

# The Global **NEW LIGHT** of MYANMAR

## World's tallest Maravijaya Buddha Image consecrated with resounding success

Dignified religious ceremonies enriched by the esteemed presence of Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and Daw Kyu Kyu Hla at Maravijaya Buddha Park

**C**HAIRMAN of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and his wife Daw Kyu Kyu Hla attended the ceremonies to consecrate the Maravijaya Buddha image, hoist golden umbrellas atop small pagodas on stone plaque chambers and share merits gained at the designated venues in the precinct of Buddha Park in Dekkhinathiri Township of Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

A total of 855 members of the Sangha were ushered into four pavilions on the platform of the Image. A total of 12 members of the Sangha led by Pali Sayadaw were ushered to Mucalinda Lake and Sasana Beikman to consecrate the Buddha image, five other monks to Maravijaya Monastery, and nine other monks to Therasana venue.

On the occasion, six members of the Sangha from Cambodia, 11 from Thailand, 10 from Nepal, 11 from Viet Nam, 10 from Bangladesh, six from Laos, 11 from Sri Lanka and five from India consecrated the Maravijaya Buddha Image. Likewise, members of the Sangha consecrated the image. State Ovadacariya 16<sup>th</sup> Shwegyin Sangharaja Chancellor of Sitagu International Buddhist Academies Abhidhaja Maha Rattha Guru Abhidhaja Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotika Dr Bhaddanta Nyanissara

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State Administration Council Chair Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and wife Daw Kyu Kyu Hla pay homage while attending the consecration of the Maravijaya Buddha image and related ceremonies in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

**WITH SPECIAL 8 PAGES**



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Religious places crowded with pilgrims on full moon day of Second Waso (Dhammacakka Day)

**NATIONAL**

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751 inmates from Mandalay Central Prison freed from sentences

# NATIONAL

## Myanmar National Human Rights Commission Statement No 9/ 2023

1. The Chairman of the State Administration Council issued Order No 48/2023, 49/2023, 50/2023, 51/2023, 52/2023, 53/2023, and 54/2023 on 1 August 2023, in commemoration of the full moon of Second Waso (Dhammacakka Day), 1385 ME, in the interest of public peace of mind and on compassionate grounds, national solidarity, internal peace and in consideration of the friendly relations between countries.
2. According to these orders, the remaining sentences imposed on Daw Aung San Suu Kyi under Criminal Case No 35/2021, 37/2021, 71/2021, 38/2021, and 45/2021 were remitted under Section 401 (1) of the Code of Criminal Procedure; the remaining sentences imposed on U Win Myint under Criminal Case No 35/2021 and 36/2021 were remitted under Section 401 (1) of the Code of Criminal Procedure; the death sentences of eligible persons in prisons and jails were commuted to life imprisonment by Section 204 (a) of the Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar; a total of 7,749 male and female prisoners serving sentences in respective prisons, jails and camps, were pardoned under Section 401 (1) of the Code of Criminal Procedure; twenty-two members of Ethnic Armed Organizations in respective prisons were pardoned under Section 401 (1) of the Code of Criminal Procedure; the sentences of 125 foreign prisoners from respective prisons and jails were remitted and shall be deported under Section 401 (1) of the Code of Criminal Procedure; and criminal cases of 72 persons under trial for connection to members of Ethnic Armed Organizations were closed and they were released under Section 419 of the Constitution.
3. It is noteworthy that the sentences of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and U Win Myint were remitted in accordance with Order No 48/2023 and 49/2023.
4. The release of 125 foreign prisoners is considered a step in promoting friendly relations between countries.
5. This action is a positive step from a human rights perspective, demonstrating the State Administration Council's respect for humanitarian issues and encouraging national solidarity and internal peace. Those whose death sentences have been commuted may have the opportunity to enjoy their lives. The Commission is convinced that not only the pardoned individuals will have the opportunity to be reunited with their families, but they will also be able to lawfully contribute towards the establishment of the Union, based on democracy and a federal system, in appreciation of the goodwill of the State.
6. The Myanmar National Human Rights Commission is greatly heartened for those family members who have been relieved and remitted from punishment.

Myanmar National Human Rights Commission  
Date: 1 August 2023

## Sagaing Region sees 69,608 homegrown and overseas visitors between January and June 2023



Both international and domestic tourists are seen visiting landmark cultural sites in Sagaing Region.

A total of 69,608 homegrown and overseas visitors flocked to the Mingun cultural zone and tourism destinations in Sagaing Region between January and June 2023, according to U Myint Sein, Head of the Sagaing Region Directorate of Hotels and Tourism under the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism.

There are 60 hotels, motels and guesthouses operated in 11 townships, Sagaing Region, offering 2,040 rooms for the guests. Currently, 45 hotels,

motels and guesthouses are in operation.

“Sagaing tourism sites and Mingun cultural zone including Sagaing saw a total of 69,608 visitors of which 68,401 domestic and 720 foreign visitors as well as 487 tourists travelling as part of a package tour in the period between January and June this year,” said U Myint Sein.

A pilot project is being conducted at the Kaunghmudaw pagoda in Sagaing township, Mingun area, Maha Bodhi

Tahtaung pagoda in Monywa, Mohnyin Thanbuddhe pagoda to be able to provide a barrier-free environment for the convenience and safety of all homegrown and overseas visitors with disabilities.

Steps are being taken focusing to keep the tourist sites clean and safe while creating reliable accommodation for homegrown and overseas visitors during their recreation trips, according to the directorate. — ASH/TH

## Daily commuter surge: Over 1,900 rail passengers journey across Yangon-Mandalay, Mawlamyine, Pyay, and Bago routes

THE highway passenger trains carry about 1,900 passengers daily from Yangon Region to Mandalay, Mawlamyine, Pyay and Bago routes, according to No 7 Division of Myanma Railways (MR).

The Yangon Railway Station operates Yangon-Mandalay, Yangon-Mawlamyine, Yangon-Pyay, Yangon-Bagan and Yangon-Bago trains daily as usual.

“The number of train commuters declined starting the COVID-19 period and some train services were suspended. But it has been increasing since the early period of this year. Despite the rainy season, the number of

passengers for highway routes is high. There are about 1,900 passengers daily,” said U Thaug Htike, chief superintendent of Yangon Railway Station.

The MR operates three trains including airbag and express trains for the Yangon-Mandalay route, two express trains for the Yangon-Pyay route, one mail train for Kyimyindine station-Pyay station, two airbag and express trains for the Yangon-Mawlamyine route, one express train for Yangon-Bagan route and one express train for the Yangon-Bago route. — ASH/KTZH



The Yangon-Mandalay-Yangon train and passengers are seen at the Yangon Railway Station.

## World's tallest Maravijaya Buddha Image consecrated ...

### FROM PAGE-1

recited the victorious consecration verse, and the Buddha image was illuminated. Three venerable Sayadaws, the leading donor and well-wishers hoisted tiers of the golden umbrella, the bejewelled pennant-shaped vane and the bejewelled diamond orb atop the pagoda, four encircled pagodas and small pagodas on the stone plaque chambers respectively.

In his supplication, the Senior General said that the heaviest marble rocks for the image were conveyed along the longest waterway and the longest land road from Sagyin Hill to Ayeyawady River, then to Sameikkhon Port and then to Nay Pyi Taw passing through a new canal and new road starting from 3 July 2020. Seeking advice from members of the State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee, it was considered to facilitate the park with the pagoda, monastery, lake, ordination hall, public rest houses and bridges. Tri Pitaka treatises were carved on the stone plaques in Pali and Romanized languages and kept in the park, and the Buddha image was entitled Maravijaya Buddha Image.

Parts 1, 2 and 3 of the Buddha image were conveyed on the throne from 26 to 31 January 2023. Religious objects and jewellery items were enshrined

into the central parts of the throne on 27 January and 10 February this year. Under the leadership of rector Sayadaws from International Theravada Buddhist Missionary University, State Pariyatti Sasana Universities in Yangon and Mandalay and Sitagu International Buddhist Academy, Tri Pitaka treatises were carved on 1,440 stone plaques in Pali and Romanized languages. Such treatises will be printed for religious centres across the world.

Moreover, Agga Dhapati Sasana Beikman called Withongama ordination hall, water fountain square, six Suddhamma public rest houses, archive museum, image board of trustees office, Maha Bodhi banyan tree, a replica bridge of Mingala Bridge from Mandalay and various religious edifices were built at Maravijaya Buddha Park.

The Senior General and wife donated a nine-inch Maravijaya Buddha image, religious building and alms to SSMNC Secretary Presiding Patron of Thanlyin Minkyaung Pahtampyan Buddhist Learning Centre in Thanlyin of Yangon Agga Maha Pandita Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Dr Bhaddanta Candima Bhivamsa Sayadaw.

The SAC Vice-Chairman



State Administration Council Chair Premier Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and his wife present offerings to the Maravijaya Buddha Image at the event yesterday.

Deputy Prime Minister and wife offered alms to Sitagu Sayadaw whereas disciples donated offerings to members of the Sangha.

The Senior General and wife together with the congregation listened to the Sammodaniya Ovadakatha deliv-

ered by Sitagu Sayadaw, and SSMNC Vice-Chairman Presiding Patron of Kyaukme Thiho Pariyatti Buddhist Learning Centre Agga Maha Pandita Dr Bhaddanta Candana Sara delivered a sermon and the congregation shared merits gained.

The Senior General and his

wife offered day meals to 900 members of local and foreign Sangha at Bawzanathala Hall and hosted a lunch for the congregation. At night, fireworks were launched at the Maravijaya Buddha Image and religious buildings were illuminated. — MNA/TTA

## State Administration Council Chair pardons prison terms for Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, U Win Myint

The State Administration Council issued Order No 48 signed by the SAC Secretary for pardoning the remaining prison terms of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi under five Criminal Code numbers and Order No 49 for U Win Myint under two Criminal Code numbers.

THE State Administration Council issued seven orders from order numbers 48 to 54 yesterday in commemoration of the full moon of Second Waso (Dhammacakka Day), 1385 ME.

The Chairman of State Administration Council has pardoned Daw Aung San Suu Kyi from her remaining prison terms to be served under

the Criminal Code Nos 35/2021, 37/2021, 71/2021, 38/2021 and 45/2021 ordered by the relevant courts in accord with Sub-section (1) of the Code of Criminal Procedure Article 401, and U Win Myint from his remaining prison terms to be served under the Criminal Code No 35/2021, and No 36/2021 ordered by the relevant courts in accord with

Sub-section (1) of the Code of Criminal Procedure Article 401, commuted the death sentences of certain prisoners to life in prison as per Sub-section (a) of Section 204 of the Constitution, granted pardons to 22 members of ethnic armed organizations, remitted the punishment of 125 foreign prisoners from the respective prisons, jails and

camps as per Code of Criminal Procedure Article 401 (1) and deported them from Myanmar and permitted to withdraw the cases opened against 72 affiliated with ethnic armed organizations in accordance with Section 419 of the Constitution, and to ensure the ethnic unity and internal peace and humanitarian and compassionate grounds.

A total of 7,749 male and female prisoners from relevant jails and camps, 22 members of ethnic armed organizations, and 125 foreign prisoners have to serve the new punishment together with the remaining punishment to which he was sentenced this time if more offence is committed. — MNA/TTA

# PHOTO PAGES FOR MARAVIJAYA EVENTS

Photos depict the live progress of the consecration ceremony of the Maravijaya Buddha Image and relevant events at the Buddha Park in Nay Pyi Taw on the full moon of Second Waso 1385 ME.



# PHOTO PAGES FOR MARAVIJAYA EVENTS



# NATIONAL

Republic of the Union of Myanmar  
State Administration Council  
**Order No 48/2023**

Full moon of Second Waso 1385ME  
1 August 2023

## Pardon Order

THE State Administration Council Chairman has pardoned Daw Aung San Suu Kyi from her remaining prison terms to be served under the Criminal Code Nos 35/2021, 37/2021, 71/2021, 38/2021 and 45/2021 ordered by the relevant courts in accord with Sub-section (1) of the Code of Criminal Procedure Article 401.

By order,  
*Aung Lin Dwe*  
Lieutenant-General  
Secretary

Republic of the Union of Myanmar  
State Administration Council  
**Order No 49/2023**

Full moon of Second Waso 1385ME  
1 August 2023

## Pardon Order

THE State Administration Council Chairman has pardoned U Win Myint from his remaining prison terms to be served under the Criminal Code Nos 35/2021 and 36/2021 ordered by the relevant courts in accord with Sub-section (1) of the Code of Criminal Procedure Article 401.

