

The Global **NEW LIGHT** of MYANMAR



Elevating Pathein Airport: Upgrades set to forge path as an international hub

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing talks about regional development with town elders in Pathein

AYEYAWADY Region is a proper area for the fish farming industry, grasping the market share for advanced fish products, said Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior

General Min Aung Hlaing in talking about regional development with town elders in the region government office in Pathein yesterday afternoon.

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Revitalizing Bagan's Heritage: Extensive data collection unveiled for 416 pagodas adorned with mural paintings

The Department of Archaeology and National Museum (Bagan Division) has unveiled a significant initiative aimed at preserving mural paintings and understanding the cultural richness of the Bagan region. In this endeavour, comprehensive data collection is set to encompass 416 pagodas, each adorned with exquisite mural paintings.

The primary objective of this venture is to provide a thorough assessment of the current condition of Bagan's pagodas, highlighting their mural paintings' status. Through meticulous fieldwork, these new details will be documented, contributing to an Update Database that promises to be an invaluable resource for scholars and enthusiasts alike. The Research

In tandem with these initiatives, a conscientious approach is taken to safeguard the cultural heritage in the vicinity. Village development projects have been initiated with the explicit aim of minimizing any potential impact on these ancient structures.



Personnel from the Department of Archaeology and National Museum (Bagan) are seen conducting detailed field surveys.

Section of the Department of Archaeology and National Museum (Bagan Branch) is orchestrating this effort, encompassing preliminary assessment field surveys which include the grading of monuments featuring mural paintings.

In tandem with these initiatives, a conscientious approach is taken to safeguard the cultural heritage in the vicinity. Village development projects have been initiated with the explicit aim of minimizing any potential impact on these ancient structures.

The team is actively engaged in conducting detailed field surveys, piecing together archaeological evidence to craft a Micro Level Archaeological Risk Map. Additionally, a concerted effort is being made to document and enumerate stone inscriptions discovered within these age-old edifices.

As this comprehensive undertaking unfolds, it exemplifies Myanmar's dedication to preserving its cultural legacy while fostering a deeper understanding of its past. — TC/KZW

NATIONAL

Flocks of pilgrims pay homage to world's tallest sitting marble Buddha image

THE Maravijaya, the world's tallest sitting marble Buddha image in the precinct of Buddha Park in Dekkhinathiri Township of Nay Pyi Taw, is crowded with pilgrims.

It is open to the public free of charge from 8 am and 8 pm. The monks, nuns and visitors flocked to the pagoda and made donations.

The well-wishers donate vegetable biryani meal boxes to the pilgrims at the pagoda.

There will be inspections under



Devotees pay reverence to Maravijaya Buddha Image in Nay Pyi Taw (above & below-left photos).

security measures for the safety of pilgrims, and apart from the escalator, the buggies for monks, the elderly and

the disabled are arranged.

Moreover, there are spacious places for the pilgrims and religious organ-

izations to recite Gathas and the people can view the pagodas in 24 special chambers around the platform of the Maravijaya Buddha Image.

Similarly, the people can pay homage to the 720 stone plaque chamber pagodas on which Tri Pitaka treatises were carved in Pali and Romanized languages with the use of modern machinery.

The Thudhamma public houses constructed with traditional architecture were also packed with pilgrims and the water fountain square and other religious and recreational sites and Sasana Beikman Agga Dhipati ordination hall, with a stand for 900 members of the Sangha and 1,200 laypersons capacity, in Buddha Park were also crowded with throngs of visitors. — MNA/KTZH



Republic of the Union of Myanmar Union Election Commission Announcement No 41/2023

10th Waning of Second Waso 1385 ME
11 August 2023

Allowing Khumi National Party to register as political party

AS of 11 August 2023, Khumi National Party with its headquarters located at No 6, Aungswng Street, Yeikha Ward, Paletwa, Chin State has been allowed to register under Section 9 of the Political Parties Registration Law. The registration number of the Khumi National Party is 36.

Sd/Thein Soe
Chairman
Union Election Commission

Four new cases of COVID-19 reported on 11 August, total figure registers 641,116

MYANMAR'S COVID-19-positive cases rose to **641,116** after **four** new cases were reported on 11 August 2023 according to the Ministry of Health.

Therefore, a total of **11,075,376** laboratory samples were examined to date and the confirmed COVID-19 cases reached **641,116**.

The total number of patients who have recovered from COVID-19 in the country reached **619,922** including **three** new recoveries. The death toll from COVID-19 in the country registered **19,494** on 11-8-2023 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

The people are urged to receive vaccination of Covid-19 without fail as full-time vaccination of Covid-19 and receiving booster shots can effectively mitigate infection of the virus, severe suffering from the disease and increase of death rate due to the disease.

Elevating Pathein Airport: Upgrades set to forge path as an international hub

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The Senior General noted that the Ayeyawady Region with high sufficiency of rice possesses quality paddy strains. He disclosed that a plan is underway to open more agriculture, livestock and industrial high schools across the nation, up from 50 districts.

In their reports, town elders requested the Senior General to establish an agriculture and livestock university in Ayeyawady Region and upgrade some road sections for better transport.

Speaking on the occasion, the Senior General underscored that the government will tackle policy affairs for the enhancement of the market economic system through collaborative efforts of businesspersons. He noted that Ayeyawady Region is a proper area for the fish farming industry, grasping the market share for advanced fish products. Moreover, he continued that if the cattle farming business can benefit the region and the State it is extended.

The Senior General unveiled that Pathein Airport will be upgraded to admit aeroplanes to land and take off. Ayeyawady Region embraces natural beauties, domestic foods and other sound foundations to operate tourism services. As projects of generating electricity were suspended in Myanmar in the past for various reasons, the country faced the loss of electrification chances.



The Senior General and his wife explore religious artefacts and traditional handicraft stalls at Shwemudaw Pagoda in Pathein.

The Senior General stressed that officials need to supervise the uplift of the living standard of people in Pathein and enforce traffic rules whereas residents have to follow the relevant disciplines.

After inspecting the urban areas of Pathein by car, the Senior General and wife paid homage to Shwemudaw Pagoda in Pathein and made cash donations for offering gold foils at the pagoda struc-

ture through officials. Later, the Senior General viewed round religious object shops and traditional handicraft shops at the pagoda. — MNA/TTA

Tatmadaw members collaborate to empower Armed Forces

TATMADAW members in individuals have to take training so as to enhance their capacity, said Chairman of the State Administration Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at the meeting with Tatmadaw members and families from Pathein Station of South-West Command yesterday morning.

In his clarification, the Senior General underlined that the government decided to hand over the State duties to the government elected from the multiparty democratic general elections after the completion of the State of Emergency.

In his address, the Senior General said that as youth plays a key role in the development of the future State, it is necessary to nurture them to become leaders of the State who can initiate the

future State. As education promotion can contribute a great deal to the improvement of the State, the government has been

encouraging the measures for education promotion since it has taken office, he added. Moreover, the Senior General urged

Tatmadaw members and families to follow the roadmap and objectives adopted by the State.

