

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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The Republic of the Union of Myanmar State Administration Council: Five-Point Road Map

1. Priority will be given to fully realizing peace, stability and rule of law throughout the Union to safeguard the socioeconomic life of the people.
2. People-centred development work that enhances socioeconomic well-being will be undertaken to ensure the country's prosperity and food security.
3. Processes will further continue to consolidate a genuine, disciplined multiparty democratic system and build a Union based on democracy and federalism.
4. Priority will be accorded to work aligned with the agreements set out in the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement, in order to achieve enduring peace for the entire nation.
5. Upon accomplishing the provisions of the state of emergency, free and fair multiparty democratic elections will be held in line with the 2008 Constitution, and further work will be undertaken to hand over State duties to the winning party in accordance with democratic standards.

It is necessary to seek other ways than incinerating agricultural waste to be used as fertilizers: Senior General



State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing views the reclamation process of farmlands in Gwaybin smart village of Tatkon Township yesterday.

TATKON area can grow sunflower for Nay Pyi Taw to become an oil pot of the nation, said Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing on his trips to inspect the temporary dam at Hsinthe Creek in Shadaw Village of Tatkon Township and solar-powered water pumping

process yesterday afternoon.

Nay Pyi Taw Council Chairman U Tin Oo Lwin and officials reported on the construction of the temporary dam and solar-powered water pumping process across the nation, progress in growing summer and monsoon paddy and other crops Nay Pyi Taw Council Area within

five years.

In his response to the reports, the Senior General pointed out that if farmlands get sufficient water, double crops will increase and agricultural produce will boost. Hence, it is necessary to systematically implement water supply projects.

Then, the Senior General

said that Myanmar possesses 13 million acres of farmlands, 590,000 acres of croplands and more than 300,000 acres of hillside farmlands in addition to more than 14 million acres of horticultural lands and over 640,000 acres of other lands. These lands must be efficiently utilized.

The Senior General noted

that water is required in cultivation in the dry season. Water can be taken from rivers and creeks as well as dams and underground water. If water pumping stations can use solar power in summer, it can reduce fuel consumption.

SEE PAGE-2

Pyin Oo Lwin

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Country needs to stand tall among global nations

If we are united and make our efforts, without doubt, we would become a regional power, and eventually a world power. I would like to praise all the national races of the Union for their steadfastness in the face of adversities during the 75 years. I would also like to urge all of you to make every effort with patriotic and national spirit, for national perpetuation and for our country to stand tall among global nations. “So long as the world exists, so does Myanmar.”

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

It is necessary to seek other ways than incinerating agricultural waste to be used as fertilizers: Senior General



State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing inspects the Shadaw solar-powered water pumping process yesterday.

FROM PAGE-1

The Senior General stressed that it is necessary to seek other ways than incinerating agricultural waste to be used as fertilizers. Conservation and cultivation of trees should be done for ensuring a lush and green environment. Myanmar’s deforestation declines by 8 per cent. Hence,

forests must be conserved not to cause direness of water.

Myanmar imports cooking oil on a yearly basis. Oil crop cultivation at home does not be sufficient for the country. Currently, the per-acre yield of sunflowers is high. Relevant ministries are assigned to increase the per-acre yield of sunflowers. Tatkon area

can grow sunflowers for Nay Pyi Taw to become an oil pot of the nation.

The Senior General instructed officials not to reduce cultivable lands as the country mostly operates agriculture and livestock farming tasks. Officials need to tackle farmlands issues under the law. The development

of the nation is not for the government but for the country. The Senior General called for striving to successfully operate agricultural farms rather than utilizing underground natural resources.

The Senior General inspected the functions of the Shadaw solar-powered water pumping station and gave guidance on the

implementation of the solar-powered water pumping process on a wider scale through a cooperative system.

The Senior General also inspected the reclamation of 79.88 acres of farmlands in Gwaybin smart village and gave guidance. —MNA/TTA

TV programmes of Thingyan dance troupes shot at MRTV

SHOOTINGS were made for TV programmes of the “Hnithit Thingyan”, “Nway Ma” and “Thingyan Moe” performed by the Kamayut education families’ dance troupe, and the “Nway Aatar”, “Padauk Pwe”, “Thingyan Minthalay”, “Hnitkuu Atta Pwe” and “Padauk Yadana” performed by the Yangon City Development Committee dance troupe at the Myanma Radio and Television on Pyay Road in Yangon yesterday.

In addition, Walking Thingyan will be held in Nay Pyi Taw along with Ethnic People Thingyan, Youth Game Thingyan, Thanaka Thingyan, and water-splashing pandals from ministries among others in order to preserve traditional culture while portraying Myanmar Traditional Thingyan Festival in a disciplined manner.

— MNA/KZW



Shootings of Thingyan dance troupes are underway at MRTV in Yangon yesterday.

Physical and mental strength is crucial in discharging duties and taking family measures: Vice-Senior General

ONLY when they have comprehensive training will they have skills to handle modern arms and equipment in doing their tasks bravely, said Vice Chairman of the State Administration Council Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Soe Win at the meeting with Tatmadaw members and families in Mongpyin Station yesterday afternoon.

Speaking on the occasion, the Vice-Senior General said Armed conflicts were triggered by various concepts and attitudes such as racism, dogmatism and religionism due to the instigation of the colonialists although ethnic people reside in a single country in unity through thick and thin. Attempts were made to totally remove the Tatmadaw from the political platform.

Currently, attempts are being made to break up the Tatmadaw with political, economic, social and military attacks. To emerge misunderstanding and pressures in the international



Vice-Chairman of the State Administration Council Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Soe Win meets Tatmadaw members and families in Mongpyin Station yesterday.

community, terrorists brutally killed some persons identified as informants but attempts were put blame on accusing the Tatmadaw of murders. Hence, all need to overcome such instigation and intimidation.

The Vice-Senior General stressed the need to take train-

ing under the timetable. Only when they have comprehensive training will they have the skills to handle modern arms and equipment in doing their tasks bravely.

Physical and mental strength is crucial in discharging duties and taking family measures. To do so, the dos and don'ts and

directives have been issued for all. Reading contributes to the improvement of morale.

The Vice-Senior General coordinated with officials to solve the problems of Tatmadaw members and families.

After the meeting, the Vice-Senior General, his wife Daw

Than Than Nwe and Chief of the General Staff (Army, Navy and Air) General Maung Maung Aye and wife presented foodstuffs, cash assistance and sports equipment for Tatmadaw members, families and maternal and child welfare association through officials. — MNA/TTA

Intellectuals and intelligentsia are important in building modern armed forces: Vice-Senior General



Vice-Chairman of the State Administration Council Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Soe Win meets instructors and trainees at the Military Computer and Technology Institute in Hopong Station yesterday.

ALL Tatmadaw members need to adjust their income and spending and they have to avoid gambling, said Vice-Chairman of the State Administration Council Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Soe Win at the meeting with instructors and trainees at the Military Computer and Technology Institute in Hopong Station yesterday afternoon.

In his speech, the Vice-Senior General urged trainees to learn relevant subjects to be

applied in engineering works at regiments and units. They all must have the capacity to provide the necessary engineering expertise for regional development measures. It is necessary to avoid illegal acts not to tarnish the image of the prestige of the school and the Tatmadaw.

It can be seen some cases of breaking the military disciplines related to monetary affairs. All Tatmadaw members need to adjust their income and spending and they have to avoid gambling. They have to notice that



monetary affairs, gambling and indulgence may harm security measures.

Intellectuals and intelligentsia are important in building modern armed forces. Hence, trainees need to strive to learn the wider-scale of relevant subjects to be professionals.

The Vice-Senior General and the Chief of the General Staff (Army, Navy and Air) presented foodstuffs and sports equipment for trainees to officials.