By order,  
*Aung Lin Dwe*  
Lieutenant-General  
Secretary

Republic of the Union of Myanmar  
State Administration Council  
**Order No 50/2023**

Full moon of Second Waso 1385ME  
1 August 2023

## Pardon Order

THE State Administration Council Chairman has commuted the death sentences of certain prisoners to life in prison marking the full moon of Second Waso (Dhammacakka Day), 1385 ME, as per Sub-section (a) of Section 204 of the Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

By order,  
*Aung Lin Dwe*  
Lieutenant-General  
Secretary

Republic of the Union of Myanmar  
State Administration Council  
**Order No 51/2023**

Full moon of Second Waso 1385ME  
1 August 2023

## Pardon Order

IN commemoration of the full moon of Second Waso (Dhammacakka Day), 1385 ME, the State Administration Council Chairman has pardoned 7,749 male and female prisoners, who face punishment, from their respective prisons, jails and camps under the Code of Criminal Procedure Article 401 (1) on condition that "they will have to serve the new punishment together with the remaining punishment to which they were sentenced this time if more offence is committed", on humanitarian and compassionate grounds.

By order,  
*Aung Lin Dwe*  
Lieutenant-General  
Secretary

Republic of the Union of Myanmar  
State Administration Council

## Order No 52/2023

Full moon of Second Waso 1385ME  
1 August 2023

## Pardon Order

THE State Administration Council Chairman has granted pardons to the following members of ethnic armed organizations who are serving prison sentences at their respective prisons, jails and camps under Code of Criminal Procedure Article 401 (1) on condition that "they will have to serve the new punishment together with the remaining punishment to which they were sentenced this time if more offence is committed" in commemoration of the full moon of Second Waso (Dhammacakka Day), 1385 ME, and to ensure the ethnic unity and internal peace.

- (1) LaRa/22/00577/Ka Asi Pha (son of) U Asa Pha, MNDAA
- (2) MaTaLa/21/01760/Ka Aik Nyo (aka) Kyaw Nyo (son of) U San Ha, TNLA
- (3) MaTaLa/21/01761/Ka Aik Kyan (aka) Lwin Kyaw (son of) U Aik Shwe, TNLA
- (4) MaTaLa/21/01762/Ka Tun Win (aka) Aik Win (son of) U Pan Marn, TNLA
- (5) ThaPa/22/00063/Ka Aik Shwe (son of) U Pan Nyein, TNLA
- (6) ThaPa/22/00064/Ka Taung Tyan (son of) U Pan Nyein, TNLA
- (7) ThaPa/22/00065/Ka Aik Sein (son of) U Debila, TNLA
- (8) ThaPa/22/00099/Ka Aik Naing (aka) Ah Naing (son of) U Kyaw Zaw, TNLA
- (9) LaRa/22/00288/Ka Kaw Kham (son of) U Tun Shwe, SSPP/SSA
- (10) LaRa/22/00289/Ka Aik Luk (son of) U Tun, SSPP/SSA
- (11) ThaPa/21/00124/Ka Kyaw Tun (aka) Aik Tun (aka) Lwe Kan (son of) U Aw, SSPP/SSA
- (12) LaRa/22/00578/Ka Aik Nyi (son of) U Nyi Mein, MNDAA
- (13) LaRa/22/01090/Ka Arkar Soe (aka) Aik Nwe (son of) U Gwin Jan, TNLA
- (14) LaRa/22/00276/Ka Aik Mann (son of) U Aik Swal, TNLA
- (15) LaRa/22/01091/Ka Aik Nyo (son of) U Aung Sar, TNLA
- (16) LaRa/23/00211/Ka Tun Maung (aka) Aik Rein (son of) U Aik Sar, TNLA
- (17) LaRa/22/01201/Ka Maung Maung San (aka) Maung Kyam (son of) U Aik Tone (aka) Swal Khine, TNLA
- (18) LaRa/22/01200/Ka Karlain (aka) Maung Lay (son of) U Aik Ywin, TNLA
- (19) LaRa/23/00615/Ka Aik Ti (aka) U Aik Lau, TNLA
- (20) LaRa/23/00616/Ka Aik Mon (son of) U Aik Kyan, TNLA
- (21) LaRa/23/00617/Ka Aik Lau (aka) Aung Kyaw (son of) U Aik Hlwe, TNLA
- (22) ThaTa/23/00389/Ka Aung Naing Myint (son of) U Chit Maung, AA

By order,  
*Aung Lin Dwe*  
Lieutenant-General  
Secretary

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News and Periodicals Enterprise

# NATIONAL

Republic of the Union of Myanmar  
State Administration Council  
Order No 53/2023

Full moon of Second Waso 1385ME  
1 August 2023

## Pardon Order

THE State Administration Council Chairman has remitted the punishment of 125 foreign prisoners from the respective prisons, jails and camps, upon the conditions 'to serve the new punishment together with the remaining punishment to which he was sentenced this time if more offence is committed' under Code of Criminal Procedure Article 401 (1), in commemoration of the full moon of Second Waso (Dhammacakka Day), 1385 ME, on bilateral relation of countries and humanitarian grounds, and they are expelled from Myanmar.

By order,  
*Aung Lin Dwe*  
Lieutenant-General  
Secretary

Republic of the Union of Myanmar  
State Administration Council  
Order No 54/2023

Full moon of Second Waso 1385ME  
1 August 2023

## Pardon Order

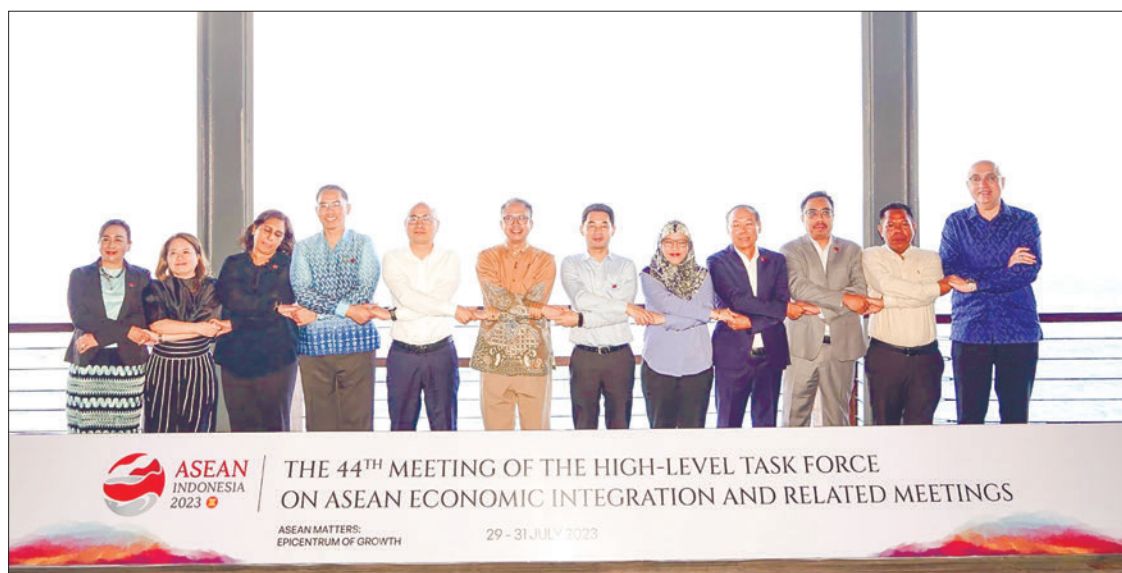
THE State Administration Council Chairman has permitted to withdrawal of the cases opened against 72 affiliated with ethnic armed organization under Section 419 of the Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar in commemoration of the full moon of Second Waso (Dhammacakka Day), 1385 ME, and to ensure ethnic unity and internal peace.

By order,  
*Aung Lin Dwe*  
Lieutenant-General  
Secretary

## ASEAN focuses on Economic Integration, use of EVs, ASEAN Blue Economy Farmework, utilization of FTAs

THE 44<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the High-level Task Force on ASEAN Economic Integration (HLTF-EI) was held in Lombok, Indonesia, on 29-31 July 2023. Dr Wah Wah Maung, Deputy Minister for Investment and Foreign Economic Relations who is also the Lead of Myanmar HLTF-EI attended the meeting.

The HLTF-EI leads discussed matters pertaining to the development of the ASEAN Community's Post-2025 Vision particularly from the perspective of the AEC pillar, the status implementation of Priority Economic Deliverables under Indonesia's ASEAN Chairmanship in 2023 and the implementation of the Comprehensive Compliance Monitoring (CM) assessment of the AEC Blueprint 2025, the implementation of ASEAN's sustainability agenda including the development of ASEAN Strategy on Carbon Neutrality, the use of Electric Vehicles and



MIFER Deputy Minister Dr Wah Wah Maung (L) poses for the documentary group photo at the meeting in Indonesia.

its enabling ecosystem, developing ASEAN Blue Economy Framework for sustainable development of the ASEAN region, and also promoting utilization of the signed ASEAN Free Trade Areas (FTAs).

The ASEAN's work on Good Regulatory Practices, the pro-

gress of the implementation of Consolidated Strategy on the Fourth Industrial Revolution for ASEAN, and the implementation of Bandar Seri Begawan Roadmap on an ASEAN Digital Transformation Agenda to accelerate ASEAN's Economic Recovery and Digital Economy Integra-

tion were also discussed at the meeting. Moreover, the meeting discussed the recommendations for the consideration of the ASEAN Economic Ministers' Meeting which will be held on August 2023 and the ASEAN Economic Council Meeting which will be held on September 2023.

The meeting was chaired by Mr Edi Prio Pambudi, Deputy Minister for International Economic Cooperation Coordinating, the Ministry of Economic Affairs of Indonesia and attended by the leads and representatives of the High-level Task Force on ASEAN Economic Integration from the ASEAN Member States, the deputy secretary-general and officials from the ASEAN Secretariat. The Chairmanship for the HLTF-EI meeting has been handed over from Indonesia to Lao PDR at the end of the meeting. Lao PDR will be the chair and host of the incoming 45<sup>th</sup> HLTF-EI meeting.

The High-level Task Force on ASEAN Economic Integration (HLTF-EI) is a think-tank group of the ASEAN Economic Community and the group meeting is held twice a year to discuss the future work of the ASEAN Economic Community. — MNA

## Five new cases of COVID-19 reported on 1 August, total figure registers 641,063

MYANMAR'S COVID-19-positive cases rose to 641,063 after five new cases were reported on 1 August 2023 according to the Ministry of Health. Therefore, a total of 11,032,436 laboratory samples were examined to date and the confirmed COVID-19 cases reached 641,063. The total number of patients who have recovered from COVID-19 in the country reached 619,840 including 11 new recoveries. The death toll from COVID-19 in the country registered 19,494 on 1-8-2023 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

# OPINION

## Lay an eminent milestone in Theravada Buddhism

ON 1 August 2023, a significant national gala ceremony took place at Thebyu hillock in Dekkhinathiri Township, Union Territory Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar. This momentous occasion commemorates the consecration of the Maravijaya sitting Buddha Image, an awe-inspiring monument proudly standing as the world's tallest sitting marble Buddha image. Made possible by the generous contributions of Head of State Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and devoted individuals aligned with Myanmar's rich Buddhist traditions, this remarkable statue serves to highlight the flourishing of Theravada Buddhism in Myanmar.

What sets the Maravijaya Buddha Image apart is that it was entirely built by Myanmar's engineers, showcasing their exceptional engineering skills without any foreign experts' involvement. This achievement is a source of immense pride for the nation, exemplifying the unwavering dedication of Myanmar's people to their faith.

The construction of the Maravijaya sitting Buddha Image stands as a symbol of the propagation, purification, and perpetuation of Theravada Buddhism. As a nation with deep-rooted spiritual traditions, Myanmar continues to thrive and uphold the principles of its cherished faith, thanks to the dedication and support of its people and well-wishers.

In addition to the Buddha Image, the gala ceremony features the creation of a world Buddhism library. To ensure the preservation of the Lord Buddha's teachings for generations to come, 96 small pagodas were built to house Vinaya treatises, 216 pagodas for Abhidhamma treatises, and 720 Suttanta treatises. Each chamber contains stone plaques inscribed in Pali and Romanized languages, holding a treasure trove of knowledge.

The ceremony were attended by members of the Sangha from nine foreign countries, along with local members of the Sangha, State dignitaries, well-wishers, and esteemed guests. This historic milestone in Myanmar's religious history offers attendees a rare opportunity to witness the consecration of the world's tallest Buddha image and accumulate meritorious deeds.

The construction of the Maravijaya sitting Buddha Image stands as a symbol of the propagation, purification, and perpetuation of Theravada Buddhism. As a nation with deep-rooted spiritual traditions, Myanmar continues to thrive and uphold the principles of its cherished faith, thanks to the dedication and support of its people and well-wishers.

