

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.

Maravijaya Monastery offered to abbot monk at gala ceremony

Maravijaya Monastery is systematically facilitated with a prayer hall, a lecture hall, bedrooms, a library and reading rooms, refectories, toilets, kitchen hall and layperson halls for convenience of members of the Sangha in daily routine.

A ceremony to offer Maravijaya Monastery yesterday morning took place in the precinct of Maravijaya Buddha Park in Dekkhinathiri Township of Nay Pyi Taw where the Maravijaya Buddha Image is located.

Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, his wife Daw Kyu Kyu Hla and family offered a paper of donating the mon-

astery to Abbot Agga Maha Pandita Bhaddanta Neminda.

They also donated offerings to Presiding Patron of Pali Tekkatho Mingalazeyon Monastery in Pyinmana Agga Maha Pandita Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Bhaddanta Vimalabuddhi and the abbot of the monastery respectively.

SEE PAGE-3



Female workers are seen in producing garment products in Nyaung Inn Industrial Zone of Bago Township. **PHOTO: TIN SOE (BAGO)**

Bago Region witnesses robust foreign and citizen investments exceeding \$179 mln and K75 bln respectively from Feb 2021 to July 2023

BETWEEN February 2021 and July 2023, Bago Region experienced a significant surge in both foreign and citizen investments, reaching remarkable figures of US\$179.095 million and over K75.23

billion, as stated by U Ko Ko Latt, the Director of Bago Region Directorate of Investment and Company Administration.

During July of this year, authorities in Bago Region further approved

an additional \$2.812 million in investments for three existing industries, consequently generating job opportunities for more than 100 labourers.

SEE PAGE-7

NATIONAL

PAGE-4



Over 70% of Rakhine's tourism businesses resumes operations after disaster

CURRENT AFFAIRS

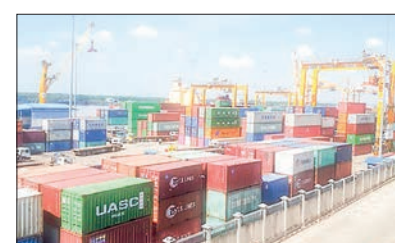
PAGE-6



Wholesale price of palm oil reaches K8,500 per viss in Yangon

LOCAL BUSINESS

PAGE-7



54 container vessels scheduled to arrive at Yangon ports in August

NATIONAL

Myanmar, Laos Venerable Sayadaws wish to flourish Theravada Buddhism



Sayadaws from State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee of Myanmar and Buddhist Fellowship Organization of the Lao PDR hold talks in Yangon yesterday.

SECRETARY of the State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee Agga Maha Pandita Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Thanlyin Minkyaung Monastery abbot Dr Bhaddanta Candima Bhivamsa and four SSMNC members held talks with Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotika Most Ven Bounma Simmaphom, President of the Buddhist Fellowship Organization of the Lao PDR, and party, who are currently in Yangon to attend the consecration of Maravijaya Buddha Image in Dekkhinathiri

Township, at the Presiding Patron Hall on Kaba Aye Pagoda Road in Mayangon Township of Yangon yesterday afternoon.

In his welcoming speech, Thanlyin Minkyaung Sayadaw highlighted ongoing cooperation between Laos and Myanmar in Theravada Buddhism education and welcomed qualified monks and laypersons to learn Pariyatti literature at the International Theravada Buddhist Missionary University. The President of the Buddhist Fellowship Organiza-

tion of Laos expressed thanks to the Myanmar government for allowing Lao members of the Sangha to learn Pariyatti literature at the ITBMU and for conferring religious titles on Lao members of the Sangha with the best wishes for long term existence of Theravada Buddhism culture between the two countries.

Most Ven Bounma Simmaphom and party offered alms to member Sayadaws of SSMNC led by Thanlyin Minkyaung Sayadaw. — MNA/TTA

Appointment of Ambassador of Ghana agreed on

THE Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has agreed to the proposed appointment of Mrs Florence Buerki Akonor as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Ghana to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar with residence in Kuala Lumpur.

Mrs Florence Buerki Akonor was born in 1969. She obtained Bachelor of Arts in Economics and History from University of Science and Technology, Kumasi in 1994 and Master of Arts in International Affairs from University of Ghana, Legon in 1998. She joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration of Ghana in 1997 and served in various positions till 2000. Then, she served as Head of Chancery at Ghana High Commission in New Delhi from 2000 to 2004. She served as Assistant Director from 2004 to 2007 at the

Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration. From 2007 to 2011, she was assigned as Minister-Counsellor at Ghana Embassy in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. She served as Deputy Director from 2011 to 2013 and as Director from 2013 to 2014 at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration. From 2014 to 2017, she was assigned as Minister at Ghana High Commission in Ottawa, Canada. From 2017 to 2018, she was assigned as Minister at Ghana High Commission in Pretoria, South Africa. She served as Director at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration from 2018 to 2020. From 2020 to September 2022, she served as Minister/Deputy Permanent Representative to UNESCO at the Ghana Embassy in Paris, France. Since October 2022, she has been serving as Ghana High Commissioner to Malaysia. — MNA

Statement on Organizing and implementing of Labour Organizations and Employer organizations

THE Ministry of Labour recently issued a statement that as Myanmar is one of the member states of ILO, Labour Organization Law (2011) has been enacted as the implementation and compliance with the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Rights to organize Convention of ILO (No 87).

Labour organizations and employer organizations have been allowed the freedom of the rights

to organize, if the facts submitted by them, are complete and accurate in line with the provisions under Section 15, Subsection A and B of Labour Organization Rules enacted on 11-10-2011.

The following Myanmar labour organizations, employer organizations and federations are carrying out organizing measures in accord with the Law since they are in line with Labour Organization Law and Rules (2011):

Sr	Name of Organization	Registration Number	Issuing date of recognized certificates
1.	Confederation of Trade Union Myanmar (CTUM)	Myanmar/Confederation of Trade Unions (1/2015)	23-7-2015
2.	Myanmar Seafarers Federation (MSF)	Kyauktada Tsp/ Seafares/ Federation (1/2012)	25-4-2012
3.	Myanmar Maritime Workers' Federation (MMWF)	Hline Tsp/ Maritime Workers/ Federation (1/2013)	6-5-2013
4.	Myanmar Maritime Trade Unions Federation (MMTUF)	Tamway Tsp/ Maritime/ Federation (1/2014)	8-12-2014
5.	Myanmar Maritime Pilots Association (MMPA)	Botahtaung Tsp/ Maritime Pilots/ Federation (2/2014)	8-12-2014
6.	Independent Federation of Myanmar Seafarers (IFOMS)	Pazundaung Tsp/ Maritime/ Federation (1/2015)	27-2-2015
7.	Agriculture & Farmer Federation of Myanmar (Food-Allied of Workers) (AFFM-IUF)	Insein Tsp/ Agriculture/ Federation (2/2015)	21-5-2015
8.	Agriculture & Farmer Federation of Myanmar (AFFM)	Tamway Tsp/ Agriculture/ Federation (3/2015)	22-5-2015
9.	Myanmar Industries Craft and Services Trade Unions Federation (MICS-TUsF)	Mingaladon Tsp/ Industries Craft and Services/ Federation (1/2016)	8-4-2016
10.	Industrial Worker's Federation of Myanmar (IWFm)	Dagon (East) Myothit Tsp/ Industrial/ Federation (1/2019)	29-3-2019
11.	Myanmar Seafarers Employment Services Federation (MSESF)	Dawbon Tsp/ Seafarers Employment Services/ Federation (1/2012)	17-7-2012

Moreover, 25 Region/State Labour Organizations, one Township Employer's Organization, 156 Township Labour Organizations, 26 Basic Employer's Organizations and 2,824 Basic Labour Organizations have been issued the recognized certificates in accord with Labour Organization Law and Rules 2011.

Therefore, it is declared that the Government has been issuing the recognized certificates to 3,043 labour organizations and employer organizations up to present since Labour Organization Law 2011 was enacted. — GNLm

Three new cases of COVID-19 reported on 30 July, total figure registers 641,056

MYANMAR'S COVID-19-positive cases rose to **641,056** after **three** new cases were reported on 30 July 2023 according to the Ministry of Health. Therefore, a total of **11,023,421** laboratory samples were examined to date and the confirmed COVID-19 cases reached **641,056**. The total number of patients who have recovered from COVID-19 in the country reached **619,821** including **one** new recovery. The death toll from COVID-19 in the country registered **19,494** on 30-7-2023 with no new death reported from the pandemic. COVID-19 information can be browsed on the internet page moh.gov.mm of the Ministry of Health. — GNLm

NATIONAL

Prosperity of the nation and food security must be a national duty

The Senior General called for the development of domestic products, becoming the exporter country from the importer, ensuring local oil sufficiency, creating job opportunities for the people and increasing per-capita income, to all departments and organizations by accepting a concept that prosperity of the nation and food security must be a national duty.