The Vice-Senior General cordially greeted instructors and trainees. — MNA/TTA

SAC Vice-Chairman Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services C-in-C (Army) Vice-Senior General Soe Win inspects military hospital, agriculture and livestock tasks in Bahtoo Station

VICE-CHAIRMAN of the State Administration Council Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Soe Win, wife Daw Than Than Nwe, Chief of General Staff (Army, Navy and Air) General Maung Maung Aye and wife, senior military officers from the Office of the Commander-in-Chief and the Eastern Command commander inspected the Tatmadaw hospital, agriculture and livestock works in Bahtoo Station yesterday.



State Administration Council Vice-Chair Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services C-in-C (Army) Vice-Senior General Soe Win views the irrigation and potato cultivation in Bahtoo yesterday.



The Vice-Senior General provides foodstuff to patients.



The wife of the Vice-Senior General encourages the patients.

First, the Vice-Senior General and party went to the military hospital in Bahtoo and comforted the monks, officers and other ranks, families and locals and provided them with foodstuffs.

Similarly, the Vice-Senior General and wife and party comforted the patients at the maternity and child ward and presented aid to them.

The Vice-Senior General and his wife donated cash awards for health staff from the hospital and cash donations for the hospital to the commandant.

At the briefing hall of the Defence Services (Army) Combat Training School (Bahtoo), the commandants of Defence Services (Army) Combat Training School (Bahtoo), Officers Training School (Bahtoo) and Tatmadaw (Army) Warrant Officers

Training School reported on the training courses, implementation of four points for building military unit and reclamation of new farmlands.

Then, at the Livestock Breeding and Training Battalion, the Vice-Senior General and party inspected the 55 acres of model agriculture and livestock farms, seasonal crops and land substitute crops plantation, tissue-culture bananas cultivation in Green House, breeding of DYL pigs and breeding chickens with farm pond type and air-cooled system, raising beef cattle and dairy cattle.

During the inspection, he instructed them to carry out agriculture and livestock farming successfully, to sell the products at fairer prices to the military units, government employees



The Vice-Senior General views round the Paungsee Farm.

and residents and to make efforts to be a model breeding zone and to conduct research on cow species.

He then talked about the production of good fruit and veg-

etable species and the selling of seeds at K500 per bag which is cheaper than about K2000 in market prices. He added that a chilli pepper plant produces about 10 ticals of chilli and a bag

of chilli species can produce about 70 visses and one viss of chilli pepper can fetch about K7,000. Therefore, it will make a profit of over K400,000 after deducting the production costs. The families of Bahtoo station can make extra income from their manageable scale of farming.

The Vice-Senior General and party visited the Paungsee Farm (Bahtoo San) at Tatmadaw (Army) Combat Training School (Bahtoo) and inspected the new farmlands with the help of the Irrigation and Water Utilization Management Department, one acre of potato and eight acres of summer paddy cultivation.

They then inspected the breeding processes at the Paungsee Farm of Defence Services (Army) Officers Training School (Bahtoo) and Warrant Officers Training School. — MNA/KTZH

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

MoTC hosts Families' Thingyan Festival

THE Ministry of Transport and Communications hosted families' pre-Thingyan water festival at Office 2, Office 5 and Office 29 of the ministry in Nay Pyi Taw on 7 April.

Deputy Prime Minister MoTC Union Minister Admiral Tin Aung San and his wife, the deputy ministers, permanent secretaries, senior officials, their wives, and ministry personnel participated in the festival and watched the Thingyan songs and choral dances of the ministry's family members.



Deputy Prime Minister MoTC Union Minister Admiral Tin Aung San attends the ministry's Thingyan festival, watching Thingyan dances at the event on 7 April.



Then, the Union minister and attendees presented cash awards to family members who performed Thingyan songs and Thingyan choral dances. Afterwards, the festival ended by splashing water with each other. — MNA/MKKS

MoI Union Minister joins pre-Myanmar Traditional Festival and funfair at Myanmar Arts and Handicraft Centre (Yangon)

UNION Minister for Information U Maung Maung Ohn joined the pre-Myanmar Traditional Festival and funfair of the Union of Myanmar Bamar Ethnic Entrepreneurs Association held at Myanmar Arts and Handicraft Centre (Yangon) in North Okkalapa Township in Yangon yesterday.

Also present at the event were Yangon Region Chief Minister U Soe Thein, Deputy Minister for Ethnic Affairs U Zaw Aye Maung, region Ethnic Affairs Minister U Saw Jet Kaw Htoo and other departmental officials, Indian Counsellor Mr

R C Yadav, CEO of Centre for Investment and Trade Dr Sital Kumar, Economic and Commercial Counsellor Mr Tan Shufu of the Chinese Embassy in Myanmar and other officials of business organizations.

First, the Union Minister extended best wishes to the diplomats, partner organizations, ethnic entrepreneurs and attendees for the new year. He also invited them to Nay Pyi Taw walking Thingyan. He added that the Myanmar film academy award ceremony in the first week of May in Nay Pyi Taw. The country grabs



Union Minister U Maung Maung Ohn and dignitaries cut the ceremonial ribbon yesterday.



Union Minister U Maung Maung Ohn and party view round the exhibition at the event yesterday.

an achievement as the country exported rice by cooperating with 47 rice-related business persons.

Then, Deputy Minister U Zaw Aye Maung, the vice-president of the UMFCCI and the chairman of the Myanmar Bamar Ethnic Entrepreneurs Association made remarks and aims of the festivals.

Afterwards, the Union minister and relevant officials cut the ribbon "Pre-Myanmar Traditional Thingyan Festival and Funfair 2023".

The Union minister and

party also enjoyed the entertainment of kindergarten and dance troupes.

They also observed over 30 stalls of the Myanmar Bamar Ethnic Entrepreneurs Association.

The Union minister enjoyed the live performance of the "Padauk Ne Atu" Friday Night Live Show at MRTV on 7 March.

The programme was broadcasted via MRTV HD Channel to entertain the people and replayed at 10:30 am on 9 April. — MNA/KTZH

Four new cases of COVID-19 reported on 8 April, total figure registers 634,098

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases registered **634,098** after **four** new cases were reported on 8 April 2023 according to the Ministry of Health. The total number of patients who have recovered from COVID-19 in the country reached **614,596**.

The death toll from COVID-19 in the country remained unchanged at **19,490** on 8-4-2023 with no new death reported from the pandemic. — GNLM

CURRENT AFFAIRS

Sitagu eye hospital provides surgeries for over 200 patients

MORE than 200 eye patients will be admitted to undergo surgery treatment free of cost at the Sitagu Sakkudana Eye Hospital in Dagon Myothit (North) Township.

Examinations and surgical operations were made for eye patients from Dagon Myothit (North) Township from 5 to 10 April at the Sitagu Sakkudana Eye Hospital. As of 8 April, over 1,200 eye patients have been examined and 207 are set to have surgical treatment.

On the first day of treatment on 5 April, a total of 344 patients

received examinations and treatment and 96 others underwent surgical operations. All patients were provided with food donations. Surgeries were made for 19 eye patients on 7 and 8 April. The majority who came for surgical treatment are cataract and glaucoma patients.

Currently, the Sitagu International Buddhist Missionary Association (SIBMA) opened 45 Sitagu Sakkudana eye hospitals in states and regions and provided eye surgical treatment for 250,000 patients. – TWA/MKKS



Eye patients are under treatment.



Sitagu Sayadaw seen at the Sitagu eye hospital in Yangon.

Yangon circular trains to pause running during Thingyan



A new circular train is seen running in Yangon.

ACCORDING to Yangon Railways Station, Yangon circular trains will stop running during the Thingyan period.

All train services around Yangon will be

suspended from 14 April Thingyan (Akya Day) to 16 April Thingyan (Athet Day).

From 17 April, the end of the Thingyan period, the service will be

operated as usual.

Due to the increase in the number of passengers riding the circular train, the Yangon circular train is currently running 30 times a day as usual.

The Yangon-Insein section is run when the city service is suspended for a week due to the expansion of the railway section, and the trip fee is set at only K100.

