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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.

Myanmar Position on Annual Press Statement of Minister for Foreign Affairs, Indonesia, 11 January 2023

THE Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Myanmar observed that the Annual Press Statement of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Indonesia was held on 11 January 2023 in Jakarta, Indonesia. The Ministry learnt that matters relating to Myanmar were mentioned during the delivery of the press statement made by Retno Marsudi.

SEE PAGE-2

Myawady-Mae Sot Friendship Bridge I reopens after three-year hiatus



Myanmar and Thai authorities are pictured walking on the Myawady-Mae Sot Friendship Bridge I after the reopening ceremony on 12 January 2023.

OPERATIONS were resumed at the Myawady-Mae Sot Friendship Bridge I on 12 January 2023 after nearly three years of closure, and authorities from Thailand and Myanmar formally reopened the bridge at 8:30 am yesterday.

Officials concerned held a meeting regarding the resumption of the bridge activity at Tak

Province in recent days. After a series of negotiations, operations on the bridge were reinstated on 12 January.

Therefore, people can enter the Mae Sot side by passing that bridge with the border pass as before.

For a border pass document, Myawady residents can apply for it by presenting a citizenship

scrutiny card, household registration and three pictures of the licence-sized photo.

Licensed private cars are entitled to go over the bridge and the passengers need to present COVID-19 vaccination certificates.

Furthermore, border crossings with passports are also allowed and Myanmar migrant

workers can also return home via the bridge as before.

That bridge is the major border trading route between Myanmar and Thailand. The border crossing ceased amid COVID-19 cases on 23 March 2020. The border trade activity is therefore being carried out at Bridge II.

Efforts were made to reopen the bridge. However, it has been closed down for nearly three years amid coronavirus infections in both countries. It is restarted at present.

After reopening the bridge, it will bring about job opportunities for residents and freight forwarders. — NN/EMM



Vehicles are seen passing through the Myawady border post.

Public Notice for elimination of violence

1. SO called "CRPH", "NUG" and "PDF" terrorist groups are unlawfully committing killings of monks, teachers, civil servants and general people and looting under the pretext of saying "for the people".
2. Not rendering of encouragement, support and assistance to the "CRPH", "NUG" and "PDF" terrorists that are committing intimidations, killings and destructive activities could be construed as protecting lives and property of general public.
3. Giving information secretly relating to bearing of their arms, ammunition and terrorists to authorities could be tantamount to protecting lives and property of innocent people.

Myanmar Gazette

Heads of Service Organizations confirmed and appointed

1. The State Administration Council has confirmed the appointment of the following persons as of Service Organizations shown against each of their names after the one-year probationary period.

Name	Appointment
(a) Professor Dr AB	Rector University of Community Health (Magway) Department of Human Resources for Health Ministry of Health
(b) U Aung Kyaw Moe	Director-General Department of Rehabilitation Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement

2. The State Administration Council has appointed Dr Thida Tin, Deputy Director-General of the Information and Public Relations Department under the Ministry of Information, as Director-General of the Department of Media Development of the same ministry on probation from the date she assumes charge of her duties.

Myanmar Position on Annual Press Statement of Minister for Foreign Affairs, Indonesia, 11 January 2023

FROM PAGE-1

In this connection, the Ministry reiterated Myanmar's position as follows;

- (a) Myanmar will implement ASEAN's five-point consensus in line with the fundamental principles of upholding its national interest, sovereignty and non-interference in the internal affairs of the member states.
- (b) Myanmar will continue its efforts in the implementation of the Five-Point Roadmap to restore the multiparty democratic system in line with the 2008 State Constitution as an independent and sovereign state.
- (c) Myanmar again urged ASEAN as a rule-based organization, to follow the provisions of the ASEAN Charter and its fundamental principles and not to engage with any terrorist groups and unlawful associations which had been declared by the Government of Myanmar.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Nay Pyi Taw
Date, 12 January 2023

100-year-old Thabyay (Eugenia), three Kanyin (Dipterocarpus alatus) trees discovered in Myanaung Tsp

THE Forest Department of Myanaung Township in Myanaung District of Ayeyawady Region discovered one Thabyay (Eugenia) and three Kanyin (wood-oil) trees which are about 100 years old and the department put them on rare tree lists to be conserved.

The 100-year-old Thabyay (Eugenia) was found in the No 46 Hmyinwa Hill forest reserve in Myanaung on 26-1-2021, and it is 22 feet and eight inches in girth and about 100 feet in height. The people can study the tree after a half-a-mile walk west from Pathein-Monywa

road milepost 78/2.

The 100-year-old Kanyin — wood-oil — tree was found in the compound of Latpankwin Village resident U Tin Myint in Myanaung Township on 26-1-2021. The tree is 21 feet and five inches in girth and about 100 feet in height. It can be



reached about a four-mile walk along Nyaungchayhtauk-Inpin inter-village road from the Pathein-Monywa road milepost 75/0.

Another 100-year-old two Kanyin trees were found in the compound of Sathwarchaung Village resident Daw Htway in Myanaung Township on 27-1-2021. The girth of the trees is

12 feet and 17 feet respectively and the height is about 100 feet respectively. The trees are located about 1.5 miles from Myanaung-Hinthada road milepost 49/2.

The Forest Department will conserve these trees, according to Staff Officer U Than Htay. — Win Bo (Myanaung-IPRD)/KTZH

Tourism revival can drive great progress in State economy

THE tourism sector that contributes to the economy of the country through various ways and means. Business activities and transport operations in a region thanks to domestic and foreign tourists can accelerate money circulation. Foreign tourist arrivals can increase foreign exchange earnings. The government is striving for more arrivals of international tourists to the nation. If inbound and outbound tourism can be enhanced, the State economy will achieve great progress.

(The excerpt from the speech made by Chairman of State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at the meeting 8/2022 of the State Administration Council on 27 September 2022.)

MoHA Union Minister inspects Pathein, Insein, Toungoo prisons

STATE Administration Council member Union Minister for Home Affairs Lt-Gen Soe Htut inspected the Pathein Prison together with Ayeyawady Region Security and Border Affairs Minister Colonel Moe Min Naing and departmental officials under the ministry on 11 January.

During the meeting with prison officials, the director of the Ayeyawady Region Prison Department reported on the prison protests that occurred on 6 January and measures conducted by prison staff and security force members as per the procedures of the prison handbook.

Then, the Union minister instructed those responsible to take necessary measures so that such prison unrest do not occur again and to draft the plans with the experiences from that cases including advantages and disadvantages in detail.

He then checked the prison central prison outpost, pris-

oners/detainee dormitories, kitchen, rations warehouse, place where prisoner/detainee launched unrest on 6 January, their materials and destroyed security equipment.

During the inspection, the Union minister also instructed officials to focus on security, conduct 24-hour patrol to prevent security breaches, systematic inspection of dormitories by cooperating with the police force as the restricted materials are sent to prisons, avoid bribes, do regular weapon training, provide meals, healthcare and vocational issues to the inmates and apply strict administration under the existing law, orders and directives.

Afterwards, the Union minister and party met with the prison staff and families and provided kitchen utensils and cash.

The Union minister and party also inspected the Luggage X-Ray Scanner operations at the parcel reception office and



Union Minister Lt-Gen Soe Htut inspects the jail kitchen.

parcel scanning division of Insein Prison, CCTV Control Room and preparation of breakfast for inmates yesterday.

Then, they went to Training School for Prison Staff (Insein) and inspected the dormitories, classrooms and dining rooms.

They also enjoyed breakfast together with the trainees of No 107 Basic Training Course of Private Level and provided cash to the trainees.

At noon, the Union minister and party went to Toungoo Prison in Bago Region and in-

spected the prison compound and instructed matters related to security, meals, healthcare services for inmates including prisoners with HIV/AIDS and proper prescription of prison doctors for the released prisoners with HIV/AIDS. - MNA/KTZH



Macadamia plantation expanded as local/overseas demand rises

THE plantation of Macadamia, a perennial crop, is growing in the country for high demand from local and foreign markets. There are over 12,000 acres of plantation across the nation as of this financial year, according to Myanmar Fruit, Flower and Vegetable Producers and Exporters Association (MFVP).

Macadamia nuts are indigenous to Australia and they are medium-sized ev-

A hundred grams of Macadamia nuts contain calories of 691 kilogrammes, three per cent water, 71 per cent fat, 16 per cent carbohydrates, 2.5 per cent fibre, two per cent potassium and a few calcium, phosphorus, iron and potassium in addition to thiamine, riboflavin and niacin. **PHOTO: SOE MYINT AUNG**

ergreen trees. A mature Macadamia nut tree can grow up to over 60 feet high and spread up to 40 feet wide. A hundred grams of Macadamia nuts contain calories of 691 kilogrammes, three per cent water, 71 per cent fat, 16 per cent carbohydrates, 2.5 per cent fibre, two per cent potassium and a few calcium, phosphorus, iron and potassium in addition to thiamine, riboflavin and niacin.