(The excerpt from the speech made by Chairman of State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at the financial commission meeting 1/2023 on 21 March 2023)



Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, his wife Daw Kyu Kyu Hla and congregation take the Five Precepts from Presiding Patron of Pali Tekkatho Mingalazeyon Monastery in Pynmana Agga Maha Pandita Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Bhaddanta Vimalabuddhi yesterday.

Maravijaya Monastery offered to abbot monk at gala ceremony

FROM PAGE-1

Vice-Chairman of the SAC Deputy Prime Minister Vice-Senior General Soe Win, his wife Daw Than Than Nwe and attendees also offered alms to venerable Sayadaws.

After successfully holding the ceremony to offer the Maravijaya Monastery, the Senior General, wife and congregation donated day meals to members of the Sangha led by the Pali Sayadaw.

The Maravijaya Monastery was collectively contributed by well-wishers led by leading donor Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and wife Daw Kyu Kyu Hla. Maravijaya Monastery is systematically facilitated with a prayer hall, a lecture hall, bedrooms, a library and reading rooms, refectories, toilets, kitchen hall and layperson halls for convenience of members of the Sangha in daily routine. — MNA/TTA



Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and his wife Daw Kyu Kyu Hla donate offerings to a Sayadaw.

Factories in Ayeyawady Region using gasifiers on a wider scale

DEPUTY MINISTER for Science and Technology Dr Aung Zeya made trips to Kyaiklat, Wakema and Einme townships in Ayeyawady Region on 28 July to inspect factories using paddy husk-fired gasifiers.

In Kyaiklat, Myo Myat Mon rice mill is being operated with the use of a paddy husk-fired gasifier. In addition to regular functions, the rice mill manufacture paddy husk briquettes on a commercial scale.

Next, the deputy minister viewed round operations of Shwe Pyi Moe modern rice mill in Kyaiklat, Tawwin 2 rice mill in Wakema, and Thiri Zeya Aung rice mill in Einme using modern machines. He also looked into gen-

erating electricity by the paddy husk-fired gasifier and disposing of waste water via filters, ability to remove ash and tar, and use of the engine and dynamo in operation. During the inspection process, the deputy minister stressed the

need to manufacture value-added products using domestic raw materials to seek shares in the foreign market and pledged to transfer necessary techniques to those businesspersons. — MNA/KZW

NATIONAL

Nay Pyi Taw Traditional Medicine Hospital (100-bed) commissions outpatient department



Union Minister for Health Dr Thet Khaing Win and attendees cut the ceremonial ribbon in front of the outpatient department of Nay Pyi Taw Traditional Medicine Hospital (100-bed) yesterday.

OUTPATIENT department of Nay Pyi Taw Traditional Medicine Hospital (100-bed) was opened with a ceremony at the National Herbal Garden in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

Union Minister for Health Dr Thet Khaing Win looked around the patient registration unit, patient examination room and patient treatment room in the outpatient department.

After the officials have presented the conditions of successful treatment of patients with traditional medicines, the Union Minister stressed the need to use traditional med-

icines not only for the treatment of COVID-19 but for the other seasonal flu diseases, urging officials for arranging the people to know the good potency of the medicines and for manufacturing the medicine on a wider scale.

Next, the Union Minister viewed round the thriving of herbal plants the National Herbal Garden.

The outpatient department of the hospital opens for treatment from 8 am to 4:30 pm from Monday to Friday. — MNA/KZL

Over 70% of Rakhine's tourism businesses resumes operations after disaster



The photo shows the scene of Ngapali Beach in Thandwe.

TOURISM services have recently resumed in Rakhine State despite facing impacts of cyclone Mocha. U Tin Tun Aung, director of Rakhine State Directorate of Hotels and Tourism said that a total of 71 hotels, motels and lodges have been opened and operated. There are 102 hotels, motels and lodges in the entire state of Rakhine, and a total of 51 of 68 hotels and guesthouses are being operated in Ngapali Beach, which attracts a large

number of tourists.

Although it is the rainy season at present, many people are visiting Ngapali Beach, and it is known that many people visit Pearl Island during the rainy season. Pearl island is a 20-minute drive from Ngapali Gyeikaw by motor schooner.

Three-kilometre long Ngapali Beach is located seven miles from Thandwe, in Thandwe District of Rakhine State. — ASH/KZW

Illegal industrial accessories, consumer goods, vehicles seized in Yangon, Mandalay regions

THE on-duty customs team under the management of the Customs Department conducted inspections at the Asia World Container checkpoint and found 22,500 kilogrammes of LG Chem Polyolefin Elastomer (estimated value of K94.5 million) without mentioning in the import declaration form on 28 July, and six items (estimated value of K24,408,300), including 8,000 YR charging flashlights, not declared in the import declaration at Myanmar Industrial Port. These goods valued at about K118,908,300 were seized and action is taken in accordance with Customs Procedures.

A combined task force, under the management of Mandalay Region Illegal Trade Eradication Special Task, conducted inspections at milepost No 21 on the Mandalay-Muse Road. During the operation, eight kinds of goods (estimated

value of K26,253,801) including 210 Baowan Water Pumps were found a Nissan Tractor Head worth some K76 million driving from Muse to Mandalay. A total of (estimated value of K102,253,801) was seized, the action is being taken in accord-

ance with Customs procedures.

Therefore, the total number of arrests on 28 and 29 July are four cases (estimated value of K221,162,101), according to the Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee. — MNA/KZW



Confiscated illegal items including a vehicle in Mandalay Region (above and right photos).

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NATIONAL

Kyaiktiyo Pagoda attracts over 160,000 travellers in first seven months of this year

THE eminent Kyaiktiyo Pagoda located in Kyaikto of Mon State attracts a significant number of pilgrims from local and foreign countries. According to board of trustees of the pagoda's member U Soe Hla, the total count of travellers has surpassed 160,000 which consist of locals and foreigners during January and the third week of July this year.

Throughout the entire year, the pagoda remains accessible to travellers but it found a surge of visitors during its long Buddha Pujaniya festival, from fullmoon of Thadingyut to fullmoon of Kason.

"Currently, the number of travellers visiting the pagoda has decreased radically in rainy season. Among the foreign vis-

itors, tourists from Thailand have been a notable presence while visitors from European have been scarce. A total of 162,212 travellers—157,574 travellers at home and 4,638 people from abroad—visited the pagoda as of the third week in July 2023," said U Hla Soe.

Despite the seasonal fluctuation, the supporting accessories around the pagoda, such as hotels, lodges, restaurants, souvenir shops and food stalls, are being operated daily, providing catering services to travellers from various regions who will come to pay visits and homage to the pagoda as usual. Additionally, for visitors' convenience, vehicles and cable cars are also operated for the transportation. — ASH/KZL



This photo taken during rainy season shows the scenery of Sandawshin Kyaiktiyo pagoda in Mon State.

27 local and overseas life and non-life insurance companies operating businesses in Myanmar



KBZ life and non-life insurance company in Yangon is seen operating.

A total of 27 insurance companies including fully foreign-owned insurers are operating in Myanmar, according to Myanmar Insurance. There are 42 different types of life and non-life insurance offered by private insurance companies at the moment. The Insurance Business Regulatory Board (IBRB) oversees the insurance industry and verifies any new insurance types in compliance with the law and established procedures.

The Insurance Business Regulatory Board-IBRB con-

ducts regular meetings and approves new types of insurances and passes insurance agent licences in accordance with the Myanmar Insurance Law and by-laws. General insurance companies gave compensation of fire and vehicle insurances for the losses incurred during cyclone Mocha in Rakhine State, according to Myanmar Insurance.

Myanmar Insurance is drafting a policy to provide crop insurance for farmers. The policy is expected to be ready in coming winter. Currently, relevant insur-

ers are also offering insurance policies in order to cover losses of farmers due to fire, husking, and transportation.

There are five fully foreign-owned life insurance companies, three local-foreign joint ventures life insurance companies, nine citizen-owned life insurance companies, three joint venture life and non-life insurance companies, six local-owned life and non-life insurance companies, and Myanmar Insurance are currently operating insurance business. — ASH/TH



Flood Bulletin

(Issued at 13:00 hrs MST on 30-7-2023)

Flood Condition of Nanyin River

According to the (12:30) hrs MST observation today, the water level of Nanyin River at Mogaung has exceeded by about 1 inch above its danger level. It may continue to rise from the present water level by about ½ foot during the next 1 day and may remain above its danger level.

