

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.

Plan underway to erect stone plaques bearing Tri Pitaka treatises, Atthakatha and Tika treatises in Buddha Park where Maravijaya Buddha Image will be built



A miniature of the Maravijaya Buddha Image and Buddha Park including stone plaques of Buddhist treatises.

MARAVIJAYA sitting stone sculpturing Buddha image which would be the highest in the sitting stone sculpturing Buddha images across the world is being carved

in line with the advice of venerable Sayadaws of the State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee, norms of the Buddhism, norms of the Buddha image and Myanmar's traditions in the Buddha Park in

Dekkhinathiri Township of Nay Pyi Taw Union Territory.

In so doing, the sitting Buddha image will be created with 32 large characters of the Lord Buddha and 80 small ones in the

Bhumi Phassa Mudra in accord with the advice of State Ovadacariya Sayadaws. Other religious edifices will be built and decorated with Myanmar artistic works in the Yadanabon era.

Upon completion, the Buddha image will be 63 feet high and the throne 18 feet high, totalling 81 feet. At present, part-1 and part-2 of the throne have been

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Gather the raw materials at home and produce export-quality products

BASED on a cooperative system, efforts must be made for the development of the rural area. Moreover, it is necessary to gather the raw materials at home and produce export-quality products. The Senior General also stressed the need to improve motor roads and railways for the development of public transport.

(Excerpt from the speech delivered by Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at meeting 2/2021 of the Union Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar on 26 October 2021)

State Administration Council Press Release

Re-invitation to Myanmar citizens who reside in various regions for many reasons

1. Some student youths, State service personnel and citizens, with worries, have evaded to areas of EAOs and foreign countries due to the incitements and intimidation of NLD members, extremist followers, unlawful associations and terrorist groups such as CRPH and NUG, stimulation of CDM, and persons and organizations at home and abroad not wishing to restore peace and stability of the State since Tatmadaw assumed the State responsibilities on 1 February 2021.
2. They are further worried about the dictatorship statement and speeches of unlawful association and terrorist group CRPH and NUG, and some relevant persons. As they face no security guarantee and difficulties in socio-economic life in those areas, they wish to return to their native lands.
3. **The State Administration Council will specifically ease restrictions for service personnel, intellectuals and intelligentsia, and persons from various arenas and citizens who, with worries, absconded from the country except for persons who committed murders, robberies, setting fires, mine explosions and intentional attacks on security troops, those who crowded to attack public service personnel and some people, those who destroyed government and private-owned buildings and those who are highly involved in the CDM activities by providing monetary assistance and other means.**
4. As those who evade their native areas are also citizens, the State Administration Council will arrange their returns from the evaded areas to various parts of Myanmar.
5. As such, the information was released that if those who evaded to various areas, except for persons who committed any kinds of crime, wish to return to their native lands in Myanmar of their own accord due to multiple worries, the citizens abroad can contact nearby ward, village, township and district administration bodies and relevant embassies, military attaché offices and consulates in accord with the easing restrictions under the law.

*Information Team
State Administration Council*

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Daily imports of anti-COVID-19 devices, medical aids continue



THE Ministry of Commerce is making efforts to ensure people have access to the essential medical supplies that are critical to the COVID-19 prevention, control and treatment activities, including liquid oxygen and oxygen cylinders, by arranging continuous importation through trading posts, international airports and seaports with the Standard Operation Procedures (SOPs).

Anti-COVID-19 products were imported by five companies using eight vehicles.

A total of 20 tonnes of liquid oxygen was carried by one bowser; 514 oxygen concentrators for home use and 32 tonnes of masks were imported via the Myawady

and Chinshwehaw trading posts, officials said. One bowser transported liquid oxygen to Yangon via the Myawady trading zone, officials added.

Officials from the relevant departments are cooperating to facilitate and expedite the standard operating procedures, including online registration for the import process.

It is reported that the Ministry of Commerce is coordinating with relevant departments, treatment of COVID-19, as well as contact persons for inquiries can be reached through the Ministry's Website —www.commerce.gov.mm. — MNA

Lorries are seen transporting medical aids to states and regions.

521 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 2 December, total figure rises to 523,346

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to 523,346 after 521 new cases were reported on 2 December 2021 according to the Ministry of Health. Among these confirmed cases, 498,748 have been discharged from hospitals. Death toll reached 19,120 after 9 died.—MNA

Plan underway to erect stone plaques bearing Tri Pitaka treatises, Atthakatha and Tika treatises in Buddha Park where Maravijaya Buddha Image will be built

FROM PAGE-1

positioned with efforts to carve the remaining parts with the use of modern CNC machines.

In line with the advice of the venerable Sayadaws of the State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee, arrangements were made to carve the Tri Pitaka treatises, Atthakatha and Tika treatises into the marble rocks led by Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, the leading well-wisher for the Buddha image for enabling the pilgrims and people to pay homage to the Buddha image as well as observe the treatises, to propagate the Buddhism and leave the records in successive eras.

In such doing, advice of venerable members of the Sangha from the State Sangha Maha



မန္တလေးမြို့ မဟာလောကမေဂစိန်ကုသိုလ်တော်ဘုရားရှိ သီဟိုဠ်စွယ်တော်ကြွတ်ပုံ ပိဋကတ်သုံးစုံကျောက်စာတုံးများ



ကျောက်စာတုံးများ (၁၂၅ ဗ x ၁၂၅ ဗ x ၁၈ ဗ)



The Buddha Image and the Throne are conveyed through waterway.



Nayaka Committee was sought at first, and Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, the leading well-wisher for the Buddha image, himself sought the guidance

from Chairman of the State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee Abbot of Bhamo Monastery Abhidhaja Maha Rattha Guru Abhidhaja Maha Saddhammajotika Dr Bhaddanta Kumarabhivamsa. After seeking the advice, arrange-

ments are being made to carve Tri Pitaka treatises, Atthakatha and Tika treatises in Pali and Romanize languages on marble rocks with the use of modern machinery.

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Plan underway to erect stone plaques bearing Tri Pitaka treatises, Atthakatha and Tika treatises in Buddha Park where Maravijaya Buddha Image will be built

FROM PAGE-3

Under the guidance given by former Rector of the International Theravada Buddhist Missionary University Agga Maha Pandita Abhidhaja Agga Maha Saddhammajotika Bhaddanta Ashin Silanandabhivamsa, Tri Pitaka treatises, Atthakatha and Tika treatises will be carved in Pali and Romanize languages under the supervision of five State Ovadaçariya Sayadaws.

A plan is underway to take samples of chambers for Pitaka stone inscriptions approved by the Fifth Bud-



The Ovadakatha from Bhamo Sayadaw is acquired on 3 November 2021.

ka treatises, Atthakatha and Tika treatises will be kept in the face to face direction of the Maravijaya Buddha Image as the stone plaques bear the teachings of the Lord Buddha. Arrangements are being made for pilgrims and people not only to pay homage to the Maravijaya Buddha Image but also to observe Tri Pitaka treatises, Atthakatha and Tika treatises in the stone plaque chambers at the same time.

Construction tasks of Maravijaya sitting stone sculpturing Buddha image which will be the highest among the sitting stone sculpturing Buddha images across the world are being collectively contributed by families of the Tatmadaw (Army, Navy and Air) led by leading Buddha image well-wisher Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, donors and ethnic national people. The cost for each stone plaque chamber will be K27.9 million. Records of individuals or in group donors will be carved on the plaque.—MNA



Stone plaques from Kuthodaw Pagoda and stone plaques to be inscribed.

dhist Synod placed at Maha Lawkamarazein Kuthodaw Pagoda in Mandalay. These stone inscriptions on 729 stone plaques have been recognized as the UNESCO's world heritage site in 2013 as well as the world's largest book on the World Guinness Record. The stone plaque chamber will be 12 feet long, 12 feet wide and 18 feet high and the stone plaque, 45 inches long, 75 inches high and 7.2 inches thick.