"Although Macadamia nut has large market networks in European countries, we still need the technics. If we compare the products of our country and their nuts, theirs will be two hemisphere nuts after splitting into two. The sizes of our nuts are uneven.

If we want to export, we have to

arrange these cases as the nuts are not equal in size.

The nature of the people is that they enjoy with their eyes first and then eat. If they eat the nuts with eyes, our produce might face losses. But they will know the taste if they eat by mouth. The suppliers told us to send quotations," said MFVP vice-chair U Kyaw Thu.

Although Macadamia trees are not popular among people, they earn proper income and provide good health to a man. Currently, the Macadamia plantation is expanded in certain regions and is mostly grown in Shan State, Mandalay Region, Sagaing Region, Chin and Kachin states. - Pwint Thitsa/KTZH



SAC-conferred honorary titles presented



The honorary title is offered in Yangon Region.



The honorary title is presented in Yangon Region.



The honorary title is offered in Yangon Region.

gon Command Commander Maj-Gen Nyunt Win Swe and officials went to offer the honorary titles to family members of those who were unable to attend the ceremony on their own and on their behalf due to various reasons.

On behalf of former prime minister U Sein Win (deceased), his son U Zaw Win accepted the Thadoe Maha Thray Sithu title; on behalf of former minister of industry-2 Lt-Gen Sein Aung (deceased), wife Thiri Thudamma Theingi Daw Khin Thein accepted the Thray Sithu title; on behalf of commander-in-chief (Air) Brig-Gen Thaung Dan (deceased), his son U Myo Dan accepted the Sithu title; on behalf of state councilor U Tun Yin Law (deceased), wife Daw Nang Bo

La the Sithu title; on behalf of Maj-Gen Nyan Lin (deceased), a former member of the State

Law and Order Restoration Council, wife Daw Htay Htay Yi the Sithu title.

Similarly, Sagaing Region Chief Minister U Myat Kyaw, North-West Command Commander Maj-Gen Than Htike and departmental officials presented one excellent award, the Ye Kyawswa medal, 80 Zeyar Management Excellence awards, and the Ye Bala medal at the ceremony held in Chindwin Hall of the Sagaing Region government office yesterday.

Furthermore, the security forces who participated in 11 drug seizures during the 2021-2022 financial year and 2022-2023 financial year were awarded honorariums. — MNA/TS



Awards and medals are presented in Sagaing Region.

THE State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister conferred the honorary titles on the recipients individually on 1 and 2 January in

marking the 75th Anniversary (Diamond Jubilee) Independence Day.

Yangon Region Chief Minister U Soe Thein, Yan-

PyinOoLwin strawberries fetch good prices in Mandalay market

FRESH strawberries from PyinOoLwin fetch good prices at the fruit market in Mandalay, growers said.

Strawberries are sold well due to the normal yield this year as well as a decrease in Covid-19 cases. The opening price is good this year (K10,000 per viss) although it was K8,000 per viss last year. Fruit depot owners from Yangon and Mandalay appraise the price and then they buy the whole lot," said Ko Phoe Thar, a grower from Pinleinthapyay village of PyinOoLwin Township.

"This year, strawberries from China are also entering Myanmar. So, we are selling competitively but the price does

not drop significantly. I guess that the price is unlikely to drop to the bottom even when they are in season in March. It may fetch K2,000 per viss, he added.

Strawberries can be plucked up to the end of April. An acre can produce 1,500 visses. However, the yield may vary depending on the weather condition. Strawberries generally prefer plenty of sunlight.

"The earliest yield usually gets a higher price and the price of strawberries plunged to K1,200 in March, and it climbed to K2,000-3,000 per viss in the post-Thingyan period (mid-April)," said Ko Phoe Thar. — Min Htet Aung (Mandalay Sub-Printing House)/MKKS



CURRENT AFFAIRS



Students were seen sitting the examinations of the 2021-2022 academic year.

Basic education schools to hold final examinations on 14 Feb

THE final examinations of the basic education schools will be held starting from 14 February 2023, according to the Department of Basic Education.

The year-end examinations of all grades for the 2022-2023 academic year will take place at the respective basic education schools from 14 to 21 February.

The Department of Basic Education notified that the primary school level completion exams (Grade 5) would be held from 22 to 28 February and the middle school level completion exams (Grade 9) from 22 February to 1 March.

In addition, the matriculation exam for Grade 11 (for the old curriculum) will begin on 8 March till 18, it is learnt. — TWA/CT

Security training to be conducted for gold outlets

THE township administration bodies will give training on the safety of gold shops in Yangon, announced the Yangon Region Gold Entrepreneurs Association (YGEA).

The executive committee meeting of YGEA was organized on the morning of 10 January, and the following decisions were made at the meeting — to work together to restore the market, to instruct gold retailers about security issues from the township administration body and for the members to attend the ceremony to hoist golden umbrella atop the Sule Pagoda on coming 17 January.

Gold shop owners who are concerned about the security of gold shops may undergo the training provided by the respective township administration body at 9 am on 17 January, a YGEA official said at the meeting. Gold shops in Yangon and Mandalay are more cautious than ever due to frequent robbery cases.

In addition, YGEA is continuously providing training sessions related to gold, the gold market and anti-money laundering. — TWA/CT



The police task force is seen investigating the crime scene after the robbery at Hla Thida Gold Shop in Mayangon Township, Yangon Region.

MNA discounts 15% of domestic, intl flight tickets at Myanmar Travel Fair 2023



An aircraft of the MNA fleet is seen at Magway airport.

DOMESTIC and international flight tickets will be available at a 15 per cent discount at Myanmar Travel Fair 2023, Myanmar National Airlines (MNA) stated.

Myanmar National Airlines (MNA) is participating in Myanmar Travel Fair 2023 being held at the Ministers' Office in Yangon where domestic and international flight tickets can be bought at a 15 per cent discount and gifts will also be given.

The Yangon-Bangkok round-trip tickets are available at the lowest rate of US\$74 per passenger and the Yangon-Chiang Mai round-trip tickets at \$160.

It was difficult to buy tickets from Myanmar-Thailand airlines due to the large number of Myanmar people who visited Thailand during the New Year holidays, according to air ticket dealers. — TWA/MKKS

Peanut and sesame oil prices rise

ALTHOUGH there was little change in peanut and sesame oil prices in December 2022, the prices have soared these days due to the high price of peanut and sesame seeds.

The wholesale price of peanut oil and sesame oil in the Monywa market remained steady at K9,000-K9,500 per viss, but it has now escalated to K10,000-K11,000 per viss for peanut oil and K10,000-K10,500 for sesame oil, according to the market information.

Similarly, the Mandalay market got the wholesale price per viss of K11,000 for peanut oil, K10,000-K11,000 for sesame oil

and K12,000-K13,000 for sunflower oil on 12 January, according to the market reports.

Although the price of peanuts increased by around K500 per viss in early January compared to December, the peanut expeller cake was priced at only K2,700 per viss.

The price of sesame went up by around K10,000 per basket (which holds fifteen visses) than before and the sunflower price constantly stood at K87,000-K95,000 per 27 visses. The wholesale price of peanut and sesame oil per viss is double the price of palm oil, as palm oil was in lower demand in the

market rather than peanut and sesame oil. Most consumers are people from basic strata, still backing up palm oil to get the largest market share.

In the same period last year, the price of palm oil was around K4,500 per viss while the price of peanut oil was only K5,500 per viss. Therefore, the price of peanut oil has doubled in H1 of this year compared to the same period last year. The price of peanut oil is higher than palm oil by around K5,000 per viss. The competitive promotions of peanut oil sellers can be seen, pricing around K13,000 per viss. — TWA/CT



An oil retail outlet in Lanmadaw Township.

Daily newspapers available online

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LOCAL BUSINESS

Myanmar ships \$1.825 mln worth of over 1,000 tonnes of honey in past nine months



MYANMAR conveyed 1,217.18 metric tons of honey worth over US\$1.825 million to foreign trade partners in the past nine months (April-December) in the 2022-2023 financial year, according to the Apiculture Division under the Livestock Breeding and Veterinary Department.

Myanmar exported 1,203.84 tonnes to foreign markets by sea and 13.34 tonnes via cross-border trade.

Myanmar delivered honey to the Republic of Korea, Japan, the US and Singapore by sea during the April-December period. The export volume stood at 918.48 tonnes worth \$1,377,720 to Japan, 42.78 valued at \$64,170 to the ROK, 40 worth \$60,000 to the US, 182.48 worth \$273,720 to Singapore and 33.44 worth \$50,160 to China Taipei.