In conclusion, the consecration of the Maravijaya sitting Buddha Image is a momentous occasion that showcases Myanmar's commitment to its religious heritage and the promotion of Theravada Buddhism worldwide. With the world's tallest marble Buddha image standing tall as a beacon of faith and spirituality, Myanmar continues to write its religious history with pride and devotion.

## Age Gaps in Relationships: Myth or Magic?

By Dots

AGE gaps in romantic relationships have been a topic of fascination for decades, often sparking curiosity and sometimes controversy. Whether it's famous couples like George and Amal Clooney or regular folks, these unique love stories have always piqued our interest. But guess what? Recent discoveries show that age gaps are more common than we thought, and they bring a touch of magic to our hearts!

Believe it or not, lots of couples thrive with age gaps! While the average age difference in

straight couples is about 2.3 years in the US, some pairs dare to have much bigger gaps. Imagine this: one in four male-male couples and one in seven female-female couples embrace age differences of 10 years or more. Love's canvas is full of colours, and there's no one-size-fits-all when it comes to the perfect age gap.

As couples journey through life together, age gaps add a sprinkle of enchantment to their love story. Sure, there might be challenges when it comes to decisions about having children,

blending families, different energy levels, and retirement. But they do not determine the success of a relationship. Factors like shared values, financial planning, open communication, and mutual respect for each other's needs and differences play a significant role in making age-gap relationships work.

Here's something that'll make your heart flutter - older women paired with younger men often find sheer happiness in their marriages! Society might have had different ideas before, but things are changing. Dat-

ing websites show more women are interested in dating younger men, and men are open to dating ladies ten years older or more.

Challenging the long-standing "half your age plus seven" rule, recent research reveals that men tend to prefer women in their early twenties, regardless of their own age. Women, on the other hand, typically seek partners who are roughly the same age or slightly older. Love's melody is unique for each couple, and it's not just about shared experiences but how their hearts connect.

But hold on, love's magic doesn't stop there! Some studies hint that a smaller age gap increases the likelihood of divorce, but the answer is still a bit mysterious. A separate study found no strong link between age gaps and divorce rates. Moreover, age gaps could have implications for old age, with men having younger spouses found to live longer; but unfortunately, the same did not apply to women.

In this enchanting waltz of love, there are no rigid scripts

to follow. Each couple embarks on their own journey, weaving a breathtaking tale, guided solely by the whispers of their hearts, unaffected by others' judgments. Age becomes a mere whisper, for in love's embrace, it's just a number! So, let us embrace the spell-binding enchantment of age-gap romances, where love knows no bounds, and the flame of passion burns brighter than the radiance of a thousand sunsets, leaving us forever entranced by the magic of their eternal bond.

## Tainted love: Misinformation drives 'vaccine-free' dating

*The trend highlights how anti-vaccine sentiment has become a strong identity for many people who choose to resist or ignore scientific evidence supporting the effectiveness and life-saving nature of vaccinations during the pandemic.*

IN a private dating group on Facebook, Renee flaunts herself to like-minded singles as a fit, adventurous Kizomba dancer who at 35 exudes "inner child vibes." But her main draw? She is unvaccinated.

The Covid-19 pandemic may have receded, but dating apps, websites and social media groups still offer to unite vaccine-hating singles who believe debunked falsehoods such as that coronavirus jabs alter DNA or cause infertility.

The trend underscores how anti-vaccine sentiment has become an entrenched identity for many who wilfully resist or ignore scientific assertions that inoculations saved tens of millions of lives globally when the pandemic was raging.

### Unvaxed Singles' Groups

A prospective match's vaccination status determines compatibility not just for Renee, a self-employed Australian, but for many posting in "unvaxed singles" groups that have cropped up on Facebook.

Dating decisions there are driven by chemistry but not

science. In one closed group breached by AFP, many listed "no jabbies" as their top dating criteria, while others cheered anti-vaccine advocates as "pure blood freedom fighters".

One meme popular in the group described their ideal partner: "She's curvy, funny, intelligent, unvaccinated".

It demonstrates how the pandemic turned rejecting vaccines from a personal health decision to the way "people express their personal brand," said Timothy Caulfield, a professor at the University of Alberta in Canada.

"It shows how high the walls of their echo chambers are. Being anti-vaccine has become an ideological flag — a way to demonstrate which team you belong to," Caulfield told AFP.

"It is less and less about science and more and more about the values being antivax signal."

### 'Swipe left'

According to a 2022 survey by the Pew Research Centre, about half of US adults who used a dating site or app said it was important to see the vaccination



Unjected is rejecting the term "anti-vaxx Tinder," saying they are much more than an app for dating and friendship. PHOTO: PIX FOR VISUAL PURPOSE/GETTY

status on profiles.

"Why is your vaccination status such a big deal? I've even seen it listed as a 'dealbreaker' on some profiles," said a post in a dating discussion group on the online messaging board Reddit.

"The profiles I see most state the following: 'if you're vaccinated then please swipe left.'" Some comments in the

group referred to vaccinated singles as people carrying "biological weapons," an apparent reference to the debunked claim the vaccinated spread "super strain" variants.

Vaccine falsehoods often overlap with other types of misinformation, introducing believers to those espousing the QAnon conspiracy theory and

anti-LGBTQ narratives.

"Studies have consistently shown that if a person is anti-vaccine — or unvaccinated — you can make a strong guess about that person's positions on a host of other issues," Caulfield said.

Spreading falsehoods can also be profitable.

### Debunking Claims

The Florida-based Wellness Company sells a detoxification supplement that it claims counteracts the harmful effects of coronavirus jabs, destroying spike proteins to get back "that pre-Covid feeling." But experts and public health authorities told AFP's fact-checkers there is no evidence the nearly US\$65 supplement does that.

The same company also backs a dating website for unvaccinated people called Unjected. Before being accepted, its members are required to have their "vaccination status certified by a medical professional," according to the website.

In 2021, US media reported the Unjected app, dubbed as the "Tinder for anti-vaxers," was removed from Apple's App Store over Covid-19 misinformation.

A slew of similar apps for unvaccinated singles are available on the Google Play Store. One such platform is called Unjabbed, whose user reviews expressed concern about bugs and phone hacking attempts after the app was downloaded.

SOURCE: AFP

### POEM

## Lancang-Mekong heading to a shared future

BY THIHA AUNG

We love Lancang.  
We love Mekong.  
But the two rivers are the same  
one river full of colours.

If you love Mekong, you will love Lancang.  
I love not only Lancang but also Mekong.

This is one river, so we are only one family.

A shared future and a shared river.  
Everyone has a beautiful stream in their hearts.

This region is our homeland.  
People who live by the Lancang-Mekong are  
our relatives.  
Cooperation is our basis.

So be still like a mountain  
and flow like a great river. (Lao Tsu)



### Flood Warning

(Issued at 10:00 hrs MST on 1-8-2023)

ACCORDING to the 9:30 hrs MST observation today, the water level of Thanlwin River at Hpa-an is observed as about 1 ½ feet below its danger level. It may reach its danger level during the next one day.

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

### Flood Warning

(Issued at 14:30 hrs MST on 1-8-2023)

ACCORDING to the 13:30 hrs MST observation today, the water level of Thandwe Creek at Thandwe is observed as about 2 feet below its danger level. It may reach its danger level during the next six hours.

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

### Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 7:00 pm Tuesday 1 August 2023)

**BAY INFERENCE:** According to the observations at (17:30) hrs MST today, the deep depression over North Bay of Bengal off Bangladesh Coast is crossing Bangladesh Coast near Khepupara. Monsoon is vigorous over the Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal.

**FORECAST VALID UNTIL NOON OF THE 2 August 2023:** Rain or thundershowers will be fairly widespread in Lower Sagaing, Region and Northern Shan and Kayah states and widespread in the remaining regions and states with likelihood of regionally heavyfalls in Rakhine, Kayin and Mon states and isolated heavyfalls in Lower Sagaing, Mandalay, Magway, Bago, Yangon and Ayeyawady regions and Kachin State. Degree of certainty is (100%).



# NATIONAL

## Religious places crowded with pilgrims on full moon day of Second Waso (Dhammacakka Day)

**F**AMOUS pagodas, temples and stupas across the country were densely crowded on the full moon day of Waso (Dhammacakka Day) with people who keep Sabbath and do good deeds.

The day is an important day for Myanmar Buddhists and The Buddha delivered Dhammacakka Sutta on that day. Buddhists do good deeds on the full moon day of Waso including offering Waso robes and keeping Sabbath at the pagodas across the nation.

The pagoda board of trustees of Shwedagon pagoda celebrated Dhammacakka Day and donated Waso lotus robes to four Buddha images at every four corners of the pagoda while Waso robes and offertories to the Sayadaws.

Similarly, the Shwedagon pagoda was also packed with visitors and donors.

Moreover, the Dhammacakka Day was marked at Maha Wizarapagoda, Botahtaung pagoda,



Pilgrims are seen at the Shwedagon Pagoda yesterday.



Devotees throng at the pagoda in Nay Pyi Taw.



People go to pagodas in Mandalay and its vicinities yesterday.

Thiri Mingala Kaba Aye pagoda, Sule pagoda, Tooth Relic pagoda (Yangon), Shwephonepint pagoda, Lawkachantha Abhaya Muni pagoda (Kyauktawgyi), Melamu pagoda, Ngahtetgyi pagoda, Chaukhtetgyi pagoda and Maha Dhamma Yanthi Eintawya pagoda and Nay Pyi Taw Uppatasanti pagoda. The pagodas were also crowded with pilgrims. Additionally, the Latlo-

tetaung Shwenanthwin pagoda, Shwelwantaw pagoda, Nayaungpya Inn pagoda, Yanaungmyin pagoda, Phaungtawchatma pagoda, Pyinmana Koesu pagoda, Culamuni pagoda, Sutaungya Sutaungpyae pagoda, Thatta Thattaha Maha Bawdi pagoda and Phwar, Pwint, Haw, San sites in Nay Pyi Taw Council area were also packed with visitors. The people also visited Maha

Muni Buddha image, Maha Lawkayanhnein Aungtawmu pagoda, Candamuni pagoda, Kutodaw pagoda, Mandalay Hill, Shwekyeemyin pagoda, Tooth Relic pagoda (Mandalay), Werawsana Jade pagoda and other famous pagodas in Mandalay Region to offer Waso robes, flowers and keep Sabbath and recite Dhammacakka Sutta. — ASH/KTZH

# NATIONAL

## 751 inmates from Mandalay Central Prison freed from sentences

A total of 7,749 prisoners across the country were pardoned for their sentences and 751 inmates from Mandalay Central Prison were freed from their sentences yesterday, on the Full Moon of Second Waso, 1385 ME which is also the Dhammacakka Day. The State has pardoned the inmates to mark Dhammacakka Day, to bring happiness to the public and to uphold humanitarian grounds.

Region Minister for Security and Border Affairs Colonel Kyaw Kyaw Min and Minister for Transport Mandalay Region Police Force Commander Police Brig-Gen Sein Lwin of Mandalay Region Government gave their speeches to 751 pardoned inmates — 638 males and 113 females — at the Mandalay Central Prison yesterday. Afterwards, the pardoned prisoners were released from the prison after under-

going a medical examination and receiving daily and travel allowances.

“We will provide pardoned prisoners with food allowances and travel allowances according to the rate mentioned in the bylaw and we will also bring you to railway stations, ports and bus terminals to return home. This is also an auspicious day. The Head of State has shown his regard on humanitarian grounds and sympathy for the prisoner’s family by giving a pardon to the inmates on this auspicious day for Buddhists and I am very happy about it. And I am also happy for you as you will reunite with your family soon,” Mandalay Region Director of the Correctional Department U Cho Win Htun explained.

“I would like to express my gratefulness to the Chairman of the State Administration



Families and relatives are seen happy to embrace releasees yesterday. PHOTO-MTK

Council and officials. I have long been waiting for a chance to go back home as soon as possible and see my family. Now, I have that chance and I am on cloud nine as I will

see my family soon. I am also happy for my fellow prisoners who are exempted from their sentences,” a pardoned inmate said.

In Mandalay Region, a to-

tal of 1,336 prisoners of whom 1,118 male and 218 females serving their terms in five prisons and seven camps were released yesterday. — Maung Aye Chan/TH

## 1,464 prisoners including foreigners released from Insein prison



Releasees are pictured from the Insein Jail. PHOTO: KANU

THE Government has granted amnesty for 1,464 prisoners, including foreigners, from Insein prison in commemoration of the full moon day of the Second Waso and on humanitarian grounds.

Region Minister for Security and Border Affairs Colonel Win

Tint and Minister for Transport Commander of Yangon Region Police Force Police Brig-Gen Myo Min Htike of Yangon Region Government delivered speeches to 1,464 inmates at the gymnasium of the Insein Prison.