Upon completion, the stone plaques bearing Tri Pita-

ကုသိုလ်တော်ဘုရားရှိ မူလကျောက်စာချပ် နှင့် ယခုရေးထိုးမည့် ကျောက်စာချပ် ပုံစံ

မူလ ကျောက်စာချပ်

အလျား - ၄၅ လက်မ
အမြင့် - ၆၄ လက်မ(၅' ၄")
ထူ - ၆ လက်မ

ရေးထိုးမည့် ကျောက်စာချပ်

အလျား - ၄၅ လက်မ
အမြင့် - ၇၅ လက်မ(၆' ၃")
ထူ - ၇.၂ လက်မ

မဟာလောကမာရဇိန်ကုသိုလ်တော်ဘုရား ပဉ္စမသင်္ဂါယနာမူ ပိဋကတ်ကျောက်စာ

မာရပိဋကမူပဉ္စမသင်္ဂါယနာမူ ပိဋကတ်ကျောက်စာ

All ethnic national people have been residing in regions and states with a spirit of Myanmar in unison from the time of forefathers to date, says Vice-Senior General

THE Diamond Jubilee Union Day will be celebrated in accord with five Union Day objectives not to forget the residing of all ethnic national people in 14 regions and states sharing the future, said Vice-Chairman of the State Administration Council Deputy Prime Minister Vice-Senior General Soe Win at the first coordination meeting of the Diamond Jubilee Union Day Organizing Central Committee for 2022 at the SAC Chairman Office in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday afternoon.

In his address, the Vice-Senior General said the Diamond Jubilee Union Day will be organized on 12 February 2022 on a grand scale in accord with the COVID-19 restrictions.

In looking back the history, the Panglong Conference was held in Panglong of Shan State on 12 February 1947 with the unification of the hilly and plain areas of ethnic national people led by national leader General Aung San for regaining the independence and sovereignty of the country. On this occasion, the Panglong Agreement emerged from the conference.

The Diamond Jubilee Un-



State Administration Council Vice-Chairman Deputy Prime Minister Vice-Senior General Soe Win addresses the 1st coordination meeting of the Diamond Jubilee Union Day Organizing Central Committee for 2022 yesterday.

ion Day will be celebrated on a grand scale with the participation of all persons in service and all citizens for the new generation youths not to forget the historic national unity on 12 February.

At present, more than 50 million people are residing together in the nation. The Diamond Jubilee Union Day will be celebrated in accord with five Union Day objectives not to forget the residing of all ethnic national people in

14 regions and states sharing the future.

All ethnic national people have been residing in regions and states with the spirit of Myanmar in unison from the time of their forefathers to date. The Diamond Jubilee Union Day ceremony will help new generation youths remember the unity of ethnic nationals and forge the spirit of Myanmar.

The Vice-Senior General stressed that as the latest var-

iant Omicron COVID-19 virus recently emerged in the global countries, the Ministry of Health is making necessary preparations to fight against the virus. As some changes may happen within two months ahead of the ceremony, arrangements should be made for holding the ceremony with the full strength and the minimum strength.

The Chairman of the State Administration Council gave guidance to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee Union Day

on a grand scale throughout the nation. The Vice-Senior General invited suggestions for successfully holding the ceremony.

Officials of respective sub-committees reported on their work progress and the central committee member Union ministers gave supplementary reports.

The coordination meeting came to an end with the concluding remarks of the Vice-Senior General.—MNA

Ethnic affairs, public management, services committee holds meeting 16/2021



THE Ethnic Affairs, Public Management and Services Committee held the coordination meeting 16/2021 yesterday afternoon in Nay Pyi Taw. The meeting was attended by mem-

bers of the State Administration Council, General Mya Tun Oo, Saw Daniel and Dr Banya Aung Moe, Union minister U Chitt Naing and Union minister Dr Thet Thet Khine, the

deputy ministers, permanent secretaries, directors-general and officials.

Chairman of the Ethnic Affairs, Public Management and Services Committee Union

Minister for Defence General Mya Tun Oo addressed the meeting, and Secretary of the Committee Deputy minister U Zaw Aye Maung presented the decisions made in the meeting

15/2021 and the status of the implementation.

Deputy minister U Zaw Win, the permanent secretaries and directors-general explained the matters submitted by the Union ministers to the Committee, and the chairman of the committee approved matters to be implemented with the decision of the committee.

Afterwards, the Ministry of Planning and Finance discussed the progress of the implementation decided in the meeting 15/2021. The Union ministers, deputy ministers and officials discussed the matters related to ethnic affairs, public management and services, and the committee chairman added the discussion and concluded the meeting.—MNA

Terrorist groups destroy 409 telephone towers

EFFORTS are being made to set out a plan for the stability and development of the country and for cooperating with the ethnic peoples, officials said.

Terrorists are attempting to hamper the implementation of the future activities of the nation and to overthrow the government's administrative machinery.

From 1 February to 30 November 2021, a total of 409 telephone towers were destroyed by terrorist groups.

List of telephone towers destroyed by terrorists

30.11.2021

No.	States/Regions	From 1.2.2021 to 29.11.2021					30.11.2021					Total					Re-mark
		Telephone Towers					Telephone Towers					Telephone Towers					
		MPT	MYTEL	TELENOR	OOREDOO	Total	MPT	MYTEL	TELENOR	OOREDOO	Total	MPT	MYTEL	TELENOR	OOREDOO	Total	
1	Nay Pyi Taw		1			1						1				1	
2	Kachin	1	6	1		8	1			1	1	7	1			9	
3	Kayah		1			1						1				1	
4	Kayin	1	9	1		11					1	9	1			11	
5	Chin		5			5						5				5	
6	Sagaing	8	153	8	2	171					8	153	8	2	171		
7	Taninthayi		7			7						7				7	
8	Bago	2	14			16					2	14				16	
9	Magway	3	48	1	2	54					3	48	1	2	54		
10	Mandalay	2	54	2	8	66					2	54	2	8	66		
11	Mon		14	1		15						14	1		15		
12	Rakhine																
13	Yangon	1	19			20					1	19			20		
14	Shan	2	9			11					2	9			11		
15	Ayeyawady	1	19	2		22					1	19	2		22		
Total		21	356	16	12	408	1			1	21	360	16	12	409		

The public is urged to work together to protect the terrorists, and if they receive information about the terrorist activities, they should contact the nearest security forces and cooperate with them until the terrorists can no longer stand, officials stated. — MNA



Mytel tower in Nyaunglebin.



Mytel tower in ChaungU.



The Ooredoo and Telenor twin tower in Palae Township.



Taze Township.



Yesagyo Township.



Mytel tower in Kanma Township.



Two Mytel towers were destroyed in Kyantgin Township.

4 women shot to death, 2 women burnt alive by PDFs in Taze, Sagaing region

A group of about 20 armed PDF terrorists riding motorcycles came into the courtyard of U Tike Ngwe, the village administrator of Kyuntawkon village, to search and kill him on the afternoon of 30 November. As they didn't find him, they came into the house of Daw Tin Htwe, a cousin of U Tike Ngwe, who lived in the courtyard, and killed her and her two nieces and one granddaughter.