Advisory

It is especially advised to the people who settle near the river banks and low lying areas at Mogaung Township, to take precaution measure.

Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(ISSUED at 7:00 pm Sunday 30 July 2023)

BAY INFERENCE: According to the observations at (17:30) hrs MST today, the low pressure area over Northwest Bay of Bengal and adjoining North Odisha and West Bengal Coasts, India still persists. Monsoon is vigorous over the Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL NOON OF THE 31 July 2023: Rain or thundershowers will be scattered in Nay Pyi Taw, Lower Sagaing and Magway regions, fairly widespread in Mandalay Region and Northern Shan, Chin and Kayah states and widespread in the remaining regions and states with likelihood of regionally heavyfalls in Yangon, Ayeyawady and Taninthayi regions and Kayin and Mon states and isolated heavyfalls in Mandalay, Magway and Bago regions and Shan and Rakhine states. Degree of certainty is (100%).

STATE OF THE SEA: Occasional squalls with rough seas will be experienced off and along Myanmar Coasts. Surface wind speed in squalls may reach (40-45) mph. Wave height will be about (9-13) feet off and along Myanmar Coasts.

CURRENT AFFAIRS

15 unregistered products including cosmetics containing prohibited chemicals found in market



A cosmetics shop in Mudon Myoma Market, Mawlamyine District was being inspected by FDA officials in 2020.

THE Department of Food and Drug Administration (FDA) under the Ministry of Health found 15 unregistered products including cosmetics containing prohibited chemicals

in the market, according to a release issued by the department.

Inspectors from the Cosmetics Section of the department brought the unregistered products to their attention. After careful examinations, official found the prohibited chemicals that are detrimental to health of consumers. FDA has already notified that the public should not use the above products.

The banned chemicals found in 15 aforementioned products can lead to itching, inflammation, rashes, muscle numbness, muscle tremor, fatigue, headache, depression, kidney failure and other

illnesses, according to the FDA release.

Data released by the FDA shows that during the period between January and April 2023, permissions to distribute more than 1,500 items of imported cosmetics have been granted in Myanmar.

The companies that import cosmetics, wholesalers and retailers should practise industrial ethics and refrain from selling unregistered products and those prohibited by FDA, the release stated. And those who fail to comply with the above terms can be sued under article (3), Clause (3) (d) of the Public Health Law. — TWA/TH

MPT to change auto-telephone numbers as upgraded exchanges replaced

MYANMA Posts and Telecommunications (MPT) recently announced that auto-telephones numbers will be changed since exchanges have been upgraded in some regions and states.

The existing copper cable network will be upgraded to a fixed wireless system by changing exchanges in regions and states with the advanced system in order to improve quality and provide better services to customers.

During the transitional period from old numbers to new numbers, MPT will provide free call forwarding services for three months for the convenience of customers starting from the date that changed. The customers can enjoy call forwarding services, which allow them to call existing telephone numbers or new telephone numbers during the transitional period, as stated in the announcement. — TWA/CT



The process of changing auto-telephone system to fixed wireless system in Mongnai Township of Langkho District, Shan State (South).

Wholesale price of palm oil reaches K8,500 per viss in Yangon

REGIONAL edible oil traders are purchasing less quantity than usual due to the wholesale price of palm oil that hit around K8,500 per viss in the Yangon market.

A dealer in the Nyaungbinlay market in Lanmadaw Township confirmed that palm oil fetched K8,600 per viss in the market on 27 July. The wholesale reference price of palm oil was K4,230 per viss from 24 to 30 July 2023.

On 28 July, external markets in Yangon saw K8,500 per viss of the palm oil wholesale price and around K9,000 per viss in the Mandalay market, according to the daily price lists of the markets.

A tonne of palm oil was priced at US\$942.5 in the for-



Palm oil is being sold by a dealer at a retail shop.

eign market on 24 July, US\$915 on 27 July, and US\$900 on 28 July, according to palm oil price reports from the foreign market. Although palm

oil prices in the foreign market are falling, the price of palm oil in the domestic market is still staying over K4,000 per viss higher than the reference

price. Most oil dealers in various regions, including Yangon, are trading at a high market price.

Only a small number of people got to buy at retail and wholesale reference prices, and a few purchased between K5,000 and K7,000, which is between the reference price and the market price.

Although the wholesale reference price to be announced by the authorities on 31 July may fluctuate by K100 or K200, palm oil dealers and consumers are hoping for a reduction in the high gap between the reference wholesale price and the wholesale market price. — TWA/CT

Matriculation pass certificate set to release with security upgrade

ACCORDING to the Department of Myanmar Examinations, the matriculation examination pass certificates for 2024 are planned to be issued with security upgrades.

Out of more than 160,000 students who set for the matriculation examination in the old academic system in 2023, the pass

rate of those students accounted for 67.87 per cent.

Starting from the 2023-2024 academic year, the new system of Grade-12 is being introduced, and the Ministry of Education has announced that those who did not take the old system matriculation examination and those who failed will be allowed

to take the new system Grade-12 matriculation examination to be held in 2024 as an external candidates.

Matriculation examination pass certificates for 2023 are being issued by branches of the Department of Myanmar Examinations in Nay Pyi Taw and Yangon from 10 July. — TWA/KZL



The Yangon branch of Department of Myanmar Examinations located on the Parami Road, Hline Township, Yangon Region.

LOCAL BUSINESS

Bago Region witnesses robust foreign and citizen...

FROM PAGE - 1

U Ko Ko Latt shared insights into this development, revealing that the Bago Region Investment Committee extended its support to three industries in July, allowing them to receive \$2.812 million in foreign investment. Consequently, these industries are poised to create job opportunities for 100 Myanmar workers. One of the approved industries also submitted a proposal to import necessary machinery, intending to operate with the use of solar power. Additionally, two more industries focusing on sports equipment manufacturing and synthetic flowers will receive additional machinery to bolster their operations and accommodate more workers. Furthermore, a garment industry has expressed its intention to commence operations, and the region committee awaits feedback from the Myanmar Garment Entrepreneurs Association to proceed with the garment factory's implementation.

A total of 30 businesses have invested in five major sectors, namely industrial, electric power, livestock and fishery, agricultural, and service sectors. These investments have collectively provided employment opportunities for a staggering 8,596 workers, significantly contributing to the economic growth and development of Bago Region.

Overall, the remarkable inflow of foreign and citizen investments in various industries signifies a promising outlook for Bago Region's economic landscape, offering opportunities for both local entrepreneurs and international investors to thrive in this dynamic and rapidly growing region. — ASH/TTA

MSME: Creating opportunities, improving marketability



Participants are seen in commemorative photo during the opening ceremony of capacity development forum to upgrade the digital skills of Lancang-Mekong MSMEs. PHOTO:TWA

DEPUTY Minister for Industry U Yin Maung Nyunt said that digital technology can create opportunities for MSMEs to expand their businesses and improve market capabilities.

He highlighted this at the opening of the capacity development forum to upgrade the digital skills of Lancang-Mekong MSMEs held in Nay Pyi Taw on 27 and 28 July.

The deputy minister pointed out that MSMEs are

currently the main driver of global economic development and are an important tool for expanding employment and improving quality of life. The development of MSMEs in the Lancang-Mekong region plays an important role in maintaining the stability of the regional industry and supply chain, maintaining trade facilitation and market interconnection, building a consistent market in the region, and improving the income and living standards of

people in various countries.

He also said that Myanmar pays a lot of attention to MSMEs and provides enough raw materials for agriculture and livestock farms, and increases the income of the people by upgrading the value of products through brokering.

Mr Ouyang Daobing, a counselor of the Chinese Embassy to Myanmar, said that this forum will provide knowledge sharing for MSMEs at the right time. — TWA/KZL

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54 container vessels scheduled to arrive at Yangon ports in August



The picture shows cargoes from foreign investments.

A total of 54 container vessels are slated to call in at Yangon's international ports in August, according to the Myanmar Port Authority.

In August, 10 container vessels run by Sealand Maersk Asia, eight by Samudera Shipping Line, six by RCL Line, five each

by MSC Line and SITC Line, four by New Golden Sea (COSCO), three by IAL Line, ONE Line and PIL Line, two by Evergreen Line and one by Bay Line, BLPL Line, CMA CGM Line and Land & Sea Line, and Ti2 Container Line are slated to dock at the Yangon Port.

This year, 52 container ves-

sels each in January and February, 55 in March, 50 in April, 56 in May, 57 in June and 53 in July arrived at Yangon Port.