There are some state-owned beekeeping stations with 6,200 beehives and about 820

private beekeeping businesses operating with nearly 200,000 beehives. Apiculture and honey production businesses are primarily found in Sagaing, Mandalay and Magway regions and Shan State.

Moreover, two million acres of crops yearly contribute to bee pollination every year. This year, 11 per cent of sunflower acreage are designated for pollen sources.

Additionally, beekeeping

businesses near the crop fields contribute to the successful yield of the crop as well as quality bee production.

Myanmar annually produces about 7,000 tonnes of honey, with a production capacity of 70 pounds per beehive. Approximately 2,600 tonnes of honey are conveyed to foreign markets every year. Myanmar's

honey is priced at \$1,600 per tonne.

Myanmar produces jujube honey, niger honey, sunflower honey and flower honey. – NN/EMM

Myanmar seaborne rice exports to Bangladesh exceed 174,000 tonnes under G-to-G pact



Export rice is loaded onto the overseas-going cargo vessel.

ACCORDING to the Government-to-Government pact between Myanmar and Bangladesh, Myanmar has sent over 174,000 tonnes of white rice to Bangladesh by sea, 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.

Following 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 (five per cent broken) to be exported to Bangladesh. As per the sales contract, Myanmar has exported over 174,000 tonnes of white rice to Bangladesh as of 9 January 2023. 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.

Under 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.

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 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

Prices of fuel oil, gold and dollar on 12 January 2023

Fuel Oil Price (Yangon)

Octane 92	K2,035
Octane 95	K2,090
Diesel	K2,310
Premium Diesel	K2,390

All of the prices are based on per litre.

Gold Price

The reference price of high-purity gold set by YGEA	K2,217,200 per tical
High-purity gold in the gold market	K2,843,000 per tical

Dollar Price

A US dollar set by the Central Bank of Myanmar	K2,100
A US dollar in the forex market	K2,860 to K2,880

The above prices may change from time to time.

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Ryanair shuts Brussels airport base over higher costs



Ryanair in a statement said the decision was taken after the airport opted to increase prices by 11 per cent from April 2023. **PHOTO: REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE/EMMANUEL DUNAND, AFP/FILE**

IRISH airline Ryanair on Wednesday announced it will close its base at Brussels' main airport in protest at the operator's increased prices.

The move does not affect its activities at Brussels' second airport, Charleroi, which is the low-cost airline's main base in Belgium.

Ryanair in a statement said the decision was taken after the airport opted to increase prices by 11 per cent from April 2023.

The airline had already suspended its activities over the winter at the airport, but Ryanair chief executive Michael O'Leary confirmed "we will not be re-opening" the base.

Ryanair criticized the airport's decision "to jack up prices yet again... making it even more uncompetitive compared to other Belgian and EU airports".

It said flights to 12 destinations from the main airport in Zaventem will continue on aircraft that are not based there.

Belgian unions said around 60 jobs were at risk. "That's 44 cabin crew staff (air stewards) and 15 pilots," head of the CNE union covering Ryanair staff, Didier Lebbe, told AFP. "Ryanair's decision will have a limited impact," Brussels Airport said, confirming that 12 out of 16 journeys offered by Ryanair would continue. —AFP

German watchdog raps Google over user data practices

GERMANY'S antitrust regulator on Wednesday criticized the way Google handles users' data and threatened action against the US tech giant.

Data collected by Google was used to "create very detailed user profiles which the company can exploit for advertising and other purposes", the Federal Cartel Authority said.

Based on a preliminary assessment, the watchdog determined that users were not given sufficient clarity on the "far-reaching processing of their data across services" by the tech company.

"General and indiscriminate data retention... is not

permissible" without giving users choice, the watchdog said.

The Federal Cartel Authority was therefore "currently planning to oblige the company to change the choices offered", it said, adding that it expected to issue its final decision this year.

"Google's business model relies heavily on the processing of user data," said the authority's chief Andreas Mundt.

The digital giant had "access to relevant data gathered from a large number of different services" which meant it enjoyed "a strategic advantage over other companies", Mundt said in a statement. —AFP

UAE agrees to roll over Pakistan debt, add \$1 billion more

THE United Arab Emirates has agreed to roll over \$2 billion owed by Pakistan and provide the country with an extra loan of \$1 billion, Islamabad said Thursday.

The agreement comes as Pakistan grapples with a major foreign exchange crisis, holding enough reserves to pay for just three weeks of imports.

Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif arrived in the UAE earlier Thursday for talks with top Gulf officials to seek help for the battered economy.

"The UAE president agreed to roll over the existing loan of US\$2 billion and provide a US\$1 billion additional loan," a statement from Sharif's office said.

"Both sides agreed to deepen the investment cooperation, stimulate partnerships and enable investment integration opportunities between the two countries."

The statement did not provide the terms of the loan



The soaring inflation is painful and inescapable for the people. A protest against inflation in Karachi, Pakistan, in June 2022. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

agreement.

Pakistan's national debt stands at \$274 billion — or nearly 90 per cent of gross domestic product.

The nation's forex reserves have dwindled to less than \$6 billion, with obligations of more than \$8 billion due in the first quarter alone.

A \$7 billion loan agreement with the IMF — about half of which has already been

disbursed — has stalled because Pakistan has not fully implemented tough economic measures including slashing subsidies and raising taxes.

The economy has also been hammered by devastating monsoon floods that left almost a third of the country under water last year, and the government says it needs more than \$16 billion over the next three years to rebuild. —AFP

Global fashion firms exploiting Bangladesh workers: study



Respondents told researchers that the "highest proportion" of unfair business practices included major brands such as H&M, Next, Primark and Zara owner Inditex. **PHOTO: REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE/AFP/FILE**

MAJOR international fashion brands are operating unfairly toward Bangladesh clothing suppliers, with some allegedly paying for items below the cost of production, according to a study published Wednesday.

The study's compilers, Aberdeen University and the ad-

vocacy group Transform Trade, surveyed 1,000 Bangladeshi factories making garments for global brands and retailers during the Covid pandemic.

More than half of the factories experienced at least one of the following: order cancellations, refusal to pay, price re-

ductions or delayed payment for goods.

"This research highlights reports of unfair trading practices encountered by manufacturers during Covid-19," the report found.

Such practices resulted in lower wages for the factories' workers, job losses and high staff turnover, it said.

One in five factories revealed they had struggled to pay the Bangladeshi legal minimum wage as a result.

The report also uncovered incidents where some companies demanded reductions for clothing ordered before the pandemic erupted in March 2020.

And some fashion firms refused to budge on price, despite soaring costs and rampant inflation. The study called for the creating of a fashion industry regulator in importing nations to improve purchasing practices. —AFP

OPINION

Generate electricity earlier to develop the nation sooner

CURRENTLY, the government searches various ways and means to generate electricity to be supplied to the whole nation in order to uplift the living standard of the people as well as to boost the production of goods at home.

The government strives to implement the national electrification plan from 2015 to 2030 so as to electrify all the households of the nation accounting for cent per cent. Up to now, the plan has affected 6,956,295 households in 40,693 villages from 508 towns across the nation, accounting for 64 per cent. Hence, the government is searching for possible water sources to generate hydropower plants because water sources for hydropower are plentiful across the nation.

Till today, renewable energy comprising hydropower, coal-fired power, solar power and diesel generators has been used to electrify the nation. In this regard, hydropower plants are established not far from water resources. But, there are a few numbers of coal-fired power plants in the country. So also, as now is the time to initiate the generation of electricity from solar power.

So far, the Ministry of Electric Power has established three solar-powered plants throughout the nation. Solar power is being generated at the Minbu plant the first one beside the Minbu-An Road in Minbu Township of Magway Region, at the Thabyewa plant the second one near Thabyewa Village of Thazi Township in Mandalay Region and at the Taungdawgin plant as the third one near Than Village of Myittha Township in Mandalay Region.

Only when people across the nation can consume electricity will they have the chance to improve all measures of the nation and will the country enable to shoulder with other countries. If so, the developed nation will pass good potential to new generations. It is necessary to note that if electricity can be supplied earlier, the whole nation will develop sooner.

manner. If so, the entire people of the whole nation will have sufficient electricity at full capacity in a short period.

Only when people across the nation can consume electricity will they have the chance to improve all measures of the nation and will the country enable to shoulder with other countries. If so, the developed nation will pass good potential to new generations. It is necessary to note that if electricity can be supplied earlier, the whole nation will develop sooner.

Snippets of 37 Minns and Nats from the booklet

The educational reformist and national education officer U Pho Kyar (23 March 1891-11 April 1942) published a small booklet about the 37 Nats (37 Minn) in the pre-World II years. It was republished as a 3rd edition in July 2022 by Seikku Cho Cho press. No information is provided as to when the first edition was published. It was perhaps published around 1938.