Afterwards, they came into the house of Daw Khin Hnin, a cousin of U Tike Ngwe, who lived in the same courtyard, and locked her two sisters inside and set fire to the houses,

and left. Due to the brutal killings and arson by the terrorists, two sisters were burnt to death, and the houses were destroyed by the fire.

Terrorists have been attacking administrators and security forces who are working to ensure the rule of law and security for the people. They have also been carrying out brutal killings of innocent civilians under the name of traitors, arson attacks and bombings. It is reported that security forces and local Tatmadaw forces are working together to take action against them under the law.—MNA



Deaths and damages in the aftermath of terrorist attacks in Taze Township.

Terrorists destroy schools using grenades, homemade bombs, mines

THE terrorists intentionally provided financial assistance to launch bomb attacks on public roads, streets and departmental offices of the administrative officials who participate in governmental operations.

At about 8:30 am on 1 December, the security forces inspected in front of BEHS(3) on 111st street between 60th and 61st streets in Myothit (4) Ward of Chanmyathazi Township of Mandalay Region according to the tip-off. Then, they seized a homemade bomb made of PVC pipe in a bag found beside 111st street in front of the school. When they deactivated the bomb, another bomb about 15ft in distance exploded. It was reported no one was injured.

Similarly, at about 8:30 pm on the same day, a homemade bomb made of PVC pipe was planted by the terrorists near



the basic education high school in Nyaunglun Village in Tatkon Township in Nay Pyi Taw Territory exploded.

At about 6:30 am on 2 December, the security forces

A handmade mine planted at No 3 Basic Education High School in Chanmyathazi Township.

also inspected the vicinity area of that school as they received information. They found a homemade bomb made of PVC there and no one was injured in the bomb blast.

Acting on to a tip-off, the security forces also examined near the No (2) BEHS in No (7) Ward of Shwepyitha Township in Yangon Region and also seized a homemade mine attached to Keypad in front of the fence of the school. Then, they also found pieces of the broken homemade bomb under a tree near the entrance to the school. The security forces investigate to arrest the suspects who committed such attacks. —MNA



A handmade mine found at the entry to the Basic Education High School in Nyaunglun village in Tatkon Township.

COVID-19 patients admitted at quarantine centres

MILITARY hospitals and clinics, transit centres and military training depots in various areas of the Military Commands are providing healthcare services for COVID-19 confirmed patients, officials said.

In addition, quarantine centres are also set

up in the relevant townships in collaboration with responsible persons, officials from the Ministry of Health and other departments and charity groups.

As of 7 pm yesterday, a total of 24 people – 11 males and 13 females — were under special sur-

veillance at the Nay Pyi Taw Transit Centre.

Local medical teams and officials at the respective Military Commands are assisting with the accommodation, health and medical care of the patients and laboratory-confirmed patients, officials added.—MNA

Acknowledge health personnel, volunteers in battling COVID-19

GLOBAL people accept the COVID-19 pandemic is the most dreadful disease throughout the world. A large number of global people lost life and faced weak health conditions under threats of the pandemic.

During the period from 2019 December to date across the world, many confirm patients of COVID-19 unexpectedly lost their lives, leaving difficulties and sufferings to their families and societies. In fact, the pandemic shook the world with its Saturn power.

Despite dreadful threats, health personnel including civilian and military medical doctors, nurses and various levels of

staff in addition to volunteer youths actively participated in health care services for the patients, setting aside their fear. Participation of voluntary measures performed by those brave personnel should be put on record. Their acts would be unforgettable for the health sector and the Myanmar society.

Naturally, severe pandemics may break out in global countries. No matter how severe the pandemics are, people from those countries would fight against the pandemics as much as possible. Among them, the health personnel and volunteers can be seen in the frontline of battling the disease with the sacrifice of their lives in the prevention, control and treatment activities of COVID-19 in Myanmar.

While providing health care services to the confirmed patients at COVID centres, hospitals and clinics, some health personnel and volunteer youths unexpectedly lost their lives and suffered from the impacts of COVID-19. Some of them faced family problems. They sacrificed their lives for their duties with a deep concept to save the patients as much as they can. Whatever it may be, they deeply adhered to the ethic of health personnel.

Recently, a highly transmissible "variant of concern" called "Omicron" was found a new coronavirus strain in South Africa, according to the remarks of the World Health Organization. Such a new strain will be more severe than the existing ones. Hence, the global people may face a more dreadful pandemic in the coming months due to its gradual expansion of infected areas.

Naturally, severe pandemics may break out in global countries. No matter how severe the pandemics are, people from those countries would fight against the pandemics as much as possible. Among them, the health personnel and volunteers can be seen in the frontline of battling the disease with the sacrifice of their lives in the prevention, control and treatment activities of COVID-19 in Myanmar.

Really, their minds bear the fear of losing their life and limb. But, they never focus on self-interests on their duties and never be reluctant to give the health care services for the patients whenever they face criticism and danger of the pandemics. In fact, they are honourable. All the Myanmar people should acknowledge their endeavours and take pride of their sacrifices.

WHO warns of 'toxic mix' as EU chief mulls mandatory Covid jabs

The WHO has issued stern warnings on the dangers of vaccination apathy and the European Union put mandatory jabs on the table as the United States registered its first case of the fast-spreading Omicron strain of the coronavirus.

THE new variant, first reported to the World Health Organization by South Africa a week ago, has quickly popped up across continents, darkening economic forecasts and deepening fears of another difficult winter in the northern hemisphere.

"Globally, we have a toxic mix of low vaccine coverage, and very low testing — a recipe for breeding and amplifying variants," WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said Wednesday, reminding the world that the Delta variant "accounts for almost all cases".

"We need to use the tools we already have to prevent transmission and save lives from Delta. And if we do that, we will also prevent transmission and save lives from Omicron."

The WHO says it could take several weeks to understand whether or not Omicron is more transmissible, and whether it results in more severe disease — as well as how effective current treatments and vaccines are against it.

Its detection and spread, however, have highlighted that the now nearly two-year global fight against Covid-19 is far from over.

In Brussels, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said it was "understanda-

ble and appropriate" to discuss how to "encourage and potentially think about mandatory vaccination" in the bloc — although only individual member states can impose such mandates.

Austria has already said it will make Covid jabs compulsory next February, Germany is considering a similar approach, and Greece said Tuesday it would mandate vaccines for over-60s.

First US case

The United States, officially the world's hardest-hit country from Covid-19, announced it had detected its first Omicron case: a fully vaccinated traveller from South Africa who is recovering from mild symptoms.

Top American infectious diseases specialist Anthony Fauci stressed that fully vaccinated adults should seek a booster when eligible to give themselves the best possible protection.

"Our experience with variants such as the Delta variant is that even though the vaccine isn't specifically targeted to the Delta variant, when you get a high enough level of an immune response, you get spillover protection," he said.

Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates also recorded their first cases of Omicron, making the Gulf the latest region to be affected.

The European Centre for

Disease Prevention and Control meanwhile recommended that children aged five to 11 who are at risk of severe Covid should be considered a "priority group" for vaccination.

UN aid warning

The United Nations said Thursday that the pandemic has pushed 20 million more people into poverty around the globe, meaning the need for humanitarian aid was skyrocketing.

UN humanitarian agency OCHA estimated that 274 million people would need emergency assistance next year, up 17 percent on 2021, as economies suffer with Covid restrictions.