Yangon Port handled a total of 620 container vessels last year. Thanks to the draft extension, the international ocean liners can access the inner port for now,

according to the Myanmar Port Authority's statement on 22 June.

After the new navigation channel (Kings Bank Channel) accessing the inner Yangon River was found, the draft extension work was accelerated. After that, the port can now handle larger ships. The container vessel (185.99-metre LOA, 35.25 m Beam, 29.32 GRT and 2,698 TEU) Hong-Kong-based SITC Shipping Line docked at Asia World Port Terminal for the first time on 22 June. That vessel is the largest one that AWPT Port handled.

From May 2021, the arrival of ships at terminals in Yangon has increased again. To fulfil the seaborne trade requirements, three new container vessels by Maersk Line Myanmar (Sea Land Maersk) started to run in 2021.

Earlier, the larger ships had draft problems preventing their sailing on the Yangon River. The draft was extended up to 10 me-

tres, the larger ocean liners can enter the Thilawa Port.

The coast of Myanmar is 2,228 kilometres (1,260 nautical kilometres) including 713 kilometres long Rakhine coastal area, 437 kilometres long delta region and 1,078 kilometres long Taninthayi coastline, stretching from northern Bangladesh's border to southern Thailand's border area. There are 10 seaports along the coastline, including Yangon Port, Thilawa Deep-sea Port, Kyaukpyu Deep-sea Port, Sit-tway Port, Thandwe Port, Patheingyi Port, Mawlamyine Port, Dawei Deep-sea Port, Myeik Port and Kawthoung Port.

Seaborne trade accounts for 75 per cent of foreign trade. However, Yangon Port including Thilawa terminals is the only international port and the remaining ports in eight cities are designated for the domestic way only. — NN/EM

OPINION

Media's vital role in bridging people and incidents

THE role of media and media personnel as intermediaries between readers and events is not one which is assigned, but rather it is an inherent duty they willingly embrace. In Myanmar, the media is seen as the fourth estate, tasked with ensuring checks and balances over all aspects of the nation, especially in the realm of politics.

Media personnel shoulder responsibility not only towards the State but also towards the people, providing them with information, entertainment, and education. Adhering to strict media ethics, they must present information accurately and with utmost correctness. A crucial aspect of media ethics is to avoid plagiarism, refraining from copying intellectual property without permission. News stories must be presented without any bias or personal input, ensuring reliability for the readers.

Integrity is of utmost importance, and media personnel must

refrain from presenting news stories in a way that harms individuals and organizations or violates human rights. On the contrary, they should actively protect human rights and contribute much to a happier society by adhering to these principles.

Another key responsibility of media personnel is to avoid presenting news in a manner that incites religious or ethnic conflicts. Instead, they should strive to foster unity and understanding among different communities by spreading optimism.

Neutrality is an essential characteristic of media personnel, and they must approach all incidents with unbiased minds. News presentations and criticism should be based on accuracy and devoid of personal opinions, allowing readers the freedom to form their judgements and opinions. In the realm of political affairs, media personnel play a pivotal role by promptly informing the public about all measures taken. They are entrusted with the responsibility of guiding events towards the correct path and ensuring transparency in governance.

the responsibility of guiding events towards the correct path and ensuring transparency in governance.

The duty of media personnel in maintaining checks and balances is a noble one, benefiting society as a whole. By upholding the principles of unbiased reporting, respecting human rights, and promoting unity, they contribute significantly to the well-being of the nation.

As such, the media's inborn duty is to act as a bridge between people and incidents, while also upholding the values of accuracy, integrity, and impartiality. They have to take pride that their role as the fourth estate is crucial in ensuring a well-informed and united society, with media personnel being the guardians of truth and transparency in the nation.

Following the 2023 Lancang-Mekong Cooperation (LMC) Media Summit and Workshop, held from 27 June to 4 July 2023 in three major cities of China, we have seen the importance and satisfaction of the electricity sector in a breathtaking way.

The whole of China has an excess of electricity, and with fascinating technology, LMC countries are getting sufficient power through Chinese electricity projects.

As China Southern Power Grid (CSG), Energy China and State Power Investment Corporation Limited (SPIC) are able to produce electricity using the latest advanced technologies, they are able to share the fruits of technology not only with China but also with countries in the Lancang-Mekong region and other countries around the world.

CSG is a key state-owned enterprise directly under the central government. It has established a modern corporate governance structure, striving to build a reliable, safe, smart, green, and efficient modern grid and commits to building a world-class enterprise with global competitiveness to advance the energy ecosystem service provider.

Ensuring power supply and contributing to carbon neutrality, CSG has increased investment in power grid infrastructure projects and accelerated the construction of modern power grids to build a new electric power system.

The company supplies the power to Guangdong, Guangxi, Yunnan, Guizhou, Hainan, Hong Kong and Macao. They have been independently conducting foreign trade, international co-

operation, contracting overseas engineering construction projects and dispatching labour services overseas.

The grid network covers the five provincial regions in southern China and is connected to the power grids of Southern Asia especially Lancang-Mekong countries, with a power supply area

of one million square kilometres, covering a population of 254 million and 107 million households.

Giving full play to the grids as a platform for the optimal allocation of resources, CSG makes flexible plans on electricity transmission, adopts targeted measures for orderly electricity consumption and raises public awareness

of energy consumption to fulfil basic electricity needs.

CSG has established a sound information disclosure process to deliver important information to users in a timely manner through "CSG Online" and WeChat official account, allowing users to get access to relevant information clearly, efficiently and conveniently.

As CSG is using towers equipped with automatic power tracking equipment to adequately distribute urban and rural residual electricity, Myanmar should also sign more Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) contracts with the Chinese People's Government to obtain the full power grid technology for every household in Myanmar to access 24-hour electricity.

Additionally, Energy China, established in 2021, is seen as a wholly-owned subsidiary of China Energy Engineering Group Company Limited-CEEC, taking the lead in the investment of international business, market development, supervision and management of engineering projects, etc.

It tops the world's construction technology in the fields of river diversion and closure.

The Yeywa Hydropower Plant project in Myanmar built by Energy China is the largest hydropower plant in Myanmar in terms of total installed capacity, with a maximum dam height of 137 metres, build in only 40 months in a hot and rainy climate, with a total installed capacity of 790,000 kilowatts, accounting for 50 per cent of Myanmar's national installed hydropower capacity, known as Myanmar's "Three Gorges Project".

Regarding the diplomatic cooperation, Lyu Zexiang, Chairman of CEEC International, met U Thaung Han, Union Minister for Electric Power of Myanmar, in Beijing and reached a consensus on deepening cooperation in investment and construction in the photovoltaic fields, wind power, energy storage, gas power plants and hydropower.

In the recent outbreak of Cyclone Mocha, the CEEC actively responded to the call of the

Chinese Embassy to Myanmar and organized by the Chamber of Commerce, donated cash and relief items to the Cyclone-hit area to help people in the disaster to overcome their difficulties.

The CEEC has always been actively taking social responsibility and helping local people in Myanmar in terms of people-to-people bond benefits.

Besides, State Power Investment Corporation Limited (SPIC), one of China's five power generation groups, is actively implementing the Belt and Road Initiatives, with a presence in 47 countries including Myanmar, Viet Nam, Brazil, Mexico, Türkiye and Pakistan etc.

As of May 2023, SPIC owns 8,860-megawatt overseas assets in operation, with clean and green energy.

The SPIC undertook tasks on the development and construction of the Myanmar Ayeyawady Hydropower Project with an installed capacity of 21.6 gigawatts.

The Chipwe Nge Hydropower Project has become the main

Lancang-Mekong Cooperation: Moving faster towards sufficient electrification

By KZL



The media delegation of Lancang-Mekong Cooperation gave a thumbs up to express the deepening exchanges. PHOTO: PEOPLE'S DAILY



Media personnel show interest in the presentation of China Southern Power Grid. PHOTO: PEOPLE'S DAILY

power source for lighting up the northern region of Myanmar, locally known as a pearl embedded in the Maykha River.

The SPIC is ensuring the daily power consumption of more than 400,000 people in Kachin State and Sagaing Region, making important contributions to the economic and social development of local people.

Along with the projects, jobs were also opened up for workers in Myanmar.

Leaders from the SPICYN (Yunnan International Power Investment Company Limited of State Power Investment Corporation) met Daw Mi Mi Khaing, Director of the Electric Power Planning Department of the Ministry of Electric Power of Myanmar and introduced the overall situation with the success of the projects in Myanmar.