U Pho Kyar states that in two Buddhist texts (one assumes that the texts are from the Theravada tradition) there are 37 Minn. Imitating these 37 Minn from the Buddhist texts, in the Pagan (Bagan) era during the rules of King Anawrahta and King Kyansitha additional nats/minns were 'devised' so to speak. U Pho Kyar states that these Minn, different from those mentioned in the Buddhist texts, are designated as 'internal 37 Nats/Minns' (အတွင်း သုံးဆယ်ခုနှစ်မင်း) (pages 4 to 7).

The next section mentions the Five Major (or 'Big') Nats (နတ်ကြီး ငါးပါး). U Pho Kyar states that these Five Major Nats are known by slightly different names in the five historical periods until 'now'. Significantly, U Pho Kyar states that with the exception of သိကြားမင်း (Indra) which is also Buddhist, all are of 'pure Hindu origin' (ဟိန္ဒူ နတ်များသက်သက်ဖြစ်သည်) (page 8).

The subsequent Chapter (pages 23-34) discusses what is called အပြင်သုံးဆယ်ခုနှစ်မင်း (The 37 Nats/Minns from the Outside). U Pho Kyar states that these Minns

Thoughts on U Pho Kyar's 37 Nats Booklet first published around 1938

By Dr Myint Zan



Phyin brothers were executed allegedly on orders of the King. U Pho Kyar writes that among the 'outside' အပြင်သုံးဆယ်ခုနှစ်မင်း (37 Minn) only Indra သိကြားမင်း is of Hindu origin 'the rest 36 are Myanmar made and are Myanmar Nats' (page 44).

There is a short Chapter (pages 45 to 47) where U Pho Kyar explains how 'Nats came to be worshipped'. Specific reference is made to Pabei Maung Tint Dae and his execution by the King and how people came to admire and worship him and his younger sister after their demise.

U Pho Kyar adds perhaps with a tad of irony: 'as the Nats also are within the realm of impermanence (သင်္ခါရနယ်ဝယ်) we do not know with certainty whether they still exist' (page 47).

In another Chapter, U Pho Kyar states with incredulity that even those persons who were manifestly alive (အသက်ရှင်လျက်-ငုတ်တုတ်နေလျက်) are worshipped as Nats! One of them was Hmawbi Saya Thein Gyi (1862-1942) who at that time U Pho Kyar was writing around 1938 was alive and well, residing in the town of Hmawbi.

According to U Pho Kyar, Hmawbi Saya Thein Gyi was worshipped (together with other 133 Nats) inside a monastery near the town of Than Lyin (Syriam) state (around the year 1938).

In the concluding Chapter of the Book U Pho Kyar waxes (almost) philosophical and states that since the beginning of human history the Nat (spirit) worship has existed in varying degrees in all parts of the world and 'it would never entirely disappear' (မည်သည့်အခါမှလုံးဝပျောက်ကွယ်လိမ့်မည်မှာမဟုတ်ချေ) (page 93). In the context of the year 1938 and a fortiori ('all the more so' to use a Latin legal term) even in the third decade of the 21st century U Pho Kyar makes this bold statement: 'Buddhism and other religions may appear and disappear. But the traditional nat/spirit worship will not disappear from the Face of the Earth as long as humans exist' (page 75).

U Pho Kyar alternately uses Minn as in 37 Minn and Nats without fully distinguishing the different, similar or overlapping connotations of these two terms. This reviewer also alternately uses these terms.

In the latter part of the book, U Pho Kyar states again that Hindu concepts, Hindu nats have not faded. In the worship of the nine Buddhas (ဘုရားကိုးဆူ) the worship of the Hindu pantheon of nats should be noted (သတိပြုလေ) writes U Pho Kyar. In addition, the arrangements, rituals and recitals (ရွတ်ဖတ်ပုံ) at coronation ceremonies, investitures and marriage ceremonies are generally usages (အသုံးအနှုန်း) from Hinduism (page 75).

The 19th-century German jurist Frederick Carl von Savigny (21 February 1779-25 October 1861) states that Roman law (emanating partly from the Roman Empire around 2000 years ago) did influ-

ence the development of German law initially but as German law develops historically it began to acquire a peculiar if not almost unique character. Still, almost unique as it is, German law would have inchoate 'remnants' so to speak of Roman law. Around a century after Savigny wrote U Pho Kyar also stated that the initial pantheon of Nats going back a thousand years during the Pagan era was solely of Hindu origin. But several hundred years later at the latest by the 17th century with the exception of Indra သိကြားမင်း all the Nats were 'made in Myanmar' so to speak (pages 41,44).

In the field of Burmese customary law, the late Sayagyi Dr E Maung (1898-1977), among others, a Supreme Court Justice in the 1950s and the late Sayagyi Dr Htin Aung (18 May 1908-10 May 1978), among others, Rector and Vice Chancellor of the University of Rangoon from the late 1940s to the late 1950s wrote that Burmese customary law is (almost entirely?) free of Hindu influence and Hindu law. This writer does not think that the two Sayagis categorically state that Burmese customary law is entirely free of Hindu influence. Extrapolating what Savigny wrote regarding the development of German law vis-à-vis Roman law it can perhaps be argued that though Burmese customary laws develop through Burman notions of law, ethics, and norms the influence initially of Hindu law(s) cannot be totally ignored. And writing less than two

decades before Justice E Maung and Dr Htin Aung made, in the 1950s, the claims of independence of Burmese law from Hindu influence Sayagyi U Pho Kyar around 1938, categorically stated the definite influence if not almost total domination of the Hindu Nats in the initial pantheon of Nats in the Pagan era, lasting perhaps a few centuries. Yet as U Pho Kyar himself states at the latest by the 17th century the overwhelming majority of Nats are of Myanmar origin. Hence it could be suggested that though Burmese customary law has developed throughout the centuries in almost uniquely 'Myanmar way' influence as it is by aspects of Theravada Buddhism, the initial influence of Hindu legal concepts should not entirely be neglected.

In the neighbouring country of Malaya/Malaysia the arrival of Islam around early 13th century to parts of the Malay peninsula did influence the development of Malay adat (custom) but the initial influence of Hindu laws, and customs can still be seen in inchoate forms. Textbooks on the Malaysian legal system do mention the role of a few Hindu concepts and practices especially but not entirely in the past, in Malay custom.

U Pho Kyar's statement that so long as humans exist spirit worship (here this writer eschews the use of the nats in order not to 'localize' the variegated forms of spirit worships that exist all over the world) would continue to exist (page 93) can be mentioned here

again. A teaching or chiding poem ဆုံးမစာတော် composed by the Buddhist monk Shin Mahasilavamsa (ရှင်မဟာသီလဝံသ) (1453-1518) is reproduced in the booklet. Sayadaw ('royal teacher') Mahasilavamsa composed a long poem around the year 1492 chiding, indeed censoring nay condemning the belief and practices 'for a very long time of humans [who had the sense of] cows ကာလရှည်လျား လူငန္ဒာတို့) worshipping from grandparents to grandchildren the evil nats (နတ်မိစ္ဆာ)'. Necessarily, dutifully and approvingly Sayagyi U Pho Kyar reproduces two stanzas or paragraphs of Sayadaw Shin Mahasilavamsa's poem (pages 97 to 100).

It is now more than 500 years since Sayadaw Mahasilavamsa composed his great poem. As detailed in U Pho Kyar's booklet much more than 500 years before Shin Mahasilavamsa's time nat worship existed and more than 500 years after the epic teaching poem of the Sayadaw during the Ava period various forms of nat worship continue. In regards to the long past, present and perhaps long-term future as well U Pho Kyar's prognostication is well and truly made.

Book Title: 37 Minn Author: National Education Office (အမျိုးသားပညာဝန်) U Pho Kyar Publisher: Seikku Cho Cho (July 2022, 3rd edition), 108 pages, K2,000

Researchers reveal couples who work from home do not have same experience

WORKING from home may be a better deal for husbands than wives in dual-earner couples, according to two related studies of workers in China and South Korea.

According to the findings, both husbands and wives completed more family-related tasks when they worked from home rather than the office. Husbands completed fewer family tasks when their wives worked from home than when their wives worked in the office. When husbands worked from home, wives did not complete fewer tasks.

In addition, wives in both studies felt increased guilt about failing to accomplish housework

and spending time with their families when they did more work at the office. In men, that result was found in one study.

"We found that men and women don't have the same experience working from home," said Jasmine Hu, lead author of the study and professor of management at The Ohio State University's Fisher College of Business.

Some gendered differences

"There are still some gendered differences in how they manage their job and family responsibilities."

The study was published recently in the journal Personnel Psychology.



The COVID-19 outbreak has made working from home (WFH) the new way of working for millions of employees around the world. PHOTO: FOR REPRESENTATIONAL PURPOSE ONLY/ REMOTE.CO/ANI

The researchers did two studies, both during the COVID-19 pandemic. One study involved 172 married dual-earner couples in mainland China who had at least one child. That study was done near the beginning of the pandemic in April and May of 2020.