The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development warned Omicron threatens the world's recovery and lowered its growth estimate for 2021 from 5.7 per cent to 5.6 per cent.

Omicron has prompted governments around the globe to reimpose travel restrictions, mostly targeting southern Africa.

A day after suspending new flight bookings into the country, Japan on Thursday eased the blanket move to help citizens return.

But there is growing criticism of such bans.

On Wednesday, UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres called them "deeply unfair and punitive" as well as "ineffective".



Fiji ended 615 days of international isolation on Wednesday and reopened to tourists. Traditional dancers in grass skirts welcomed waving holidaymakers as Fiji opened its borders to international travellers Wednesday for the first time since the Covid-19 pandemic swept the globe and devastated its tourism-reliant economy. PHOTO: AFP

Rising infection rates have already seen some European governments reintroduce mandatory mask-wearing, social-distancing measures, curfews or lockdowns in a desperate attempt to limit hospitalisations, leaving businesses fearing another grim Christmas. Portugal, which has Europe's highest vaccination rate, reintroduced mask mandates in indoor settings, and aims to administer a third Covid jab to almost one-fifth of its population by the end of the year.

Eligible for booster shot

From Wednesday, every adult in Italy became eligible for a Covid booster shot, previously only open to those aged over 40.

Despite new restrictions recently introduced in Denmark, the country on Wednesday registered a record number of new Covid cases with 5,120 infections in the last 24 hours.

Even as governments acted unilaterally in imposing travel restrictions, WHO member states came together in Geneva to work

on an international accord on handling the next pandemic.

An intergovernmental negotiating body will be established to reach an agreement on responding to future pandemics with a first meeting due before March 1, 2022. While the European summer of fleeting Covid freedoms may be over, in the southern hemisphere, Pacific nation Fiji ended 615 days of international isolation on Wednesday and reopened to tourists.

SOURCE: AFP

Australia creates its first mRNA COVID vaccine candidate

RESEARCH institutes and pharmaceutical company in Australia's state of Victoria have created a new mRNA COVID vaccine candidate, with clinical trials to begin early next year.

The vaccine candidate, developed by Monash University researchers, pharmaceutical manufacturer IDT Australia and the Peter Doherty Institute for Infection and Immunity, is expected to provide protection against future COVID variants.

Professor Colin Pouton from Monash University, who led the team that developed the vaccine, said on Tuesday that this vaccine has the ability to



Harry Al-Wassiti (L) and Colin Pouton are working on a COVID-19 vaccine at Monash University. PHOTO: PAUL JEFFERS / SMH.COM.AU/AFP

rapidly adjust its composition in response to emerging virus mutations, which is particularly important as new strains con-

tinue to emerge.

Compared with the existing vaccines, the new candidate focuses on a small part of the spike protein, known as the receptor-binding domain (RBD), which mediates the virus's ability to attach and enter the cell.

Through targeting the RBD region, the vaccine candidates focus the immune system on blocking virus attachment and infection.

A more focused vaccine

Pouton said this approach makes it a more focused vaccine with the important ability to rapidly adjust its composition in response to emerging mutations, including the new

variant Omicron — if the virus mutates, a new vaccine can be tested within a few weeks.

"The new variant Omicron has an unprecedented number of mutations in its receptor-binding domain. How concerned we should be about this variant remains to be seen, but our RBD mRNA vaccine programme is perfectly suited to producing a specific vaccine to protect against this new variant," he said.

Associate Professor Archa Fox, an mRNA researcher at the University of Western Australia and president of the RNA Network of Australia, said the vaccine candidate is a signifi-

cant step forward towards Australia's first home-grown mRNA vaccine, as the country cannot always rely on the global supply.

"Because of the high cost of buying vaccines from overseas, and the potential to be at the back of the queue for future pandemics, we urgently need to build expertise, capacity and capability in Australia to make mRNA vaccines and RNA therapeutics more broadly," said Fox.

About 450 doses of the vaccine candidate have been manufactured, enabling 150 people to take part in Phase 1 clinical trials, with results expected in later 2022.

SOURCE: AFP

Myanmar Gazette

Appointment of Head of Service Organization

The State Administration Council has appointed Dr Chit Sein, Deputy Permanent Secretary of the Minister's Office of the Ministry of Education, as Rector of the Yangon Distance Education University of the Department of Higher Education on probation from the date he assumes charge of his duties.

U Lwin Oo presents Credentials to President of Russia

U Lwin Oo, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the Russian Federation, presented his Credentials to Mr Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin, President of the Russian Federation, on 1 December 2021 in Moscow. —MNA

Weather icons and Myanmar Daily Weather Report (Issued at 7:00 pm Thursday 2 December 2021)

BAY INFERENCE: According to the observations at (17:30) hrs M.S.T today, the lowpressure area over the Southeast Bay of Bengal still persists. It is forecast continuously move to West-Northwestwards and further intensify into a depression over Southeast Bay and adjoining East Central Bay of Bengal during next (6) hours and into a cyclonic storm over Central Bay of Bengal around (3.12.2021). Weather is a few cloud over the North Bay and partly cloudy to cloudy over the Andaman Sea and elsewhere over the Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL AFTERNOON OF THE 3 December, 2021: Rain or thundershowers are likely to be isolated in Yangon, Ayeyawady, Taninthayi Regions and Rakhine State. Degree of certainty is (60%). Weather will be partly cloudy in Sagaing, Mandalay, Bago Regions and Kachin, Shan, Chin, Kayin, Mon States and generally fair in the remaining Regions and States.

STATE OF THE SEA: Squalls with moderate to rough seas are likely at times Deltaic, Gulf of Mottama, off and along Mon-Taninthayi Coasts. Surface wind speed in squalls may reach (35) m.p.h. Sea will be moderate elsewhere in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about (7-9) feet in Deltaic, Gulf of Mottama, off and along Mon-Taninthayi Coasts and about (4-7) feet off and along Rakhine Coast.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Likelihood of isolated rain or thundershowers in Bago, Yangon, Ayeyawady Regions and Rakhine State.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 3 December, 2021: Generally fair weather.

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 3 December, 2021: Partly cloudy.

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 3 December, 2021: Generally fair weather.

The Global New Light of Myanmar

www.gnlm.com.mm

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Nationwide vaccination campaign ongoing as planned



An over 12-year-old schoolgirl gets injected for Covid vaccine in Pantanaw, Ayeyawady Region.

THE Tatmadaw medics, health officials, nurses and health workers of public hospitals including volunteers conduct vaccination programmes in regions and states for monks, nuns, people aged over 40, inmates, people with disabilities, ethnic armed groups, patients with chronic disease, people at IDP camps and students aged over 12.

About 1,110 people in Kyaukme and Hsipaw townships of Shan State (North) were vaccinated against COVID-19 yesterday while 11,409 people in seven townships of Shan State (East), 12,196 monks and people in 15 townships of Mon and Kayin states, 10,684 people in five townships of Yangon Region, 24,188 people in 26 townships of Ayeyawady Region, 7,760 people

in eight townships of Rakhine State, 485 people in Kalay and Taze townships of Sagaing Region, 8,200 people in seven districts of Mandalay Region and 785 people in Toungoo Township of Bago Region.

Similarly, 2,277 students in Tamway and North Okkalapa townships of Yangon Region received their vaccines while 4,495 students in 26 townships of Ayeyawady Region, 2,292 students in Maungtau Township of Rakhine State and Paletwa Township of Chin State and 950 students in Toungoo and Htantabin townships of Bago Region.