During the meeting, SPICYN expressed their willingness to assist in the power development in Myanmar and contributed special advice to the realization of the goal of "National Electrification Plan by 2023" in Myanmar. Myanmar delegations frankly communicated energy solutions in non-electric zones in Myanmar

with the SPICYN.

Currently, SPICYN is operating the Fuyuan West Wing Farm Project, the Wind Power base with the largest installed capacity in China.

The wind turbines for the project feature a unit capacity of 6.7 Megawatts, representing the largest wind power base with the most advanced technology in Yunnan Province.

The wind turbine body is equipped with intelligent sensors to realize real-time monitoring, making the project the very first environmentally friendly smart wind farm in the province.

One wind turbine can supply a household with electricity for one month every year, according to the official statement.

The project is expected to generate 2,060 gigawatt hours of annual on-grid energy.

Myanmar should also engage in modern wind power generation in cooperation with China.

In conclusion, the Lancang-Mekong Cooperation will stand as a strong support for Myanmar and other LMC countries to get sufficient electricity.



The China Southern Grid's new electric power technology system was demonstrated by a person riding on a small electric bicycle. PHOTO: PEOPLE'S DAILY

SCI/TECH WORLD

Italian scientists urge media to better explain climate change

NEARLY 100 Italian scientists wrote an open letter to the media Thursday, urging better reporting of the causes and solutions to climate change so steps can be taken to avert crisis.

The letter, sent from Italy's Climate Media Centre, was also signed by the 2021 Nobel Prize winner for physics, Giorgio Parisi of Rome's Sapienza University.

The alert comes as wide swathes of Europe, especially Mediterranean nations including Italy, have been hit by extreme heat and fires, even as strong storms and hail pelted

Italy's north.

"Heatwaves, floods, prolonged droughts and fires are just some of the signs of the intensifying impacts of climate change on our territories," read the letter signed by 96 scientists, citing 18,000 deaths in Italy from last summer's heatwave.

The death toll from this season's ongoing heatwave has not yet been determined.

"However, the Italian media still too often talk about 'bad weather' instead of climate change. When they do talk about it, they often omit the causes and the solutions," read the letter.



A boat is pictured in the shallow waters of the Rhine River near Oestrich Winkel, in western Germany, on 12 August 2022 when the water level has dropped below 40 centimeters, making it difficult to transport ships. **PHOTO: PIX FOR VISUAL PURPOSE/ AFP**

The omissions risk "fuelling inaction, resignation or denial of reality", when solutions are at hand, namely "the rapid

elimination of the use of coal, oil and gas, and decarbonisation through renewable energy".

"This is the right strategy to

stop rising temperatures, and it is technologically and economically feasible today," wrote the scientists. — AFP

North Atlantic reaches record high temperature of 24.9 degrees

ACCORDING to preliminary measurements, the sea surface in the North Atlantic reached its highest temperature ever this week at 24.9 degrees. The value was measured several weeks before the usual annual maximum temperature, the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) announced on Friday, citing preliminary data.

"Based on our analysis, the record high average sea surface temperature in the North Atlantic is 24.9 degrees Celsius," NOAA scientist Xungang Yin told the AFP news agency. According to the report, the value was measured on Wednesday. Confirmation of the preliminary results is expected in a fortnight.

Normally, the North Atlantic



View of a coral reef in Key West, Florida on 14 July 2023. The coral reef, the largest in the continental US, is considered a barrier reef and is around 350 miles (563.27 km) wide from the Dry Tortugas National Park to the St. Lucie Inlet in Martin County, Florida. **PHOTO: JOSEPH PREZIOSO / AFP**

reaches its maximum temperature in early September, according to the agency. The previous record was measured in September 2022 at 24.89 degrees Celsius, Yin explained. The sea surface temperature is expected to "continue to rise in August",

he said. It is "highly likely" that the record will be broken again, he said. The new high of 24.9 degrees Celsius is "more than one degree warmer than the 30-year climatological normal calculated from 1982 to 2011," the expert added. — AFP

New radar detector swiftly identifies signs of life

A new ultra-wideband radar life detector has passed field test, the Science and Technology Daily reported on Friday.

The detection signal of the detector can penetrate non-metallic material such as a brick wall, a wood panel, concrete, and soil, said Qi Qingjie, chief scientist with the detector's developer China Coal Technology

and Engineering Group.

The detector can sense survivors' life signals, like breathing and heartbeat, in several minutes in centimeter-level resolution within a distance of 30 meters, said Qi. It can be applied in rescue efforts after earthquakes, geological disasters and landslide accidents.

The research and develop-

ment team conducted life signal detection and positioning tests on subjects under various post-disaster simulation scenarios, such as high-rise building collapse and earthquake ruins, and also verified the detection duration, positioning distance and accuracy of the ultra-wideband radar life detector. — Xinhua

Wildlife lovers urged to join UK's annual butterfly count

WILDLIFE enthusiasts across Britain are being encouraged to log sightings of butterflies and some moths, as the world's largest annual survey of the increasingly endangered pollinating insects returns.

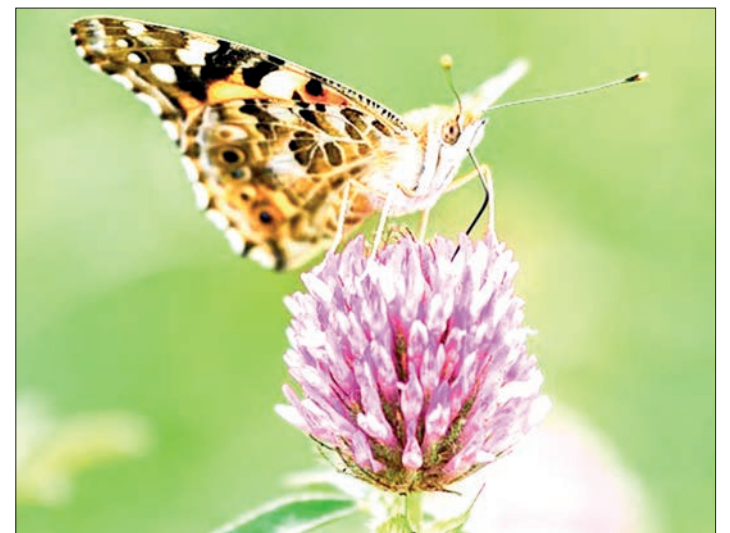
The UK-wide "Big Butterfly Count" — which this year runs from July 14 to August 6 — helps conservationists assess the health of the country's natural environment, amid mounting evidence it is increasingly imperilled.

Volunteers download a chart helping them to identify different butterfly species and then record their sightings in gardens, parks and elsewhere using a smartphone app and other online tools.

It comes as experts warn the often brightly coloured winged insects are in rapid decline in Britain as they fail to cope with unprecedented environmental change.

"It's a pretty worrying picture," Richard Fox, head of science at the Butterfly Conservation charity, which runs the nationwide citizen-led survey, told AFP at Orley Common, a vast park in Devon, southwest England.

"The major causes of the decline are what we humans have done to the landscape in the UK over the past 50, 60, 70 years," he added from the site, which is seeing fewer butterflies despite offering an ideal habitat for them. — AFP



The Painted Lady butterfly migrates to the UK all the way from North Africa. **PHOTO: DPA/AFP**

Hong Kong public broadcaster cancels LGBTQ radio show



The radio show "We Are Family," which promoted LGBTQ equality in Hong Kong, is ending its 17-year run at Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK). **PHOTO: AFP**

A radio show promoting LGBTQ equality will end its 17-year run at Hong Kong's public broadcaster on Sunday, with station management citing "changes in programme" as the reason for cancellation.

The axing of "We Are Family" comes after Beijing crushed Hong Kong's democracy movement and imposed a sweeping national security law in 2020, which critics say has fractured civil society and silenced dissent.

Programme co-host Brian Leung said he was "men-

tally prepared" for the show to be dropped at the government-funded Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK), but was not given a satisfactory explanation when meeting with station management earlier this month.

"For a traditional platform like RTHK, this programme was more or less walking a tight-rope", Leung told AFP in an interview hours before the final show.

Featuring a mix of chitchat, news and guest interviews, the show was a rare platform that advocated gay rights in the

Chinese city and its 2006 debut broke the mould at the public broadcaster.

Partly inspired by the success of Oscar-winning film "Brokeback Mountain", the show in its early days enjoyed editorial freedom "to an extent I found almost hard to believe", Leung recalled.

The show, which aired for two hours every Sunday at midnight, made use of the broadcaster's wide reach to present LGBTQ content as "something fun, light-hearted and interesting", Leung said. — AFP

Morocco's Benzina makes history with hijab at Women's World Cup

NOUHAILA Benzina became the first player to wear a hijab during a Women's World Cup game when she sported the Muslim headscarf in Morocco's match against South Korea on Sunday.