At present, due to the large number of people returning from Yangon to the countryside, the Thingyan special train service will be extended until 10 April, according to Myanmar Railways. —TWA/KZL

Myanmar to participate in 20th China-ASEAN Expo

MYANMAR business people will participate in CAEXPO (China-ASEAN Expo) free of charge, which will be held in Nanning, Guangxi, China, said Vice-General Secretary Mr Shi Zuyao of China from the ASEAN Expo (CAEXPO) Secretariat while meeting with UM-FCCI Vice-President Dr Win Sithu on 6 April.

He invited Myanmar business people to participate in the four-day 20th CAEXPO to be held in September.

The RCEP members countries like South Korea and Japan confirmed that they will join the expo and the ASEAN countries like

Thailand, Viet Nam, Laos, Myanmar and Brunei also arrange to launch galleries, said Vice-General Secretary Shi Zuyao.

Myanmar participated in the 19th China - ASEAN Expo (CAEXPO) with over 30 booths of gemstones, wooden furniture, agricultural products and food products.

The CAEXPO will include Business Matching in addition to opportunities

for trading and business sector, according to UM-FCCI.

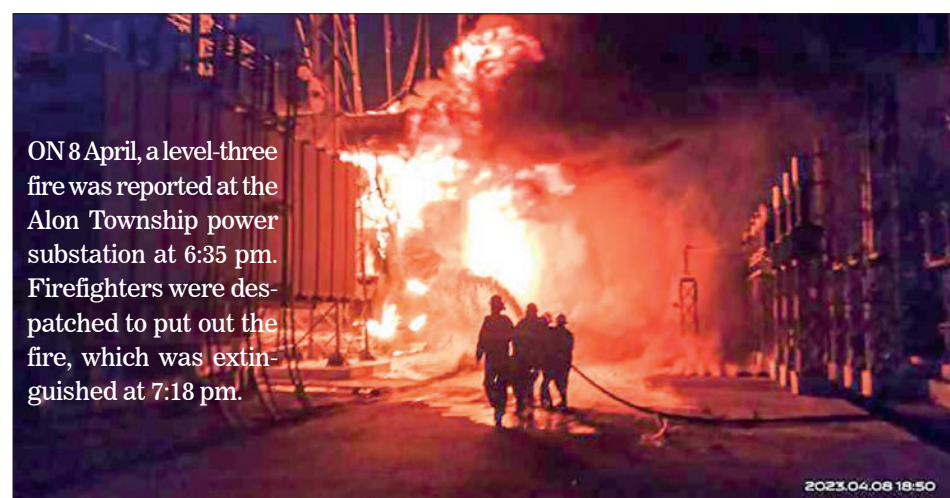
The exhibition area will be 82,000 square metres and the expo will cover electronic information, new land-waterway outlets, cross-border e-commerce and new retails, cooperation for the conservation of the natural environment and new energy vehicles, according to Xinhua News Agency. – TWA/KTZH

Photo taken on 11 September 2021 shows the "Belt and Road" International Pavilion at the 18th China-ASEAN Expo.



PHOTO NEWS

Fire breaks out at power substation on Kanna Road in Alon tsp



ON 8 April, a level-three fire was reported at the Alon Township power substation at 6:35 pm. Firefighters were dispatched to put out the fire, which was extinguished at 7:18 pm.

2023.04.08 18:50



Fire Brigade members are seen struggling to extinguish the fire. **PHOTOS: MFSD**

2023.04.08 18:50

LOCAL BUSINESS

MoC organizes team to check weight, quality of export rice and rice products

THE Ministry of Commerce said it organized a team to check the weight and quality of rice and rice products for export.

The ministry assigned the Myanmar Inspection and Testing Services Ltd (MITS) by organizing the team to check the weight and quality of rice and rice products for export on 6 April exercising the authorities under Notification 231/2022 of the State Administration Council issued on 19 December 2022.

The MITS shall have to check whether the weight of rice and rice products is in conformity with the fixed quality or meet the quality control processes, and the rice and rice products must be exported with the recommendation of that company.

Moreover, the MITS can cooperate with the business organizations of the rice sector,

and wholesale centres in carrying out the duties mentioned in the order and can collect the fees for testing depending on the types of tests as per the standards of technology and SOPs. It can also release public notices with the approval of the ministry.

Moreover, the MITS has the authority to issue the findings on the inspection of the weight and quality of rice and rice products to the business organizations or companies, the copies to governmental organizations and companies if necessary.

The MITS shall submit a report once every three months to the ministry. The MITS must report unusual cases while serving the duties to the ministry to seek a decision in a timely manner and carry out the duties as per the instructions of the ministry.



Export rice bags are seen at the rice mill.

Therefore, if there is any dispute regarding the findings of MITS, the business organi-

zations or companies can report to the ministry within two weeks from the date of issue with firm

evidence and the decision of the ministry must be the final solution. – NN/ KTZH

Myanmar foreign trade surges to over \$33.9 bln in FY2022-2023



MYANMAR'S external trade between April and March of the last Financial Year 2022-2023 (April-March) tremendously grew to US\$33.9 billion, reflecting a significant increase of over \$3.57 billion as against the year-ago period, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

The figures surged from \$30.35 billion in the corresponding period of FY2021-2022.

Myanmar's export was worth over \$16.575 billion whereas the country's import was valued at \$17.349 billion last FY.

With border posts between Myanmar and China resuming,

the border trade bounced back to \$8.57 billion, showing an increase of \$818.268 million as against the year-ago period. Similarly, Myanmar's seaborne trade amounted to over \$25.35 billion in the FY2022-2023, indicating a sharp rise of \$3.74 billion from the year-ago period.

Myanmar targets to achieve exports worth \$15.5 billion and imports worth \$14 billion in the 2022-2023 FY, the National Planning Law stated.

Therefore, the overall trade value surpassed its targets.

Myanmar exports agricultural products, animal products,

minerals, forest products, and finished industrial goods, while it imports capital goods, raw industrial materials, and consumer goods. The country's export sector relies more on the agricultural and manufacturing sectors. The Ministry of Commerce is focusing on reducing the trade deficit, export promotion, import substitution and market diversification.

The external trade stood at \$15.5 billion in the past mini-budget 2021-2022 (October-March) period and \$29.58 billion in the 2020-2021 FY, as per the Commerce Ministry's statistics. — KK

Prices of fuel oil, gold and dollar on 8 April 2023

Fuel Oil Price (Yangon)

Octane 92	K2,250
Octane 95	K2,315
Diesel	K2,150
Premium Diesel	K2,230

All of the prices are based on per litre.

Gold Price

The reference price of high-purity gold set by YGEA	K2,364,500 per tical
High-purity gold in the gold market	K2,968,000 per tical

US Dollar Vs Kyat

A US dollar set by the Central Bank of Myanmar	K2,100
A US dollar in the forex market	K2,855 to K2,870

The above prices may change from time to time.

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OPINION

Use quality strains of cotton for boosting production

COTTON is one of the important crops in Myanmar. Hence, Myanmar people dub it as staple cotton. Local growers generally cultivate quality strains of long and short staple cotton on their croplands. As Myanmar people use cotton in making textiles and personal goods, it is necessary to grow any strains of cotton to meet the local sufficiency of cotton.

In the past, local growers cultivated cotton plants on 450,000 acres of croplands. In 2011, the country placed croplands under cotton plants but the number of sown acreage gradually declined for various reasons. In the previous year, cotton yielded 438.5 visses per acre, and the whole country yielded 198.7 million visses of cotton in total. Currently, the country still requires 363 million visses of cotton.

The use of quality cotton strains and correct agricultural techniques can contribute to producing high quality and boosting the per-acre yield of cotton for meeting the local cotton demand and reducing spending of foreign exchange in reducing import of cotton abroad as well as benefiting the cotton growers.

If local farmers can strive for boosting the production of cotton to 700 visses per acre, the country can reduce the import volume of the cotton year after year. Hence, it is necessary to arrange chances for local growers to cultivate cotton plants on the previous number of sown acreage in regions and states. To do so, local authorities need to meet local cotton growers to fulfil their needs.