All armed forces in the inter-

national community have to defend external dangers whereas the police force must serve the duties to tackle internal armed terrorism and conflicts. But, Tatmadaw together with Myanmar Police Force is serving the duties to solve the internal armed conflicts and take security measures for the life and property of the people.

To uplift the capability of Tatmadaw, Tatmadaw members in individuals have to take training to enhance their capacity. The Senior General stressed that Tatmadaw members have to strive for building a capable and powerful Tatmadaw through individual capabilities and endeavours.

Then, the Senior General inspected regiments and units in Pathein Station in a motorcade. — MNA/TTA



The Senior General extends warm greetings to Tatmadaw members and families at Pathein Station.

NATIONAL

Five-Point Road Map of the State Administration Council

1. Emphasis will be placed on ensuring peace and stability and the full rule of law across the whole Union, and on successfully conducting a free and fair multiparty democratic general election.
2. Continued efforts will be made to promote the State economy and enhance the socioeconomic situation of all people through expediting manufacturing businesses rooted in agriculture and livestock to benefit the entire National people.
3. Priority will be given to achieving peace as the essence of the State and stabilizing the results of the peace process in alignment with the agreements in the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) to the extent possible.
4. Work processes will be accelerated to ensure a strong disciplined and authentic multiparty democratic system and build a Union founded upon democratic and federal systems.
5. Work will be undertaken to ensure accuracy and fairness in the general election to prevent eligible voters from losing their rights, and upon accomplishing the provisions of the state of emergency, free and fair multiparty democratic elections will be held, and State duties will be handed over to the elected government.



Senior General Min Aung Hlaing provides guidance on adhering to set standards during stadium visit in Patheingyi of Ayeyawady Region.

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing on inspection tour of sports institutions in Patheingyi

CHAIRMAN of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing yesterday afternoon inspected progress in uplifting the sports sector and water supply facilities in Patheingyi of Ayeyawady Region.

At Koethein Stadium in Patheingyi, the Senior General highlighted that the uplift of sports can be defined as improving the prestige of the State and the people, fos-

tering patriotic spirit and national spirit. Upgrading the stadiums must consider the possible number of spectators, and these must be standardized stadiums and gymnasiums in conformity with the current situation, he added. The Senior General noted that it is necessary to systematically calculate the area of land plots allotted for the construction of the Institute of Sports and Physical Educa-

tion (Patheingyi).

The Senior General pointed out that stadiums and gymnasiums must meet the set standards to contribute to the improvement of the sports' standard whereas the capacity of coaches must be enhanced.

The Senior General viewed round Koethein Stadium and Kyaukse Stadium. He also inspected the standard-

ized swimming pool in Patheingyi and left instructions on the construction of the standard stands with resilience to natural disasters.

On arrival at Patheingyi water supply station, the Senior General urged officials to raise public awareness of the efficient use of water and grow trees along the banks of Ngawun River near the water treatment plant to reduce silting process.

The water supply station treats 4.5 million gallons of water per day using water from the Ngawun River to distribute water to urban areas of Patheingyi through pipelines at fair prices. — MNA/TTA

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

Nine Objectives of the State Administration Council

1. Political Affairs

- (a) To ensure a strong, disciplined and authentic multiparty democratic system and foster a Union founded upon democratic and federal systems.
- (b) To prioritize the attainment of enduring peace for the entire nation in alignment with the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA).
- (c) To emphasize the full restoration of peace and stability and the rule of law throughout the Union for the people to enjoy socioeconomic security.

2. Economic Affairs

- (a) To enhance agriculture and livestock production with modern technologies for the benefit of all National people and to promote growth in other sectors of the economy for achieving national prosperity and food security.
- (b) To invigorate Micro-, Small- and Medium-Sized Enterprises (MSMEs) for elevating the export sector, leveraging the momentum for sustained economic growth.
- (c) To spur the cultivation of oil crops to meet targeted production levels, thereby achieving domestic self-sufficiency in edible oil while striving towards the export of surplus oil.

3. Social Affairs

- (a) To implement a universally accessible and comprehensive education system in order to enhance the knowledge and skills base for the nation and nurture skilled technicians for the manufacturing sector.
- (b) To elevate the health and sports sectors crucial for all the people, thus improving the nation's life expectancy and health.
- (c) To nurture youth to become physically strong, intellectually capable, morally upright, socially adept and economically empowered young individuals poised to lead the nation's development efforts.

SAC Vice-Chair DPM Vice-Senior General Soe Win discusses holding of 24th Myanmar Traditional Cultural Performing Arts Competition

VICE-CHAIRMAN of the State Administration Council Deputy Prime Minister Vice-Senior General Soe Win, in his capacity as Patron of the Leading Organizing Committee for the 24th Myanmar Traditional Cultural Performing Arts Competition, addressed the committee's coordination meeting in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

At the meeting, the Vice-Senior General clarified the organizing of Myanmar's traditional cultural performing arts competitions on a grand scale from 1993 up to 2016, the suspension of competitions between 2017 and 2021 for various reasons, nearly disappearance of Myanmar tradition and culture in some competitions and deceased of great artists during these five-year and



State Administration Council Vice-Chair Deputy Prime Minister Vice-Senior General Soe Win addresses the coordination meeting yesterday in Nay Pyi Taw.

Performing Arts Competition at the Union Government meeting 3/2022 and it concluded successfully through the strong cooperation of working committee and subcommittees despite the patently slow COVID-19 outbreak.

A nation with high national characteristics means its owned cultural arts that depict unique features of that country in addition to the historic tangible and intangible cultures.

The State Administration Council organized the 23rd Myanmar Traditional Cultural Performing Arts Competition successfully in 2022 emphasizing Sections 27, 33 and 390 (a) of the Constitution regarding assisting

the development, consolidation and preservation of National culture, striving for youth to have strong and dynamic patriotic spirit, the correct way of thinking and to develop the five noble strengths and preservation and safeguarding of cultural heritage.

Therefore, the relevant leading committee, working committee, ministries concerned and representatives of regions and states should make concerted efforts for the participation of skilled judges and young contestants in the 24th competition that the government mainly emphasizes.

Then, Union Minister for Re-

ligious Affairs and Culture U Tin Oo Lwin, chairman of the leading committee and Deputy Minister Daw Nu Mra Zan, secretary of the leading committee reported on the status of previous events, arrangements and awarding programmes for coming events, objectives and cooperation with relevant committees.

Next, the Union ministers, the Nay Pyi Taw Council chairman, regions and states ministers and officials of relevant subcommittees and judges coordinated the discussions.

Finally, the Vice-Senior General made proper instructions and concluded the meeting. — MNA/KTZH

A nation with high national characteristics means its owned cultural arts that depict unique features of that country in addition to the historic tangible and intangible cultures.

penetration of offensive music and dance movements among the youths to a certain extent.

Meanwhile, the maestros who preserve Myanmar's traditional arts and the young people who love these arts hope for the

emergence of Myanmar's traditional cultural performing arts competitions again, he added.