World governing body FIFA lifted its ban on footballers wearing the hijab nearly a decade ago, after previous concerns over player safety.

The 25-year-old defender Benzina, who plays her club football in Morocco, ran out against South Korea in Adelaide to write her name in the history books.

Benzina shared social media posts in the lead-up to the World Cup about wearing a hijab, but has not spoken to the media in Australia and New Zealand



The primary purpose of wearing the hijab is to fulfill a religious obligation for Muslim women to maintain modesty and protect their beauty and adornments from unrelated men. Nouhaila Benzina in action against South Korea. **PHOTO: AFP**

about it.

She told broadcaster Al Jazeera recently it would be a proud moment.

"Lots of work was done over

many years, and thank God it had a positive result," she said.

"We hope to play at a high level and honour Moroccans."

— AFP

Extinct birds on the ballot for New Zealand's avian beauty contest

FIVE extinct species have been included on the ballot for New Zealand's most popular feathered friend as competition organisers hope to draw attention to endangered birds.

New Zealand's annual avian beauty contest has proven highly contentious over the years.

The kakapo, a chubby parrot resembling a green-feathered bowling ball which can't fly, couldn't run in last year's Bird of the Year competition.

The twice former winner was dropped from the 2022 vote by organisers to help less popular species have a shot at the title.

Feathers were also ruf-

fled when a native bat was allowed to enter, then flew off with the 2021 title.

This year, competition organisers Forest & Bird will celebrate their centenary by crowning New Zealand's most popular feathered friend in the last 100 years — even if the potential winner no longer exists.

"We're searching for the bird that has captured New Zealanders' hearts over the last century," said Forest & Bird chief executive Nicola Toki at Saturday's launch.

The environmental group has put 75 species on the ticket for this year's Bird of the Century contest, of which a quintet are thought to be extinct in New Zealand. — AFP



The kakapo, a chubby parrot resembling a green-feathered bowling ball has twice won the competition. **PHOTO: DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION/AFP**

Belgian brothers look to put singer Brel's boat back to sea

BELGIAN singer Jacques Brel famously crooned about clinging to love in iconic hits like "Ne me quitte pas" and now two brothers in his homeland are engaged in their own enduring passion project to restore his cherished sailboat.

In the North Sea port of Zeebrugge, Gustaaf and Piet Wittevrongel are close to returning the yacht to the sea, 15 years after it was salvaged as a wreck from a New Zealand beach.

The red and blue hull of the 20 metre (66 foot) Askoy II looks almost as good new as the final work is done ahead of a planned launch in September.

That will be almost 45 years after the death of the

Belgian songster, whose French-language ballads such as "Quand on n'a que l'amour" made him a global star in the 1950s and 60s.

"We're waiting for the green light from the maritime inspection," said older brother Gustaaf, 84. Brel embarked on two epic ocean crossings in the Askoy II — then considered one of the most beautiful vessels of its kind — in 1974 to the Marquesas Islands in the South Pacific.

But he sold it in Polynesia after becoming more interested in flying and the boat eventually ended up shipwrecked in New Zealand after reportedly passing through the hands of drug smugglers. — AFP

ECONOMY WORLD

More new enterprises tapping China's import expo

MORE new overseas enterprises will participate in the sixth China International Import Expo (CIIE) slated to be held in Shanghai from 5 to 10 November this year to tap the Chinese market.

Nearly 20 Fortune 500 enterprises, leading-industry companies, and over 500 small and medium-sized enterprises have signed up to participate in the major import expo for the first time, according to the CIIE Bureau.

Among the first-time participants is the Japanese lifestyle brand MUJI. Shimizu Satoshi, board chairman and managing director of MUJI (Shanghai) Company Limited, said with the CIIE debut, the company hopes to demonstrate its unwavering commitment to being deeply rooted in the Chinese market.

Attracted by the growing purchasing power of consum-



People visit a match-making event of the 6th China International Import Expo (CIIE) at the National Exhibition and Convention Center (Shanghai) in east China's Shanghai, 26 July 2023. PHOTO: XIN MENGCHEN/XINHUA

ers in the country of 1.4 billion people, about 200 enterprises have signed up to attend the event for six consecutive years. It demonstrates their commit-

ment to and confidence in the world's second-largest economy.

A combined business exhibition area of over 360,000 square meters has been booked

thus far, with enterprises ready to showcase their newest products and services. About 2,000 new products, technologies, and services were first launched in

the past five sessions.

There will be six business exhibition areas for food and agricultural products, automobiles, intelligent industry and information technology, consumer goods, medical equipment and healthcare products, and the services trade.

Forty enterprises have even signed up to attend the 7th CIIE next year, with over 30,000 square meters of business exhibition area booked to date, according to the organizer.

Zhu Min, head of the Shanghai Municipal Commission of Commerce, said that the city's 60 trading platforms running throughout the year have brought in nearly 200,000 exhibited products from the CIIE, importing 323 billion yuan (about 45.3 billion US dollars) worth of goods. — Xinhua

Canada's GDP decreases 0.2% in June

CANADA'S real gross domestic product (GDP) decreased 0.2 per cent in June following 0.3 per cent increase in May, Statistics Canada said on Friday.

According to advance information, the decrease was driven by the wholesale trade and manufacturing sectors, whose downward movements more than offset the increases recorded in May, the national statistical agency said.

These decreases were partially offset by increases in oil and gas extraction as well as in the real estate and rental and leasing sector in June. Oil and gas extraction's increase partially offset the decrease recorded in the previous month which dropped 6.6 per cent as a result of the forest fires in Alberta, the



The oil and gas extraction sector saw growth in June, which helped counterbalance some of the negative impacts on the economy. PHOTO: PIX FOR VISUAL PURPOSE/HMDC

agency said.

The fires primarily impacted installations in the western parts of the province, from Edmonton to the Rocky Mountains' Foothills in the Clearwater, Montney and Duvernay forma-

tions. These played a crucial role in the industry's largest monthly contraction since April 2020, resulting in a steep drop in both natural gas extraction and crude oil, the agency said. — Xinhua

Key US inflation gauge cools further as rate hikes bite

A key indicator of US inflation cooled in June to the lowest annual rate in over two years, although this remains above the central bank's target, according to government data released Friday.

The Federal Reserve's preferred gauge of inflation, the personal consumption expenditures (PCE) price index, rose 3.0 per cent last month from June 2022, down from a 3.8 per cent jump in May, said the Commerce Department.

From May to June, the PCE price index ticked up 0.2 per cent, a touch above the 0.1 per cent rate in the prior

month.

But spending climbed 0.5 per cent between May and June, up from 0.2 per cent previously, the report said, although growth in personal income slowed. "The economy's main growth engine continues to hum," said Oren Klachkin, lead US economist at Oxford Economics.

"Rising incomes, complemented with lingering excess savings, gave consumers the purchasing power to continue spending in June," he added, although warning that their ability to spend is not limitless. — AFP



The US central bank's preferred inflation gauge cooled again in June, although spending remained resilient. PHOTO: AFP/FILE

Worldcoin crypto already under scrutiny in Europe

LESS than a week after its launch, the Worldcoin crypto project of OpenAI chief executive Sam Altman is already under scrutiny by European regulators over its reliance on an eye scan to verify a user's identity, France's data protection agency said Friday.

Worldcoin's launch on Monday comes as the cryptocurrency

industry is suffering hard times after the spectacular collapse of FTX and various legal cases against the sector's biggest players.

Using eye scans, it tries to solve one of the main challenges facing the crypto industry: a level of anonymity so high that makes it vulnerable to scams and spam bots — which AI threatens to

make exponentially worse.

But Worldcoin's collection of biometric data could run afoul of strict data privacy rules in Europe.

"Worldcoin has begun to collect data in France... which seems questionable as does the conservation of biometric data," France's CNIL data regulator told AFP. — AFP

Egypt energy-saving measures power satirical reaction



Boys sell sweet pastries to pedestrians outside the (C) 18th-century Ottoman-period Sabil-Kuttab (water spring and school) of Abd al-Rahman Katkhuda along Islamic Cairo's landmark al-Muizz li-Din Allah street on 27 July 2023. **PHOTO: AFP**

SWELTERING without air conditioning during the day and plunged into darkness at night, many Egyptians have responded with anger and ridicule to government measures for reducing energy consumption.

Hours-long power

cuts across Egypt, several times a day, prompted the directives as record temperatures hit the Mediterranean region this month.