It can be seen that local growers prefer to grow long-staple cotton species. However, cotton wool domestically produced from the croplands is of lesser volume as well as needs high quality. As such, both local authorities and farmers are to emphasize the production of quality cotton wool to be used in producing quality threads. Up to now, as the country imports various sizes of threads necessary for making textiles, it is necessary to improve the cultivation and production of cotton without fail.

Local authorities should arrange the expansion of cotton sown acreage, use modern cultivation techniques, boost per-acre yield and distribute quality strains of cotton for local growers. As such, cotton growers, businesspersons and the government are to join hands in seeking necessary quality cotton strains and producing quality cotton wool.

Currently, as the government is striving for seeking modern agricultural techniques in the cultivation of cotton from abroad and the distribution of quality cotton strains in order to meet the local cotton demand, officials from regions and states are to participate in endeavours for boosting the production of cotton.

The use of quality cotton strains and correct agricultural techniques can contribute to producing high quality and boosting the per-acre yield of cotton for meeting the local cotton demand and reducing spending of foreign exchange in reducing import of cotton abroad as well as benefiting the cotton growers.

Tagu, Padauk and Thingyan

By Maung Swe Ngae

* Tagu brings seasonal flowers of Padauk
When the old year goes out
When the New Year comes in
Fragrant and scented air blows within.

* Thingyan comes but once a year
Flowers of Padauk also come together
It's only for a single day
Those sweet flowers bloom and sway.

* Thingyan water is doused with Thabyay
Dirt be removed in this way
We are to preserve unrivalled feature
Through a thorough understanding of own culture.

* Thangyat troupes break the silence in the contest
Trying to serve the people best

Humorous chants represent a unique character
Covering Myanmar's traditional New Year.

* Nobody takes offence at the jokes
Looking forward to joy and hopes
Essence be still and all unchanged
Lovely traditions never on the wane.

* Preceding the arrival of the 'New Year'
Three-day festival brings good cheer
Throwing water at each other
Accompanied by music, dance and laughter.

* During three days of the water festival
Revellers are overjoyed without interval
While boys novitiated and men ordained
Shinlong processions seen in the main.

* Tagu, Padauk and Thingyan appear together
Shall really be inseparable forever
Expecting the good things in future
While Myanmar exists in the world!

* I wish you 'Happy Thingyan' finally
May you be happy, healthy and wealthy!!

Notes

Tagu:	The first month of Myanmar's 12-month calendar.
Padauk:	Angsana, or Gumkino tree.
Thingyan:	Water festival that annually falls in mid-April in Myanmar
Thabyay:	Eugenia.
Thangyat:	Rhyming lampoon.
Shinlong Procession:	Buddhist novice-making procession



Book Title	-	Gaba Myay Ei Wunyoe Ta Chaung
Writer	-	Ye Shan
Publishing House	-	Maha Sarpay
Publication Date	-	March 2023 (1 st Edition)
Price	-	K4,000

Gaba Myay Ei Wunyoe Ta Chaung

THE writer of this book has served with Myanma Railway in various capacities before retirement as the Chief Station Master. He won the National Literary Award in 2010 in the short stories genre. The award-winning book is titled Buta Yon Lay, a small railway station. His name is Ye Shan. He started to enter the literary field as a poet, whose first work was carried in the Magazine named Moe Wai in 1978. Naturally, almost all of his writings be they articles or essays or short stories or novels are concerned with the people around him – the fellow workers from the Myanma Railway, the travellers, the vendors, the hawkers, the merchants, the brokers and the suppliers.

This being so, this book under review is also based on his experience with Yangon Central Railway Station in his capacity as the Deputy Chief Station Master (Traffic). This is a true story about the needy railway staff in particular and the people in the environment in general.

This book started with an unpleasant environment in his flat and the dirty surrounding. Despite ushering in winter in other towns, Yangon was still hot, seemingly not knowing what winter was. Amidst the intense heat, he was disturbed by the rats of giant size. And the flat he had to live in was not suitable for a high-ranking officer like him. The flat was a G-type one. The railway quarters were

stinking of unpleasant and inoffensive smells. And there were also squatter huts around.

His flat was located on U Phyo Kyar Street. The whole flat would be wet when it rained. He felt suffocated because of difficult breathing. Despite all such inconveniences, his ears were quite disturbed by the loudspeaker from the donation begging pandal at the trishaw stand. Besides this trishaw stand, there were two other donation-begging pandals – one at the taxi stand in front of the parcel division and the other at the labour office. These three pandals were disturbing us with the loud noise from the sound boxes, making us unable to have a sound sleep.

He composed the bitter lives

of the lower-level employees of the railway department. There are 34 episodes, depicting the miserable lives of his subordinates. Episode 1 is about one employee who had to sell used bottles and old torn papers to earn extra income so that he can feed all the mouths in his family. This employee was called Ko San Myint, who said that he had to collect the used bottles left on board the train by the passengers. This book has almost 160 pages, in which the station master wrote about his bitter experiences between 2006 and 2015 until when he was transferred to Ywa Htaung Station. This book provides not only general knowledge about Myanma Railway but also the miserable life of the Railway employees.



Book Title	-	Ah Tway Ah Myin 346
Writers	-	Multiple pens
Publishing House	-	Peacock Publishing House
Publication Date	-	March 2023
Price	-	K4,000

Ah Tway Ah Myin (346)

THE magazine was first published in 1984 by Maung Wun Tha, a great journalist cum writer, and became a monthly magazine in 1984. His name is U Soe Thein. He has been an editor with the Vanguard Daily. Upon his death, his wife Daw Myint Myint (Thiri Wuntha) and his daughter Htaik continued to publish this magazine. The wonderful sustainability of this great magazine can be attributed to coverage of multiple sectors to which great pens contributed articles of value which the readers cannot miss. True to its name, Ah Tway Ah Myin carries articles on philosophy, providing food for thought to the readers.

This month's issue of Ah

Tway Ah Myin includes the editorial, an article written by Maung Wun Tha titled Pyu Gyin Thu Hnit Phyt Gyin Thu and the writings of U Sandima (Salin), Maung Khin Min (Danubyu), Dr Aung Aung Min, Tun Aung Gyaw, Maung Khine Lat, Saw Lu, Zin Lin, Win Htut Zaw, K Hmine, Htay Kyi (Salin), Min Chan Mon, Maung Pwint Nyan (Mawya), Chaint The, Mya Mya Swe (Seik Pyinnya), Kyaw Han (Myanmarsar), Maung Zeya, Maung Yin Swe, Dr Aung Myint Oo, Ko Than Lwin, Win Zaw (Thon Zaw), Sun E Lu, Nyein Chan Thu, Maung Kyi, Pyi Thit Han and Nway Htway.

The editorial deals with Buddhism and the title can be

translated into 'Keeping Alive the Vibhaccha Nana.' The contemplation of commitment to wicked deeds through the use of manipulation is called evil nana. The editorial writer pointed out that Vibhaccha Nana is essential to be able to make a critical approach to things so that people can be free from the wrong view, Miccha Ditthi. If one wishes to lead a valuable life, there is no alternative but to cultivate oneself with the use of Vibhaccha Nana.

Dr Aung Aung Min contributed an article titled, "Seik Ko Kaung Zwa Saunt Shaunt Chin", which can be roughly translated into English as "Keeping the Mind Properly." After listening to the sermons preached by the

Rector Reverend, he was encouraged to write an article on safeguarding the mind. He said that lobha, dosa, moha, mana, issa and macchariya are contaminating the mind, which can be likened to impure gold. The contaminated mind must be washed out by mindfulness and wisdom.

Writer Win Htut Zaw wrote an article on the commitment to suicide, which is in vogue these days around the world. He pointed out that suicide is not a way out. Those who are not strong-minded tend to choose to kill themselves when they are unable to overcome the difficulty they are being faced with. As a matter of fact, suicide is not the correct way out.

Regarding an article by Salin Htay Kyi, an archer hits the target as he knows how to aim the bow at the target. What counts is not the arrow shot but the aiming of the bow at the target. He said not all the targets can be hit. This is in fact a matter of hit or miss. But the duty of the archer is to aim the bow at the target, and when the target is straight in his scope, he has to shoot the arrow, not needing to worry about hitting or missing the target.