He also underscored that the Senior General instructed the necessary things to hold the 23rd Myanmar Traditional Cultural

CURRENT AFFAIRS

Journey of PhaungdawU Buddha images resumes this year

THE Buddha images from the PhaungdawU Pagoda in Nyaungshwe Township, Shan State (South), will start an itinerary that includes a visit to 24 places to receive a devotional offering after around four years of suspension starting from the COVID-19 pandemic. The journey will last from 15 October to 1 November this year according to the traditional way, and it was started to contribute to the merit of people, as the Board of Trustees of the pagoda elaborated.

According to the arrangement, places that Buddha images will go other than the PhaungdawU Monastery are Inntein Kyaypawkhon Monastery, Inntein



Buddha images from the Inlay PhaungdawU Pagoda are seen gracefully conveyed across the Inlay Lake in 2012.

Monastery, Heya Ywama Monastery, Ngaphechaung Monastery, Kyaysar Monastery, Pwasarkon Monastery, Linkin Monastery, Nyaungshwe Monastery, Nanthae Monastery, Mongthauk Monastery, ThalaU Monastery, Kayla Monastery, Zayatgyi Monastery, South Alotawpauk Monastery, Nantpan Monastery, Magyeesate Monastery, Kyaikkham Monastery, Mongpyo Monastery, Nauktaw Monastery, Inpawkhon Monastery, and Yaytha Monastery.

Not only locals but also foreign nationals are interested in the festival, and traditional boat race will also be included in it. — TWA/CT

Palm oil prices surge, approaching K9,000 per viss



The photo shows a shelf of edible oil displayed at a shopping centre. PHOTO: HTUN HTUN

PALM oil wholesale price surged to K9,000 per viss on 10 August from K7,800 on 3 August in Yangon's market.

The prices moved in the range between K9,300 and K9,500 per viss in the Mandalay market. The palm oil (10-viss jerry can) price spikes close to K98,000, said a seller.

The related institution notified that Yangon's wholesale reference price for palm oil is set at K4,150 per viss for a week from 7 to 13 August. The CIF price for imported palm oil was US\$942 per tonne. The original price of palm oil is K4,070 per viss when the exchange rate is calculated at K2,488 per viss.

Approximately 18,000 tonnes of palm oil were imported on 7-9 August, as per the edible oil mar-

ket.

The wholesale price of palm oil in Yangon remains unchanged at around K9,000 per viss both in August of 2022 and 2023.

There is a big price difference between the market price and the reference price in August.

However, the price difference narrowed on 26 December 2022, with the wholesale market price of K5,200 per viss and the reference price of K4,360 per viss.

Rocketing edible oil price prompts housewives to cut consumption as the prices hit around K9,000 per viss for palm oil and K15,000 for peanut oil, Daw Aye Myint from Tamway Township, told the Global New Light of Myanmar (GNLM).

Some branded palm oil was priced at K7,800 per one-viss bottle at a shopping centre in early August. That branded oil was nowhere to be found on the evening of 10 August. Only peanut oil and sesame oil worth around K15,000 per one-viss bottle was displayed at the centre, Ko Thein from Ahlon Township told the GNLM. — TWA/EM



Unusual high tides sweep Yangon River, defying norms

MYANMA Port Authority issued a warning that the Yangon River will rise above the normal level between 17 and 19 August.

The height of the Yangon River will be above the datum from about 19.98 feet to approximately 20.08 feet. When the estimated tide height exceeds 20 feet above the datum, a notification is issued that aims to help workers who are living near the riverside areas to prepare and be aware.

During the period from 27 to 31 October 2019, Yangon River experienced an extraordinarily high tide from about 20.15 feet to about 21.13 feet above the datum.

Additionally, the Yangon River has risen to a height of about 22 feet above the datum, so there is no need to worry too much, according to the Myanmar Port Authority.

Most of the rivers in Myanmar have reached the critical water level and above due to heavy rain and the flooding of roads and railways has led to the inflow of water to the villages. Authorities concerned advised the people who are living near those rivers to evacuate and be alerted for safety. — TWA/MKKS



People from Dala Township are seen arriving in Yangon after crossing the Yangon River by sampans. (PHOTO: AFP)

LOCAL BUSINESS

Fuel prices see one-day increase of over K100

FUEL prices showed a one-day increase of over K100 per litre in the domestic market.

Fuel prices were K2,195 per litre of Octane 92, K2,310 for Octane 95, K2,360 for diesel and K2,440 for premium diesel on 10 August and then, the prices rose to K2,310 per litre for Octane 92, K2,420 per litre for Octane 95, K2,500 for diesel and K2,575 for premium diesel on 11 August.

The figures indicated a one-day increase of K110-140 per litre.

The price index set by Mean of Platts Singapore (MOPS), the pricing basis for many refined products in southeast Asia, weighs on the domestic fuel prices, according to the Supervisory Committee on Oil Import, Storage and Distribution of Fuel Oil.

Last August 2022, the oil prices peaked at K2,605 per litre for Octane 92, K2,670 for Octane 95, K3,330 for premium diesel and K3,245 for diesel.

The committee is therefore steering the fuel oil storage and distribution sector ef-

fectively not to have a shortage of oil in the domestic market and to ensure price stability for energy consumers.

The Petroleum Products Regulatory Department, under the guidance of the committee, is issuing the daily reference rate for oil to offer a reasonable price to energy consumers. The reference rate in Yangon Region is set on the MOPS's price assessment, shipping cost, premium insurance, tax, other general cost and health profit per cent.

The rates for regions and states other than Yangon are evaluated after adding the transportation cost and the retail reference rates daily covered on the state-run newspapers and are posted on the media and official website and Facebook page of the department daily starting from 4 May.

The committee is inspecting the fuel stations whether they are overcharging or not. The authorities are taking action against those retailers of fuel stations under the Petroleum and Petroleum Products



Fuel price sign is seen at the petrol station in Kamayut Township on 11 August 2023. PHOTO: HTUN HTUN

Law 2017 if they are found overcharging rather than the set reference rate.

As per the statement, 90 per cent of fuel oil in Myanmar is imported, while the remaining 10 per cent is produced locally. The domestic fuel price is highly correlated with international prices. The State is steering the market to

mitigate the loss between the importers, sellers and energy consumers. Consequently, the government is trying to distribute the oil at a reasonable price compared to those of regional countries.

Some countries levied higher tax rates and hiked oil prices compared to that of Myanmar. However, Malaysia's oil

sector receives government subsidies and the prices are about 60 per cent cheaper than that of Myanmar. Every country lays down different patterns of policy to fix the fuel prices. Myanmar also levies only a lower tax rate on fuel oil and strives for energy consumers to buy the oil at a cheaper rate. — NN/EM

Two weeks left to utilize Thailand's Form D benefits for corn exports

WITH only over two weeks remaining to export Myanmar's corn to Thailand under Form D customs tariff benefit, the corn market falters, traders explained.

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 are only 20 days remaining to enjoy that customs benefit.

