members of the group with better health services.

During a forum held by the SCO hospital alliance in Wuhan, central China's Hubei Province, three SCO telemedicine cooperation platform centers were launched in Hubei, Gansu and Xinjiang.

Four online platforms under the SCO hospital alliance were also launched, focusing on the hepatobiliary and pancreatic specialties, gynaecology, internet hospitals, and hospital

management.

Cui Li, vice-president of the Good-Neighbourliness, Friendship and Cooperation Commission of the SCO, expressed the hope that the new platforms will provide better medical and health services for the people in SCO countries.

Health is a key cooperation area among SCO countries. The SCO hospital alliance now has 109 members, including 81 Chinese hospitals.

The alliance has established cooperation platforms in six fields and carried out cross-border remote consultations for nearly 1,000 cases of intractable diseases.—Xinhua

Govt to conduct across India Covid response mock drill on 27 December

A mock drill to test the Covid emergency preparedness would be conducted in hospitals across the country on Tuesday, 27 December.

"A mock drill for an emergency response to deal with Covid 9 cases will be conducted at hospitals across the country on Tuesday, 27 December; the Union Health Minister Dr Mansukh Mandaviya will also be participating in the Mock drill," official sources to ANI.

The mock drill is being conducted amid fear of a Covid surge in the country in the wake

of a spurt of Covid cases reported in China and other countries. The Union Ministry in India has started taking several proactive steps in this direction.

The Union Ministry of Health advised States on 20 December to significantly increase genome sequencing. A high-level meeting was also chaired by Union Health Minister on 21 December to review the COVID-19 situation & preparedness of the public health system for surveillance, containment & management of COVID-19.—ANI



Gardeners work below a big board displaying precautions to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 novel coronavirus, at a roadside in Mumbai. PHOTO: AFP

ECONOMY WORLD

Suez Canal chief seeks to dispel fears over draft Egypt law



Qatari Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) carrier "Duhail" passes through the Suez Canal near the Egyptian port city of Ismailia. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

THE chairman of Egypt's Suez Canal on Thursday affirmed the waterway is "not for sale", in a bid to allay fears over a draft law under discussion in parliament.

On Tuesday the legislature approved in principle a bill proposed by the government seeking to establish a sovereign wealth fund "that can carry out all economic and investment activities" for the Suez Canal Authority.

The draft bill has sparked wide debate on social media. Many fear the fund would under-

mine the state's sovereignty over the waterway which accounts for roughly 10 per cent of global maritime trade and is a vital source of foreign currency for economically-battered Egypt.

Suez Canal Authority chairman Osama Rabie said in a news conference on Thursday that the canal cannot be "sold, leased or borrowed for collateral".

He added the purpose of the fund is to invest in mega-projects. The proposed bill comes with Egypt's economy struggling un-

der growing foreign debt, and the local currency plunging against the dollar. In October the government said Egypt had clinched a \$3 billion loan deal with the International Monetary Fund conditioned on a currency depreciation and state subsidy cuts. Economist Hani Tawfiq suggested in a Facebook post that the purpose of the proposed sovereign fund would likely be to "exchange state debt for bonds issued by the fund (and) guaranteed by Suez Canal revenues".—AFP

Kyrgyzstan's coal mines dig on in hope of past glory

HUNDREDS of metres underground, Emylbek Umarov hacks out lumps of coal by hand with a pickaxe in a dank mine in a remote mountainous corner of Kyrgyzstan. Coal may be falling out of favour elsewhere because of climate change, but Suluktu's mines hope growing demand from neighbouring Central Asian countries and beyond will help them return to their Soviet heyday.

For some, like Umarov, the mine is one of the few places offering work — despite the threat of accidents that have killed dozens of people in the area in recent years.

"It's terrifying, it's tough, but there's no other work here," said the 27-year-old, who has two degrees in computing and economics.

As he spoke, the coughing of miners with blackened faces echoed through the tunnels illuminated by a few lamps hanging from a ceiling dripping with water.

The men work with jackhammers, pickaxes and explosives on 12-hour shifts day or night 15 days a month for a monthly salary of less than 150 euros (\$160). Before starting their shifts, they have to travel an hour to the mine in large Russian-made Kamaz trucks along a badly rutted road.