The respective military command commanders and officials inspected the vaccination processes and instructed necessary things. —MNA

Terrorists died in bomb blasts while attempting to plant bombs

THE terrorists died in mine blasts when they planted mines on a concrete bridge in the YeU-Taze road in Taze

Township of Sagaing Region and Mingala bridge on the Htonebo-PyinOoLwin road in Amarapura Township of Man-

dalay Region.

On 1 December, according to the tip-off that a terrorist died during a mine incident near Kyweswe Village in Taze Township, the security forces inspected that place. Then, they found a dead body of the terrorist with injuries on his head who died while planting a mine on the concrete bridge.

Similarly, on 2 December, an explosion took place on Mingala bridge near Tamoke Soe Village on the Htonebo-PyinOoLwin road in Amarapura Township of Mandalay Region.

On arrival at the incident place, security forces found the dead body of the terrorist who died in an accident, while planting the homemade mine on that bridge. About 12 feet of the bridge railing was destroyed due to the mine blast.

The bodies of terrorists were taken to Taze Township public hospital. —MNA



A terrorist dies while planting a mine at the Mingala Bridge on the Htonebo-PyiOoLwin Road in Amarapura Township.

A terrorist dies nearby a concrete bridge on the YeU-Taze Road in Taze Township.

Narcotic drugs worth K300 million seized in PyinOoLwin



MYANMAR Police Force seized narcotic drugs worth over K300 million in PyinOoLwin, Mandalay Region.

A combined team comprising members of security forces searched a vehicle from Muse to Mandalay driven by Win Naing, 49, at the access of bypass road in PyinOoLwin Township, Mandalay Region on 1 December, and seized 2.31 kilogrammes of heroin and over 160,000 stimulant

tablets worth K300 millions. After the investigating, the narcotic drugs were transported from Shan State (North) to Myitkyina of Kachin State.

Police have filed charges against suspects under the narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances law and anti-narcotic drug laws. Police Force has investigated the case to arrest suspects in connection with the case, Myanmar Police Force said. — MNA

Seized drugs and a vehicle along with the arrestee.

Rattan handicrafts generate income in Naga Self-Administered Zone

TRADITIONAL woven rattan creel, baskets and plates are allowing residents in the Naga Self-Administered Zone, Sagaing Region to earn extra income after they harvested the crops.

Those rattan and bamboo handicrafts are widely used in the Naga Self-Administered Zone.

It takes about four hours to make a woven creel. The handicrafts are made of bam-

boo and rattan. The price of a rattan creel is approximately K10,000.

Those rattan creels and wicker baskets are utilized to carry the woods, water and other goods. Some are also used as decoration. The prices may vary depending on the size and quality. This traditional woven rattan creels and baskets generate a healthy income for the local resides. — Han Tun/GNLM



It takes about four hours to make a woven creel. The handicrafts are made of bamboo and rattan. The price of a rattan creel is approximately K10,000.

Agricultural export tops \$485 mln as of 19 Nov



In the exports sector, the agriculture industry performed the best, accounting for 37 per cent of overall exports. The chief items of export in the agricultural sector are rice and broken rice, pulses and beans and maize. Fruits and vegetables, sesame, dried tea leaves, sugar, and other agro products are also shipped to other countries.

THE value of agricultural exports slid to US\$485 million as of 19 November in the current mini-budget period (October 2021-March 2022), as per the statistic of the Ministry of Commerce.

The agro exports stood at \$508.44 million in the corresponding period of the 2020-2021FY. The figures reflect a small decrease of \$23 million as the main trade partner China shut down all the borders in the wake of COVID-19 negative consequences, according to the trade figures released by the Ministry of Commerce.

Starting 26 September, Kyin-sankyawt border posts between Myanmar and China has reopened on a trial run.

Traders cannot expect trade facilitation according to the changes in China's policy during the COVID-19 pandemic. If the restrictions are eased and negotiation goes smooth, the trade will go back to normality,

traders said.

During the mini-budget period, the coronavirus pandemic impacted the foreign demand for agricultural products, livestock, mineral and finished industrial goods. On the contrary, the exports of the fishery, forest products and other goods rose slightly.

In the exports sector, the agriculture industry performed the best, accounting for 37 per cent of overall exports. The chief items of export in the agricultural sector are rice and broken rice, pulses and beans and maize. Fruits and vegetables, sesame, dried tea leaves, sugar, and other agro products are also shipped to other countries.

Myanmar agro-products are primarily exported to China, Singapore, Malaysia, the Philippines, Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, and Sri Lanka. Sometimes, the export market remains uncertain due to unsteady global demand.

The country requires specific export plans for each agro-product, as they are currently exported to external markets based upon supply and demand. The G-to-G pact also ensures a strong market for the farmers.

Contract farming systems, involvement of regional and state agriculture departments, exporters, traders, and some grower groups, are required to meet production targets, the Agriculture Department stated.

The Commerce Ministry is endeavouring to help farmers deal with challenges such as high input costs, procurement of pedigree seeds, high cultivation costs, and erratic weather conditions.

The agricultural exports jumped to US\$4.6 billion in the last financial year 2020-2021, despite the downward trend in other export groups. — KK/GNLM

Ngapali beach seen with visitors after reopening for one month

NGAPALI beach, which was closed for nearly two years during the COVID-19 period, is now crowded with travellers after reopening for over one month, it is learnt.

In order to prevent the spreading of COVID-19, the government authorities banned tour groups from visiting popular beaches after Myanmar reported several COVID-19 cases. Nevertheless, the Ngapali beach was reopened in the last Thingyan festival period.

"We have been vending for eight years at Ngapali beach. We are selling well before the outbreak of COVID-19. Then, our business has been stopped for over one year due to COVID-19. Now, the beach is opened again and crowded with the visitors," said a local vendor.

Travellers can visit Ngapali beach from Yangon-Ngathaingyoung-Gwa route or from

Sittway- MraukU-Minbya-An-Taungup-Thandwe route.

Now, the hotels, which were occupied only by foreign travellers, are offering a discount price for domestic travellers. There are also some hostels in Ngapali beach for the family to stay conveniences.

Ngapali beach is a popular tourist destination and it is over 4 miles away from Thandwe town. The beach is one of the most attractive places for local people and foreign travellers.

The name "Ngapali" was given to a little village in Thandwe District in 1826, after the First Anglo-Myanmar War, by Italians who reached there. According to them, the beach is so similar to a beach in Napoli, a city in Italy and the name became "Ngapali" on the Rakhine people's tongue. — Aye Maung/GNLM

Daily newspapers available online

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

News and Periodicals Enterprise

S. Korea's export hits record high in November



South Korea's export hit a new record high last month thanks to the continued recovery in global demand from the COVID-19 pandemic, a government report showed on Wednesday. **PHOTO: AFP**

SOUTH Korea's export hit a new record high last month thanks to the continued recovery in global demand from the COVID-19 pandemic, a government report showed on Wednesday. Export, which accounts for about half of the export-driven economy, reached 60.44 billion U.S. dollars in November, up 32.1 per cent from a year earlier, according to the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy. Import surged 43.6 per cent to 57.35 billion dollars last

month, sending the trade surplus to 3.09 billion dollars.

The trade balance stayed in black for 19 months in a row. The outbound shipment surpassed the previous high of 55.92 billion dollars tallied in September this year, topping 60 billion dollars for the first time in the country's history.

The export continued to grow for 13 straight months since November last year, keeping a double-digit increase for the ninth consecutive month.

The daily average export advanced 26.6 per cent over the year to 2.52 billion dollars in November. Among the country's 15 major export items, the shipment of 13 products grew last month amid the global demand recovery from the pandemic.