Additionally, torrential rain on 7 August destroyed some road sections to Myawady, a major border point between Myanmar and Thailand. Therefore, landslides blocked the corn's trade route and repair works are being undertaken.



Corn bags are stacked for export.

As a result of this, the market is slowing down.

The prevailing prices of corn stand at K1,200-1,220 per viss in the domestic market while the FOB corn prices were US\$290-310 per tonne, according to Yangon Region

Chambers of Commerce and Industry (Bayintnaung Commodity Depot).

Myanmar conveys corn to China and Thailand through the border and also sends 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 programme. Legitimate corn trade between My-

anmar and China commenced at the end of 2022. A total of 112 companies have been given the go-ahead for corn exports.

Myanmar exported more than two million tonnes of corn to foreign trade in 2022 corn season. The majority of them were sent to Thailand and the remaining went to China, India, the Philippines and VietNam.

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, patron of the Myanmar Corn Industrial Association.

At present, 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

OPINION

Drawing life lessons from Asian Highway landslides

A SERIES of terrible landslides struck the Asian Highway on 7 and 8 August 2023, specifically along the route leading to Myawady in Kayin State. This unfortunate occurrence has illuminated several key points that warrant consideration. Officials concerned are responsible for checking the bad event and investigating the root causes of a regrettable incident.

Tragically, the road section between Kawkaeik and Myawady on the Asian Highway faced a massive landslide, disrupting both transport and trade activities. Evidently, the driving force behind this landslide was an onslaught of torrential rains. The landslide area on some 150 feet long part of the highway is situated between the 149th and 150th mileposts near the Tawna waterfall on the Myawady-Kawkaeik stretch of the Asian Highway, nestled within the Dawna Mountain range.

The forecast suggests that the persistence of such heavy downpours could potentially trigger further instances of landslides along this highway. Consequently, the authorities must adopt preventive strategies to avert future landslides at this site. Swift repairs to the damaged highway are also imperative, ensuring that the flow of transportation and trade can swiftly be restored.

According to the information, relevant departments and authorities prepare to build a Bailey on the collapsed part of the highway as quickly as possible. In open season, the Department of Bridges plans to build a culvert or a bridge there. As time passes, the repairs to the affected section of the Asian Highway will undoubtedly be completed. However, the opportunistic profiteers should erase their greedy acts in time not to cause a burden on the market situation over the consumer people.

Landslides on the Asian Highway bring traffic to a grinding halt, thereby compelling business entities to seek alternative routes to facilitate trade between neighbouring nations. This rerouting comes at a considerable financial cost, a burden that often falls on the shoulders of these businesses. In this context, they exercise restraint, refraining from exploiting the situation by inflating the prices of their goods, as consumers grapple with concerns about rising costs.

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MYANMAR is on the path to reaching the bargain basement in the rock bottom list in the ranking of the League of Nations. From the country with the most potential in 2013/14 to now a wimp where even the smallest nation within ASEAN would dare interfere in its internal affairs. Even the recently independent nation with the smallest GDP within ASEAN would dare offer refuge to confirmed terrorists acting against the nation. How could we fall so low from grace within one generation? At this rate, ministers from other ASEAN nations would be kicking the butt of Myanmar leaders within the next generation or so, literally, at the official meetings.

From being the top in the region in education, healthcare, public housing, or visitors, 50+ years ago, to now being at the derriere of every measurable statistic, we need to make wholesale changes now, or forever be buried in the annals of civilization. Just look at tourist arrivals as an example, what are we selling other than pagodas (history) and culture? Compare with other regional countries, what fun activities can the tourists do here! Do we have a culture we can be proud of? Just look at Facebook postings and comments by the youth of Myanmar. We would see our proud culture there!

Instead of staying unpreju-

iced, let alone being supportive, of the efforts of the government, some of these regional countries tried to undermine Myanmar's development further through the closure of bank accounts held by Myanmar citizens and local and foreign-owned businesses operating in and out of Myanmar. Terrorists who killed Li Li Naing Kyaw (singer), or an ex-ambassador, get sympathies from them, yet the current government get ignominious treatment.

King Bayint Naung and Alaung Payar could die again from exasperation if they wit-

ness the present circumstances, we are in. We are here because we let people bully us. We let ourselves down. We become gratified in our little world, sitting back, relaxing and basking in the past glories. Senior civil

servants became corrupt instead of becoming role models. Incompetent people became heads of departments or units. Proficiency, expertise and skills took a back seat and fighting spirit was frowned upon in favour of being

submissive, even if one is in the right. This cancer culture has spread to the international stage, hence the current midget status in the world.

So, what is the solution... Simple, yet effective actions

would bring us up in no time.

I. Solve the power issue

Myanmar leaders and senior civil servants have a knack for leaving hard-to-do stuff for others. 'Let the next government sort this issue out' can no longer be the slogan. Even if President Thein Sein made the wrong call of abandoning the Myit Sone dam and even if the NLD administration did nothing to upgrade the power sector, we must do it now, so that we would be elec-

tricity sufficient ten years down the road. Bring the hydro back, backed up by nuclear. Else we would never get out of this third-world poverty trap.

II. Focus on producing

If you want to be rich, you must produce/build something. China has become so wealthy because it becomes the world's factory. Be its agricultural produce, livestock, clothes, processed foods, buildings or even journals, we need to make something. Just as a rich man would always look down on a poor person, a richer nation would always look down upon a poorer state. That goes without saying. So, we need to start producing and making things. The whole population must work hard and work smart, to support this. Sitting at a tea shop the whole day and talking nonsense would not make Myanmar country rich.

III. Build the next generation of wolf warriors

We need to copy China and India, in how they are handling international affairs and responding to interference and bullying from the West. Their own brand of wolf warriors is unafraid to fight it out in front of an international audience or press corp. 'The Future Belongs to the Braves', Reagan had said. Myanmar leaders should be rid of people who occupy positions

of power, yet hide behind a desk and not do anything productive, other than attending ceremonies and events! What a waste of the country's resources. We need to give the younger generation, who are willing to stand up for the country and be counted, a chance to bring Myanmar up.

IV. Effective law enforcement

Law enforcement in Myanmar is a joke, most of the time. People can slander you, and disparage you online many times over, yet the punishment is miniscule. Some restaurants are blatantly avoiding paying commercial taxes, yet no raids of any kind have ever taken place. Even criminal offences do not get traction without paying off judges or government lawyers or police officers. Without effective law enforcement, regardless of how comprehensive the laws are, people would continue to commit the offences, 'sans chaitment'.

As Steve Jobs said, "You have to work hard to get your thinking clean to make it simple. It's worth in the end because once you get there, you can move mountains". Get these four simple things going with the brave men and women and Myanmar would get the respect it deserves, in this vicious and cut-throat world of international relations.