The released prisoners

included 1,196 male prisoners, 144 female prisoners, 13 male foreign prisoners, one female foreign prisoner, 74 Bengali male prisoners and 36 Bengali female prisoners, and they were freed on the condition that, if they committed offences again, they would have to serve not only the sentence for it but also for the remaining sentences. Foreign prisoners were deported.

In addition, 34 prisoners from Shwe Thahtay camp, 17 from Tawgyitan camp, 33 from Hlayhlawinn camp, 62 from Aingkalaung camp, 45 from Aung Chantha camp and 23 from Mingone camp were also released and they were given travel expenses. — Nyein Thu (MNA)/KZW

## 86 prisoners released in Nay Pyi Taw Council Area

THE State Administration Council granted pardon for 86 prisoners from the prison, production camps and farming camps in commemoration of the full moon of the Second Waso and on humanitarian grounds yesterday.

The released prisoners included 21 prisoners from Nay Pyi Taw prison, 15 prisoners from Kintha 1 manufacturing camp, 35 from the farming camps (Nay Pyi

Taw), and 15 prisoners from Kintha 2 production camp (Tatkon).

The director of the multi-purpose farming enterprise of Nay Pyi Taw, the chairman of the Zabuthiri Township administration body and Police Major Aung Myo Zaw Lwin of Zabuthiri Township Police Force delivered speeches to prisoners at the hall of the Nay Pyi Taw prison. — MNA/KZW



Releasees are seen being transported to their respective places.



From the jail in Kachin State



Kyaukpyu prison.



NyaungU prison.

# ECONOMY WORLD

## Asian markets mixed as early momentum fades

ASIAN markets were mixed Tuesday as investors struggled to maintain early gains fanned by hopes the Federal Reserve's interest rate hike campaign has run its course.

Positive data out of Washington in recent weeks, particularly falling inflation, has been compounded by China's recent promises of stimulus measures to kickstart growth, as the country's post-Covid recovery grinds to a halt.

Traders are now keeping a close eye on earnings this week

from tech titans Apple and Amazon, and US jobs at the end of the week that could provide an idea about the Fed's thinking.

Britain's central bank is also due to announce a rate decision.

On Monday, Chicago Fed boss Austan Goolsbee left open the possibility of pausing or stopping interest rate hikes at the bank's next policy meeting in September.

"Thus far we're on the golden path and we've got to walk that line," Goolsbee told Yahoo! Finance, referring to the path of



A worker walks past an electronic board showing the rate of the Japanese yen versus the US dollar after the closing session on the Tokyo Stock Exchange along a street in Tokyo on 3 July 2023. **PHOTO: AFP**

lowering inflation without triggering a major recession.

He said the slowdown in inflation was "fabulous news", echoing comments from Minneapolis chief Neel Kashkari, who called the readings "quite positive".

"As we approach the middle of summer, there is a prevailing belief among people on the street that the Federal Reserve has probably made its final rate hike in the current cycle," said Stephen Innes of SPI Asset Management. — AFP

## Thailand's fruit exports to slow down in H2, with China as growth point

THAILAND'S fruit exports are expected to experience a slowdown in the second half of 2023, with China identified as the primary source of growth, according to the latest report by the Bangkok-based Kasikorn Research Centre.

The report highlighted chal-

lenges in the latter part of the year, including the passing of the peak season, potential economic slowdown in major export markets, and climate change impacts affecting fruit quality and yield, which could lead to a decline in the total value of Thailand's fruit exports in the rest of the year.

Driven by the recovery of trade with China, fresh and refrigerated fruits are expected to see growth in exports, while canned and processed fruits may encounter declining exports due to reduced orders from markets like the United States and the European Union, it said. — Xinhua

## Greek islanders dismayed by plan to scale up fish farming



An aerial photo shows fish farms on the Poros Island, on 5 July 2023. **PHOTO: AFP**

ON the sunny quay of the picturesque Greek island of Poros, veteran fisherman Spiros Papaioannou makes no bones about imminent plans to expand fish farming. "We don't want them on our island," the rubber-booted man in his seventies grumbled while cleaning his nets.

"We fishermen are going to be chased away, that's for sure," he said. Greek-Spanish group

Avramar, which presents itself as the world's leading producer of Mediterranean fish, already operates several fish farms in Poros.

The Greek state has long planned to make the Saronic Gulf island of 3,000 inhabitants near the Peloponnese peninsula one of the country's top aquaculture sites for sea bream and sea bass, which mainly

end up at French and Italian restaurants.

Eventually, fish farms would cover a quarter of the island, 600 hectares on land and 269 hectares at sea. A Mediterranean country with more than 15,000 kilometres (9,300 miles) of coastline, Greece is keen to develop its aquaculture industry and has earmarked 25 sites for fish farm installation. — AFP

### NEWS IN BRIEF

#### South China's Guangzhou adds three air freight routes to India

CHINA'S leading express firm, YTO Express, announced that it will launch three air freight routes from the southern Chinese metropolis of Guangzhou to India from Monday to Wednesday.

The three new international air freight routes will link Guangzhou Baiyun International Airport with Chennai, Mumbai, and Delhi in India.

It is rare in the industry for cargo airlines to open international routes so intensively. It is also the first time for the Baiyun airport to launch three air routes operated by the same airline company in three consecutive days, which indicates the Guangzhou international air cargo market has ushered in a development period of acceleration, said the Guangdong Airport Authority (GAA).

The three air routes will be operated by the B767-300 freighter, with one round trip scheduled weekly for each route. The full load of a freighter can reach about 50 tonnes of goods, and the flights will mainly carry cargo, including electronic products, auto parts, textiles, machinery, and equipment.

The new air services are estimated to add about 8,000 tonnes to the Baiyun airport's annual international cargo throughput, which is expected to greatly facilitate the economic and trade exchanges between Guangzhou and South Asia. — Xinhua

#### S Korea's online shopping grows 7.7% in June

SOUTH Korea's online shopping grew in June due to solid demand for travel services and e-coupon services, statistical office data showed Tuesday.

Shopping in cyberspace stood at 18.42 trillion won (14.4 billion US dollars) in June, up 7.7 per cent from the same month of last year, according to Statistics Korea.

Online demand for travel and transport services spiked 30.4 per cent following a return-to-normality policy from the COVID-19 pandemic.

The online transaction of e-coupon services jumped 46.7 per cent on the spread of the trend to offer gifts such as coffee and cake through e-coupons. Transactions for food and beverage in cyberspace gained 14.8 per cent, and demand for food delivery services rose 0.8 per cent. Mobile shopping through smartphones increased 5.8 per cent over the year to 13.44 trillion won (10.5 billion dollars) in June. — Xinhua

# Toyota profit soars 78% to record high as production recovers

TOYOTA Motor Corp said Tuesday its net profit in the three months ended June soared 78.0 per cent from a year earlier to a record 1.31 trillion yen (\$9.2 billion), helped by the yen's weakness and robust sales as its production recovered from the coronavirus pandemic.

The Japanese automaker posted record sales of 10.5 trillion yen, up 24.2 per cent, while its operating profit jumped 93.7 per cent to 1.12 trillion yen, also a record high for the quarter.

The upbeat earnings results came as Toyota ramps up its production capacity across the globe to

make up for lost opportunities during the coronavirus pandemic.

An easing in the global chip shortage also allowed pent-up demand to be satisfied, with its group-wide sales in the three-month period rising 8.1 per cent to 2.75 million cars, the company said. Toyota also benefited from a weaker yen. The Japanese currency fell about 8 yen against the US dollar during the year through June, according to Bank of Japan data, amid the widening interest rate differential between Japan and the United States.

Every 1-yen fall

against the dollar boosts the automaker's operating profits by 45 billion yen, Toyota has said.

The automaker said growth in vehicle sales and price increases in North America and Europe pushed up its operating profit for the quarter by 600 billion yen from a year ago, offsetting the rise in material and labour costs.

By region, its Japanese business saw the biggest growth, with its operating profit doubling to 700.7 billion yen as vehicle sales rose 32 per cent on the back of improved production. — Kyodo



Photo taken in Tokyo on 21 June 2023, shows Toyota Motor Corp.'s all-new Vellfire minivan launched the same day. PHOTO: KYODO

# BMW raises 2023 outlook on strong orders

GERMAN automaker BMW on Tuesday lifted its 2023 earnings forecast on the back of strong orders and improved availability of its premium models.

The group said it now expected a pre-tax profit margin (EBIT) of 9 to 10.5 per cent, compared with 8-10 per cent previously.

Car deliveries are expected to see "solid growth", it added, after earlier pencilling in only "slight growth".

The more optimistic outlook comes after BMW released preliminary results showing a "solid"

performance in the first half of this year.

The company delivered 1.2 million vehicles over the first six months, a 4.7-per-cent increase on last year.

The group achieved an EBIT margin of 10.6 per cent, helped by "a positive price situation".

Like other carmakers, BMW struggled last year with a global shortage of semiconductors and other supply chain disruptions that curbed production in the automotive sector.

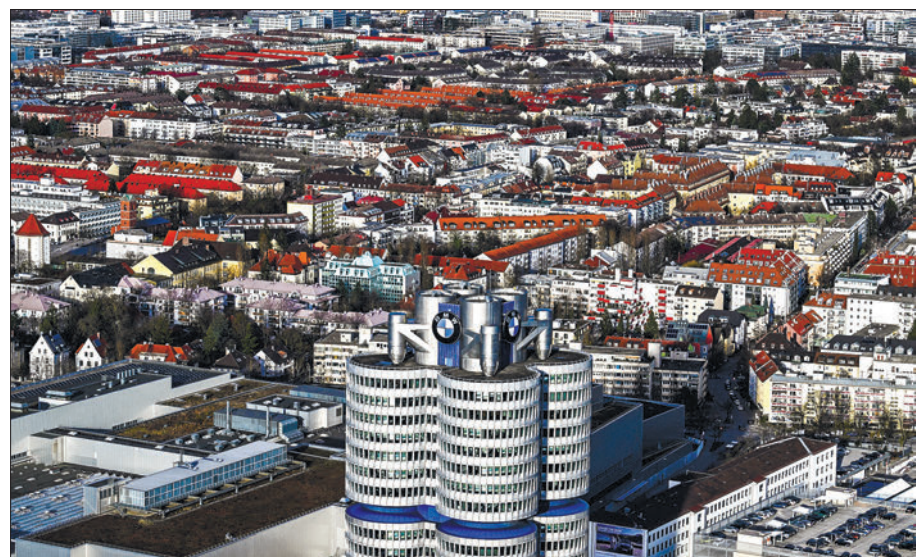
The group never-

theless reported an increased net profit of 18.6 billion euros (\$20.4 billion) for 2022, as higher prices for its luxury models helped offset a 4.8-per-cent drop in deliveries.

With supply issues gradually easing, BMW said it "expects positive momentum in the business during the second half of the year".

"This is built on the ongoing strength of the order bank and an expected improvement in the availability of its premium vehicles," it added.

— AFP



The headquarters of German carmaker BMW is pictured on 13 March 2023 in Munich, southern Germany PHOTO: AFP

# ADB approves US\$ 100 mln USD loan to Cambodia for boosting labour force competitiveness

THE Asian Development Bank (ADB) has approved a 100-million-US-dollar loan to help boost the caliber of Cambodia's labour force by addressing skills gaps and shortages.

In its press statement on Tuesday, the lender said this will be done through reforms and investments in technical and vocational education and training (TVET) combined with private sector participation.

The first subprogramme of the Skills for Future Economy

Sector Development Programme will help transform Cambodia into a technology-driven, knowledge-based industrial economy by strengthening its human capital resources, the statement said. "Reshaping Cambodia's labour force and modernizing its economy requires the continual reform of the TVET system through comprehensive strategies and well-timed, successive investments," said ADB country director for Cambodia Jyotsana Varma.

"These structural and institutional reforms in TVET are crucial in designing training programmes that meet market demand, upgrade training facilities and equipment, and expand the Skills Development Fund," she said.

An estimated 9 million workers make up Cambodia's labour market, with women accounting for 49 per cent of the workforce, the statement said, adding that 54 per cent of Cambodia's population was under 30 years old. — Xinhua

## THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR MINISTRY OF ENERGY MYANMA OIL AND GAS ENTERPRISE (INVITATION FOR OPEN TENDER) (16/2023-2024)

1. Open tenders are invited for supply of the following respective service in Myanmar Kyats.

Sr. No.	Tender No.	Description	Remarks
(a)	MOGE-C002/2023	Shot Hole Drilling and Cable/Geophone Layout/ Pick-up Service of 2D Seismic Acquisition for onshore Block PSC-Q, Payagon Area.	Kyats

2. The open tender form including description of materials/Qty with details specifications and Tender Terms and Conditions can be available during office hours commencing from 1 August, 2023 at the Finance Department, Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise, No.(44) Complex, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar.