The hulks of Soviet-era machinery can be seen in the pinkish dawn.

'We were proud'

Tucked away in the mountains, the town of Suluktu was founded in 1868 and is one of the oldest coal extraction hubs in Central Asia.

From the "miner's bread" on sale in local bakeries to the local football team called "Shakhtar" (Miner) — everything in the town is a reminder of its main industry, including the coal dust coating the ground. Suluktu "heated Central Asia during Soviet times", said its mayor, Maksat Kadyrkulov.—AFP



Miners working outside the town of Suluktu in ex-Soviet Kyrgyzstan are hopeful amid an uptick in global demand. **PHOTO: AFP**

Two years after EU exit, UK business feels Brexit blues

TWO years after Britain's departure from the European Union, bosses of UK businesses are reeling from the cost of Brexit, including some who voted to cut ties with Brussels.

"It's cost, cost, cost with no benefit," noted Adrian Hanrahan, chief executive of a small chemicals company, Robinson Brothers, based in central England and for which the EU remains a key market.

The problem is not the customs duties, largely eliminated by the post-Brexit free trade agreement between London and Brussels, but rather a mountain of new regulatory paperwork.

"We've added probably 25 per cent extra now on our administration costs just to cope with the changing paperwork... of getting stuff in from the EU and out of the EU," Hanrahan told AFP. The company employs 265 people, producing chemicals



More than half of British firms are facing difficulties adapting to new trading rules according to the British Chamber of Commerce. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

used by various sectors featuring food, electronics, pharmaceutical and other firms. Robinson Brothers exports around 70 per cent of its products, of which more than half go to the EU.

'Nothing to help them'

The company is far from alone in struggling with the consequences of Brexit, with 56 per cent of UK businesses facing difficulties adapting to new trading rules, the British Chambers of Commerce said Wednesday.—AFP

Chinese commercial space company to launch stackable satellites

CHINA'S private company GalaxySpace is accelerating the research and development of flat-panel stackable satellites, for rapid construction of a satellite internet constellation.

GalaxySpace said the design enables dozens of satellites to be stacked on top of each other like tablet personal computers and be launched at the same time on a single

rocket. It can greatly improve the use efficiency of a rocket and shorten the construction period of a constellation.

Satellite internet will provide extensive broadband connection with satellite communication technology. It is to use the satellites in space playing the role of the base station on the ground for the terrestrial network connection. Under this

context, each satellite is a mobile base station in space. It can provide users worldwide with high bandwidth, flexible, and convenient internet access service. In addition, each stackable satellite can carry a flexible solar wing, which features small size, lightweight, and modularization, to help save mass and launch costs, the company told Xinhua.—Xinhua

US spending bill gives Boeing reprieve on latest MAX models

BOEING has won a reprieve from a regulatory deadline for the new versions of the 737 MAX under the \$1.7 trillion spending bill approved by Congress on Friday.

The bill, which cleared its final legislative hurdle Friday with passage in the House of Representatives, requires Boeing to make some enhancements to the jets, but allows the Federal Aviation Administration to approve both the 737 MAX 7 and 737 MAX 10 without mandating an overhaul of the crew alerting systems.

Boeing Chief Executive Dave Calhoun had said in July that the company might scrap the MAX 10 if it had to meet



A giant spending bill approved by the US House of Representatives included relief for Boeing on a regulatory deadline on new versions of the 737 MAX

PHOTO: SAUL LOEB/AFP

the changed standard.

More recently, Boeing officials have expressed confidence Congress would provide relief. The company declined comment Friday. A December 2020 law enacted by the US Congress required the

FAA to certify planes only if equipped with a flight crew alerting system designed to help pilots prioritize warnings and advisories activated during flight.