For the Sake of Future Generations

By U AC



We need to give the younger generation, who are willing to stand up for the country and be counted, a chance to bring Myanmar up. ILLUSTRATION: PIX FOR VISUAL PURPOSE/ISTOCK PHOTO/PIXABAY

New mobile phone app helps healthcare workers provide comprehensive abortion care

Highlights:

- A new "digital decision support tool" or app has been launched to assist healthcare providers in offering comprehensive abortion care. The app is accessible on both Apple and Google Play platforms.
- Healthcare workers have the right to access the latest evidence-based information to ensure high-quality abortion care. The app aims to empower caregivers with up-to-date guidelines and recommendations, particularly utilizing the WHO Abortion care guideline.
- The introduction of the digital decision support tool aims to elevate the quality of abortion care by offering personalized guidance to healthcare providers, enhancing risk assessment and management, and ensuring patient-centered follow-up and referrals.

HEALTHCARE workers have the right to access the most up-to-date evidence-based information, to help them provide comprehensive abortion care. In recognition of this, a new "digital decision support tool" or app has been launched, available on Apple and Google Play, to support caregivers in the process of deci-

sion-making, and using the WHO Abortion care guideline, to provide comprehensive abortion care.

This app takes the individual characteristics of patients and generates patient-specific assessments or recommendations, which can then be given to healthcare providers to consider. The tool guides the healthcare

worker through assessing abortion-seekers for possible risks, and also gives them checklists and further context to help them in managing cases. It helps to minimize possible mistakes in abortion provision, and even schedules individualized post-abortion follow-ups and referrals.

Enhancing Abortion Provision

While the tool cannot be used to store client information and isn't intended for training purposes, it is likely that it will help to increase the capacity of healthcare providers working on abortion provision. This is because it will harness health workers'

knowledge, guiding them through clinical guidelines, combined with the client's information. It can be used as a digital job aid, on a mobile device. This new tool recognizes the crucial importance of supporting healthcare workers to give the essential health care of abortion and post-abortion care. The app also incorpo-

rates resources relevant for the provision of abortion care including WHO guidelines, publications, evidence briefs and infographics.

Video

A new video, available in English, French and Spanish, has now been released, which highlights how healthcare work-

ers can be better supported to empower individuals to access this care.

SOURCE: UN News



This new tool recognizes the crucial importance of supporting healthcare workers to give the essential healthcare of abortion and post-abortion care. ILLUSTRATION: WHO/UN

NATIONAL

Flooding disrupts rail travel in Bago Region; Passenger safety ensured



Waterlogged tracks at the Bago-Phayagyi Section is captured in the photo.

HEAVY rainfall on 10 August flooded parts of the Bago Region, impacting the Yangon-Mandalay railway route. About 10 inches of water covered tracks from Bago-Phayagyi Station, forcing the temporary closure of the Bago-Phayagyi section at 6:41 pm.

The No 5 Up express train with 389 passengers stopped at Bago station at 7 pm, followed by the No 3 Up express train with 328 passengers at 7:50 pm. Myanmar Railways, Railway Police, and local authorities ensured passenger safety and comfort.

Other trains, including the No 994

Down train, No 924 Down train, No 272 Down train, No 904 Down train, No 1 Up mail train, No 2 Down mail train, No 6 Down passenger express train, and No 4 Down express train, were also affected. Adjusted schedules and transfers were arranged for affected passengers.

Pending railway safety assurance plans to resume remaining passenger trains were in place, as stated by the Ministry of Transport and Communications. By 6:30 pm on the incident day, floodwaters receded, allowing the restoration of normal train operations.

— MNA/KZW

CRIME NEWS

Illegal timbers, fuel oil, agricultural produce and vehicles confiscated

THE Customs on-duty teams confiscated a Mitsubishi Fuso tractor head, a Chenglong tractor head, a Hino Profia tractor head and three trailers (approximately K135 million), headed to Myawady from Myingyan, carrying 420 bags of corn worth K13,671,000 that were different from the vehicle gate pass certificate at the Ma-yanchaung permanent checkpoint and 10 barrels of Takasago sparkling lime worth K11.34 million that were not declared in the Import Declaration (ID) from a container at the Asia World Terminal container checkpoint on 10 August. The action was taken under Customs procedures.

Additionally, the combined teams made inspections and captured 38,000

gallons of illegal fuel oil (diesel) worth K228 million at the Kyweye checkpoint in Monywa township and an unregistered motorbike worth K300,000 in Padamyaward in Katha township. The action was taken under Petroleum and Petroleum Products Law and Export and Import Law.

A total of 33.885 tonnes of illegal teak and 0.772 tonne of illegal hardwood worth K14,520,112 was seized in Bago and Toun-goo districts. The action was taken under the Forest Law.

As a result, a total of 12 arrests were made on 10 August, with an estimated value of K402,831,112, as reported by the Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee. — MNA/MKKS



Officials check illegal teak logs in Bago Region.

Stimulant tablets seized in some townships across Myanmar

A combined team comprising members of the Anti-Drug Police Force conducted a search of a passenger bus at the combined checkpoint in Nantsiaung village in Mohnyin township at 11:30 am on 10 August. The search resulted in the seizure of 61,050 stimulant tablets.

Additionally, the police force inspected

a motorbike driven by Lau Laung near Nayang (Ywathit) in Monghsat township at 5:45 pm on the same day. This operation led to the confiscation of 4,400 stimulant tablets.

Offenders are prosecuted under the provisions of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law. — MNA/MKKS



A checkpoint on the Yangon-Mawlamyine Road.

Regular inspections to curb illegal goods in Yangon Region

COLONEL Win Tint, Chairman of the Illegal Trade Eradication Special Task Force and Yangon Region Minister for Security and Border Affairs stated at a coordination meeting on 11 August that regular inspections are required to prevent illegal goods from entering Yangon Region.

Most goods enter the region through other routes in addition to the 11 roads and eight ports in Myawady, Kawthoung, Ayeyawady Region, and Bago Region.

Thus, these routes needed to be inspected regularly, the minister added.

In addition, the district-level illegal trade eradication special task forces also said that it is necessary to ensure non-disclosure of information in performing activities and coordinate with district special task forces, the Road Transport Administration Department and traffic forces to identify and take action against vehicles without licences. — TWA/CT

Public Notice for Elimination of Violence

1. Declaring themselves to be “for the people”, the so-called CRPH, NUG and PDF terrorist groups are lawlessly killing Buddhist monks, civil servants including schoolteachers, and members of the general public, as well as looting and robbing.
2. Not encouraging, supporting, or assisting “CRPH”, “NUG”, and “PDF” terrorists, who are intimidating and killing people and committing destructive activities, is to protect the lives and property of the general public.
3. Giving information secretly to the authorities on terrorists and on the possession and transport of weapons/ammunition is tantamount to protecting the lives and property of innocent people.

NATIONAL

Myanmar to expand staffing at Support Centres for Foreign Workers in ROK

THE government is arranging to appoint more staff at the Support Centres for Foreign Workers in the Republic of Korea to enhance services for Myanmar migrant workers there, according to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

More effective support for Myanmar workers is needed as the number of Myanmar citizens working in the ROK increases, prompting the government to assign more staff at the support centres in different parts of the ROK, according to U Thant Sin, Ambassador of Myanmar to the Republic of Korea.