ENVIRON WORLD

Space-based NASA instrument to track pollution over North America

A Falcon 9 rocket successfully blasted off from Florida into space on Friday carrying a new

NASA device that can track air pollution over North America down to the neighbourhood level.



The Tropospheric Emissions Monitoring of Pollution instrument, TEMPO for short, will allow scientists to monitor air pollutants and their emission sources more extensively than ever before. **PHOTO: AFP**

The launch, which took place at 12:30 am (0430 GMT), will bring into orbit the Tropospheric Emissions Monitoring of Pollution (TEMPO) instrument, which will allow scientists to monitor air pollutants and their emission sources more extensively than ever before.

The data will be used by the US Environmental Protection Agency, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and other agencies responsible for tackling atmospheric pollution.

“TEMPO will be measuring pollution and air quality across greater North America on an hourly basis during the daytime, all the way from Puerto Rico up

to the tar sands of Canada,” said Kevin Daugherty, NASA’s TEMPO project manager.

A unique feature of TEMPO, which is about the size of a washing machine and has been described as a chemistry laboratory in space, is that it will be hosted on an Intelsat communications satellite in geostationary orbit.

“Geostationary orbit is a common orbit for weather satellites and communications satellites, but an air quality instrument measuring gases hadn’t been there yet,” said Caroline Nowlan, an atmospheric physicist at the Harvard & Smithsonian Centre for Astrophysics. — AFP

NEWS IN BRIEF

China’s sustained afforestation efforts green the world

SPRING is the season for new life. In China, the peak time for spring plowing and sowing is around the Qingming Festival, which falls on Wednesday this year, when people from all walks of life go out and plant trees to make the land greener. From top leaders to ordinary citizens, planting trees has been a prevalent practice for the Chinese, who voluntarily take part in the country’s massive greening efforts every year to clearly show just how much the world’s second-largest economy values greenness and ecological conservation. China designated 12 March as National Tree Planting Day in 1979 and launched a nationwide voluntary tree-planting campaign in 1981. From 1982 to 2021, Chinese citizens voluntarily planted approximately 78.1 billion trees across the vast country. — Xinhua

Annual cherry blossom viewing starts at Japan Mint in Osaka

AN annual cherry blossom viewing event began Thursday at the Japan Mint in Osaka, with elderly and disabled invitees enjoying the sight a day before the famous springtime fixture opens to the general public.

A total of 339 cherry trees of 140 varieties line a 560-metre long path on the grounds of the head office, according to the organization.

Visitors were seen taking photos of the blossoms as Japan Mint workers gave live music performance.

“I like how we can compare different types of cherry blossoms with pink flowers or yellow flowers,” said Rieko Sawai, a 65-year-resident of Neyagawa, Osaka Prefecture, who visited the site with her mother. Prior registration is required to attend the event running through 13 April. It is open from 10 am to 7:30 pm on weekdays and 9 am to 7:30 pm on weekends. — Kyodo

Ice sheets could retreat faster than expected: study

ANTARCTIC ice-sheets risk breaking into the sea faster than previously thought in stretches of up to 600 metres a day, speeding up the rise in sea levels, new research indicates.

In a paper published Wednesday in science journal *Nature*, researchers studied traces left by retreating ice-shelves thousands of years ago on the seabed off Norway.

Ridges revealed how quickly the “grounding line” — the point where an ice sheet starts to float — had retreated during the transition from the last ice age: from 55 to 610 metres (667 yards) a day.

“These values far exceed all previously reported rates of grounding-line retreat across



Global warming due to human-caused carbon emissions is reducing ice, raising warnings that dangerous “tipping points” could be reached, with sudden major melting driving sharp rises in sea level. **PHOTO: REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE/AFP/FILE**

the satellite and marine-geological records,” they wrote.

They calculated that sim-

ilar low-lying ice sheets in the Antarctic such as around the so-called Thwaites “dooms-

day” glacier could retreat at a similarly quick rate under current climate conditions. — AFP



Wildfires, which are fires that occur in wildlands such as forests and grasslands, play an important role in the global carbon cycle. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

Research reveals rising CO2 emissions from northern hemisphere wildfire

THERE has been a significant increase in carbon dioxide emissions from forest wildfires in the world’s northern part over the past two decades, with the year 2021 hitting a record high, Chinese scientists and their overseas counterparts have found. The increase was partly caused by the extreme drought events, which led to more frequent wildfires, in the mid-high latitudes of the

northern hemisphere, according to the findings recently published in the journal *Science*. Wildfires, which are fires that occur in wildlands such as forests and grasslands, play an important role in the global carbon cycle. Extreme wildfires pose a threat to human health and the global climate by damaging ecosystems and releasing harmful pollutants and greenhouse gases. — Xinhua

HEALTH/WELLNESS: WORLD

Half of unmarried people under 30 in Japan do not want kids: survey

AROUND half of unmarried people under 30 in Japan have no interest in having children, a recent survey by a pharmaceutical firm showed, with respondents citing economic concerns and the burden of childbirth and parenting as their reasoning.

Of the 400 respondents between 18 to 29 years old, 49.4 per cent said they do not want children, the highest percentage in any of the last three annual pregnancy white paper surveys conducted by Rohto Pharmaceutical Co.

By gender, it found that 53.0 per cent of men and 45.6 per cent of women are not interested in

becoming parents, citing such reasons as the high cost and anxiety about Japan's future, the Osaka-based company said in late March.

The results of the online survey conducted in January came after government data showed the number of babies born in the country last year dropped below 800,000 for the first time since records began in 1899.

To reverse the trend of the declining birthrate in the rapidly aging country, the government in April launched the Children and Families Agency to oversee child policies, also including child abuse and poverty. — Kyodo



Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida (far L) and others hold signs and letters spelling out "The Children and Families Agency" to commemorate its launch in Tokyo on 3 April 2023. PHOTO: KYODO

Belgian drug bunnies put the "E" into Easter

BELGIAN bunnies will be an Easter treat for kids around the world this weekend, but not all are moulded from the country's renowned chocolate.

A batch of rabbits seized this week by veteran customs officer Pol Meuleneire was crafted from a solid lump of MDMA, the raw material for pills of the rave drug ecstasy.

Known as the gateway into Europe for Latin American cocaine, Belgium has now also become a turntable for mail-order synthetic drugs, made in Europe and sent worldwide.

Meuleneire, who retires in a few months after 43 years in Belgium's customs service, told AFP that when he began his career he was excited to find



A Belgian customs officer at Brussels Airport using a Raman scanner to show that what appears to be a chocolate bunny is actually ecstasy. PHOTO: AFP

10 grammes of cannabis in a letter.

Now, his workspace in an office block in the freight zone

at Brussels airport is overflowing with suspect packages — and bags and jars of illegal pills and powders. — AFP

Johnson & Johnson proposes \$8.9 bln settlement of talc cancer claims

US pharmaceutical giant Johnson & Johnson on Tuesday proposed an \$8.9 billion settlement to resolve years-old lawsuits claiming that its talcum powder products caused cancer.

The New Jersey-based company said the proposed settlement, which needs the approval of a bankruptcy court, "will equitably and efficiently resolve all claims arising from cosmetic talc litigation."

J&J has been facing thousands of lawsuits over talcum powder containing traces of asbestos blamed for causing ovarian cancer.

The firm has never admitted wrongdoing but stopped selling the talc-based baby powder in the United States and Canada in May 2020.

"The company continues to believe that these claims are specious and lack scientific merit," Erik Haas, J&J's vice-president of litigation, said in a statement. J&J said the \$8.9 billion would be paid to the tens of thousands of claimants over 25 years through a J&J subsidiary, LTL Management LLC, which was set up to address the claims and has filed for bankruptcy protection. — AFP

Panasonic "smart town" attracts well-heeled Chinese retiree



Photo shows a bedroom in a Panasonic "wellness smart town" in Yixing, Jiangsu Province, equipped with a "smart sleep" system, which moderates lighting and air conditioning to optimize sleeping conditions and facilitate natural waking on 26 February 2023. PHOTO: KYODO

IN a scenic eastern Chinese city some two hours from Shanghai by high-speed train, well-heeled retirees are beginning to move into a "wellness smart town" that Japan's Panasonic Holdings Corp has built with a local partner to cater to the demands of China's aging population.