Semiconductor export jumped 40.1 per cent over the year to 12.04 billion dollars in November, exceeding 10 billion dollars for the seventh straight month. —Xinhua ■

Vietnam's spectacular terraced ricefields wait for tourists

AS the morning sun finds its way through the mist over Vietnam's terraced rice fields, local farmers lead buffalo into the paddies and pass another day without tourists in their hilly homeland.

Located 300 km (around 190 miles) northwest of Hanoi, Mu Cang Chai district in northern Yen Bai province had become a hit with foreign and local tourists alike before the coronavirus pandemic.

The spectacular terraces — which lie up to 1,000 metres above sea level — mostly belong to the Hmong, a minority group who make up most of the area's population.

The Hmong women once rented their colourful traditional costumes to visitors, while men earned up to \$30 a day driving them up tiny muddy paths through the hills.

The paddy fields are particularly beautiful in September and October, when the crops turn a shiny yellow.

"We used to get huge numbers of tourists," farmer Lo Thi Loan told AFP.

"But this year all the rice fields are empty... due to virus movement restrictions."

"It's our only desire now that the virus is gone and we can resume our normal life," she added.—AFP ■



The terraces mostly belong to the Hmong, a minority group who make up most of the area's population. **PHOTO: TRAVELMEDIUM/AFP**

NEWS IN BRIEF

Top oil producers may freeze output amid Omicron concerns

MAJOR oil producers are due to meet Thursday to decide on output levels from January onwards, which could be frozen as the new Covid variant Omicron sparks turmoil.

The OPEC+ alliance led by Saudi Arabia and Russia has so far resisted US-led pressure to significantly boost output to rein in surging energy prices. The emergence of the new variant has further complicated the equation, leading to countries reinstating travel bans and mulling further restrictions that could tighten demand and hurt oil prices. The 13 members of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and their 10 allies are due to meet from 1300 GMT via videoconference after technical discussions.—AFP ■

Japan's biggest labor body calls for 4% pay hike in wage talks

JAPAN'S biggest labor organization on Thursday decided to call for a 4 per cent pay hike in annual wage negotiations early next year to help fairly redistribute wealth, a goal also sought by the country's prime minister. Tepid wage growth has been partly blamed for weak domestic demand in Japan and Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida is calling for a pay hike of over 3 per cent next year at companies seeing their earnings recover to pre-pandemic levels as he aims to deliver on his promise of achieving economic growth and wealth distribution.

Members of the Japanese Trade Union Confederation known as Rengo reached an agreement at their meeting in Chiba Prefecture near Tokyo to demand a pay-scale increase of around 2 per cent and an annual pay rise of 2 per cent during upcoming "shunto" negotiations.—Kyodo ■

OECD cuts 2021 global growth outlook due to supply issues, inflation

THE Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development revised downward Wednesday its projection for this year's global economic growth, citing supply chain disruptions and inflation as well as the prolonged impact of the coronavirus pandemic.

The world's gross domestic product will grow a real 5.6 per cent in 2021, down 0.1 point from an earlier prediction in September, the OECD forecast in its latest economic outlook report, saying, "Health, supply constraints, inflation and potential policy missteps are all key concerns."

"Shortages of semiconductors and other intermediate goods, delays in supplier delivery times and bottlenecks in shipping have hit production in many industries," the quarterly report by the Paris-based club of 38 mostly wealthy nations said, adding that the auto industry is one of the severely affected



France was among the most affected European countries from the COVID crisis, but robust policy support and high vaccination rates are fuelling a strong economic recovery. Some 450,000 passengers travel daily through Saint Lazare, the second-busiest rail station in France. **PHOTO: AFP**

sectors.

Due to the supply constraints along with the spread of the Delta variant of the coronavirus, output in the July-September period was "particularly weak in a number of Asia-Pacific economies, including Japan and Indonesia," according to the OECD.

The report also said that "stronger and longer-lasting inflation pressures" have been seen across the world "at an unusually early stage" of its recovery phase of the economic cycle, with sharp rises in food and energy costs having large impacts on low-income households.—Kyodo ■

Increase in imported goods values drives New Zealand's trade deficit



Photo taken on Dec. 18, 2020 shows a container port in Auckland, New Zealand. **PHOTO: XINHUA/GUO LEI**

NEW Zealand recorded a trade deficit of 6.3 billion NZ dollars (4.3 billion U.S. dollars) in the September 2021 quarter, following a surplus of 548 million NZ dollars (373.8 million U.S. dollars) in the June 2021 quarter, the statistics department Stats NZ said on Thursday.

Trade goods values for exports fell 2.7 billion NZ dollars (1.84 billion

U.S. dollars) to a total of 14 billion NZ dollars (9.55 billion U.S. dollars) in the September 2021 quarter, while goods values for imports rose 3.2 billion NZ dollars (2.18 billion U.S. dollars) to a record total of 19 billion NZ dollars (12.97 billion U.S. dollars), Stats NZ said.

In the same period, prices increased for both import and export goods,

leading to a 0.7 per cent quarterly increase in terms of trade — the ratio between export prices and import prices, it said.

The rise in values for imported goods was led by increases for mechanical machinery and equipment, electrical machinery and equipment, and petroleum and products, Stats NZ said.—Xinhua

Amazon invests in 274 renewable energy projects globally

AMAZON on Wednesday announced that it has 274 renewable energy projects globally after adding 18 new utility-scale wind and solar energy projects across the United States and Europe.

Amazon is on a path to power 100 per cent of its business operations with renewable energy by 2025,

five years earlier than its original 2030 commitment, the company said.

These new utility-scale wind and solar projects bring Amazon's total committed renewable electricity production capacity to more than 12 gigawatts and 33,700 gigawatt hours when the projects become fully operational, or elec-

tricity output equivalent to powering more than 3 million U.S. homes for a year.

The amount of clean energy produced by these projects will avoid the equivalent of the annual emissions of nearly 3 million cars in the United States each year, or about 13.7 million metric tons, according to Amazon.—AFP

Hong Kong quarantine pushes Cathay pilots to 'breaking point'

CATHAY Pacific has been hit by a wave of pilot resignations in recent weeks as resentment over Hong Kong's strict quarantine regime boils over and crew scramble for emerging opportunities overseas.

The departures come as Hong Kong ties itself to Beijing's closed-border zero-Covid strategy — a move that has kept the city coronavirus-free but internationally isolated.

Hong Kong's leaders say normalising travel with China must come be-

fore the rest of the world, a strategy that has caused growing alarm within multinationals in a finance hub that dubs itself "Asia's World City".

AFP interviewed four Cathay pilots who requested anonymity. Each said they knew more than a dozen colleagues who had resigned in the last few weeks.

More were applying for jobs at rivals in places that have shifted to a strategy of learning to live with the virus, they added.

"Things are horrible, resignations are through the roof," one pilot, who has more than 20 years' flying experience and has applied to two rival airlines, told AFP.

"There are a lot of guys at their breaking point. It's actually amazing that we haven't had an accident yet."

For much of the pandemic Hong Kong has restricted inbound travel with as much as three weeks mandatory quarantine.—AFP



Hong Kong has the world's busiest cargo airport. **PHOTO: AFP**

CM G-7 AGRI MYANMAR COMPANY LIMITED

Notice for Final General Meeting of Members Voluntary Winding Up

According to the section 357 of Myanmar Companies Law, it is required to secure consents of members of the Company "CM G-7 AGRI MYANMAR COMPANY LIMITED" and therefore all the members are invited to attend the final general meeting which will be convened at the place and time mentioned below.