The decision to place more staff at the support centres came after some Myanmar

workers working for agricultural businesses in Korea suffered as their employers fail to protect them with industrial accident insurance, and the programmes to introduce Korean employers to Myanmar workers who came back home while working in Korea for various reasons delayed, the ambassador said.

The ambassador of Myanmar to the ROK has advised the Ministry of Labour in South Korea to further emphasize plans for overseas workers, including Myanmar, to reduce occupational hazards by informing employers and employees.

The South Korean government is planning to update EPS (Employment Permit Sys-



Myanmar Ambassador to ROK U Thant Sin (C) is pictured participating in the 2023 EPS Conference in Busan, South Korea.

tem) as the current socioeconomic situation has changed, according to the Ministry of Labour (ROK).

Workers from 16 countries including Myanmar are working in the ROK under the EPS system and Myanmar workers

are primarily employed in agricultural, livestock-breeding and manufacturing sectors. — ASH/TH

MAI launches direct flights connecting Yangon, Mandalay in Myanmar to Novosibirsk, Russia

Sector	Flight No.	Departure	Arrival
Yangon - Mandalay	8M 130	1405	1510
Mandalay - Novosibirsk		1610	2310
Novosibirsk - Mandalay		0010 (+1)	0555 (+1)
Mandalay - Yangon	8M 131	0635 (+1)	0740 (+1)

An advert of the Yangon-Mandalay-Novosibirsk flight.

MYANMAR Airways International (MAI) announced that they will fly from Yangon and Mandalay in Myanmar to Novosibirsk in Russia as a new Russia-Myanmar flight.

The flight will take off from Yangon International Airport and Mandalay International Airport (TadaU) to Novosibirsk International Airport in Russia as a Russia-Myanmar flight and start running on 5 September, MAI stated.

The flight will commence on 5 September every Tuesday and Saturday, and the ticket

price will be US\$409.

In addition, international tourists from Russia will have access to connecting flights to Suvarnabhumi Airport and Don Mueang International Airport in Thailand, Singapore, Kuala Lumpur, Hanoi, Phnom Penh, and Kolkata.

Connecting flight services will be reportedly arranged for them to continue travelling to popular destinations in Myanmar such as Ngapali, Heho, Bagan, and NyaungU. — ASH/CT

Myanmar's films to be screened at Colombo ASEAN Film Festival

THE Colombo ASEAN Film Festival, which will be held in Sri Lanka in coming September, will feature films and short films from four ASEAN countries, including Myanmar, according to U Chan Thar Kyi Soe, Head of Information for the Myanmar Motion Picture Organization's International Relations Committee.

The film exhibition will feature films from ASEAN countries namely Myanmar, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand and Viet Nam. One Myanmar feature film and three short stories with English subtitles were invited to participate in the exhibition.

"Currently, those who want to participate are invited first. If they have already registered, they must inform Film Promotion Branch of the Information and Public Relations Department that they want to include these movies.

"Films will be selected from the Film Promotion Branch. These films will be screened for cultural exchange. Since it is a cultural exchange, it is very beneficial to the relationship between countries. Currently, we have registered one Myanmar movie and two short stories," said U Chan Thar Kyi Soe.

The Colombo Asian Film Festival will be held in Colombo, Sri Lanka in the second week of September. Films and short stories selected among the entries will be screened at the ASEAN Film Festival in Sri Lanka for three days. — ASH/KZL

Myanmar's participation confirmed in 2023 International Horticultural Expo

MYANMAR plans to participate in International Horticultural Expo 2023 in Doha, Qatar by operating a showroom that represents Myanmar at the event set to convene for six months, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

The Union Minister Commerce, on 9 August, made instructions for the arrangements and the items to be displayed at the showroom which will be managed by the Treasure

Cap Group of Companies on behalf of the government. The company is responsible for the design and contents of the showroom to be displayed at the expo scheduled to begin on 2 October 2023, and end on 28 March 2024.

Several nations will take part in the exposition "Green Dessert, Better Environment" by running showrooms that showcase cutting-edge agricultural technologies, education



The photo illustrates a general view of the "International Horticultural Expo 2023" planned to convene in Doha, Qatar.

programmes on environmental protection, and sustainable conservation processes. — TWA/TH

ECONOMY WORLD

Japan gives Brazilians visa-free entry for short stays from 30 Sept

JAPAN will allow Brazilian tourists to visit the country on short stays without visas from 30 September; the government said Thursday, creating a reciprocal entry exemption between the two nations following a summit earlier this year.

As this year marks the 115th anniversary of Japanese emigration to Brazil, the reciprocal

visa exemptions are “expected to further deepen people-to-people, cultural and economic exchanges between the two countries and to promote tourism,” the Foreign Ministry said.

Japan’s visa exemption for Brazilian visitors staying for a maximum of 90 days was announced by Prime Minister Fumio Kishida during a meeting

with Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva in May.

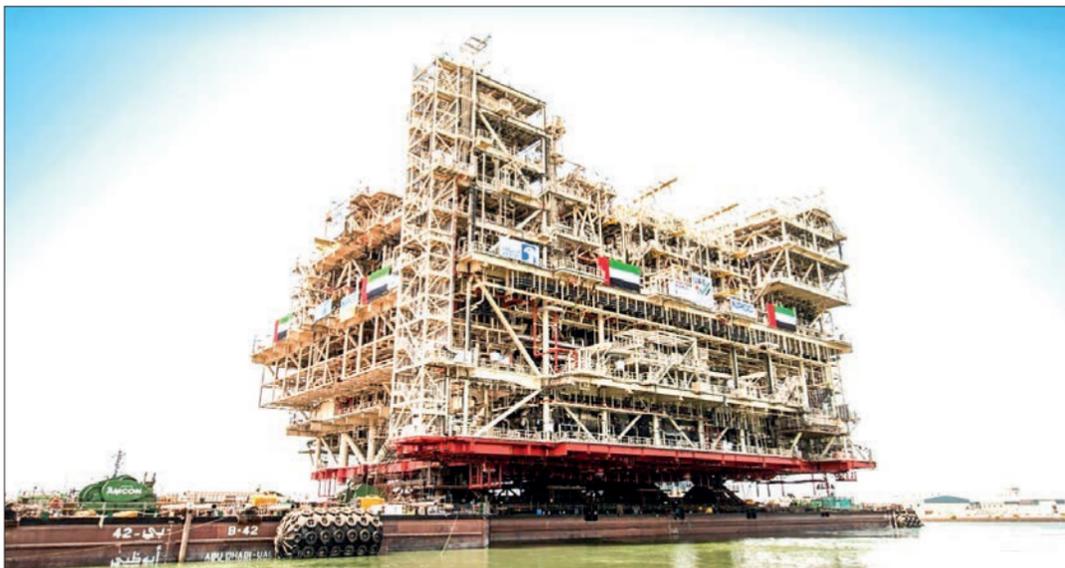
In 2019, Brazil scrapped its visa requirement for entry by Japanese travellers to the South American nation for short stays, with the aim of reviving a tourism industry that had been sluggish due in part to a deterioration of the domestic security situation. — Kyodo



Starting from 30 September, Japanese officials have said that tourists from Brazil can visit Japan for short trips without needing a visa.