The 2020 law — enacted to enhance safety after two MAX crashes

led to a combined 346 fatalities — gave the FAA until December 27, 2022 to certify MAX models already under review without having to meet the new requirements. Boeing has argued the benefit of the MAX's "commonality" with earlier versions of the jets, which enabled pilots experienced in those earlier versions to easily transition to newer models. Under a measure introduced by Senator Maria Cantwell of Washington state, a Democrat, Boeing must retrofit MAX planes currently flying to improve the safety sensor system with features currently being designed for the MAX 10.—AFP

Italy sees year-end consumer, business confidence rise

CONSUMER and business confidence both rose in Italy in the final survey of 2022, capping an up-and-down year for the key indicators.

Both indicators rose for the second consecutive month in December, according to data released Friday by ISTAT, Italy's

National Statistics Institute.

In the latest survey, consumer confidence broke through the 100-point barrier at 102.5 points, up from 98.1 in November, while business confidence rose to 107.8, an improvement from 106.5 a month earlier.—Xinhua



Consumer and business confidence both rose in Italy in the final survey of 2022, capping an up-and-down year for the key indicators. PHOTO: AFP

S Africa's Eskom warns of long electricity crisis

BELEAGUERED electricity firm Eskom warned South Africans on Friday to brace for a prolonged electricity crisis as it

struggles to power up the continent's most advanced economy.

While it hopes to spare the country rolling

blackouts on Christmas Day, the state-owned company warned the first three months of next year will be difficult.

"We are going to have a challenging period over the next three months," Eskom chief operating officer Jan Oberholzer told a media briefing.

"It's going to be a difficult period."

South Africa has endured electricity shortages for the past 15 years, but power cuts reached new extremes this year, which Eskom blames on sabotage, crime and ageing power stations.

The country generates most of its power from coal-fired plants, but also gets some from Koeberg, a nuclear station near Cape Town.—AFP



South Africa has endured electricity shortages for the past 15 years, but power cuts reached new extremes this year, which Eskom blames on sabotage, crime and ageing power stations. PHOTO: ESKOM

Ryanair to strike in Belgium on and around New Year

BELGIAN-BASED Ryanair cabin crews will strike on and around New Year, unions said Friday, adding to growing labour strife in Europe that threatens a rocky holiday period for many passengers.

Most of the 450 flight

attendants based in Belgium for Ryanair, the low-cost Irish carrier, have been called to stop work on 30, 31 December and 1 January — over a New Year's weekend that is expected to be very busy.

They also plan to strike on the following

weekend, on 7 and 8 January, the CNE and AVC Puls unions said.

The strike will mainly hit Ryanair's Belgium hub at Charleroi airport, south of Brussels, and is likely to cause several flight cancellations.

It will affect the 15

planes Ryanair bases in Belgium, CNE permanent secretary Didier Lebbe told AFP, predicting that it would halve the number of flights the airline runs into and out of the country.

Ryanair planes based in other countries won't be affected, he said.—AFP

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V ALVAN VOY.NO. (SCY1145)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V ALVAN VOY. NO. (SCY1145)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **25-12-2022** 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**

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Myanma Port Authority**

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GLOBAL AFFAIRS

Prosecutors to indict Abe shooter after psychiatric evaluation



A security officer grabs Tetsuya Yamagami after he allegedly shot former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in the city of Nara on 8 July 2022.

PHOTO: KYODO / FILE

PROSECUTORS have decided to indict the man accused of fatally shooting former Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in July following a psychiatric evaluation, sources close to the matter said Saturday.

The Nara District Prosecutors Office earlier extended the

detention of Tetsuya Yamagami, 42, to carefully examine whether he was mentally fit to withstand trial. His statements during the examination, including those on how he made a firearm himself to shoot Abe, led the prosecutors to believe he was competent enough to be tried, the sources

said. The period of his detention for mental examination will expire on 10 January. Yamagami was arrested for murder after shooting Abe on 8 July during a campaign speech in the western city of Nara. Yamagami told investigators that he held a grudge against the Unification Church, a religious group known for its mass weddings and aggressive donation solicitations, after his mother's large financial donations caused his family to fall apart. He targeted Abe in the belief the former prime minister had links to the group, investigative sources have said.

According to Yamagami's uncle and the church's senior official, his mother made donations totalling about 100 million yen (\$753,000) to the group -- formally known as the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification. Yamagami told investigators her repeated donations left his family in financial ruin.—Kyodo

N Korea fires at least 1 ballistic missile towards Sea of Japan

NORTH Korea launched at least one ballistic missile towards the Sea of Japan, the Japanese government said Friday, becoming the latest incident in a flurry of weapons tests conducted by Pyongyang that has heightened regional tensions.