Date: 10.12.2021

Time: (9:00) am

Place: No.1-11, Padonmar Stadium (East Wing), Sanchaung Township, Yangon, Myanmar.

The final report of the liquidator will be submitted and explained to the members in the meeting.

U Win Swe

Liquidator (CM G-7 Agri Myanmar Company Limited), Advocate (No.11054)
No. 59, U Ba Han Street, Thamine, Mayankon Township, Yangon.
Tel: (959) 451360389

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V NIMTOFTE MAERSK VOY.NO. (145W)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V NIMTOFTE MAERSK VOY.NO. (145W)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **3-12-2021** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MITT/MIP** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S SEALAND MAERSK ASIA PTE LTD

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V KOTA HALUS VOY.NO. (KHLU0191N)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V KOTA HALUS VOY.NO. (KHLU0191N)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **3-12-2021** 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 ADVNACE CONTAINER LINES

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V GREEN CLARITY VOY.NO. (0249-039N)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V GREEN CLARITY VOY.NO. (0249-039N)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **3-12-2021** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **HPT** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S EVERGREEN MARINE (S'PORE) PTE., LTD.

Pope Francis heads to migrant frontline Cyprus

POPE Francis arrives on the divided island of Cyprus Thursday as part of a landmark trip to push two of his priorities: the plight of migrants and inter-confessional dialogue.

The pontiff, 84, will land at Larnaca airport on the Mediterranean island for a two-day visit before continuing to Greece, another front in Europe's refugee crisis. Cypriot authorities have described his trip as "historic".

Francis will be the second Catholic pontiff to set foot on Cyprus, which has a Greek Orthodox majority. Pope Benedict XVI visited in 2010.

Migration will be a key feature of his visit to the country, which complains of bearing a disproportionate burden of the

flow of people trying to reach the European Union. The trip will culminate in a mass at an open-air football stadium in the capital Nicosia, eagerly awaited by the estimated 25,000 Catholics in a country of about one million people. The Catholic minority includes thousands of Maronites whose ancestors arrived from Syria and Lebanon, but most are overseas workers from the Philippines and South Asia, along with African migrants.

More than 500 Cypriot police will be on duty to secure the visit.

On Friday afternoon Francis will hold an ecumenical prayer with migrants at a church which serves worshippers from dozens of nations near the "Green Line" that splits the city.—AFP ■



Pope Francis salutes nuns at the end of his general audience at the Vatican's Paul VI Hall on 1 December 2021, ahead of his departure for Cyprus. PHOTO: AFP

Ukraine leader calls for talks with Russia amid invasion fears



Russian forces conduct military exercises near Ukraine in April 2021. PHOTO: VADIM SAVITSKY RUSSIAN DEFENCE MINISTRY/AFP/FILE

UKRAINIAN President Volodymyr Zelensky on Wednesday called for direct talks with Moscow as tensions mounted over

claims that Russia is laying the groundwork for an invasion.

Zelensky's call came as NATO looks to counter what

it says is a build-up of Russian troops on the border with Ukraine, with US diplomatic chief Antony Blinken set to meet his Russian counterpart Sergei Lavrov in Stockholm on Thursday.

"We must tell the truth that we will not be able to end the war without direct talks with Russia," Zelensky said during an annual address to lawmakers in Kiev.

"Let's be honest, the war in Donbass has been going on for eight years," Zelensky said, referring to eastern Ukraine.

"We must talk, knowing that we have a strong and powerful army," Zelensky added, saying he was "not afraid" to speak directly with Russian President Vladimir Putin.—AFP ■

Libya on bumpy road to uncertain elections

LIBYA is less than a month from elections seen as crucial to ending its long-running civil war, but deep political divisions could provoke a delay or even fresh violence.

In theory, the North African country is preparing to draw a line under a decade of conflict since the 2011 overthrow of long-time dictator Moamer Kadhafi in a NATO-backed uprising.

Western officials have talked up a UN-led peace process and insist on "inclusive" and "credible" elections starting on December 24, despite serious disputes over how they should be held. Libya's electoral commission has said it



Military checkpoints remain a common sight in Libya where persistent clashes between rival militias have raised fears of violence as the country gears up for crux elections. PHOTO: AFP/FILE

is ready to organise the process and has published an initial list of candidates and handed out voting cards. The United Nations has

said that nine international organisations have sought accreditations to observe the conduct of the vote.—AFP ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

French parliament debates new law to jail school bullies

FRANCE'S parliament on Wednesday voted to make bullying at school punishable by up to three years in jail, as part of efforts to combat the scourge.

The proposals, which had the support of Education Minister Jean-Michel Blanquer and were backed by President Emmanuel Macron's ruling coalition and the right-wing Republicans party, sailed through the lower house National Assembly by 69 votes.

Five deputies on the left, sceptical of the need to create a specific offence to tackle the problem, abstained.

The draft measure will now go to the upper house Senate and is expected to be definitively adopted in February.

Blanquer welcomed the "signal" sent.

"We will never accept the lives of our children being shattered," he said during the parliamentary debate, calling the draft law "a way of enforcing the values of the republic."

As well as increasing resources for prevention and education, the legislation would create a new crime of "school bullying" which would carry a maximum three-year jail term and a fine of up to 45,000 euros, depending on the severity of the case and the age of the culprit.

In cases that involved the victim committing suicide, or attempting to, the punishment could be up to 10 years in prison. — AFP ■

Ruling party concedes, leftist poised to become Honduras's first woman president

LEFTIST opposition leader Xiomara Castro was poised Wednesday to become Honduras's first woman president, with her main rival of the ruling conservative party conceding defeat even before the final vote count.

With just over 53 per cent of ballots processed three days after the presidential vote, former first lady Castro enjoyed a resounding lead of 53.26 per cent to 34.18 per cent for Nasry Asfura of the ruling National Party (PN), her closest challenger.

While Hondurans awaited the official outcome, Asfura said late Tuesday he had met the candidate of the leftist LIBRE party and her family to congratulate her on her victory.

"I wish that God may enlighten and guide her so that her administration does the best" for Honduras, Asfura said in a video released by the PN.

The closely watched poll came four years after presidential elections marred by fraud claims and violence, and the PN was quick to highlight "the climate of peace and tranquility in the country," even though the ruling party was ousted from power.—AFP ■

Cambodia's Hun Sen backs son to take over leadership

CAMBODIA'S strongman Prime Minister Hun Sen, who has led the country for more than three decades, on Thursday backed his eldest son to take over the top job, paving the way for a political dynasty.

Speculation has long simmered that the 69-year-old Hun Sen was grooming Hun Manet – a four-star general educated in Britain and the United States – to lead the kingdom.

“Hun Manet is one of the candidates for prime minister and receives support from his father,” Hun Sen told a public ceremony in the coastal city of Sihanoukville.

He added his 44-year-old son, a Royal Cambodian Armed Forces deputy commander-in-chief and commander of the infantry, would have to face an election. Cambodia is expected to go to the polls in 2023.

At the last election in 2018, Hun Sen's party won every seat in parliament after the Supreme Court dissolved the main opposition, the Cambodia National Rescue Party a year before.

Cambodian authorities have arrested scores of former opposition members and rights campaigners in recent years.

Critics say Hun Sen has wound back democratic freedoms and used the courts to stifle opposition and activists.