PHOTO: KYODO

UAE’s ADNOC awards US\$3.6 bln contract to expand gas infrastructure



NPCC Abu Dhabi successfully finished constructing one of the largest offshore oil platforms in the world for ADNOC in 2019. **PHOTO: PIX FOR VISUAL PURPOSE/AFP**

THE United Arab Emirates’ ADNOC Gas on Wednesday said it awarded a \$3.6 billion contract to expand its gas processing infrastructure, including the commissioning of new processing facilities.

The contract was awarded to a joint venture between the UAE’s National Petroleum Construction Company (NPCC) and

Tecnicas Reunidas, a Spanish general contractor, according to a statement carried by the official WAM news agency.

“The scope of the contract includes the commissioning of new gas processing facilities which will enable an optimised supply to the Ruwais Industrial Complex” in the western Al Dhafra region, the statement

said. The contract coincides with a larger plan “to enable increased gas recovery from existing fields and develop untapped resources”, the statement said. ADNOC Gas, estimated to have the seventh largest gas reserves globally, is a subsidiary of state energy giant Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC). — AFP

Cubans wary of banks as government cracks down on cash

ACCUSTOMED to lugging around thick wads of cash, Cubans are skeptical of government efforts to force them to deposit their money into a crumbling banking system, in an effort to curb runaway inflation and boost liquidity.

The communist country is experiencing its worst economic crisis in decades, with double-digit inflation and rampant money printing in recent years boosting the amount of cash on the street.

Long wary of the country’s poorly functioning banks, Cubans have in recent months embraced cash even more, to avoid long lines and withdrawal limits at ATMs.

The government, seeking liquidity, transparency, and greater control over monetary flow, last week announced restrictions on cash payments to force businesses and citizens to use electronic

payments.

Cash transactions will be limited to 5,000 pesos (about \$20 on the black market), under the reform which is to be gradually implemented over the next six months.

“In the times we are living in, 5,000 pesos is nothing,” said mechanical engineer Lisandra Pupo, 30, who like most Cubans, prefers to have her cash safely in hand.

Soaring prices and the loss of value of banknotes mean people on the island have to cram cash into a bag or backpack to pay even minor purchases.

“If I had a lot of money, I would not put it in the bank, because if I need it tomorrow and I go to the bank, they will not be able to give it to me, so I will have to wait three days, or until the bank has enough money,” said Pupo. — AFP

EU chief offers 400 mln euros to help flood-hit Slovenia

EUROPEAN Commission President Ursula von der Leyen on Wednesday offered 400 million euros from the bloc’s solidarity fund as part of a package to help flood-hit Slovenia.

And she made it clear that,

in her view, climate change had played a role in the disaster.

Four Slovenians and two Dutch tourists died in last week’s flooding, which also flooded tens of thousands of houses.

“We will make accessible 400 million euros, 100 million of them still this year and 300 million euros next year” from the solidarity fund, von der Leyen told reporters after touring affected areas. — AFP



Long wary of the country’s poorly functioning banks, Cubans have in recent months embraced cash even more, to avoid long lines and withdrawal limits at ATMs. **PHOTO: YAMIL LAGE / AFP**

Driverless taxis gain ground in San Francisco



Waymo cars were cleared to travel at speeds as fast as 65 miles per hour (105 kilometres per hour) without human drivers at the wheel, even in some inclement weather. **PHOTO: WAYMO**

CALIFORNIA authorities took a major step forward Thursday in expanding driverless taxi services in San Francisco, giving

the green light for operators Waymo and Cruise to compete with ride-share services and cabs. The California Pub-

lic Utilities Commission (CPUC) heard six hours of public comment before voting three-to-one to let Waymo, a unit of Goog-

le-parent Alphabet, and General Motors-owned Cruise essentially run 24-hour robotaxi services in San Francisco.

“Today is the first of many steps in bringing AV (autonomous vehicle) transport services to Californians and setting a successful and transparent model for other states to follow,” said CPUC commissioner John Reynolds, who voted in favour of approval.

Waymo cars were cleared to travel at speeds as fast as 65 miles per hour (105 kilometres per hour) without human drivers at the wheel, even in some inclement weather. — AFP

India’s wearable devices market posted strong growth in 2023: Report

WEARABLE devices market in India saw a robust 53.3 per cent yearly growth in the first half of 2023, with shipping of 57.8 million units, according to data released by International Data Corporation (IDC).

International Data Corporation (IDC) is a global market intelligence and advisory services pro-

vider. During the quarter of 2023, 32.8 million wearables were shipped in, a growth of 37.2 per cent year-on-year and 30.6 per cent quarter-on-quarter.

Smartwatch shipments almost doubled to 12.8 million in the second quarter, while earwear shipments grew by 15.2 per cent year-on-year. — ANI



Brands launched several smartwatch models in different shapes, designs, materials, finishes and with new features. **PHOTO: ANI**

Lufthansa pilots receive pay hikes to fight inflation

LUFTHANSA pilots are to receive pay rises totalling 18 per cent in the coming years, with the German airline saying Thursday it would bring “stability” after strikes over surging inflation.

It was the latest hefty wage agreement in Europe’s top economy as workers battle fast-ris-



The pay hike for Lufthansa pilots was the latest hefty wage agreement in Europe’s top economy as workers battle fast-rising price. **PHOTO: AFP**

ing prices, although there have been concerns the deals could add to upward pressure on inflation.

The German flag carrier was hit by pilot and ground staff walkouts in 2022 that crippled operations, although the pilots had suspended strikes since late last year. — AFP

US consumer inflation edges up in July

US consumer inflation inched up in July, government data showed Thursday, rebounding slightly for the first time in around a year and weighing on policymakers as they mull further interest rate hikes.

The consumer price index (CPI), a key inflation gauge, rose 3.2 per cent from a year ago last month, according to the Labour Department -- slightly up from June’s 3.0 per cent pace and breaking a streak of cooling figures. — AFP

<p>CLAIMS DAY NOTICE M.V KOTA HAPAS VOY.NO. (KHPS0392N)</p> <p>Consignees of cargo carried on M.V KOTA HAPAS VOY.NO. (KHPS0392N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 12-8-2023 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of AWPT where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.</p> <p>Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claim's Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.</p> <p>No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day. Phone No: 2301185</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Shipping Agency Department Myanma Port Authority</p> <p>Agent For: M/S PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL LINES</p>	<p>CLAIMS DAY NOTICE M.V MCL 6 VOY.NO. (02)</p> <p>Consignees of cargo carried on M.V MCL 6 VOY.NO. (02) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 12-8-2023 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of WILMAR where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.</p> <p>Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claim's Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.</p> <p>No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day. Phone No: 2301928</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Shipping Agency Department Myanma Port Authority</p> <p>Agent For: M/S UNIVERSE LOGISTICS INTERNATIONAL CO LTD</p>	<p>CLAIMS DAY NOTICE M.V ZOGRAFIA VOY.NO. (BS2308)</p> <p>Consignees of cargo carried on M.V ZOGRAFIA VOY.NO. (BS2308) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 12-8-2023 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of IBTT where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.</p> <p>Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claim's Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.</p> <p>No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day. Phone No: 2301928</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Shipping Agency Department Myanma Port Authority</p> <p>Agent For: M/S BEN LINE AGENCIES (S'PORE) PTE LTD</p>
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ROLLING UPDATES

WORLD



Viet Nam struggled with a series of heatwaves beginning early May when the mercury reached a record high, while rivers and reservoirs at hydroelectric power plants dried up. **PHOTO: AFP**

Power crisis cost Viet Nam \$1.4 bln: World Bank

A severe power shortage in Viet Nam caused by an intensely hot spell and unprecedented drought in May and June cost the country \$1.4 billion, according to the World Bank.