The missile was fired at

around 4:31 pm and fell into waters outside Japan's exclusive economic zone, with no damage from the projectile or its debris to aircraft or vessels confirmed, according to the Defence Ministry.

Senior Vice-Defence Minister Toshiro Ino told reporters in Tokyo that the missile, which

travelled about 300 kilometres and reached a maximum altitude of 50 km, may have flown on an irregular trajectory.

The South Korean military said it detected two short-range ballistic missiles launched from Sunan in the Pyongyang area.—Kyodo

'Epic' winter storm wallops US, leaving 1 mln without power

MORE than a million US power customers were in the dark Friday as a "bomb cyclone" winter storm walloped the country, closing highways, grounding flights and causing misery for Christmas travellers.

Heavy snow, howling winds and air so frigid it instantly turned boiling water into ice took hold of much of the nation, including normally temperate southern states.

Over 200 million Americans were under weather warnings, as wind chills sent temperatures down as low as -55 Fahrenheit (-48 Celsius), according to the National Weather Service (NWS).

In Hamburg, New York, 39-year-old Jennifer Orlando hunkered down with her husband. "I can't see across the street," she told AFP. "We're not going anywhere."—AFP



Volunteers welcome a homeless person at a shelter in Louisville, Kentucky. PHOTO: AFP

Trump should never hold office again: US insurrection report

DONALD Trump should never be allowed to run for public office again after inciting an insurrection, lawmakers investigating last year's assault on the US Capitol concluded in their watershed final report.

The recommendation led a list of proposals from the 845-page document aimed at ensuring there is no repeat of the deadly riot the ex-president is accused of orchestrating in a failed bid to cling to power after losing the 2020 election.—AFP

RUSSIA-UKRAINE CONFLICT

Ukraine estimates grain harvest fell around 40%

UKRAINE estimates its grain harvest fell by around 40 per cent year on year due to the Russian invasion, a representative for the country's industry told AFP Friday.

"We expect a grain harvest of 65-66 million tonnes" by the end of the year, the head of the Ukrainian Grain Association Sergiy Ivashchenko said, following a record harvest of 106 million tonnes last year.

"The main reason is the war," which immediately led to fuel shortages and hindered

sowing, Ivashchenko said.

Ukraine is a major exporter but Russia's invasion in late February stopped shipments and blocked 20 million tonnes of grain in Ukraine's ports.

"Ports were blocked... this broke a cycle" by cutting farmers' source of income, Ivashchenko said.

"That, and of course the war, meant farmers did not have enough money to buy fertilisers, their yield decreased," he explained.—AFP



Ukraine is a major exporter but Russia's invasion in late February stopped shipments and blocked 20 million tonnes of grain in Ukraine's ports. PHOTO: SERGEY BOBOK / AFP

Kremlin says Biden, Zelensky refusing to hear 'Russia's concerns'

RUSSIA on Thursday accused Ukraine and the United States of turning a deaf ear to its concerns after Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky made a historic visit to Washington. Zelensky enjoyed a hero's welcome on a lightning trip on Wednesday in which US President Joe Biden committed nearly \$1.8 billion in military supplies including, for the first time, the Patriot missile defence system.—AFP



Two-time coup leader Sitiveni Rabuka has been confirmed as Fiji's prime minister. **PHOTO: AFP**

'Rambo' Rabuka returns as Fiji prime minister

FORMER military commander Sitiveni Rabuka was on Saturday confirmed as Fiji's prime minister, after accusing the outgoing government of stoking "fear and chaos" to derail his return to power.

Rabuka replaces the imposing Frank Bainimarama, who toppled the government in a 2006 coup and became prime minister a year later.

The 74-year-old Rabuka said he felt "humbled" as he made his way out of parliament to be sworn in by the country's president.

The two-time coup leader and former prime minister -- nicknamed "Rambo" -- narrowly triumphed over Bainimarama by 28 votes to 27 in a secret ballot held in parliament, speaker Naiqama Lalabalavu announced.