3. The interested Bidders should submit the Technical Specifications with Original Bid Bond and Commercial Quotation in each separate sealed envelopes on which to be addressed to the Managing Director, Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise, No.(44) Complex, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar and should reach in tender box of the Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise not later than 01:00 pm, 31-8-2023.

4. Tender closing date and time 31-8-2023, 01:00 pm.

Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise  
Ph; 067-3411214

# ROLLING UPDATES

## WORLD

## Switzerland to lift Fukushima disaster import curbs on Japan foods

SWITZERLAND plans to lift on 15 August import restrictions it has been imposing on food products from parts of Japan after the 2011 Fukushima nuclear power plant disaster, the Fukushima prefectural government said Tuesday.

Switzerland will follow in the footsteps of the European Union, which will remove the remaining controls requiring radiation tests on some agricultural and fishery products from 10 prefectures, including Fukushima, on Thursday. Switzerland is not an EU member.

Swiss Ambassador to Japan Andreas Baum told Fukushima Gov. Masao Uchibori about the decision to remove

the restrictions when they met at the Swiss embassy in Tokyo on Monday, according to the prefectural government.

With the EU and Switzerland dropping the measures, the number of countries and regions imposing import restrictions on Japanese food products will be 10. In Asia, China, South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macau maintain import restrictions on Japanese food products. China and Hong Kong have intensified radiation inspections of seafood imports from Japan ahead of a planned release of treated radioactive water from the crippled Fukushima nuclear plant into the sea. — Kyodo

## Where's the beef? US man sues Taco Bell over filling size

A New York man unhappy with the amount of filling he received in his Taco Bell order has sued the fast food chain for false advertising.

Frank Siragusa claims the Mexican Pizza he bought last September had approximately half the beef and bean filling shown in adverts.

Had he known this, the plaintiff "would not have paid the \$5.49 price", according to the class-action lawsuit filed in the Eastern District of New York Monday. Siragusa is seeking upwards of \$5 million from the chain for "unfair and decep-

tive trade practices".

The Mexican pizza offers seasoned beef and refried beans between two pizza shells with sauce, cheese and tomatoes on top, with add-ons including guacamole and chicken.

Siragusa filed the suit on behalf of himself and other customers who were left similarly disappointed with items, including Taco Bell's popular Crunchwraps.

The court filing juxtaposes photos of food taken from the chain's website with photos of the "actual" item that customers say they received. — AFP



Taco Bell chain restaurant in Middletown, DE, on 26 July 2019. PHOTO: AFP

## UAE vows to allow 'peaceful' assembly of climate activists at COP28

THE United Arab Emirates said Tuesday it would allow environmental activists to "assemble peacefully" at this year's UN climate talks, despite a prohibition on unauthorised protests in the Gulf state.

The oil-rich UAE, set to host COP28 from November to December in the business hub of Dubai, requires official permission for protests but effectively bans demonstrations it deems disruptive.

At the upcoming UN climate talks "there will be space available for climate activists to assemble peacefully and make their voices heard", it said.

The announcement was made in a joint statement with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) released on Tuesday and published by the UAE's official WAM news agency.

The statement was released after COP28 president Sultan al-Jaber and UNFCCC chief Simon Stiell signed a bi-



In this picture taken on 10 May 2023, people attend the UAE Climate Tech Forum in Abu Dhabi. Faced with mounting pressure over planet-heating pollution, the Arab Gulf's energy giants are turning to humble tech start-ups as they search for ways to remove emissions while keeping oil flowing. PHOTO: AFP

lateral agreement in Abu Dhabi that provides the legal basis for organizing and hosting the climate talks.

"We are firmly committed to ensuring that UN values are upheld at COPs," the statement quoted Stiell as saying.

Tuesday's announcement was welcomed by campaign group Climate Action Network

International which commended "the COP28 Presidency for their dedicated efforts towards fostering an inclusive climate summit".

But it warned that it would "resist any attempts to curtail (civil society) participation", according to Harjeet Singh, its head of global political strategy. — AFP

## Pentagon awards General Dynamics subsidiary contract extension for tank maintenance for Ukraine

THE US Department of Defence said Monday it has awarded a 17-month extension of contract to a subsidiary of General Dynamics, the fifth largest US defence contractor, allowing it to continue providing maintenance for the Abrams tanks, including those destined for Ukraine.

According to a press release

from the Pentagon, the extension was worth nearly 34 million US dollars and was granted to General Dynamics Land Systems (GDLS), which specializes in designing and manufacturing tanks and other armoured fighting vehicles for the military.

Among the vehicles are the Abrams main battle tanks,

a third-generation American main battle tank. Work on providing technical support to the Abrams system will be performed in Sterling Heights, the US state of Michigan, where the GDLS is headquartered, the release said, adding that the work is estimated to be completed no later than 31 December 2024. — Xinhua

## Syria willing to receive 180,000 refugees from Lebanon: Lebanese minister

SYRIA has expressed its willingness to receive 180,000 displaced refugees from Lebanon at the first stage, said Lebanese Minister of the Displaced Issam Charafeddine on Tuesday.

"We have reached an understanding with the Syrian government to resolve the crisis of the displaced safely," Charafeddine

was quoted as saying by the El-nashra news website. "There is mutual trust with the Syrian side and a commitment to the understanding reached last year regarding the safe return of the displaced," Charafeddine said, adding that shelter centres have been ready to receive the displaced and provide them

with facilities, healthcare, and education.

The minister said he had proposed forming a tripartite committee with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and Syria but was rejected on the ground of instability in Syria. — Xinhua

# SPORTS

## Victory sends Hanthawady to third place in MNL



HANTHAWADY United reached third place in the Myanmar National League after defeating Kachin United 2-0 in the Week-14 of the tourney at Thuwunna Stadium in Yangon yesterday.

Hanthawady won over Kachin United thanks to the goals from Aung Zeya and Aung Myat. With the win, the team advanced to the third place with 22 points.

Hanthawady United player (red) vies for the ball with a Kachin United player during the Myanmar National League Week-14 at Thuwunna Stadium in Yangon on 1 August 2023. **PHOTO: MNL**

After the MNL Week-14 matches, the Shan United team is carving the best, earning the top spot as usual, while the Yangon United team proved that it is the best-attacking team in the current Myanmar National League and continues to stand in the second place.

In the match between Maha United, ISPE and Hanthawady United for the third place, Hanthawady United was able to hold on. This is the opportunity for Hanthawady United to climb back to the third place after the Week-7 of the domestic league. — KZL

## Mane's Bayern departure sad but for the best - Tuchel

BAYERN Munich boss Thomas Tuchel said Tuesday he was saddened that things didn't work out for Sadio Mane at the club but feels his departure is for the best.

The Senegal forward, who joined Bayern just 12 months ago, is joining the growing number of players heading to Saudi Arabia. The 31-year-old is reportedly set to join Cristiano Ronaldo at Al Nassr in a deal worth a reported \$45 million. Speaking to Sky Germany, Mane rued his departure, saying: "Leaving Bayern hurts me. I would have wished for a different ending."

Those sentiments were echoed by Tuchel when he spoke in Singapore on the eve of his friendly against

Liverpool.

"We had a long, big hug and we both agreed that we don't like what's happening now, but we think it's for the best in this situation," said the Bayern coach.

"Sometimes things don't work out as everybody wants it to work out. In person I have always had a very good relationship with him and this will stay.

"I can totally understand that he feels hurt and I also wouldn't feel happy if things like this happened.

"Obviously it's something that we didn't bring into the full potential, which is my job and my responsibility, but in this particular situation, it was the best solution to untie the knot."—AFP



This file photo taken on 22 June 2022 shows Bayern Munich's Senegalese forward Sadio Mane playing the ball during a press conference after he signed a three-year deal with German first division football club FC Bayern Munich, in Munich, southern Germany. **PHOTO: AFP**

## Portugal coach regrets missing 'huge' chance to beat US at World Cup



Portugal's goalkeeper (1) Ines Pereira (4L) saves the ball and collides with USA's forward (13) Alex Morgan (C) during the Australia and New Zealand 2023 Women's World Cup Group E football match between Portugal and the United States at Eden Park in Auckland on 1 August 2023. **PHOTO: AFP**

COACH Francisco Neto lamented a "huge opportunity" missed after his Portugal side came within a post of beating the United States on Tuesday and knocking the holders out of the Women's World Cup.

Vlatko Andonovski's USA, the pre-tournament favourites, held on for a goalless draw in Auckland that took them through to the last 16 — and ended Portugal's hopes on their World Cup debut.

Portugal, who are ranked 21<sup>st</sup> in the world, almost snatched a sensational victory in stoppage time when Ana Capeta hit the

post.

A Portugal win would have taken them through from Group E at the expense of the holders and top-ranked United States.

"I think it was our best game in the World Cup," said Neto, who has been in charge since 2014.

"I will be honest with you, when Ana hit the ball I was thinking it would be a goal and about what Vlatko would do and what I would have to do to stop him.

"I swear, I truly believed it was going to be a goal."

He added: "I told the girls I was very proud. Of course, they are very sad because we have

huge expectation on ourselves.

"They felt that we were probably going to be the first team in the world that would eliminate the US in this stage.

"It was a huge opportunity for us but unfortunately we go home tomorrow." Portugal reached their first Women's World Cup only after they came through a play-off against Cameroon. They lost 1-0 to the Netherlands in their opening match at the tournament and followed that by beating Viet Nam 2-0.

They go out with four points on the board and just one goal conceded in three games.—AFP



# Thousands urged to evacuate in southern Japan ahead of typhoon

**A** POWERFUL typhoon sweeping towards southern Japan on Tuesday triggered the cancellation of hundreds of flights, with officials urging hundreds of thousands of people to seek shelter.

Typhoon Khanun was packing maximum sustained wind speeds of 180 kilometres (112 miles) an hour as it crossed the Pacific Ocean towards the Okinawa region.

The Japan Meteorological Agency said the storm, which it described as "very strong", was about 170 kilometres southeast of the regional capital of Naha at 0600 GMT. The centre of the typhoon was expected to brush past Okinawa late Tuesday or early Wednesday before crossing to eastern China later in the week.

Cities across Okinawa advised more than 760,000 people to leave their homes as the weather agency warned waves of up to 12-metres (39-feet) high could pummel the group of islands. The typhoon was expected to bring fierce winds and heavy rain. "Many people stay at home because their houses are concrete," a disaster management official at the Okinawa regional government told AFP, speaking on condition of anonymity. "But we are asking people who live alone or in wooden houses in low-lying areas to consider seeking shelter before the typhoon gets



Lightning strikes a building near Tokyo's Haneda Airport (bottom) on 1 August 2023. PHOTO: AFP

bad."

More than 500 flights were cancelled on Tuesday, while regional ferry and bus

services were suspended ahead of the typhoon, national broadcaster NHK reported. Japan Airlines and All Nippon Airways

said more than 74,000 passengers in total would be affected by flight cancellations on Tuesday and Wednesday. — AFP

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Russia says Moscow attacked by Ukrainian drones

UKRAINE launched an attack on Moscow and the Moscow region with three unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), with two of them shot down and the third having crashed after being jammed by electronic warfare, said Russian authorities on Tuesday.

According to the Russian Defence Ministry, the attempt was foiled by air defence systems that destroyed two Ukrainian UAVs over the Odintsovo and Naro-Fominsky districts of the Moscow region.

One more drone, affected by electronic warfare, had lost control and crashed into the non-residential Moscow-City building complex, said the ministry. Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyenin confirmed on his Telegram channel that several drones had been shot down by air defence systems while attempting to fly into Moscow. — Xinhua

## Xi orders all-out rescue of people missing, trapped in floods, geological disasters

CHINESE President Xi Jinping on Tuesday demanded all-out search and rescue of the people missing or trapped in floods and geological disasters in an instruction on the work regarding flood prevention and disaster relief.

Xi, also general secretary of the Communist Party of China Central Committee and chairman of the Central Military Commission, also demanded efforts to minimize casualties.

Affected by Typhoon Doksuri, extreme rainfall was recorded in north China and the regions along the Yellow and Huaihe rivers, triggering floods and geological disasters and causing heavy casualties in Beijing and Hebei.

It is crucial to ensure medical



Passengers walk past cars submerged in floodwater in Mentougou District of Beijing, capital of China, 31 July 2023. PHOTO: XINHUA

treatment for the injured and provide comfort to the families of the deceased, Xi said.