Cambodia PM Hun Sen (L) has backed his eldest son Hun Manet (R) to take over the top job in the country. PHOTO: AFP/FILE

doms and used the courts to stifle opposition and activists.

Hun Sen added that his son's

elevation to the top job could still be a decade away, keeping mum on his retirement plans.—AFP ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

US does “not support” UN treaty banning nuclear weapons: Blinken

THE U.S. government on Wednesday maintained its opposition against a UN treaty banning nuclear weapons, saying such outright prohibitions will not help achieve disarmament goals.

“We do not support the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons,” Secretary of State Antony Blinken told a press conference in Latvia. “Seeking to ban nuclear weapons through a treaty that does not include any of the countries that actually possess nuclear weapons is not likely to produce any results.”

The top US diplomat's remarks came as he was asked about a plan by Germany's incoming coalition government to join the first meeting of the treaty's signatories in March as an observer, a shift in stance by a key NATO member hosting US nuclear weapons on its territory.

Germany's move is seen as putting pressure on Japan to do the same. Although Japan, as the only country in the world to have suffered the devastation of atomic bombings, aspires to a world free of nuclear arms, it relies on US atomic weapons for protection.—Kyodo ■

EU members agree more sanctions against Belarus targets

EU diplomats agreed Wednesday to add 28 individuals and bodies to its Belarus sanctions list in response to the alleged channelling of migrants to the bloc's borders.

Brussels accuses strongman Alexander Lukashenko's regime of mounting a “hybrid attack” against EU soil by luring thousands of Middle Eastern migrants to the Polish and Lithuanian borders.

Member states had already decided to slap sanctions on several Belarus targets, and on Wednesday senior envoys approved a list drawn up by the European Commission, diplomats said.

According to one of the officials, the new targets include 17 officials and 11 companies or official bodies. EU ministers are expected to formally ratify the decision on Thursday.

Also on Wednesday, the United States said it too would announce new sanctions against Belarus.—AFP ■

N. Korea's ruling party to convene key gathering later December



North Korean leader Kim Jong Un (C) attends a meeting of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea in Pyongyang on 1 Dec 2021. PHOTO: KYODO

NORTH Korea's ruling party will convene a plenary meeting of the Central Committee later this month to review its policies

for 2021, state-run media reported Thursday, as the country's economy remains stagnant amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

The decision was made at a meeting of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea on Wednesday that leader Kim Jong Un attended, the official Korean Central News Agency said.

Kim, who will mark 10 years in power on Dec. 30, was quoted by KCNA as saying at the gathering that “positive changes” were achieved in overall state affairs including politics, economy, culture and national defense.

Because “next year will be an important one as we should wage a giant struggle as much as we did this year,” the party

should “work out plans for the new year well to be dynamic, onward, scientific and detailed,” Kim added.

At the party's first congress in nearly five years -- held for eight days through Jan. 12 -- a new five-year national economic development strategy was mapped out.

North Korea has acknowledged facing a severe food crisis due in part to natural disasters and sluggish trade activities with China, its closest and most influential ally in economic terms, in the aftermath of the emergence of the novel coronavirus.—Kyodo ■

Canadian envoys fault Ottawa for ‘Havana Syndrome’ neglect

AFTER job postings to Cuba, they complained of violent headaches, visual troubles and nausea — nearly 20 Canadian diplomats claim their government failed them and others they say are falling victim to the mysterious “Havana Syndrome” to this day.

Officially, the Canadian authorities recognize 14 cases of the unexplained affliction, with the last recorded in December 2018.

But the stricken diplomats, who are suing the government

in Ottawa for taking too long to evacuate them and provide them with treatment, say the number is closer to 30, and rising.

Paul Miller, a Toronto lawyer representing 18 Canadian diplomats claiming more than CAN\$28 million in damages and interest, told AFP he continues to receive calls from alleged victims. “We have some very recent cases, from 2021,” he said.

A source close to the case told AFP there were two reports just this year of diplomats forced to end their tours of duty in Ha-



The US Embassy building in Havana, where US diplomats experienced the first apparent “Havana Syndrome” attacks, which some experts attribute to targeted microwaves. PHOTO: RESEARCH INSTITUTE FOR FARM ANIMAL BIOLOGY/AFP HANDOUT

vana earlier than scheduled after experiencing symptoms.

Still unexplained, cases of the puzzling affliction dubbed “Havana Syndrome” in the media made their first appearance in Cuba in 2016. Diplomats from

the United States and Canada, some of whom claimed to have heard very high-pitched sounds around the onset of their symptoms, started complaining of migraines, vertigo and nausea.—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.

Hein Si Thu competes in Laguna Phuket Championship 2021 Golf Tournament

HEIN SI THU, a Myanmar professional golfer, is competing in the Laguna Phuket Championship 2021 Golf Tournament organized by Asian Tour starting from 2 December at Laguna Golf Phuket, Thailand.

Hein Si Thu competed on the first round of the Championship, hitting 16 holes in 205 yards with six Srixon rods and winning the Hole-In-One award at the same time.

Again, Hein Si Thu scored a birdie on the first round of the competition with a total of 69 strokes.

The second round of the competition will continue on 3 December.

A total of 144 golfers from more than 20 countries are competing in the tournament, with a total prize pool of US USD 1 million.

The competition will run until 5 December, according to the tourney organizers. — Ko Nyi Lay/GNLM



Myanmar professional golfer Hein Si Thu. **PHOTO: ASIAN TOUR**

Reviving Spurs is Conte's 'biggest challenge'



Antonio Conte says getting troubled Tottenham back on track will be the biggest challenge of his glittering managerial career. **PHOTO: MIGUEL MEDINA/ AFP**

ANTONIO Conte says getting troubled Tottenham back on track will be the biggest challenge of his glittering managerial career.

Conte has quickly realized the size of the task he faces to revive Tottenham after a difficult first four weeks in charge.

The Italian was left chastened by an embarrassing Europa Conference League defeat to Slovenian minnows NS Mura last week. And Conte, a title winner with Chelsea, Juventus and Inter Milan, conceded before

Thursday's Premier League game against Brentford that he will have to work overtime to turn the tide in north London.

"Biggest challenge, yes. But as I said in Mura, I'm not scared about this," he said.

"I have a lot of enthusiasm. When I arrive here, I enjoy the situation. I enjoy to work with the players, I enjoy to speak with the club, I enjoy to create a good base. "Now the most important thing is this – to create a good base and then to build something important.—AFP ■

Salah stars as Liverpool thrash Everton

MOHAMED Salah scored twice as Liverpool showed no mercy on former manager Rafael Benitez to leave the Spaniard clinging to his job as Everton boss after losing the Merseyside derby 4-1.

The Reds had won just one of their previous nine visits to Goodison, but were in complete control from the first whistle against Benitez's men, who have now taken just two points from the last 24 on offer in the Premier League.

Stunning strikes from Jordan Henderson and Salah inside 20 minutes gave Everton a mountain to climb.

Demarai Gray's strike gave the Toffees

hope before the break. But that was extinguished by another clinical Salah finish just after the hour mark as the Egyptian took his tally for the season to 19 goals in 19 games before Diogo Jota blasted home a fourth 12 minutes from time.

"It was for sure the best performance at Goodison since I have been at Liverpool," said Reds' boss Jurgen Klopp.

"We had some good games here but never as good or convincing as tonight.

"Tonight we showed we made a big step in our development. This is now our benchmark we have to reach when we play these type of games."— AFP ■



Derby delight: Mohamed Salah (left) scored twice as Liverpool beat Everton. **PHOTO: AFP**