After 11 days of daily blackouts, Prime Minister Mostafa Madbouli ordered civil servants on Thursday to work from home once a

week, announced scheduled power outages at least through August, and proposed other solutions to Egypt's energy crisis.

But many Egyptians took to social media to criticise — and poke fun at — what they view as a failure on the government's part.

"Why do we export gas to Europe while we live in darkness?" wondered Egyptian resident Islam, 36, in comments to AFP. He gave only his first name.

Some were reminded of the last time the Arab world's most populous nation faced incessant power outages 10 summers ago, helping fuel popular discontent and protests against the short-lived presidency of the late Islamist leader Mohamed Morsi.

He was deposed in July 2013 by then-defence minister Abdel Fattah al-Sisi, whose ensuing administration has invested billions in improving the national power grid.

Until just a few weeks ago, officials were still insisting that Egyptians' years of suffering from unreliable mains supply were now gone. — AFP

Ryanair pilots' strike in Belgium cancels almost 100 flights

A strike by Ryanair pilots in Belgium in an ongoing dispute over working conditions has cancelled 96 flights to and from Charleroi this weekend, the airport said, in the midst of the busy summer travel season.

The industrial action will affect 17,000 passengers due to leave or land in the southern city, around 28 per cent of the expected number of travellers, the airport's management told AFP.

Pilots say the low-cost Irish airline is failing to honour a collective convention that sets time off work in exchange for salary cuts agreed in 2020 during the height of the coronavirus pandemic, which decimated the industry.

The pilots' union said the company was failing to respect Belgian law and was prospering thanks to "social dumping" that creates unfair competition for other airlines that abide by the rules. — AFP



Pilots say the low-cost Irish airline is failing to honour a collective convention agreed in 2020. **PHOTO: KENZO TRIBOUILLARD / AFP**

China has 318 online ride-hailing companies by end of June

CHINA'S online ride-hailing companies reached 318 by the end of June, five more than the number registered in the previous month, data from the Ministry of Transport

shows.

By the end of last month, the authorized ride-hailing vehicle certificates and driver licenses in the country hit 2.43 million and 5.79

million, respectively, according to the ministry.

In June, China saw some 763 million ride-hailing trips, up 3.7 per cent on a monthly basis.

In 2022, online ride-hailing trips made up about 40.5 per cent of total taxi trips, an increase of 6.4 percentage points from a year earlier. — Xinhua

US oil giants report lower profits but lift shareholder payouts

EXXONMOBIL and Chevron reported profits Friday that were much lower than last year's due a drop in commodity prices, but still lofty enough to enable increased shareholder distributions.

The two US oil giants joined European rivals Shell and Total in seeing steep declines in their bottom-line results compared with the heady year-ago period when Russia's invasion of Ukraine sent crude and natural gas prices sky bound.

ExxonMobil reported profits of \$7.9 billion, down 56 per cent on a 28 per cent drop in revenues to \$82.9

billion.

Chevron reported profits of \$6.0 billion, down 48 per cent, while revenues declined 28 per cent to \$48.9 billion.

US crude prices in the second quarter of 2023 were down more than 30 per cent compared with the year-ago period, which was dominated by worries about the loss of Russian crude supply.

Natural gas prices are also down sharply following a mild winter, while the comparative weakness in refinery margins reflects sluggish economic conditions in some key markets. — AFP

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V NEGAR VOY.NO. (SCY1154)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V NEGAR VOY. NO. (SCY1154)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **31-7-2023** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MITT** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

**M/S LAND AND SEA INTERMODAL LOGISTICS
SDN BHD LINE**

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V ISEACO FORTUNE VOY.NO. (0UV32E1NC)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V ISEACO FORTUNE VOY.NO. (0UV32E1NC)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **31-7-2023** 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.

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Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S CMA-CGM SHIPPING LINE PTE LTD

ROLLING UPDATES

WORLD

Xi's special representative to attend Decade of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor celebration event



The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is laying the foundation of Pakistan's sustained economic modernization. Aerial photo taken on 9 April 2022 shows a view of the Karot Hydropower Project in Punjab province, eastern Pakistan. **PHOTO: CTG/HANDOUT VIA XINHUA**

HE Lifeng, special representative of President Xi Jinping, will travel to Pakistan from 30 July to 1 August to attend the Decade of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor celebration event in Islamabad, foreign ministry spokesperson Mao Ning announced on Saturday.

He, vice premier of the State Council, will travel to Pakistan at the invitation of the government of Pakistan, Mao added.

This year marks the 10th anniversary of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) proposed by President Xi Jinping, and also the 10th anniversary of the launch of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Over the past decade, as an

important pioneering project of the BRI, the CPEC has achieved fruitful results and become a new benchmark for the friendship between China and Pakistan, a foreign ministry spokesperson said.

To mark the 10th anniversary of the launch of the CPEC, the Pakistani government will hold a grand celebration event in the country's capital Islamabad. He will attend the event and meet with the leaders of Pakistan, the spokesperson said.

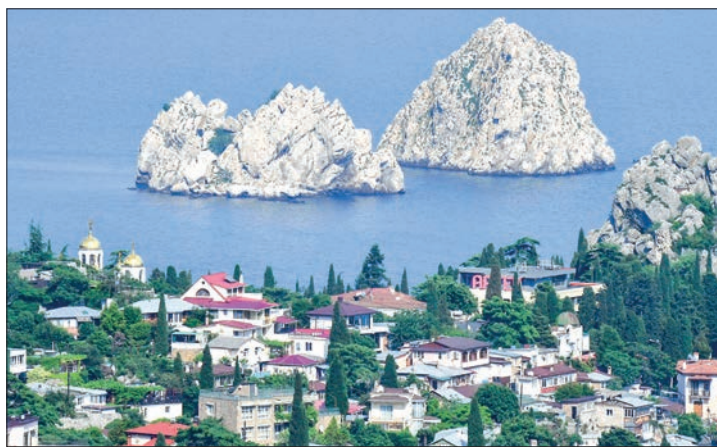
China and Pakistan are all-weather strategic cooperative partners and iron-clad friends, and the friendship between the two countries is time-honored, the spokesperson noted. — Xinhua

Russia says thwarted Ukrainian drone attacks on Moscow, Crimea

RUSSIA said on Sunday it had downed Ukrainian drones targeting Moscow and the Crimea peninsula, in attacks that damaged two office towers in the capital and briefly shut an international airport.

One drone targeting Moscow was shot down on the city's outskirts and two others were "suppressed by electronic warfare" and smashed into an office complex early on Sunday, the Russian defence ministry said, adding that there were no injuries.

Moscow and its environs, lying about 500 kilometres (310 miles) from the Ukrainian border, had rarely been targeted during the conflict in Ukraine



The resort city of Yalta in Crimea, which is regularly hit by drones and explosions. **PHOTO: AFP**

until several drone attacks this year.

The attack reported Sunday is the latest in a series of recent drone assaults —

including on the Kremlin and Russian towns near the border with Ukraine — that Moscow has blamed on Kyiv. — AFP

NEWS IN BRIEF

Taliban create bonfire of 'immoral' music equipment

AUTHORITIES from Afghanistan's vice ministry created a bonfire of confiscated musical instruments and equipment in Herat province at the weekend, deeming music immoral.

"Promoting music causes moral corruption and playing it will cause the youth to go astray," said Aziz al-Rahman al-Muhajir, head of the Herat department of the Ministry for the Promotion of Virtue and Prevention of Vice.

Since seizing power in August 2021, Taliban authorities have steadily imposed laws and regulations that reflect their austere vision of Islam — including banning playing music in public.

Saturday's bonfire saw hundreds of dollars worth of musical gear go up in smoke — much of it collected from wedding halls in the city.

It included a guitar, two other stringed instruments, a harmonium and a tabla — a type of drum — as well as amplifiers and speakers.

Women have borne the brunt of the new government regulations, and are not allowed in public unless wearing a hijab. — AFP

Back on track: Europe's night trains make bumpy comeback

NIGHT trains have made a comeback in Europe thanks to their low-carbon footprint, but after years of neglect, the renaissance has had a bumpy ride.

Operators admit that the trains are outdated — with passengers facing the occasional delays, technical problems or

malfunctioning toilets — while companies compete in an overloaded network.

Despite the challenges, national rail operators are giving night trains another chance while startups are jumping on the bandwagon as climate concerns are making travellers ditch kerosene-burning planes

for cleaner modes of transportation.