Xi urged efforts to make appro-

appropriate arrangements for the people affected by the floods and geological disasters, promptly repair damaged infrastructure including transportation, telecommunications and electricity facilities, and restore normal order in work and life as soon as possible.

Xi stressed that relevant authorities must strengthen the monitoring and early warning of floods, focus on crucial locations of flood prevention, and fully implement the measures in flood prevention during the key period from late July to early August.

The safety of the people's lives and properties as well as social stability must be ensured with utmost efforts, Xi said. —Xinhua



## Ignoring ground water issue is not worthwhile

By Kaung Aung

**E**VERY day in the morning and evening, I happen to walk along this street. I notice a particular item every day whenever I pass a particular location, so my experiences of walking along the street in the morning and evening are very different. When I first saw that event, I had a feeling that I had never been able to identify before.

Soon I realized my particular feeling is something like feeling of stinginess or feeling sorry for losing something that I never own. In that location, the open tap that releases water into a tin container (or occasionally a plastic container) and water spilling over to the ground are the things, I notice every day.

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## Yangon's streetside bookstores for book lovers

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# Green hazards

## DIALOGUE

Between Luu Luu and Thu Thu

**LUU LUU-THU THU** dialogue will be presented in Sunday's Special section in Global New Light of Myanmar. A snippet of information about the do's and don'ts and knowledge sharing on topics that are worth reading for people will be disseminated. This week's topic features "Harmful Greens".

**Luu Luu:** Hey Thu Thu, the title is aesthetic, isn't it?

**Thu Thu:** It sounds cool yet it will shock you for real.

**Luu Luu:** Right, every household must be aware of this deadly danger.

**Thu Thu:** Definitely! What is more important is that we are the nearest people to those harmful things.

**Luu Luu:** Let's talk about herbicides first which are utilized in paddy cultivation before we get into a discussion about the pesticide.

**Thu Thu:** Long ago, I hadn't heard that farmers used herbicide in paddy cultivation.

**Luu Luu:** Absolutely. Earlier, paddy cultivation commenced around early July in the peak monsoon season. As per the changing farming pattern, farmers start doing agricultural work in mid-May. Additionally, the farming method was shifted from manual transplanting of seedlings to broadcasting seeds ten years ago.

**Thu Thu:** Does transplanting mean putting the seedlings on the field?

**Luu Luu:** Yes, it is. Traditionally, land preparation was done with cattle ploughing and farmers had organic fertilizer output from dead weeds.

**Thu Thu:** What about direct seed distribution?

**Luu Luu:** Broadcasting seeds are right onto the seedbeds or covered with soil. Sometimes, the seeds are scattered onto the grass or weeds. Unlike cattle ploughing, plowing with a tractor and spreading seeds take significantly less time. However, it doesn't kill the grass and it is hard to harrow to break soil clods, and the paddy

is not fed adequate water.

**Thu Thu:** The grass invasion is a problem now.

**Luu Luu:** Right. The weeds are sometimes mixed with rice crops. Transplanting seedlings needs a labor force. Nonetheless, it brings more benefits to the farmers as the grass is removed. Broadcasting seeds culture prompted the farmers to use herbicides.

**Thu Thu:** Those who spray herbicide are not found wearing protective clothing like PPE and gloves.

**Luu Luu:** That's my point. The farmers have little knowledge of the advantages and disadvantages of herbicides. The majority of them are still far from good agricultural practices. The workers are spraying chemicals without protection.

**Thu Thu:** Is there an awareness campaign for that?

**Luu Luu:** Experts raise awareness of herbicide and weed control practices. Yet most of the farmers who own over ten

acres of farmland joined the campaigns. Those farmers working on a small scale rarely attended the events.

**Thu Thu:** Would you like to explain the side effects of herbicide?

**Luu Luu:** Lack of appropriate protective wear could cause skin contamination, chemical exposure, long-term illness, toxic inhalation, microbiome toxicity, stomach, and peptic ulcer diseases, and cancer threats.

Lack of appropriate protective wear could cause skin contamination, chemical exposure, long-term illness, toxic inhalation, microbiome toxicity, stomach, and peptic ulcer diseases, and cancer threats.

Glyphosate, a common herbicide, is classified as chemical Group 2A, according to a report from the International Agency for Research on Cancer.

**Thu Thu:** Oh, it's terrifying.

**Luu Luu:** Of course, it is. Farmers expect good yields. They are our benefactors who are endeavoring to ensure food security and boost family income. The relevant institutions need to conduct awareness campaigns frequently. The farmers also voluntarily collect information on how to use herbicide safely and effectively for the sake of our surroundings. I am going to stop this week's discussion here wishing health and well-being to the farmers.

**Thu Thu:** All right, please continue sharing the pros and cons of pesticides next week.

*Translated.*

## Unspoken voices: Miserable lives encountered in daily life

By Moon

**I**N the urban scene of Yangon, people are moving around and busy with their chores and duties under the scorching sun. In the middle of such a crowd, four abandoned kittens, less than a week old, can be seen in a garbage dump near the market. The kittens were placed in a wooden drawer, and the mother cat was nowhere to be seen.

Some curious people approached to take a closer look at them. Still, kittens are suffering from extreme heat and desperation, despite the attention they got. No one has stepped forward to take care of them. But

after a while, a girl and a boy picked up the drawer and held it in their arms. They also seemed to be contacting someone with their mobile phone. After a great deal of time, a group of people got out of their car and took the kittens with them. It is sure that the kittens are in good hands since they are from a certain animal rescue shelter.

An event like this frequently occurs in the urban and rural environments of Myanmar. But the end result is not always like that. Stray cats and dogs are considered good companions for humans by animal



**S**U HLAING is looking at the street-side bookstores, mulling over what she should buy. She comes to Pansodan Road in Yangon's central area where the secondhand book stalls are concentrated.

"Especially on weekends, I come here to buy a book at least or sometimes only for window shopping with my friends," Su, a book lover told the Global New Light of Myanmar (GNLM).

Yangon, Myanmar's largest city and economic hub, boasts of streetside used bookstores that offer various types of old books.

"The new Myanmar books are very expensive and I usually come to the secondhand bookstores. Sometimes, the recycled books are in quite a good condition. I keep in my mind like that reading more, paying less," she continued.

A 27-year-old university demonstrator Su said, "My parents often told me to read books when I was in my childhood. They bought books depending on my age such as local comic books – Bo Bo and Shwethway (weekly). I also love spending my holidays reading comic books and children's story books, which I borrow from a book rental store using my pocket money when I was young."

Nowadays, book rental shops have almost disappeared. People with smartphones can access the PDF version of various books including Myanmar novels, magazines, and historical books.

"Although it is easy to find a book online that we want, I don't like reading books on electronic devices. The taste of reading by holding books in our hands and holding electronic devices is different. I prefer print books. I like the smell of books. I felt I was the happiest person in the world when I went to a book rental shop in my

childhood," she continued.

She added that she finds a place to sit and read the books at the streetside used-book stores sometimes.

"The shop owners do not bear a grudge against our manners. They don't say anything even when we read the books and do not buy them," she said.

There are various monthly and weekly publications including novels on the local market. The prices seem to be beyond the

means of most families to purchase.

"When I go to the supermarket or shopping centre, I see bookshelves filled with books for children. I sometimes pick them up and leave them back when I see the price tags," said Hlaing Hlaing, who has one daughter.

"I want to buy when I see books that are appropriate for my seven-year-old daughter. If I buy two books at K3,000 each, it will cost K6,000. The cost is almost equal

"If we have the products (recycled books) in our hands, the sales are normal. But it becomes slack if we don't have the books. We earn between K70,000 and K80,000 per day, sometimes K200,000. The sales show an increase compared to the same period of last year," he added.

He said the librarians also make orders from them.

"The librarians purchase books at my bookstore. Sometimes, they give the book lists that they want to order. But sometimes, I myself select the proper books depending on the audience who will read. For example, we ask them whether they would buy for school libraries or the elderly in order to choose the types of books," he told the GNLM.

## Yangon's streetside bookstores for book lovers



By Jumper

"If we have the products (recycled books) in our hands, the sales are normal. But it becomes slack if we don't have the books. We earn between K70,000 and K80,000 per day, sometimes K200,000. The sales show an increase compared to the same period of last year.

to my family's daily expenses."

She buys books for her daughter from street-side bookstores, which costs K500 or K1,000, instead.

The book transactions were good before the outbreak of COVID-19, said the owner of Soe Thant (Jack) secondhand bookstore.

He has been running his secondhand bookstore for over thirty years at the corner of Merchant Road and 37<sup>th</sup> Street in downtown Yangon.

Currently, the sales of children's books are on the rise, he said.

"We also advertise the books which are available at my bookshop on Facebook," he added.

The second-hand bookstores are a must-visit for book lovers in Yangon. They offer an affordable way to build up a personal library as well as a chance to grab the literary heritage at cheap prices.

lovers; on the other hand, some people loathe them considering they can bring harm and various diseases. Stray dogs were mostly handled by the Yangon City Development Committee (YCDC) every year by killing with poison to control the population, which is not very effective. The disagreement between YCDC and animal lovers regarding stray dogs' population control methods never came to a solution due to various reasons, such as a lack of financial assistance and human resources for the use of more humane methods. In addition to stray dogs, the number of stray felines is also increasing in the blink of an eye. Who is to blame for the increase in these numbers? In my opinion, it all depends on us. One must help as much as possible to take care

of all the poor creatures in need, not by feeding them without taking responsibility. Doing so only encourages the problem to get worse.

There are still some thoughtless people who abandon their innocent pets in many ways, giving reasons for their poor health or manners without wanting to take responsibility. Despite the controversy, a lot of people are willing to lend a hand to these poor little creatures. Not all people are animal lovers, but those who want to save a life on the go can take a role in helping them by adopting them or sending them to shelters and making donations to shelters to meet their needs.

Nowadays, many animal rescue shelters have also appeared in Yangon and some other cities to provide stray cats and dogs with the

necessary procedures for their health, including vaccination and sterilization processes, which have already reduced the reproductive rate.

At last, I would like to share the quote of Karen Davison: "Saving one dog will not change the world, but surely for that one dog, the world will change forever." According to reformed writing, "Saving one animal won't change the world, but it will change the world for that one animal."

One can contact the following Facebook pages for the purpose of finding a forever home for stray cats and dogs: <https://www.facebook.com/GoldenHeartanimalsrescueyangon>, <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100087916788003>, <https://www.facebook.com/bynilar>, and many others.

# Food security: A crucial drive for efficient consumption of entire people

By Aung Kyaw Thant

The majority of global countries are facing challenges related to food security based on climate change and political instability across the world. Hence, every country including Myanmar is implementing various kinds of policies to ensure local food security.

Being an agro-based country, Myanmar is a nation that mostly emphasizes the operation of businesses related to agriculture and livestock farms to be able to provide sufficient food to the people and export surplus stocks for earning foreign exchange.

According to the statistics issued by the Worldometer elaboration of the United Nations, more than 54 million of the population is residing in all parts of Myanmar with a 0.7 per cent population growth rate. Of them, 31.4 per cent of the population lives in urban areas whereas 68.6 per cent of people reside in rural areas. Actually, agricultural produce and products from livestock farms can be sufficiently supplied to the people.

Among the three basic needs of society such as food, clothing, and shelter, food security is the most essential for all. In fact, food security directly affects the improvement of the primary economic sector of the State as well as the socioeconomic life of the people. As the population of the nation is growing year by year, it is necessary to adopt a master plan to sufficiently supply agricultural produce, livestock, and fishery products to the people in the long run. To do so, sown acreage of farmlands and croplands as well as livestock farms and fishery farms should be extended year after year.

That is why the Myanmar's sustainable and harmonious development plan (2018-2030) is under implementation to increase

crop production to ensure the food security of the country. In line with the economic policies of the State, plans for agricultural and livestock farms are adopted yearly to ensure food security and boost the export sector.

More than 15.22 million acres of farmlands were placed under paddy, more than 9.58 million acres under 20 kinds of pulses and beans, more than 7.83 million acres under oil crops, more than 1.47 million acres under maize, and more than 450,000 acres under cotton in 2022-2023 financial year.

Fish and shrimp farms are also being managed in coastal areas of the nation. Rakhine State, the Taninthayi Region, and the Ayeyawady Delta are the best locations for undertaking fish and shrimp farms not only for local consumption but for export purposes.

Likewise, more than nine million heads

of cattle and more than two million heads of sheep and goats are being bred on average in the livestock sector yearly. Of them, these animals are used in meat production and export of live animals on a yearly basis, according to the CEIC Data and the Ministry of Planning and Finance.

Yangon and Mandalay markets are focal points to collect green and dry groceries, livestock products, and marine products sent by merchants from all regions and states and distribute these goods to relevant areas depending on public demands so as to solve the food security of the people.