Panasonic and major Chinese healthcare company Yada International Holdings Ltd have built 794 condos and 376 detached villas in the four-square-kilometre resort complex in the Jiangsu Prov-

ince city of Yixing, with owners arriving from across the country.

The development represents Panasonic's first wellness smart town venture in China and draws on its more than two decades of experience in responding to the needs of an aging population in Japan. The lure for residents is an array of state-of-the-art tech features to help them stay healthy as they head into old age.

Toilets, for example, can assess body fat and heart rate, while urine samples can also be

taken, with data accessible by smartphone. A "smart sleep" system, meanwhile, moderates lighting and air conditioning to optimize sleeping conditions and facilitate natural waking.

To cater to nursing care demands, bathrooms are equipped with a shower system that can be used while sitting and a general hospital is located near the 300,000-square-metre community inside the larger complex.

A Japanese-style footbath service is provided at a community centre. — Kyodo

ECONOMY WORLD

Climate-hit island pushes to reshape World Bank, IMF

WHILE conflict and inflation will dominate World Bank spring meetings next week, campaigners are pushing for a redesign of global financial architecture to help countries cope with climate change.

Experts say developing nations are struggling to find the funds needed to stop burning planet-heating fossil fuels and prepare for tomorrow's climate disasters, as they grapple with rising costs, soaring debts and extreme weather events.

The question is what to do about it, amid international tensions driven by Russia's invasion of Ukraine and trade tussles between the US and China.

Enter Barbados Prime Minister Mia Mottley.

"We believe that we have a

plan," the head of the Caribbean island nation, threatened by storms and sea level rise, told world leaders at the COP27 climate summit in Egypt in November.

Known as the Bridgetown Initiative, the ideas she laid out include using the International Monetary Fund to turn "billions to trillions" in investments to cut carbon pollution, as well as a tax on fossil fuel profits to cushion the economic blows of climate impacts.

While the proposals are still being debated, they have gained traction among the large economies that hold sway over the World Bank and IMF, raising hopes of action in the coming months.

The World Bank is under



Climate activists protest outside the World Bank headquarters against fossil fuel projects during the IMF and World Bank annual meetings in Washington, DC on 14 October 2022. PHOTO: OLIVIER DOULIERY/AFP/FILE

particular pressure, in the wake of the resignation of chief David Malpass amid questions over his stance on climate change.

French President Emmanuel Macron has embraced the reform push and will seek to keep up momentum with a climate fi-

nance summit in June, ahead of Bank meetings and UN climate summits later this year.

Reform plans are gaining momentum because they fill a "policy vacuum" over funding for the global climate response, said Avinash Persaud, the economist running the Barbados campaign with "one and a half people and a spreadsheet". "I feel we've got a moment here," he told AFP. **'Burning and drowning'**

United Nations climate science experts have said time is running out to invest in the changes needed to limit warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius above preindustrial temperatures. Currently the world is far off track, risking enormous costs, for nature, human societies and the global economy. — AFP

NEWS IN BRIEF

China's farm produce imports, exports up in first two months

CHINA'S foreign trade of agricultural products registered stable growth in the first two months of this year, official data shows.

During the period, the country's total imports and exports of farm produce stood at 54.16 billion US dollars, rising nine per cent year on year, according to the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs. — Xinhua

Swiss govt to investigate why Credit Suisse crumbled

THE Swiss government has promised lawmakers a full report into the factors that lay behind the downfall of Credit Suisse, one of the world's biggest banks, parliament said Thursday.

The emergency takeover by UBS has sparked unease and criticism within Switzerland, where Credit Suisse was a pillar of the country's totemic banking sector. — AFP

World food prices down by a fifth on 2022: UN

WORLD food prices are still high but have fallen by a fifth compared to a year ago when prices soared to a monthly record high after Russia invaded agricultural powerhouse Ukraine, UN data showed on Friday.

Prices have fallen 20.5 per cent since March last year after a 12th straight monthly drop, the Food and Agriculture Organization said.

But in releasing its latest data tracking monthly changes in international prices of a basket of food commodities, the FAO said food remained expensive notably for developing countries highly dependent on imports. — AFP



On 22 July 2022, an agreement was brokered by the United Nations and Türkiye to open a safe maritime humanitarian corridor in the Black Sea (the Black Sea Grain Initiative). Since then, over 900 ships full of grain and other foodstuffs have left three Ukrainian ports: Chornomorsk, Odesa and Yuzhny/Pivdennyi. PHOTO: AFP



All regions of Quebec, except Centre-du-Québec, recorded employment gains between February 2022 and February 2023. PHOTO: REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE/AFP

Canada economy adds more jobs

THE Canadian economy gained 35,000 jobs in March while the unemployment rate remained stable at five per cent, close to a record low for the fourth consecutive month, Statistics Canada said Thursday.

Job creation increased in March, after little change in February (up 22,000) and significant gains in December (up 69,000) and January (up 150,000).

"That was a stronger outcome than expected, with the

consensus of forecasters looking for only a modest increase in employment," said Royce Mendes, analyst with the Desjardins Group.

Employment rose in the private sector and remained stable in the public sector and for the self-employed.

Employment growth was particularly strong in the transportation, finance and insurance sectors, but declined in construction and natural resources.

The average hourly wage for employees rose by more than five per cent from a year ago, reaching CAD\$33.12 (US\$24.56) in March.

The unemployment rate has not budged since it dipped slightly in December, settling near the record low of 4.9 per cent recorded in June and July.

According to Statistics Canada, most of the unemployed had been unemployed for 13 weeks or less. — AFP

China an “investment landmark” for French businesses

AS French President Emmanuel Macron is paying his state visit to China, French businesses are eyeing more opportunities from broader cooperation between France and China.

“We have already seen potential opportunities in the market, which makes us even more bullish about China’s economic outlook and prospect,” Fabrice Megarbane, president of L’Oreal North Asia Zone and CEO of L’Oreal China, told Xinhua in a recent interview.

From the first week of

February, consumer traffic and purchases have shown positive signs and L’Oreal expects a progressive rebound from the second quarter and consumer enthusiasm to bounce back in all categories, he said.

“We are entering a new era of innovation-driven and high-quality development, which is very in line with China’s economic development roadmap,” Megarbane said.

Calling China “the new investment landmark” for L’Oreal, Megarbane said that they have been “in-

vesting in China in the past 25 years, and will invest in China continuously in the future.”

“In the mid-and-long term, China is not only a growth engine for L’Oreal Group but has a strategic position in terms of innovation (digital plus beauty tech), sustainability and talent,” he said. Francois-Henri Pinault, chairman and CEO of French multinational Kering Group, told French daily Le Figaro that the dynamism of the Chinese market is picking up. — Xinhua



L’Oreal’s flagship store in Shanghai. PHOTO: WANG GANG/ CHINA DAILY

Icelandair to buy 25 Airbus A321 jets



A technician works on an Airbus A321XLR. The single-aisle, narrow-body aircraft is equipped with fuel-efficient engines that allow an extra-large range of up to 4,700 nautical miles (around 8,700 kilometres). PHOTO: AXEL HEIMKEN / AFP

ICELANDAIR is to buy 13 Airbus A321XLR aircraft with purchase rights for additional 12 jets as it renews its fleet, the company said.

“Icelandair and Airbus have signed a Memorandum of Understand-

ing for the purchase of 13 Airbus A321XLR aircraft with purchase rights for additional 12 aircraft,” the carrier said in a statement after Thursday’s agreement, adding deliveries will start in 2029.

Icelandair added that it plans to start operating Airbus aircraft in 2025, saying it is in advanced talks for four leased Airbus A321LR.