Sitting at the crossroads between western and eastern Europe, Austria has been at the heart of this revival with the backing of the government even as low-cost airlines threatened to relegate sleeper trains to the history books. — AFP



Night trains have experienced a revival in Europe due to their low-carbon footprint, attracting environmentally conscious travelers. **PHOTO: AFP**

Sex abuse report casts shadow over Pope's Portugal visit



A bus announcing the visit of Pope Francis drives past the Augusta street arch at Comercio square in Lisbon, on 28 July 2023. **PHOTO: AFP**

POPE Francis heads to Portugal next week for a global gathering of young Catholics as the country grapples with a report into decades of sexual abuse of children by members of the Church.

The 86-year-old pontiff arrives in Lisbon on Wednesday and is expected to meet in private with victims of clergy abuse during his five-day visit to attend World Youth Day.

Organizers expect up to one million people will take part in the event which is being held for the first time since 2019 due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

It comes after an independent commission published a report in February that found "at least" 4,815 children were sexually abused by clergy members in the country — mostly priests — since 1950.

The inquiry, based on testimony from more than 500 victims, concluded Portugal's Church hierarchy "systematically" tried to conceal the abuse.

The results of the inquiry, commissioned by the Church in Portugal, has tainted the institution in the country where 80 per cent of its population of some 10 million people identify as Roman Catholic. — AFP

30% of disaster base hospitals are in areas at risk of flooding

NEARLY 30 per cent of hospitals in Japan, including specially designated hospitals for emergencies, are located in areas at risk of flooding by rivers, a government panel survey showed Sunday, underscoring the need to fully grasp all the hazards in order to continue operating during disasters.

The research panel of the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare found the risk in 221 facilities out of 765 so-called disaster base hospitals as of late August 2022. These hospitals are equipped to provide medical care to patients around the clock in natural disasters and also have helipads and specially trained

medical staff.

The panel found as well that among the 7,406 other hospitals not designated as disaster base hospitals, 2,044 are situated in flood-risk areas.

It analyzed the data of hospitals' locations and all the areas designated by the government as at risk of flooding.

By prefecture, Tottori Prefecture found that all its four disaster base hospitals are in the flood-risk areas, while Toyama Prefecture saw six out of eight.

The ministry said all the disaster base hospitals have already drawn up manuals that detail measures on operations in the event of a disaster. — Kyodo



Photo taken 29 August 2019, from a Kyodo News helicopter shows a hospital in Saga Prefecture, southwestern Japan, surrounded by floodwater following torrential rains the previous day. **PHOTO: KYODO**

German teachers pushed out for calling out 'far-right' pupils

TWO teachers have been pressured out of their jobs in a small German town after denouncing the alleged right-wing extremism of their pupils, in a case that sparked a national outcry.

Laura Nickel and Max Teske were working in the high school in Burg, a picturesque town in the eastern state of Brandenburg popular with tourists, when they noticed worrying behaviour among some of their students.

"Right-wing extremism was on full display in the school," Nickel, 34, told AFP. "From Hitler salutes to swastikas drawn on dictionaries and students' lockers, not to mention racist and homophobic language."

"They were really the loudest pupils — they did not hide,"

she added.

In April, the teachers sent an anonymous letter to the local press denouncing the behaviour they had witnessed.

The letter's publication led to other schools in eastern Germany reporting similar incidents and renewed soul-searching about the growing appeal of extremism.

The far-right AfD party has climbed to record highs in opinion polls in recent weeks, boosted by discontent with the ruling coalition. It is making most progress in the former communist east.

Many in the east — known as the German Democratic Republic (GDR) during communist rule — still feel they lost out when national reunification happened in 1990. — AFP

Death toll rises to at least 10 in Thai warehouse explosion



A handout photo made available by Pasemas rescue group shows Thai firefighters extinguishing a fire after an explosion at a fireworks warehouse in Sungai Kolok district, Narathiwat province, southern Thailand on 29 July 2023. **PHOTO: PASEMAS RESCUE GROUP HANDOUT**

THE death toll from a powerful explosion that levelled an unlicensed fireworks warehouse in southern Thailand

rose to at least 10 on Sunday, the local governor said as police sought the owner on charges of negligence.

The blast Saturday afternoon in the town of Sungai Kolok was believed to have been caused by welding during construction work on a building storing fireworks illegally.

More than 100 people were injured in the blast that left only twisted metal beams still standing as rescue workers picked over the debris, with local media reporting hundreds of homes were also seriously damaged.

"We have identified 10 people and found parts of two bodies which we cannot identify yet," Narathiwat provincial governor Sanan Pongaksorn told a press conference Sunday. — AFP



Colombia stun Germany with 97th-minute winner at World Cup

COLOMBIA scored a 97th-minute winner through a Manuela Vanegas header to snatch a dramatic 2-1 victory over Germany and stand on the cusp of the Women's World Cup last 16 on Sunday.

Skipper Alexandra Popp thought she had rescued a point for Germany as she held her nerve to score from the spot on 89 minutes.

But in an incredible finish to a pulsating clash, Vanegas popped up deep into stoppage time for all three points with a close-range header.

It came after Linda Caicedo scored one of the goals of the tournament in front of 40,000 fans in Sydney near the start of the second half, but that was just the beginning of the drama.

Their victory left Colombia top of Group H with a perfect six points. Germany and Morocco have three each and all to play for.

South Korea are still just about alive on zero points.

Germany face the Koreans in the last round of matches while Colombia are up against Morocco. Singing and dancing Colombian fans vastly outnumbered German supporters in a raucous crowd at Sydney Football Stadium. Loud boos and whistles went up each time Germany had the ball, and they had plenty of it in the first half.

Lina Magull swung and missed the ball as it sat up invitingly for her in the Colombian penalty area.

Magull was a menace and after making life difficult once more for the Colombian defence, the ball fell to striker Popp with the goal gaping just before the break. But the usually deadly striker skied her volley high and wide to give the South Americans a huge let-off. — AFP

Will shape victory in match against Rakhine says David Htan

YANGON United star player David Htan said he will put the best effort in the upcoming match against Rakhine United which will be played at Thuwunna Stadium in Yangon at 4 pm today.

David Htan highlighted, "We lost points against Myawady FC recently, but we have prepared mentally to face the opponent, and we will shape the victory again.

"They are a brilliant team and build the club with talented players. I have watched their playstyle, and I believe we can do well," he said.

"Come and enjoy the match, and we will try our best," he invited his beloved fans.

After the week-13 of the Myanmar

National League, Yangon United is standing in the second place with 10 wins, one draw, and two losses, earning 31 points, and Rakhine United is taking the seventh place with 16 points from four wins, four draws, and five losses. — KZL

Yangon United Captain David Htan is seen maintaining his posture to kick the ball during a match. **PHOTO:YUFC**



Liverpool fire four past Leicester in Singapore friendly



Liverpool forward Darwin Nunez (right). **PHOTO: AFP**

LIVERPOOL geared up for the start of their new Premier League campaign with an impressive display in Singapore on Sunday as they thumped English rivals

Leicester City 4-0 in a pre-season friendly. Goals by Darwin Nunez, Bobby Clark and Diogo Jota in an eight-minute spell late in the first half gave the Reds a 3-0

lead at the interval. Ben Doak then headed in their fourth midway through the second half to seal a thumping victory at the National Stadium. With two weeks left before Liverpool kick off their Premier League season at Chelsea, manager Jurgen Klopp could reflect on a good day of preparation for his side. "We had a lot of good moments but we can do better," said the German.

"I'm absolutely fine (with how things went). The result was good, nobody was injured — just a few knocks — and the atmosphere during and after the game was top class. So yeah, it was a good day in the office." Liverpool face Bayern Munich in another pre-season friendly in Singapore on Wednesday while Leicester, who were relegated from the Premier League last season, are returning to England for the start of their Championship campaign against Coventry City next Sunday. —AFP

Crawford stops Spence to claim undisputed welterweight world title



TERENCE Crawford punished Errol Spence on the way to a ninth-round technical knockout to claim the undisputed welterweight world title in Las Vegas on Saturday.

Unbeaten Crawford had knocked down Spence three times and had his previously unbeaten foe staggering under a hail of blows when referee Harvey Dock called a halt at 2:32 in the ninth.

Terence Crawford celebrates his ninth-round technical knockout victory over Errol Spence for the undisputed welterweight world title. **PHOTO: AFP**

Crawford added Spence's World Boxing Association, World Boxing Council and International Boxing Federation titles to his own World Boxing Organization crown. Crawford became the first undisputed welterweight world champion of boxing's four-belt era, which began in 2004.

A former lightweight and undisputed light welterweight world champion, he became the first man to win all the belts in two weight divisions.

"It means everything because of who I took the belts from," Crawford said. — AFP