The second study was done in South Korea, later in the pandemic from June to August 2021. This involved 60 dual-earner couples, some with children and some without. In both surveys, all participants completed two surveys each day for 14 consecutive workdays. Each husband and wife reported their work-from-home status and the amount of work and family tasks they completed.

They also completed various measures, which could include work-family conflict and family-work conflict, how much guilt they felt toward their families and their work, and their psychological withdrawal from work and family.

Findings showed that when husbands had flexible work schedules, wives completed significantly more work tasks when working from home than in the office. When wives had inflexible work arrangements, husbands completed significantly more family tasks when working from home.

More flexible work schedules

"These findings suggest that husbands could help remote work-

ing wives when they have more flexible work schedules and do more family tasks when their wives have more rigid work schedules," Hu said.

Overall, the results suggested that when the boundaries between work and family time are blurry, dual-earner couples feel the conflict. Findings showed that when employees (both husbands and wives) worked from home, they increased how much work they completed around their home and family, but that increased their feelings of inter-role conflict, psychological withdrawal from work and feelings of guilt concerning work for their employer.

SOURCE: ANI

SCI/ENVIRON WORLD

Trapped sediment in dams 'endangers' water supplies: UN



Most of the world's 60,000 big dams were designed to last 50 to 100 years. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

THOUSANDS of the world's large dams are so clogged with sediment that they risk losing more than a quarter of their storage capacity by 2050, UN researchers said Wednesday, warning of the threat to water security.

A new study from the UN University's Institute for Water, Environment and Health

found that, by mid-century, dams and reservoirs will lose about 1.65 trillion cubic metres of water storage capacity to sediment.

The figure is close to the combined annual water use of India, China, Indonesia, France and Canada.

That is important, the researchers say, because these

big dams are a key source of hydroelectricity, flood control, irrigation and drinking water throughout the world.

"Global water storage is going to diminish — it is diminishing now — and that needs to be seriously taken into account," the study's co-author and Institute director Vladimir Smakhtin told AFP.—AFP

Anti-coal activists resist as German police clear protest camp



Activists perched in self-made structures in the western German village of Luetzerath, as police began a forced evacuation on 11 January 2023. **PHOTO: AFP**

GERMAN police pressed ahead Wednesday with clearing a camp of anti-coal activists in an abandoned town which has become emblematic of the country's struggle to transition away from fossil fuels amid an energy crisis.

Once numbering as many as 2,000, around 200 anti-coal activists remain in the western German village of Luetzerath, which has been slated for demolition to enable the expansion of the neighbouring Garzweiler coal mine.

Hundreds of police tightened a perimeter around the protest camp before sunrise to prevent anyone from entering.

They moved in at 8 am (0700 GMT) to the sound of alarms set off by the demonstrators, which warned that the next stage of the forced evacuation had begun.

"They took the first aid team out of the camp by force," Mara Sauer, a spokesperson for the activists, told AFP. "Only some were able to stay in hiding."

Draped in emergency blankets to stave off the cold, some of those remaining clung to trees and other built structures high up away from the police.

Others have climbed to the top of abandoned buildings and barns, where they use loudspeakers to lead chants against the police along with songs of encouragement for their fellow activists.— AFP

UAE names oil chief as president of COP28 climate talks

THE head of the United Arab Emirates' national oil company was named Thursday as president of this year's COP28 climate talks, prompting fierce criticism from environmental activists.

Sultan Ahmed al-Jaber, who heads up the UAE's Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC), will be the first CEO to take the role at the UN summit, said a statement carried by the official WAM news agency.

"We will bring a pragmatic, realistic and solutions-oriented approach that delivers transformative progress for climate and for low carbon econom-

ic growth," Jaber said in the statement.

"I sincerely believe that climate action today is an immense economic opportunity for investment in sustainable growth," he added.

Environmental activists were quick to react, warning that the involvement of a major figure from the oil industry could slow progress in the fight against global warming.

Jaber's appointment "poses an outrageous conflict of interest", said Harjeet Singh, head of global political strategy at Climate Action Network International.—AFP



The UAE, one of the world's biggest crude producers, argues that oil remains indispensable to the global economy and is pushing the merits of carbon capture -- removing carbon dioxide, the main greenhouse gas, when fuel is burned or from the air. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

NEWS IN BRIEF

Greenpeace sues VW in Germany over CO2 emissions

A German court on Tuesday began hearing a case against Volkswagen brought by climate group Greenpeace to try to compel the giant group to stop selling petrol and diesel cars from 2030.

The plaintiffs, the two heads of Greenpeace Germany and climate activist Clara Meyer, also want to force the world's second-largest carmaker to reduce emissions by 65 per cent by 2030 as compared to 2018.

Greenpeace's case is based on a landmark verdict by Germany's constitutional court in April, 2021, which found government plans to curb CO2 emissions insufficient to meet Paris climate agreement targets and placed an unfair burden on future generations. In a major win for activists, former chancellor Angela Merkel's government then brought forward its date for carbon neutrality by five years to 2045, and raised its 2030 target for greenhouse gas reductions.—AFP

HEALTH/PANDEMIC WORLD

Super-resistant mosquitoes in Asia pose growing threat: study



Health officials fumigate a densely populated area in Surabaya, in Indonesia's East Java province in an effort to stamp out the Aedes Aegypti mosquito. **PHOTO: REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE/ AFP**

MOSQUITOES that transmit dengue and other viruses have evolved growing resistance to insecticides in parts of Asia, and novel ways to control them are desperately needed, new research warns.

Health authorities commonly fog mosquito-infested areas with clouds of insecticide, and resistance has long been a concern, but the scale of the problem was not well understood.

Japanese scientist Shinji Kasai and his team examined mosquitos from several countries in Asia as well as Ghana and found a series of mutations had made some virtually impervious to popular pyrethroid-based chemicals like permethrin.

"In Cambodia, more than 90 per cent of Aedes aegypti mosquitoes have the combination of mutations that results in an extremely high level of resist-

ance," Kasai told AFP.

He found some mosquito strains had 1,000-fold resistance, compared to the 100-fold seen previously.

That meant insecticide levels that would normally kill almost 100 per cent of mosquitoes in a sample killed only around seven percent of the insects.

Even a dose 10 times stronger killed just 30 per cent of the super-resistant mosquitoes.

"The resistance level that we found in mosquitos in Cambodia and Vietnam is totally different," said Kasai, director of the Department of Medical Entomology at Japan's National Institute of Infectious Diseases.

Dengue can cause haemorrhagic fever and infects an estimated 100 to 400 million people a year, although over 80 per cent of cases are mild or asymptomatic, according to the World Health Organization.

Several dengue vaccines have been developed, and researchers have also used a bacteria that sterilises mosquitoes to tackle the virus.—AFP

Study reveals how better planning may help lower amount of fat in diet

ACCORDING to new research, coaching overweight or obese pregnant women to improve their ability to plan and achieve goals may be critical to helping them reduce the amount of fat in their diet.

Previous research has shown that maternal diet quality affects prenatal development and long-term child health outcomes,

but the stress that typically increases during pregnancy - often exacerbated by concern for foetal health and anxiety over impending parenthood - may derail efforts to focus on healthful eating. In this new study, researchers at The Ohio State University set out to identify the pathway between stress and total fat consumption, with a broader goal to evaluate an

intervention designed to improve the diets of pregnant women who are overweight or obese.

Through a series of questionnaires and statistical analysis, the team found that two thinking-related skills — planning, and execution of those plans — were weakened in women whose stress was high, and those skill gaps were associated with higher total fat intake.

These two skills are known as executive functions, a set of multiple thinking processes that enable people to plan, monitor behaviour and execute their goals.

"People with a higher level of stress tend to have a higher intake of fat, too. If stress is high, we're so stressed out that we're not thinking about anything - and we don't care what we eat," said lead author Mei-Wei Chang, associate professor of nursing at Ohio State.—ANI



Researchers at The Ohio State University set out to identify the pathway between stress and total fat consumption. **PHOTO: AFP**

Hong Kong asks S Korea to remove flight landing restrictions

HONG Kong has asked South Korea to remove restrictions that limit flights from the city to landing only at Seoul's Incheon International Airport, media reports said Wednesday.

South Korean Prime Minister Han Duck Soo announced the COVID-19-related restrictions on Tuesday, which also apply to flights from Macau, adding that the measure would remain in place until 28 February.

South Korean health authorities also said last week that all arrivals from Hong Kong and Macau must present negative results from a PCR test conducted within 48 hours of arrival.

The Hong Kong government released an official state-

ment on Tuesday denouncing the restrictions, calling them "unreasonable."