“With the acquisition of the Airbus aircraft, Icelandair will complete the replacement of the Boeing 757,” said the carrier, without revealing details of the purchase price of the deal. — AFP

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Botataung Township, Yangon,
The Republic of the Union of Myanmar.
Dated 9 April 2023
hh@kcyangon.com

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V AS SOPHIA VOY.NO. (311W)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V AS SOPHIA VOY.NO. (311W)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **9-4-2023** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MITT/MIP** where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: 2301185

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S SEALAND MAERSK ASIA PTE LTD

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V RATANA THIDA VOY.NO. (244W)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V RATANA THIDA VOY.NO. (244W)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **9-4-2023** 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 REGIONAL CONTAINER LINES

GLOBAL AFFAIRS

PLA Eastern Theatre Command launches patrol, military exercises around Taiwan Island



The three-day operation will run until Monday, the People's Liberation Army's (PLA) said. A People's Liberation Army (PLA) soldier looks around with a telescope on 5 August 2022, as the Navy of the PLA Eastern Theatre Command continues drills the waters around the island of Taiwan. **PHOTO: XINHUA/FILE**

THE Eastern Theatre Command of the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) on Saturday launched combat readiness patrol and military exercises around the Taiwan Island, which will last from 8 to 10 April Beijing time as scheduled.

The patrol and exercises

take place in the maritime areas and airspace of the Taiwan Strait, off the northern and southern coasts of the island, and to the island's east, said Shi Yi, a spokesperson for the command.

These operations serve as a stern warning against the

collusion between separatist forces seeking "Taiwan independence" and external forces and against their provocative activities, said Shi, adding that the operations are necessary for safeguarding China's national sovereignty and territorial integrity. — Xinhua

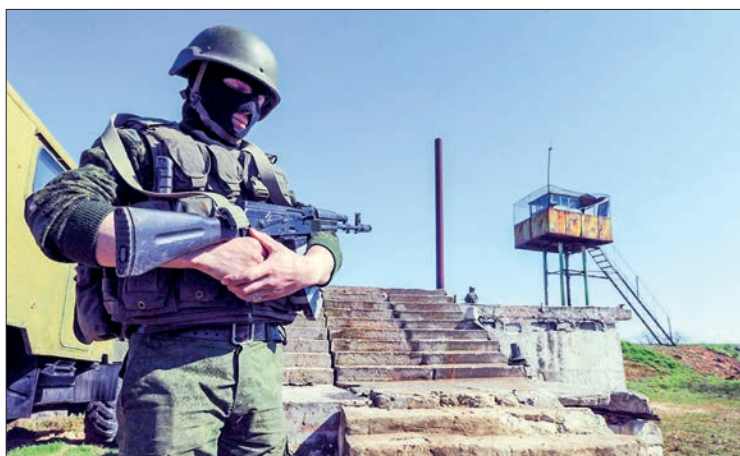
Ukraine tells Lula it won't give Crimea up

UKRAINE on Friday rejected a proposition from Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, who had suggested Kyiv should give up Crimea to end the war with Russia.

Russia annexed the Crimea peninsula from Ukraine in 2014.

"There is no legal, political or moral reason that would justify us having to yield even a centimetre of Ukrainian land," Ukrainian foreign ministry spokesman Oleg Nikolenko said on Facebook.

"Any mediation efforts to restore peace in Ukraine should be based on respect for the sovereignty and the full restoration of Ukraine's territorial integrity," he added.



A member of the Russian forces guards in front of surface-to-air S300 missiles in a Ukrainian anti-aircraft missile unit on the Cape of Fiolent in Sevastopol on 5 March 2014. **PHOTO: VIKTOR DRACHEV/AFP/FILE**

On Thursday, Lula said "everything" and suggested Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky "could not get Ukraine could give up Crimea to begin peace discussions. — AFP

Swiss seek transparency from top online platforms

SWITZERLAND is preparing to regulate major online platforms like Google, Facebook, YouTube and Twitter, saying Wednesday that users should be able to demand more transparency from them.

The government has in-

structed the communications ministry to prepare a draft law for consultation on regulating platforms, by the end of March 2024. The government "wants to strengthen the rights of users in Switzerland and demand more transparency from the

platforms without limiting their positive influence on freedom of expression," it said. Bern said the public was increasingly getting its information from such platforms, which therefore have a "considerable influence on public debate". — AFP

WORLD: TOP HEADLINES

Secret US documents on Ukraine war plan spill onto internet: report

SECRET documents that provide details of US and NATO plans to help prepare Ukraine for a spring offensive against Russia have spilled onto social media platforms, the New York Times reported on Thursday.

The Pentagon said it is assessing the reported security breach.

"We are aware of the reports of social media posts, and the Department is reviewing the matter," Deputy Press Secretary Sabrina Singh said.

The documents were spread on Twitter and Telegram, and reportedly contain charts and details about weapons deliveries, battalion strengths and other sensitive information, the Times said.

Information in the documents is at least five weeks old, with the most recent dated 1 March, the report said.

One of the documents summarized the training schedules of 12 Ukraine combat brigades, and said nine of them were being trained by US and NATO forces, and needed 250 tanks and more than 350 mechanized vehicles, the newspaper said. — AFP

US reporter charged with spying in Russia

MOSCOW has formally charged US journalist Evan Gershkovich with espionage, Russian news agencies reported Friday, adding that he had denied the accusations.

The arrest of Wall Street Journal correspondent Evan Gershkovich prompted an outcry from media outlets and rights groups, as well as government officials in Washington.

"FSB investigators charged Gershkovich with espionage in the interests of his country," Russian state-run agency TASS said, citing a law enforcement source.

"He categorically denied all accusations and stated that he was engaged in journalistic activities in Russia," TASS said.

Gershkovich's arrest is seen as a serious escalation of Moscow's crackdown on the media.

His publication, one of the most prestigious in the United States, "vehemently denies the allegations" against its "trusted and dedicated reporter".

The case has been classified as secret, limiting the amount of information available. — AFP

Missing SDF chopper had normal radio communications before vanishing

A Japanese military helicopter that went missing off Okinawa had normal radio communications with air traffic control, including its last contact just two minutes before vanishing from radar, people close to the matter said Saturday.

The radio communications between the Japan Ground Self-Defence Force's UH-60JA multipurpose helicopter with 10 members aboard and two air traffic control centers in the area did not indicate any abnormalities, they said.

GSDFF officials said Saturday the helicopter's automatic distress signal transmitter likely failed when it presumably crashed Thursday afternoon.

Neither of the air traffic control centres received a distress signal from the helicopter's emergency locator transmitter that was designed to automatically activate on impact, the officials said.

The helicopter took off from a base on Miyako Island at 3:46 pm on Thursday for a land survey and flew about 10 minutes before disappearing from radar. — Kyodo

Biden weighs in after Tennessee vote to expel Black lawmakers

US President Joe Biden and Vice-President Kamala Harris on Friday showered attention on three Tennessee officials targeted for expulsion from the state legislature over their support for gun control, as the fracas escalated into a major national row over race and representation.

Biden spoke via phone with the “Tennessee Three” and “thanked them for their leadership in seeking to ban assault weapons”, a White House statement said.

Biden invited the three to the White House “in the near future”, it added.

The Republican-led Tennessee House of Representatives expelled two Black law-

makers on Thursday after they disrupted an assembly session to demand stricter gun controls in the wake of a deadly mass shooting at an elementary school. A third white legislator who joined their protest was not removed.

Accusations of racism have reverberated around the case, and sparked anger among Democrats well beyond Tennessee.

Harris, the nation’s first Black vice-president, arrived in Nashville in a clear message of solidarity with the three officials. She attended a rally at Fisk University, a historically black institution, and met with the three Democrats targeted over the gun protests. — AFP



Democratic state Representative Justin Jones of Nashville, pictured during a vote on his expulsion from the state legislature. PHOTO: AFP

Guatemala Holy Week unfolds under new UNESCO heritage status



Guatemalan Catholic devotees take part in a procession in the tourist city of Antigua during Easter celebrations. PHOTO: AFP

THOUSANDS of Guatemalan worshippers wearing black hoods and purple tunics funnel slowly through the streets of Antigua carrying images of Jesus over a multicolored carpet of flowers and scented sawdust as somber music rings out.