A smiling Bainimarama appeared to accept defeat as he told reporters after the vote: "This is democracy".

A chorus of cars honked in celebration as they drove past the parliamentary building in the capital Suva.

New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern congratulated Rabuka in a statement. —AFP

WORLD: TOP STORIES

Indonesian families sue over deadly stadium disaster

SEVEN Indonesian families whose relatives died or were injured in one of the worst stadium disasters in football history are suing officials they consider responsible, their lawyer said Friday.

The stampede in the Javan city of Malang in October left 135 people dead, including more than 40 children.

It has been primarily blamed on an excessive use of tear gas by police, according to a preliminary investigation.

The civil lawsuit targets eight parties, including Indonesia's football association, the national police, league organiser PT Liga Indonesia Baru, and the owners of Malang football club Arema FC.

Indonesian President Joko Widodo is also listed as a co-defendant. —AFP

Bolsonaro pardon includes Brazilian officers convicted in prison massacre

OUTGOING Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro has pardoned security forces convicted of crimes committed more than 30 years ago, which legal experts say applies to agents found guilty of an infamous prison massacre in 1992.

The far-right leader's decree, which is part of a traditional Christmas pardoning and comes nine days before he leaves office, gives a pass to officers whose crimes "were not considered extremely serious" and were committed in the line of duty more than three decades ago, an official document said. —AFP

Military plugs gap as UK passport control staff strike

MILITARY personnel standing in for striking UK passport control staff appeared to minimize feared disruption on Friday, despite an escalating public sector fight for more pay.

Around a quarter of a million passengers were due to arrive at the six airports affected by the Border Force officers' stoppage, ahead of the Christmas holiday weekend. But while passengers were warned of potential lengthy delays, London's Gatwick and Heathrow hubs both said immigration halls were operating as normal after the government drafted in soldiers and civil servants. "Just landed at Heathrow, never seen efficiency like the... Army running border control," tweeted relieved traveller Lucy Zilberweit, adding that she "flew through" the airport.

Around 1,000 workers at Heathrow, Birmingham, Cardiff, Gatwick, Glasgow and Manchester, and the southern port



The strikes by border staff will affect six airports in the UK including Heathrow. **PHOTO: AFP**

of Newhaven, took part in the stoppage organized by the Public and Commercial Services (PCS).

They will walk out every day for the rest of the year, except 27 December, following stoppages this week by nurses and ambulance workers.

Railway workers will stage another strike from mid-after-

noon Saturday, which is Christmas Eve, until early Tuesday, while highways and postal staff are also in the midst of walk outs. **'Impact'**

The past year has seen a wave of industrial action, from dock workers to lawyers, as decades-high inflation erodes earnings. —AFP

Attack on Kurds in Paris revives trauma of unresolved murders



FURIOUS Kurdish demonstrators clashed with police in central Paris on Friday after a deadly attack on a community centre which has revived the trauma of three unresolved murders in 2013 that many blame on Türkiye.

At least three people were killed and several injured in a shooting in central Paris on Friday. The French president Emmanuel Macron said Kurds in France were "the target of an odious attack". **PHOTO: AFP**

Police deployed outside the cultural centre used teargas to disperse the protesters who tried to break through a police cordon protecting Interior Minister Gerald Darmanin, AFP reporters said. Some could be seen throwing objects at police and setting rubbish bins on fire, while several cars were damaged during the disturbances. The community has been left incensed by the attack, with many -- without evidence at this stage -- again point-

ing the finger at Türkiye. They also accuse French authorities of not doing enough to protect them.

"I can't believe it's starting again," Jihan Akdogan told AFP at the scene. "We knew it would start again," her brother, Juan Golan Elibeg, 41, added. Both were referring to the notorious triple murders of three Kurdish women activists almost 10 years ago in the same area of Paris that deeply shook the Kurdish diaspora in France. —AFP

'Rambo' Rabuka returns as Fiji prime minister
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SPORT



PHOTO: MFF

Myanmar face shock 2-3 loss to Singapore in AFF Mitsubishi Electric Cup 2022

MYANMAR men's national football team faced a shock 2-3 defeat to the Singapore team in the second group B match of the AFF Mitsubishi Electric Cup 2022 at the Jalan Besar Stadium in Singapore yesterday.