"The Hong Kong government has written to the Korean authority and liaised with the consulate general of Korea in Hong Kong to express our grave concern and strongly request the authority to withdraw the restriction concerned," the statement read. South Korea's decisions come amid a dispute with China after Seoul imposed a slew of restrictions on travellers from China last month following Beijing's decision to lift its stringent zero-COVID policies, with China accusing South Korea of discriminatory practices against Chinese tourists.—Kyodo



People line up outside a COVID-19 testing centre at Incheon International Airport. **PHOTO: REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE/ YONHAP/FILE**

China highlights COVID response at nursing homes, community level

CHINESE authorities are strengthening COVID-19 prevention and control measures in nursing homes and mobilizing the community-level response, officials said on Wednesday.

New guidelines have been introduced on preventing and controlling the novel coronavirus infection in nursing homes, subjecting such institutions to more intense controls than general society, said Li Banghua, an official with the Ministry of Civil Affairs (MCA), at a press conference.

Li said the guidelines stipulate that health monitoring should be carried out at least twice a day in nursing homes, while nucleic acid or antigen tests must be conducted twice a week, adding that access to medical care services must be guaranteed.

There are more than 40,000 nursing institutions in China, accommodating more than 2.2 million elderly people.

Officials also called for efforts to improve the community response system, highlighting the importance of grassroots governance organizations and community health centres.—Xinhua

ECONOMY WORLD

Tax incentive extension to continue spurring China's NEV growth

GUO Zi handed over the keys to a Wuling Air EV car to the buyer, closing her first sale of a new energy vehicle (NEV) in 2023.

"I sold more than 380 NEVs in 2022," said Guo, a top sales representative at a retail dealer of SAIC-GM-Wuling (SGMW), a major Chinese automobile manufacturer, in the city of Liuzhou, south China's Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region.

"The purchase tax exemption for NEVs really reduces consumers' costs, which, in addition to high gasoline prices, has been an important factor drawing customers to NEVs," she said,

adding the dealer saw people flocking in for inquiry during the New Year holiday.

China announced in September last year that the purchase tax exemption for NEVs would be extended to the end of 2023. The third extension since the country first implemented the policy in 2014, was expected to waive 100 billion yuan (about 14.8 billion US dollars) worth of taxes.

As of 10 November, a total of 68.62 billion yuan worth of taxes had been exempted in 2022, up 101.2 per cent year on year, according to the State Taxation

Administration.

After a government subsidy programme for NEVs terminated on 31 December 2022, which was first put in place in 2010 to stimulate the popularity of NEVs, "auto companies may adjust NEVs' selling prices based on assessments of the market, but the extension of the tax exemption remains bullish news for the sales of NEVs," said Wang Weisen, deputy general manager of the sales company of SGMW.

Boosted by incentive policies, China has seen a continued positive trend in domestic sales of NEVs, Wang noted.—Xinhua



Visitors view cars from Chinese electric automaker Nio during China (Tianjin) Auto Show 2021 in north China's Tianjin, 29 September 2021. PHOTO: XINHUA/LI RAN

Top Japan business lobby to request pay increases that top inflation



Toyota Motor Corp's labour union holds a gathering in Toyoda, Aichi Prefecture, during the course of shuntō wage negotiations in 2019. PHOTO: KYODO/FILE

JAPAN'S most influential business lobby plans to ask member companies to demonstrate their "social responsibility" by granting pay rises that outpace inflation during upcoming wage negotiations, its final policy draft showed Tuesday.

The guidelines by the Japan Business Federation, known as Keidanren, for corporate man-

agers discussing pay deals with labour unions in annual "shuntō" wage negotiations come as Prime Minister Fumio Kishida has urged businesses to give above-inflation wage rises as part of his "new capitalism" growth and redistribution policy.

But it remains to be seen just how far companies will heed Keidanren's request, which is set

to be adopted and published on 17 January. At a Tuesday press conference following a meeting of top Keidanren officials over the guidelines' content, Chairman Masakazu Tokura called for "wage rises across the supply chain" and indicated he wants to see wages rise at a variety of businesses, regardless of their size.—Kyodo

Inflation in Netherlands hits 47-year high in 2022

THE annual inflation rate in the Netherlands was 10 per cent in 2022, the highest since 1975 when the rate was 10.2 per cent as a result of the oil crisis, Statistics Netherlands (CBS) said on Tuesday. Last year, the price development of energy, such as electricity, gas and district heating, in particular contributed to the high rate. The energy was on average 114 per cent more expensive in 2022 than in 2021. The inflation rate was 2.7 per cent in

2021. Food and motor fuels also had an impact on inflation.

Food was 10.8 per cent more expensive than 12 months previously. In 2021, food prices were still 0.2 per cent lower. The rise in food prices was mainly caused by meat, dairy products, bread and grains, and vegetables. In 2022, motor fuels were 18.1 per cent more expensive than the year before, while in 2021, the increase was 16.8 per cent.—Xinhua



Pedestrians walk in a shopping street in the outlet centre Bataviastad in Lelystad, Northern Netherlands. PHOTO: AFP

Haitians flock for passports to reach US under new programme

HAITIANS seeking to escape from poverty and despair are flocking to government offices hoping to get a passport and perhaps their ticket to life in America under a new US immigration programme. At the main migration office in Port-au-

Prince, the crowd is so big that security officers keep the metal gates closed and only let people in one by one. Under the new policy announced by President Joe Biden, the United States will accept 30,000 people per month from Haiti and a handful of other

countries mired in crisis — Cuba, Nicaragua and Venezuela — but on condition they stay away from the overcrowded US border with Mexico and arrive by plane.

To qualify for this programme, candidates must also have a sponsor in the US who

can show sufficient income to support them. In the halls of the migration office in the Haitian capital, people seeking a way out line up and wait their turn.

"I have four sisters and 13 nieces and nephews who are US citizens. And some of them are in

the army," said a woman named Magalie Chauvert, confident she will get permission to enter the US. People applying for a passport in Haiti must buy a stamp that costs the equivalent of about \$50 — a fortune in the poorest country in the Americas.—AFP

Airbus tops Boeing in 2022 plane orders and deliveries

AIRBUS consolidated its leadership in civil aviation for 2022 on Tuesday, reporting more orders and deliveries than American archrival Boeing as both companies contend with lingering supply chain challenges.

In terms of deliveries, Airbus finished the year having 661 planes arrive with clients, much higher than Boeing's 480.

But the Airbus lead in new contracts was slimmer, with its 820 net orders outpacing Boeing by just

12.

Still, the US giant notched a 40 per cent jump in annual deliveries in its best year since 2018, prior to the lengthy global grounding of the 737 MAX after two deadly crashes and the massive travel downturn due to Covid-19.

Boeing's performance was plagued by a halt of more than one year to deliveries of the 787 Dreamliner, its other best-selling plane, which resumed deliveries only in August after an extensive

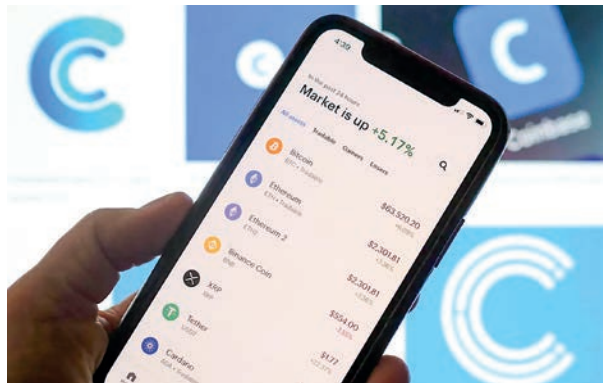
back-and-forth with US air safety regulators.

"We worked hard in 2022 to stabilize 737 production, resume 787 deliveries, launch the 777-8 Freighter and, most importantly, meet our customer commitments," said Boeing Commercial Airplanes President Stan Deal. "We will stay focused on driving stability within our operations and the supply chain as we work to deliver for our customers in 2023 and beyond," he added.—AFP



The aircraft manufacturer Airbus production facility for the Airbus A320 and A321 is pictured in Hamburg, Germany on 18 January 2022. PHOTO: AFP

Coinbase cuts 20% of jobs as crypto crisis continues



Coinbase is a US-based publicly traded cryptocurrency exchange. PHOTO: CHRIS DELMAS/AFP

CRYPTOCURRENCY trading platform Coinbase said Tuesday it was slashing 950 jobs, or just over 20 per cent of its workforce, as the fallout from the collapse of industry giant FTX continues.

Coinbase CEO Brian

Armstrong announced the cuts to the firm's 4,700 strong workforce in a blog message in which he decried the "unscrupulous actors" that have hurt the emerging market for cryptocurrencies.