Guatemala’s Holy Week celebrations, which mix Mayan rituals with Catholic religious fervor, were given UNESCO heritage status in November, bringing special meaning to this year’s Good Friday processions being carried out across

the country.

Despite its name, Guatemala’s Holy Week festival actually stretches over six weeks, reaching a fever pitch at Easter as the Central American country is transformed by extravagant processions, vigils, and the laying of brightly coloured carpets throughout the streets.

“For us it is cause for great joy and is a very special day to participate in this offering, especially now,” lawyer Roberto Matheu told AFP, referring to the new UNESCO recognition.

The 45-year-old spoke as he finished creating a carpet of flowers with his family, an activity he has done since childhood.

Guatemalans “experience Holy Week differently to the rest of the world”, said Culture Minister Felipe Aguilar.

Guatemala’s customs, music, food and art are the result of a “cultural fusion” between the Catholicism of Spanish conquistadores and the ancestral beliefs of the Indigenous Mayan population, he said. — AFP

Iraq’s Saddam still revered in Jordan 20 years later

TWENTY years after the fall of his regime, the late Iraqi president Saddam Hussein remains admired and popular in Jordan where his image can still be seen across the country.

The instantly recognizable face peers out from everything from bumper stickers to mobile phone cases in neighbouring Jordan, despite symbols and images associated with his rule being outlawed in Iraq itself.

On 20 March 2003, then US president George W Bush launched Operation “Iraqi Freedom” with a ground invasion by 150,000 US and 40,000 British troops, under the pretext of destroying Iraq’s alleged arsenal of weapons of mass destruction.

Saddam appeared for the

last time in public on 9 April, just hours before the announcement of the fall of Baghdad.

Having ruled Iraq with an iron fist since 1979, Saddam went to ground until his hiding place was discovered by US troops eight months afterwards.

He was later tried, convicted and hanged on the morning of 30 December 2006.

In Iraq, it is an offence to display photographs or slogans of the toppled dictator and arrests are still sometimes made.

Last October, four people were detained in Anbar province, between Baghdad and the Jordanian border, for “glorifying the defunct regime during National Day celebrations”.

But in Jordan, many people



The instantly recognizable face peers out from everything from bumper stickers to mobile phone cases in Jordan, despite symbols and images associated with his rule being widely considered taboo in Iraq itself.

PHOTO: AFP

fondly remember Saddam for his support for the Palestinian cause, Arab nationalism and resistance

to Western intervention in the Middle East.

“Tens of thousands of Jor-

dans graduated from Iraqi universities in various fields during Saddam’s era with free scholarships,” MP Khalil Attiyeh told AFP.

He said Saddam supported the Palestinian uprising, or intifada, and gave money “to the families of the Palestinian martyrs and rebuilt the houses of those who had them demolished by the enemy”. Attiyeh believes it is normal for “Jordanians to adore him and not to forget him, and to keep his photos, showing loyalty to this heroic leader”.

Salameh Blewi, 67, a Jordanian contractor who visited Baghdad in the 1980s, called Saddam “an honourable and honest Arab leader, with honourable positions”. — AFP

PLA Eastern Theatre Command launches patrol, military exercises around Taiwan Island

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SPORT

Kompany's Burnley secure promotion to the Premier League



Burnley celebrate their second goal in front of the Boro crowd. PHOTO: AFP

BURNLEY secured promotion back to the Premier League at the first time of asking after Vincent Kompany's men won 2-1 at Middlesbrough on Friday.

A 19-game unbeaten league run has taken the Clarets 19 points clear of third-placed Luton, who have just six games remaining, at the top of the Championship.

The decision to act swiftly

to land former Manchester City captain Kompany after his first managerial spell at Anderlecht came to an end has proved a masterstroke.

Many feared the worst when the Clarets' six-year stay in the English top flight came to an end last season.

Due to the terms of a controversial leveraged takeover by an American consortium in late 2020,

a "significant proportion" of a £65 million (\$78 million) loan had to be repaid when they were relegated.

Nearly £70 million-worth (\$87 million) of players departed as Nick Pope, Dwight McNeil, Nathan Collins and Maxwel Cornet were snapped up by Premier League clubs, while two pillars of the club's stay in the top flight, Ben Mee and James Tarkowski, left on free transfers. — AFP

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar State Administration Council: Twelve Objectives

1. Political affairs

- (a) To build a Union based on democracy and federalism, through a disciplined and genuine multiparty democratic system that is fair and just.
- (b) To prioritize the achievement of enduring peace for the entire nation in line with the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA).
- (c) To continue implementing the principle of peaceful co-existence among countries through an independent, active, and non-aligned foreign policy.
- (d) To ensure peace, stability, rule of law, and the safe and smooth functioning of transport networks across the Union.

2. Economic affairs

- (a) To enhance development based on agriculture and livestock using modern production techniques and to strengthen all-round development in other sectors of the economy.
- (b) To develop a stable market economy and promote international investment in order to enhance the economic development of the entire National people.
- (c) To assure support for the sustainability of Micro-, Small- and Medium-Sized Enterprises (MSMEs) that prioritize import substitution, export production, and the use of domestically produced raw materials, in order to increase domestic production and generate employment opportunities.
- (d) To advance the socioeconomic life of the people, in order to ensure the country's prosperity and food security.

3. Social affairs

- (a) To ensure a strong and dynamic Union spirit, the genuine spirit of patriotism.
- (b) To respect and promote the customs and traditions of all National people and preserve and safeguard their faiths, beliefs, culture, and characteristics of patriotic nationalism.
- (c) To strengthen basic health care in order to achieve the emergence of a health system that enhances the longevity and health of the entire nation.
- (d) To comprehensively promote the education sector to make it capable of producing the human resources necessary for building a modern, developed, and progressive democratic nation.

Iran advances to 2nd round after passing Myanmar in Olympic qualifiers



Iran defenders desperately clear the ball from Captain Khin Marler Tun (No 10) during the second match of the Women's Olympic Qualifiers 1st round played at Thuwunna Stadium in Yangon 2023. PHOTO: MFF

IRAN women's national football team and the Myanmar women's national team drew (1-1) at the second match of the Women's Olympic Qualifiers 1st round played at Thuwunna Stadium in Yangon yesterday, and team Iran won the two rounds (2-1) and advanced to the second round. Myanmar head coach Daw Thet Thet Win used key players from the kick-off.

In the first half of the match, the Myanmar team was able to play with an advantage, but in the 13th minute of the match, the back number (15), Negin Zandi scored the leading goal for Iran.

Team Iran took the lead, so they played defensively.

In the 16th minute of the match, the Myanmar team had to take a penalty kick, but Win Theingi Tun's kick missed the goal and the opportunity to equalize was a slip, so Iran led (1-0) at the end of the first half. In the second half, the Myanmar team was forced to play with full attack, and in the 56th minute of the game, Win Theingi Tun scored an equalizer for team Myanmar with a header. After that, both teams made player changes and competed fiercely, and as Iran was able to stop the Myanmar team's attack properly, it ended with a goal (1-1) without being able to score any more goals.

At the press conference held after the match, the head coach of

the Myanmar team, Daw Thet Thet Win, said, "I am sad that we could not get a good result. We will have to prepare a lot of weaknesses of the team, and we will have to review for the next tournament," she said.

Iran's head coach, Maryam Azmoon, said, "Our team is low on the world level and in terms of ability, but we have prepared everything to get a good result. The Myanmar team is a big team in Asia and has good players. That's why we had to play counterattack as a priority.

"I am proud of the players who worked hard to get good results. We will do our best to get a good result in the second-round qualifiers," she said. The second round qualifiers for the Paris Olympic Women's Football Tournament will be held in the coming October. — KZL