If so, all the people need to efficiently consume agricultural produce, livestock, and fishery products without waste while agricultural and livestock farmers are striving for ensuring the food security of the whole nation under relevant long-term plans.



In recent tourism news, concerns have been raised about the impact of tourism on the historic city of Bagan in Myanmar. Bagan is an ancient city located in the Mandalay Region of Myanmar in Southeast Asia. It is situated on the eastern bank of the Ayeyawady River and covers an area of about 42 square kilometers. Bagan was the capital of the Pagan Kingdom from the 9<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> centuries and is known for its thousands of temples, stupas, and pagodas, many of which were built during this period. Bagan is a popular tourist destination and attracts visitors from all over the world. The best time to visit Bagan is from November to February when the weather is cooler and drier. Some of the most popular temples and pagodas in Bagan include Ananda Temple, Shwezigon Pagoda, and Thatbyinnyu Temple.

Bagan is leading to concerns about overcrowding, damage to the temples, and the conservation of the city's cultural heritage.

By WW

## Tourism concerns grow for Bagan's ancient temples and local community

One of the main concerns is the impact of tourism on the temples themselves. As more and more tourists visit Bagan, there are fears that the sheer

volume of visitors could damage the fragile structures. In addition, some visitors have been seen climbing on the temples and taking selfies, which could

also contribute to affecting ancient architecture over time.

Another concern is the impact of tourism on the local community. While tourism has

brought economic benefits to the area, there are concerns that it could also have negative effects, such as the relocation of local people and the loss of

traditional culture and customs. To address these concerns, the government of Myanmar has taken steps to regulate tourism in Bagan. For example, it has limited the number of visitors to some of the temples and has introduced stricter regulations concerning climbing up the structures.

In addition, there are efforts underway to promote sustainable tourism in the area, such as encouraging visitors to stay in eco-friendly accommodations

and supporting local businesses that promote traditional culture and customs.

Despite these efforts, concerns remain about the impact of tourism on Bagan. As more and more visitors flock to the area, it will be important for the government and the local community to continue to work together to ensure that tourism is sustainable and does not have a negative impact on the city's cultural heritage or the well-being of its people.

### FROM PAGE-A

Man creates values, and he is also the one who disregards them. Man commits something wrong when he cannot determine whether his action is right or wrong and he is also brave enough to do so. I have to say people waste water or use more than necessary amount for he does not realize the value of it. So I would like to present about the facts of ground water which we use daily.

### The importance of water

Safe and clean water plays a critical role in survival of humans and animals, despite lack of nutrition and calories in it. There are countries and peoples facing shortage of clean drinking water as the people who are facing food insecurity. Experts predict that

by 2025 almost half of the world's population could suffer from some form of water-borne disease. And nearly 3,500 million people in developing countries could suffer water shortages by 2050, according to a UN report on the state of the world's water.

### Fresh water needed for people

In addition to being essential for human, animal, and plant survival, fresh water promotes a nation's economic growth. Nearly a billion people currently lack access to safe and clean water, endangering their health, education, and professional prospects. More than 2.3 billion people still do not have basic sanitation services. This situation prompted the United Nations to launch the International Decade for Action, "Water for Sustainable

## Ignoring ground water issue is not worthwhile

Development".

A person is said to be living in a water-scarce area where, on average, he receives less than 164 cubic feet of water a day. People in Myanmar receive 1,032 cubic feet of fresh water, compared to 320 cubic feet for residents of neighbouring Thailand and 156 cubic feet for residents of India. Myanmar is considered to be a water resource rich country as it has many freshwater resources such as the Ayeyawady, Chindwin, Thanlwin, Sittoung rivers and many freshwater creeks, lakes and ponds.

With a daily water consumption of 30 gallons per person in urban areas and 15 gallons in rural areas, Myanmar is ranked number eight in the world for the availability of freshwater, according to the researchers.

### The role of ground water

People use ground water because clean freshwater cannot be obtained from rivers, creeks, or lakes but only in large quantities from the ground. Ground water can be obtained easily and cheaply in almost every location by estab-

lishing a tube-well and so more than 2,000 million world population rely on ground water for drinking and use it for 40 per cent of food production. So sustainable and ever-clean subsurface water resources are essential for the survival of humanity in the future. If the aforementioned condition is to be maintained, the ground water resources must be protected from industrial, mining, and agricultural wastes.

People in Yangon city have been utilizing ground water since about 1842. Under the British colo-

nia rule, the government passed a law to regulate ground water use based on the ratio of natural availability to human consumption.

Ground water is the main source of supply for recently established townships in the Yangon region. There are more than three thousand wells, according to a study done between 1990 and 1991. Furthermore, according to certain records, freshwater sank into the earth at a very good rate of 16.7 inches per year, resulting in an acceptable subsurface freshwater reserve.

Areas around Mingaladon township and its northern neighbour town of Htaukkyant were used to be open space and had been known as recharged areas where rainwater infiltrate into the ground. These areas are now

incorporated into outskirts and covered in factories and homes. Some areas are now covered with concrete or asphalt roads, turning them into impervious layers where rainwater once found its way to the ground. Poor recharged rates as a result of this phenomenon result in weaker subsurface water storage level, while an increase in discharged rates is brought on by the expansion of wells.

### Saltwater replaces ground freshwater layer of Yangon

According to hydrogeologist U Myint Thein, areas that are close to the sea, rivers, and creeks have already experienced instances where saltwater has replaced freshwater. "With the changes in climate, quality of ground water may become poor by about 2040.

People can use ground water at that time, but the quality of it may be questionable. I can say ground water may be available in coming decades because saltwater is gradually replacing the fresh water in subsurface storage areas as the freshwater recharge becomes worse. The existence of fresh ground water depends on the states of saltwater. The layer of freshwater lies above the layer of saltwater as the latter has a higher density of 1.02 while the former has 1. If the volume of freshwater declines, it will be contaminated by the saltwater layer, turning the well water salty. When the water in a well becomes such a situation, people use to say the well is spoiled," he said.

Townships in the Yangon Region, such as Hlinethaya, Shwepy-

itha, Insein, Hline, Ahlon, and the river bank opposite Kyimyindine (the proposed area of a new satellite town), which are located close to the Hlaing, Panhlaing, Bago, and Yangon rivers as well as Pazundaung Creek, have the potential to be contaminated by saltwater. Some areas of Ahlon and Kyimyindine townships have already contaminated by saltwater, according to Daw Tu Mar, a real estate broker.

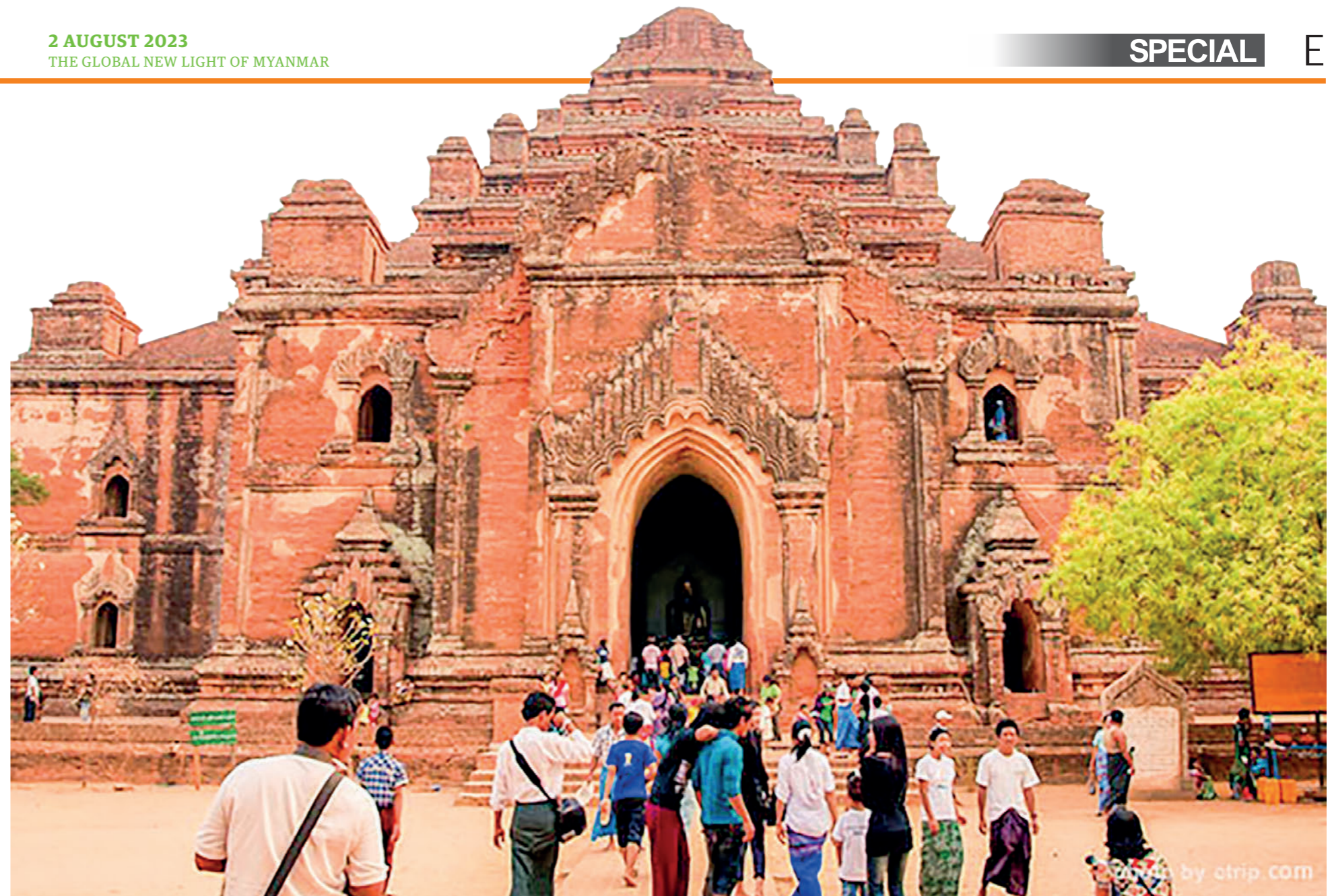
### Growing population and tube-wells

Almost all the townships in Yangon have tube-wells today as the number of such wells rose significantly since the years 1988-90. With the increased number of new buildings and population, 60 per cent of Yangon residents acquire

drinking water from not less than 300,000 tube-wells. The Underground Water Act (1930) formally enforced by the Department of Urban and Housing Development, under the Ministry of Construction may have lost its role.

As the number of tube wells grows each year, the amount of ground water being used rises while the rate at which rainwater is absorbed into the ground declines. Such an imbalanced state of groundwater recharge and discharge can result in a decrease in groundwater storage, which in turn causes the confining bed, an underground soil layer, to sink. Buildings may sink as a result of this type of sinking, which can also damage them.

SEE PAGE-F



# High-grade Pawsan rice from Shwebo rockets to K125,000 per bag

**T**HE price of high-grade Pawsan rice from the Shwebo area spiked to K125,000 per bag, according to Myanmar Rice Wholesale Centre (Wahdan).

The panic buying of some consumers sparked by the Central Bank of Myanmar's issuance of the new K20,000 note on 31 July pushed up the rice price.

The price of Shwebo Pawsan rice increased from K115,000 per bag on 24 July to K125,000 per bag on 31 July, indicating a sharp increase of K10,000 within a week.

Similarly, the prices of other rice varieties were up by K1,000-4,000 per bag. The prices of old Pawsan rice touched a high of K95,000-97,000 per bag depending on producing areas (Myaungmya, Patheingyi, Pyawbwe and other regions), while rice prices stood at K86,000 per bag

of Khunni, K65,000 for Ngasein, K86,000 for Pawkywe, K63,000 for rice grown under intercropping system and K96,000 for new Pawsan rice variety, as per the price data released by Myanmar Rice Wholesale Centre (Wahdan).

To stabilize the rice price, Myanmar Rice Federation released a notification on 28 July that it will plan to sell off the rice reserved under the cooperation of the exporting companies and other schemes to the domestic market. Initially, 50,000 rice bags (25 per cent broken – Single Polished & Sorted) will be sold. The federation will increase the sales quota if necessary.

Under the guidance of the Ministry of Commerce, MRF has been making efforts and participating in the development of the rice market, systematic registration for rice storage, fair



Rice bags are seen being organized at the warehouse.

market and price stability as the role of the private sector.