Team Myanmar showed their best form, but due to the mistakes of the goalkeeper and misunderstandings at the back, the result was a loss.

With counter-attacking, Maung Maung Lwin scored an

icebreaker at 24 minutes but Ilhan equalized for Singapore at 45 minutes.

The score was 1-1 at the end of the first half.

Singapore led the scoreboard just after the second half start with a score of Shah Shahiran at 49 minutes by taking advantage of Myanmar's defence errors.

But Maung Maung Lwin equalized with his drilling skills plus super passes at the 65-minute mark.

Myanmar received a red card in the later minutes and played with just ten players.

The ten-man squad showed their best skills but Singapore got a winning or leading goal scored by Shawal Anuar over the Myanmar goalkeeper's mistake at 75 minutes.

The Myanmar team had a lot of opportunities to score goals just before the final whistle, but they lost with a 2-3 result due to weak finishing. — KZL

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.

French World Cup winner Matuidi retires

BLAISE Matuidi, a World Cup winner with France in 2018, said on Friday he is retiring, a year after he last played.

The 35-year-old, who started the World Cup final win over Croatia in Russia four years ago, had been omitted from Inter Miami's squad for this season.

Midfielder Matuidi won Ligue 1 with Paris Saint-Germain and Serie A with Juventus after spending time with Saint-Etienne and Toulouse.

He made 84 international appearances, scoring nine times before his final Les Bleus game in 2019.

"I've decided to end my career as a professional footballer," he said in a video on YouTube.—AFP



Blaise Matuidi with the World Cup trophy after the 2018 final.
PHOTO: AFP/FILE

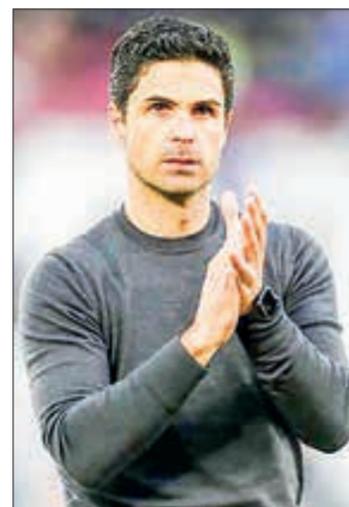
Arteta wants Arsenal to seize title chance as Premier League returns

MIKEL Arteta has urged leaders Arsenal to carry on from where they left off by winning their first Premier League title since 2004 when English football's top-flight resumes after the World Cup break.

The Gunners were in superb form, with 12 wins from 14 matches, when the league was paused in unprecedented fashion to allow for the first World Cup held in a northern hemisphere winter to take place in Qatar.

All season long, fans and pundits have been debating whether the break will be a help or a hindrance to clubs' ambitions, with Arsenal now without Gabriel Jesus after he was sent home early from the World Cup with a knee problem sustained in Brazil's shock defeat by Cameroon.

Arteta, however, was in buoyant mood ahead of his side's return to Premier League



Arsenal's Spanish manager Mikel Arteta applauds at the end of the English Premier League football match between West Ham United and Arsenal at the London Stadium, in London on 1 May 2022. PHOTO: AFP

action against London rivals West Ham at the Emirates on Monday.

"You know, I want the team to play a certain way, and the more consistent we are on that

the more we are going to win," he told Sky Sports.

"There is excitement, and we should be excited and we should be embracing the opportunity that we have ahead of us."

Arsenal are currently five points clear of reigning champions Manchester City.

City will be the last of the title contenders in action during the Boxing Day holiday round of fixtures when they travel to strugglers Leeds on Wednesday.

Saudi-backed Newcastle, riding high in third place, are away to Leicester on Monday.

The Magpies last won a major domestic trophy in 1955 and such is the northeast club's desire to end that drought, Howe used all five of his players who had been in Qatar during a hard-fought 1-0 win over Premier League rivals Bournemouth that secured a place in the last eight of the League Cup.—AFP