The layoffs follow the

collapse of the FTX platform and arrest of founder Sam Bankman-Fried late last year which has put a black eye on the digital currency sector. "Coinbase is well capitalized, and crypto isn't going anywhere," Armstrong insisted in his post addressed to employees. He said that his company would ultimately be strengthened by recent events with a major rival gone and clearer rules from authorities on their way. Coinbase had already cut 18 per cent of its workforce in June, when the tremors hitting the cryptocurrency market first emerged.—AFP

Meta bans ads targeted at teens based on gender

META, owner of Instagram and Facebook, on Tuesday said it will stop allowing advertisers to target ads at teens based on gender, as it fights accusations that its platforms are harmful to young users.

Beginning in February, the social media gi-

ant said advertisers, the source of the company's massive revenues, would only be able to use age and location when targeting ads at teens globally.

In another break with practice, a teen's previous activity on Meta-owned apps will no longer inform

the ads they see, the company said.

In a blog post, Meta said that the changes came because it recognizes "that teens aren't necessarily as equipped as adults to make decisions about how their online data is used for advertising."—AFP

PESTICIDES DISTRIBUTOR CHANGING

We, **Shanghai Yuelian Chemical Industry Co.,Ltd**, would like to change the Distributor of the following products, from **Myanmar Byter Agro Tech Co.,Ltd** to **Myanmar Gold Medal Crop Science Co.,Ltd**. If any object or enquiry, please contact to Pesticide Registration Board, Plant Protection Division, Department of Agriculture, Yangon, from here to next (2) weeks.

No	Trade Name	Active Ingredient Name	Registration Type	Registration Number
1	Kaung Mon	Pyraclostrobin 28% + Tebuconazole 14% EC	Provisional	P2022-4826

Myanmar Gold Medal Crop Science Co.,Ltd
Tel: 09-784772103

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V UNI ACCORD VOY.NO. (0284-739N)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V UNI ACCORD VOY.NO. (0284-739N)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **13-1-2023** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **AWPT** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

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

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V OSLO TRADER VOY.NO. (252W)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V OSLO TRADER VOY.NO. (252W)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **13-1-2023** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MIP/MITT** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S SEALAND MAERSK ASIA PTE LTD

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V MSC FORTUNE F VOY.NO. (SB301A)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V MSC FORTUNE F VOY.NO. (SB301A)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **13-1-2023** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **AWPT** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S MEDITERRANEAN SHIPPING COMPANY S.A

GLOBAL AFFAIRS

Russia appoints new military commander in Ukraine



Russian RS-24 Yars intercontinental ballistic missile systems are seen on the Red Square for the Victory Day parade in Moscow, Russia, 9 May 2019. **PHOTO: BAI XUEQI / XINHUA**

CHIEF of the General Staff of the Russian Armed Forces Valery Gerasimov has been appointed the new commander of Russia's integrated group of forces in Ukraine, the Defence Ministry said Wednesday.

Gerasimov will succeed Sergei Surovikin, commander-in-chief of the Russian Aerospace Forces, who was appointed commander of Russia's integrated group of forces in the special military operation in Ukraine in October last year.

Surovikin, Commander-in-Chief of the Ground For-

ces Oleg Salyukov, and Deputy Chief of the General Staff Alexei Kim have been appointed as Gerasimov's deputies, according to the ministry.

The decision was made due to the fact that a wider range of tasks will be implemented within the scope of the special military operation, the ministry said, adding that closer interaction will be required between branches of the forces, and the troops will need stronger support as well as more effective command and control. —Xinhua

Japan may allow firms to donate to S Korean fund over wartime labour

THE government is considering allowing Japanese firms to



A public hearing to discuss wartime labour issues stemming from Japan's colonial-era rule of the Korean Peninsula is held in Seoul on 12 January 2023. **PHOTO: KYODO**

donate to a South Korean fund for compensation to wartime labour lawsuit plaintiffs on behalf of Japanese defendant companies, a government source said Thursday.

Japan plans to make it a condition for the South Korean fund to give up on demanding money from the companies, which have been ordered by South Korean courts to compensate the plaintiffs, according to the source.

The Japanese government is unlikely to offer an additional apology for its past colonial rule of the Korean Peninsula and related issues and is expected to stand by its past statements, the source added. —Kyodo

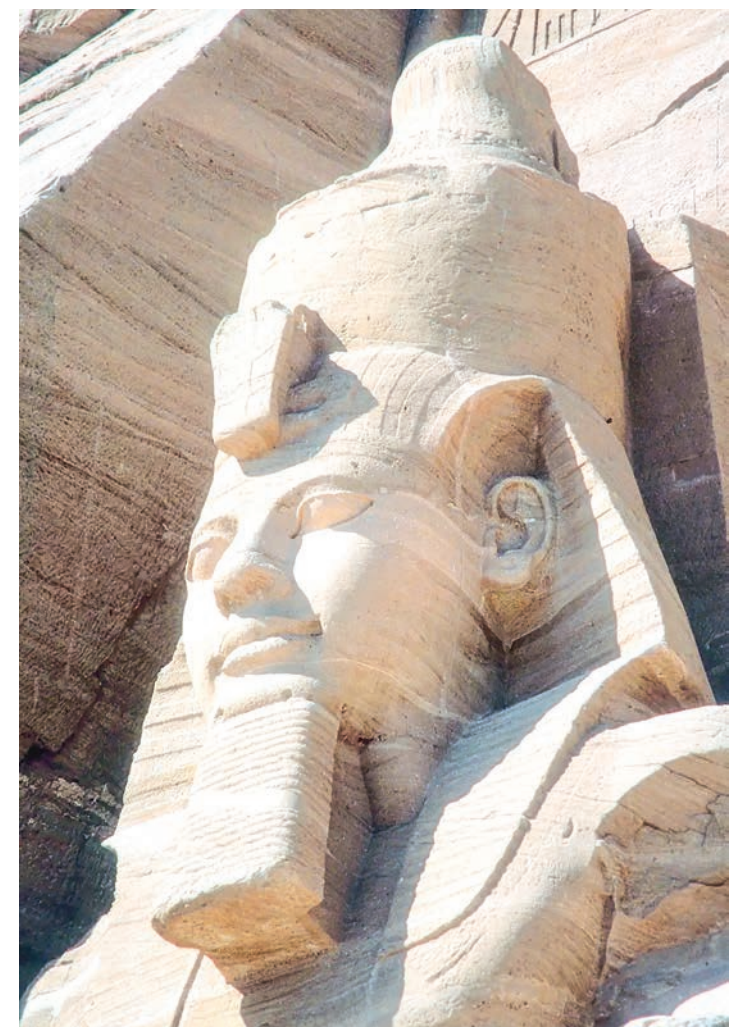
Egypt stops bid to steal 10-tonne ancient statue

EGYPTIAN authorities said Tuesday they had detained three people for trying to steal with a crane.

The public prosecutor's office said in a statement it had "ordered three defendants be held in custody for four days pending investigations", accusing them "of attempting to steal a pharaonic statue" from the

ancient southern city of Aswan, some 675 kilometres (420 miles) south of Cairo on the Nile.

The statement said police had reported that "three people were arrested in possession of manual digging tools and heavy equipment, a crane", which they had used in a bid to "lift the statue and excavate antiquities in the area". —AFP



A millennia-old 10-tonne statue of the pharaoh Ramses II. **PHOTO: BRITANNICA/AFP**

WORLD: TOP HEADLINES

Australia urges quick security deal with PNG

AUSTRALIAN Prime Minister Anthony Albanese called Thursday for a "swift" new security deal with Papua New Guinea, as his government seeks to parry China's expanding influence in the Pacific.

In a first-ever address to the Papua New Guinea parliament by a foreign head of government, Al-

banese underscored the need for a Pacific "family first" approach – implicitly at Beijing's expense.

The Australian leader urged a "swift conclusion" to negotiations on a security treaty covering "law and order challenges" in the resource-rich Pacific nation. —AFP

Top US court backs WhatsApp suit over Pegasus spyware

THE US Supreme Court on Monday rejected a bid by NSO Group to block a WhatsApp lawsuit accusing the Israeli tech firm of allowing mass cyberespionage of journalists and human rights activists. The Supreme Court denied NSO's plea for legal immunity and ruled that the case, which targets the company's Pegasus

software, can continue in a California federal court, a court filing showed. Pegasus gives its government customers – which have allegedly included Mexico, Hungary, Morocco and India – near-complete access to a target's device, including their personal data, photos, messages and location. —AFP

Benedict's confidant spills beans on two-popes tension

JUST one week after the funeral of Benedict XVI, his closest aide released a much-trailed memoir Thursday, revealing details of tensions between the late pope emeritus and his more liberal successor Pope Francis.

Georg Gaenswein's book reveals private conversations with both popes in charting the German ex-pontiff's rise to power and the decade spent in retirement following his shock resignation in 2013.

The Vatican has not officially responded but Pope Francis

called Gaenswein in to a private meeting on Monday, following days of pre-publication interviews in which the 66-year-old German aired years of grievances.