Myanmar has achieved self-sufficiency in rice and only the excess rice is exported systematically. At present, rice crops are being harvested in the northern Bago Region and central Myanmar Region. With the electricity supply improving, rice mills could run operations fully. Therefore, the production meets the consumption for sure. Nevertheless, the unscrupulous are spreading malicious rumours and fake news to trigger consumers' concerns and spark panic buying. The federation

hereby requested the consumers to stop panic buying and buy rice when they need it. Myanmar Rice Federation will endeavour to stabilize the rice price and the right product. The MRF will join hands with the rice millers, rice traders and companies. The federation called on them to balance the short-term and long-term benefits in trading, as per the MRF's notification dated 24 April.

Individuals and family entities can contact the rice wholesale centres for fair prices and the right product. For any diffi-

culties, please contact the office of the MRF, as per the statement.

Myanmar Rice Federation notified on 24 April that tips-off about the manipulators who spread malicious rumours on digital platforms to spark concerns of the consumers and raise the rice prices can be done for the sake of the long-term benefit of the rice industry. The federation will forward the reports of the manipulators to the relevant authorities if they refuse to be persuaded. The stakeholders in the supply chain need to exert concerted efforts in this as well. — NN/EM

# Myanmar's fisheries sector flourishes: Exports reach 70,000 tonnes to foreign markets in Q1

MYANMAR exported nearly 70,000 tonnes of fishery products to external markets including China in the Q1 (April-June) of the current financial year 2023-2024, the Ministry of Commerce stated.

Myanmar bagged US\$115.242 million from 69,612 tonnes of fisheries exports in Q1. China accounts for 30 per cent of overall fisheries exports. Live fisheries are exported to foreign markets by air, while some are delivered through seaborne trade after processing at cold storages.

Myanmar's fisheries have penetrated markets of Japan, European countries and neighbouring countries such as Thailand and China.



Fisheries are seen being processed at the cold storage for exportation.

The value of Myanmar's fishery exports as of 21 June this FY beginning 1 April 2023, the Ministry of Commerce's statistics showed. — TWA/EM

## Ignoring ground water ...

### FROM PAGE-E

The residents of Yangon could find themselves in such a situation if, according to calculations by some experts, the use of the city's groundwater is not properly managed.

### Beware of El Niño weather patterns

On 3 May of this year, the United Nations issued a warning regarding the increasing likelihood of El Niño weather patterns and the potential for a rise in the earth's temperature to record highs. According to the World Meteorological Organization outlook, there is about a 60 per cent chance that El Niño will form at the end of July, and an 80 per cent chance it will form in late September. Petteri Taalas, the secretary-general of the meteorological organization (WMO) warned that the world should prepare to brace for the unfavourable weather situation ahead as the global temperatures are likely to surge to record levels fuelled by a naturally occurring El Niño weather pattern bringing drought and some adverse weather pattern in some parts of the world.

Due to the rising global temperatures and the potential for increased ground water use as a result of the city's expanding population, residents of Yangon city may eventually experience ground water scarcity. To be able to brace for the unavoidable disaster of future, city's residents should limit their use of water while experts and relevant government departments develop action plans to combat the impending unfavourable situation of ground water shortage.

Translated

## Corn price rebounds to K1,200 per viss in domestic market

THE price of corn escalated at K1,200-1,220 per viss in the domestic market as the FOB corn prices rose to US\$290-310 per tonne, according to Yangon Region Chambers of Commerce and Industry (Bayintnaung Commodity Depot).

Myanmar ships corn to China and Thailand through the border and also sent corn to China, India, Vietnam and the Philippines by maritime shipping presently, according to the Myanmar Corn Industrial Association.

China is purchasing Myanmar's corn through cross-border trade under the opium substitution program. Legitimate corn trade between Myanmar and China commenced at the end of 2022. A total of 112 companies have been greenlit for legitimate corn exports.

Thailand gives the go-ahead to corn imports under zero tariff (with Form-D), between 1 February and 31 August. However, Thailand imposed a maximum tax rate of 73 per cent on corn imports to protect the rights of their growers if the corn is imported during the corn season of Thailand. There is only one month remaining to export Myanmar's corn to Thailand under the Form D customs tariff benefit.

The directive released on 30 June 2022 said that transactions for the exports of agricultural products including corn, rice, bean and oil crops are to be made in dollars instead of Yuan-Kyat/Baht-Kyat. Therefore, 65 per cent of export earnings (US dollars) of the corn have to be exchanged according to the reference rate of the Central Bank of Myanmar (K2,100). The CBM eased the foreign currency conversion order to 50 per cent from 65 per cent for the exporters on 13 July 2023, according to its notification 15/2023.

Currently, the CBM sets the reference exchange rate at K2,100 whereas the US dollar is transacted at K3,400 in the grey market, showing a large gap between the reference exchange rate and the grey market rate.

Myanmar exported over 2 million tonnes of corn to foreign trade in the 2022 corn season. The majority of them were sent to Thailand and the remaining went to the Philippines, China, India and Viet Nam.

More than two million tonnes of corn are expected to be shipped to foreign trade partners in the 2023 corn season, said U Min Khaing, chair of the Myanmar Corn Industrial Association.

The corn is cultivated in Shan, Kachin, Kayah and Kayin states and Mandalay, Sagaing and Magway regions. Myanmar has three corn seasons – winter, summer and monsoon. The country produces 2.5-3 million tonnes of corn every year. — NN/EM



The harvested corn is pictured at the corn plantation.

## Japan targets annual influx of 200-tonne Myanmar's dried bamboo shoots



The photo shows a dried bamboo shoot processing work site in Bago Region.

JAPAN will purchase about 200 tonnes of Myanmar's dried bamboo shoots every year, Daw Nan Khin Ohn, chair of the Bamboo Shoot Society under the Myanmar Bamboo Cultivation Association.

Myanmar ships dried bamboo shoots to external markets beyond domestic consumption. Myanmar has received a purchase proposal of 200 tonnes from Japan yet the production still cannot meet the demand. Only seven tonnes can be made for now. Therefore, concerted efforts are being made with Japan to boost the export

"Japan has a plan to buy 200 tonnes of dried bamboo shoots from Myanmar. Our out-

put cannot meet the foreign demand. We mainly rely on the naturally grown bamboo forest so there is a shortage of raw materials. Consequently, there is a problem with supplier capacity. To meet the demand, farming technology for quality bamboo shoot production is required. At present, we utilize Japanese technology. We are also working together with Japan from farm to production," she elaborated.

Only when Myanmar's bamboo shoots can be produced from farms rather than natural forests can production meet foreign demand. There is a scarcity of raw materials that meets export standards

as they are not systematically grown.

Trial runs for exporting Myanmar's dried bamboo shoots began in 2010. Japan started to give the green light to Myanmar's dried bamboo shoots as quality ones in 2017. Now, they want to increase the purchase order up to 200 tonnes.

According to Mekong-Lancang cooperation projects, Myanmar is implementing the establishment of bamboo plantations across the country and the State allowed the growers to seek land permits for bamboo plantations as bamboo shoots have export potential. — ASH/EM

## Myawady border trade surpasses US\$35.487 mln in July 3<sup>rd</sup> week

The value of trade through the Myawady border with neighbouring Thailand amounted to US\$35.487 million in the third week of July, the Ministry of Commerce's statistics indicated.

Export via Myawady was worth \$10.382 million and imports were valued at \$25.105 million between 15 and 21 July.

The trade figures showed a drop of \$5.257 million compared to that of the previous week, with a decrease of \$0.297 million in exports and \$5.554 million in imports.

Exports of mineral products and finished goods in-

creased yet the exports of fishery products, agricultural products and other goods declined.

Imports of capital goods and consumer goods moved up. However, imports of raw materials fell by \$8.747 million compared to that of last week.

Myawady border saw a decrease in exports (\$0.297 million) of corn, tamarind with seeds, dried ginger, onion, fresh chilli pepper, cucumber seeds, bitter gourd seeds, dried aloe vera, shrimp, crab, eel, clothes and other goods in the third week of July.

Imports of fish nets, ve-

hicles and auto parts, aircon, engines, equipment, electrical appliances and installation tools, iron and steel, motorcycle parts, bike parts and components, microscope, cameras, chemical equipment, petroleum products, fertilizer, synthetic leather products, raw rubber materials, raw minerals, tyre and tube, home-use sewing machines, bulbs and lights, cotton, pharmaceuticals, soap, toothpaste, furniture, cosmetic, tobacco products, lace products, clothes, kitchen wares and other goods rose this week ending 21 July.

— TWA/EM



Some homegrown tourists and foreigners are enjoying the beauty of the sunset in Bagan and taking photos.

## Bagan-NyaungU Ancient Cultural Zone unveils seven new travel destinations

THE Directorate of Hotels and Tourism (DHT) in Bagan announced the development of seven captivating travel destinations within the Bagan-NyaungU Ancient Cultural Zone, aiming to entice both domestic and international tourists.

The newly introduced tour destinations include Tuyin Hill, and Zee-U-Hla Village's boasting nine tamarind trees, each approximately 900 years old, and an ancient iron furnace dating back to the 1st century AD. Other attractions are Set-Set-Yo Village, offering an enriching cultural experience, Hiking Trip near Mount Popa,

providing breathtaking natural vistas, Myinkaba Village, offering mesmerizing sunset views, Gemoe Pond Tour, and a Community-Based Trip to Shwenat Mountain, providing unique insights into local life.

While the arrival of domestic tourists to the Bagan-NyaungU Ancient Cultural Zone has increased, the total number of visitors remains at about 20 per cent of pre-COVID-19 levels.

As per the statistics of the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism (MoHT), Myanmar welcomed 0.233 million foreign tourists in 2022, reflecting a remarkable 78 per cent increase compared

to 2021. By May 2023, the influx of foreign visitors surpassed 400,000, with a significant number coming from China, Thailand, Korea, Japan, India, Vietnam, the United States, Malaysia, Singapore, and China (Taipei).

To further boost foreign tourism, efforts are underway to enhance cooperation not only with the governments of these countries but also with international organizations like the World Tourism Organization, aiming to access new tourism markets and attract more tourists from across the globe. — TWA/CT

## Chinese Culture Centre holds green tea art campaign

MS Cao Jing, Minister-Counsellor of the Chinese Embassy to Myanmar, emphasized the essence of Chinese green tea art as “concord”, representing harmony, cooperation, and peace during the opening ceremony of the tea campaign held at the Chinese Culture Centre in Yangon on 1 August.

The rich green tea culture in China dates back thousands of years, with tea leaves being exported to various parts of the world. Myanmar also widely embraces tea culture, and the exchange of tea traditions between China and Myanmar enhances the social life of both nations.

In recognition of its significance, in 2022, the rituals related to traditional Chinese tea science were listed as a representative of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO.

Rector Dr Kay Thi Htwe of the National University of

Arts and Culture, Yangon, that nurturing cultural and tourism relations between China and Myanmar through the medium of tea culture can lead to industry expansion and mutual growth.

Yunnan Province, renowned for its early tea cultivation and consumption in China, acts as a vital bridge for cultural and commercial exchanges with Southeast Asian countries, including Myanmar.

The tea campaign showcased various aspects of Yunnan's unique culture, including ethnic costumes, Yunnan Black Tea, the traditional three-course tea-making process, the art of dyed flowers by the Bai people, Yi people's paper art, embroidery, and Yunnan's captivating traditional singing and dancing. The event proved to be an engaging celebration of the longstanding cultural connection between China and Myanmar. — TWA/CT



A Yunnan ethnic demonstrates the tea-making process at the event yesterday.

## Recovery of sunken Malaysian cargo ship completed

MARITIME Malaysia reported that the cargo ship, MV Tung Sung, which sank in Malaysian waters, was successfully recovered on 30 July. The incident occurred on 20 July when the gravel carrier sank off the coast of Sebuyau in Malaysia's territorial waters, leading to the disappearance of nine seamen, including four Myanmar nationals, four Malaysian citizens, and one Indonesian national.

As of now, the Malaysian authorities have found only five of the missing individuals, and the search and rescue opera-



An MMEA photo shows a crane being used to try to refloat the capsized MV Tung Sung.

tion for the remaining seamen is ongoing. To identify the bodies of the missing Myanmar seafarers, the authorities have requested DNA samples from their families for verification. U Hote Swam, Vice-President of the Myanmar Seafarers Federation (MSF), stated that the MSF president is actively assisting in the necessary measures as the families of the missing seamen seek help from the federation.

The Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency (MMEA) and collaborative teams, consisting of over 100 rescue

members, have been conducting comprehensive water and aerial searches since 20 July in an effort to locate the missing seamen.

MSF President Captain U Soe Min Aung informed the Global New Light of Myanmar (GNLM) that they intend to seek compensation for the four missing Myanmar nationals following the shipwreck. The investigation and rescue operations continue as authorities strive to find all the missing seamen and provide support to their families. — TWA/CT