In one, he claimed it had "pained Benedict's heart" when Francis effectively reversed his predecessor's decision to relax restrictions on the use of the traditional Latin mass.

Up until his death on 31 December at the age of 95, Benedict had remained a figurehead for the conservative wing of the Catholic Church, which views

Pope Francis as too liberal.

Shocked and speechless

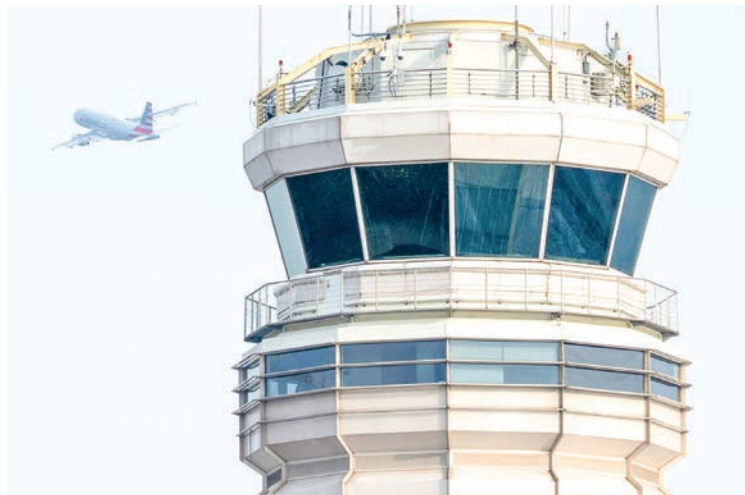
As his secretary since 2003, Gaenswein was a constant presence at Benedict's side, and during his final years living in a monastery in the Vatican grounds, his gatekeeper.

After Benedict's death, Gaenswein led the mourners, greeting visitors to his mentor's lying-in-state and kissing the coffin in front of tens of thousands at St Peter's Square during the funeral led by Pope Francis.—AFP



German Archbishop Georg Gaenswein kisses the coffin of Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI at the start of his funeral mass at St. Peter's square in the Vatican on 5 January. PHOTO: AFP

US flights grounded over system outage, snarling airports



An American Airlines plane departs Newark International Airport in New Jersey on Wednesday. PHOTO: AFP

AVIATION authorities were forced to temporarily ground all domestic flights across the United States on Wednesday due to a crucial alert system outage, triggering thousands of delays and cancellations.

The Federal Aviation Administration said normal oper-

ations were being restored but the early morning halt created knock-on effects that snarled travel throughout the day.

The grounding order was issued after the FAA identified an issue with the Notice to Air Missions system (NOTAM), which provides information to

pilots about hazards, changes to airport facilities and information that can affect flights.

The agency tweeted that it was still investigating the cause of the problem.

But the outage spelled yet another hellish day for US travelers less than a month after a bad winter storm roiled the system.

"I just learned that my flight was delayed again," said Vince Hamilton, who was at Reagan National Airport near Washington seeking to travel to Chicago, and then on to St. Louis where, he said, "I have to catch a bus that I'm probably going to miss."

The nationwide halt was believed to be the first such stop order since the attacks of 9/11, according to aviation experts cited in US media. The FAA did not respond to queries seeking confirmation.—AFP

WORLD: TOP HEADLINES

China moves to regulate deepfake technology

NEW rules went into effect in China on Tuesday to regulate the use of deepfakes, the increasingly realistic digital video manipulations that have sparked disinformation fears around the globe.

Deepfake technology allows users to replace one person's face with another in a video, or to put words into a speaker's mouth, with at times disconcerting realism.

The technique relies on artificial intelligence and has proven popular on social media, where amusing and often uncanny creations featuring face-swapping celebrities abound.—AFP

Brasilia ups security over new protest threat

SECURITY was boosted in Brasilia Wednesday as backers of ex-president Jair Bolsonaro vowed fresh protests just days after riots that shocked the Brazilian capital.

Demonstrations called for several cities on Wednesday evening were slow to get started, however, with officers in anti-riot gear and helicopter backup left twiddling their thumbs for what had been billed as a major mobilization.

AFP observed virtually no turnout in Brasilia, Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo, nothing like the "gigantic" rally promised to "take power back" from Bolsonaro's successor Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva.—AFP

ISIS claims responsibility for bombing outside Afghan ministry in Kabul

THE Islamic State jihadist group claimed responsibility Wednesday for a suicide bombing outside the foreign ministry in Kabul that officials and witnesses said killed at least five people and wounded 40 others. An IS member slipped by Taliban security barriers "before blowing up his explosive belt in the middle of employees and guards," the Amaq news agency of the local chapter of Islamic

State said on the Telegram messaging app. An AFP team was conducting an interview inside the information ministry next door when Wednesday's blast took place. A company driver waiting outside saw a man holding a bag and with a rifle slung over his shoulder walk past before the man blew himself up.

"He passed by my car and after a few seconds there was a

loud blast," Jamshed Karimi said, adding he saw 20 to 25 casualties. "I saw the man blowing himself up." Kabul police spokesman Khalid Zadran said five civilians were killed and several more wounded by the blast.

The local IS branch, known as Islamic State-Khorasan (ISK), claimed that the blast killed at least 20 people, "including several 'diplomatic' employees".—AFP



Islamic State jihadist group claimed responsibility Wednesday for a suicide bombing outside the foreign ministry in Kabul. PHOTO: AFP

Benedict's confidant spills beans on two-popes tension

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SPORT

Djokovic to play 75th-ranked Spaniard on Australian Open return

NOVAK Djokovic was drawn Thursday to play Spain's Roberto Carballes Baena on his return to the Australian Open and could meet Nick Kyrgios in the last eight.

The Serbian star, who was deported a year ago, will kick-start his bid for a 10th Melbourne title and a record-equalling 22nd Grand Slam crown against a player ranked 75th in the world.

In the absence of injured world number one Carlos Alcaraz, defending champion Rafael Nadal takes the top seed and starts against Britain's promising Jack Draper.

On the women's side, top seed and world number one Iga Swiatek will meet Germany's Jule Niemeier as she targets a maiden Grand Slam title in Australia. —AFP

Myanmar team win gold medal in Cambodian Chess trio tourney



The Myanmar team (left) competes against the Thai team during the Cambodian Chess Out Chaktrang Trio Tournament in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. PHOTO: BALA SOE

THE Myanmar Chess Team won the gold medal in the Cambodian Chess Out Chaktrang Trio Tournament held as a prelude to the 32nd Southeast Asian (SEA Games).

Win Zaw Tun, Nay Oo Kyaw Tun, and Nyein Chan representing Myanmar won gold with a score of 11.5 points in the trio chess competition being held at the Royal University in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. The silver medal was won by the Thai team with 11 points while the bronze was won by the Cambodian team with nine points.

In the four-player chess tournament, the Myanmar team won the bronze medal as well. The chess tournament will be held from 6 to 13 January in Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

The Cambodian traditional chess game (Out Chaktrang) will be included in the 32nd Southeast Asian Games (SEA Games) to be hosted by Cambodia. — Bala Soe/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.

Myanmar team included in Group B of Paris Olympic Women's 1st-round Qualifiers



THE lot-drawing ceremony for the 2024 Paris Olympic Women's Asian Zone first-round Qualifiers was held in Malaysia on 12 January, and the Myanmar team went into Group B.

The first-round qualifiers will be held in seven groups, with 26 teams divided into four groups of five and two groups of three.

According to the qualification format, only the top teams from the seven groups will be allowed to participate in the second-round qualifiers.

Group A sees Uzbekistan, Jordan, Timor-Leste, and Bhutan while Group B includes Myanmar, Iran, Bangladesh, and Maldives.

Meanwhile, Viet Nam is placed in Group C with Nepal, Palestine, and Afghanistan and Thailand are in Group D with Mongolia, Singapore, and Sri Lanka.

Group E features the Philippines, Hong Kong, Tajikistan, and Pakistan, and Group F consists of China Taipei, Indonesia, and Lebanon.

India, Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan are falling into Group G.

The first group matches will be held from 3 to 11 April 2023. Asian powerhouses such as Japan, North Korea, Australia, China and South Korean teams will compete from the second qualifiers and will face against seven best teams from the first-round qualifiers.

The second-round qualifiers will be divided into three groups of four teams, and only the top team from each of the three groups and the best three second-placed teams will be allowed to participate in the third-round qualifiers.

The Myanmar women's national team has been training since December for the international competitions to be completed in 2023, including the Paris Olympic qualifiers, and is handled by Daw Thet Thet Win as the head coach.

The Paris Olympic qualifiers are also the first international competition to be held this year for team Myanmar. — Ko Nyi Lay/KZL



Myanmar women's national team during training in 2022. PHOTO: THAW GYI