Northern Viet Nam suffered rolling blackouts and sudden power outages, with operations at a large number of factories badly impacted. Some businesses were given very little notice or had no warning at all.

Viet Nam is a crucial part of the supply chain for some of the world's most important companies, and many of them — including Samsung and Apple supplier Foxconn — have factories in the north, not far from Hanoi.

The World Bank said with an estimated peak demand supply deficit of 1.8GW, businesses in the north reported losses of up to 10 per cent of revenue, citing a small industry survey

as part of its August economic updates. “The preliminary estimate of economic costs for the May-June power outages is about US\$1.4 billion (or 0.3 per cent of GDP),” the World Bank said in its Taking Stock report released Thursday. Viet Nam struggled with a series of heatwaves beginning early May when the mercury reached a record high, while rivers and reservoirs at hydroelectric power plants dried up. —AFP

S Africa's ex-president Zuma sent to jail, immediately released



Jacob Gedleyihlekisa Zuma is a South African politician who served as the fourth president of South Africa from 2009 to 2018. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

SOUTH Africa's former president Jacob Zuma reported back to jail on Friday only to

be swiftly released, the government said in the latest twist in the judicial saga over his

contempt of court sentence.

Zuma was ordered to report back to prison and arrived at 6 am local time at a detention facility in Estcourt, northwest of Durban, where was “admitted into the system”, the prison service said.

But he was let go almost immediately as part of a “remission process” aiming to address overcrowding in prison, Correctional Services national commissioner Makgothi Thobakgale told a press conference in Pretoria

“Upon admission into the system he was subjected to administrative processes ... He was then released,” Thobakgale said. —AFP

Egypt dig unearths 41mln-year-old whale in desert

PALAEONTOLOGISTS in Egypt have unearthed an extinct species of whale that lived 41 million years ago when whale ancestors were just completing their move from land to sea. The team has dubbed the species “Tutcetusrayanensis” after the Egyptian boy king Tutankhamun and the Wadi El-Rayan Protected Area in Egypt's Fayoum Oasis where the type specimen was found.

With an estimated length of 2.5 metres (eight feet) and a body mass of approximately 187 kilogrammes (410 pounds), Tutcetusrayanensis is the smallest species so far found from the basilosaurids, the oldest known whales that lived exclusively in the water.

Team leader Hesham Sallam, of the American University in Cairo (AUC), said it was a “re-

markable discovery that documents one of the first phases of the transition to a fully aquatic lifestyle”. Basilosaurids “developed fish-like characteristics, such as a streamlined body, a strong tail, flippers and a tail fin, and had the last hind limbs visible enough to be recognized as ‘legs’, which were not used for walking but possibly for mating,” Sallam said in an AUC statement.

Erik Seiffert of the University of Southern California, a co-author of the team's findings published in the review Communications Biology, said the Eocene fossil sites of Egypt's Western Desert have long been the world's most important for understanding the early evolution of whales and their transition to a fully aquatic existence. — AFP



In a photo released by the American University in Cairo (AUC) on 10 August 2023, Egyptian paleontologist Hesham Sallam, along with colleagues Abdullah Gohar and Mohamed Sameh, stands before the holotype fossils of a newly identified extinct basilosaurid whale species named Tutcetusrayanensis. **PHOTO AMERICAN UNIVERSITY IN CAIRO (AUC) / AFP**

Hawaii fire death toll hits 55, expected to rise

A devastating wildfire, driven by hurricane winds, has consumed the historic Hawaiian town of Lahaina, claiming at least 53 lives in one of Hawaii's deadliest disasters.

A terrifying wildfire that left a historic Hawaiian town in charred ruins has killed at least 55 people, authorities said Thursday, making it one of the deadliest disasters in the US state's history.

Brushfires on Maui — fueled by high winds from a nearby hurricane — broke out Tuesday

and rapidly engulfed the seaside town of Lahaina.

The flames moved so quickly that many were caught off-guard, trapped in the streets or jumping into the ocean in a desperate bid to escape. “It really looks like somebody came along and just bombed the whole town.

It's completely devastated,” said Canadian Brandon Wilson, who had travelled to Hawaii with his wife to celebrate their 25th anniversary, but was at the airport trying to get them a flight out. — AFP

SPORTS

All former champions out as Sweden set up Spain World Cup semi-final

A new name will be engraved on the Women's World Cup after Sweden clung on to defeat the 2011 champions Japan 2-1 on Friday and set up a semi-final clash with Spain.

Spain needed extra time earlier to defeat the Netherlands, the 2019 runners-up, 2-1 to reach the last four for the first time in their history.

After the exits of Germany, Norway and holders the United States, Japan had been the last remaining former champions.

They refused to go out without a fight, Honoka Hayashi pulling a goal back three minutes from the end of normal time to set up a frantic finish in front of more than 43,000 at Auckland's Eden Park.

Japan also missed a penalty and rattled the woodwork as the Swedes clung on for the second game in a row after holding off the USA and winning a penalty shootout in the last 16.



Sweden players celebrate scoring their first goal against Japan. PHOTO: AFP

Sweden, the top-ranked side left standing at world number three, survived to reach the semi-finals for the third time in four World Cups.

They will stay at Eden Park to face Spain on Tuesday for a place in the final.

"I have been a coach for so many years now, I have had such incredibly skilled players," said Sweden's 63-year-old coach Peter Gerhardsson.

"They are very meticulous, always interested and they always give 100 per cent, and during tournaments like this we become more like a club team."

Sweden took the lead in the 32nd minute when Japan failed to clear and the ball fell to Amanda Ilestedt to stab home a scrappy opener, her fourth goal of the tournament.

Gerhardsson's side made it 2-0 from a penalty soon after the break, converted by Manchester City's Filippa Angeldal. — AFP



A Myanmar player (red) tries to control the ball falling back from the air during the semi-final game of the Continental Futsal Championship 2023 against the Czech Republic in Thailand on 11 August 2023. PHOTO: MFF

Myanmar falls short of Final, unable to overcome Czech Republic

TEAM Myanmar failed to reach the Final of the Continental Futsal Championship 2023 after suffering a 1-5 loss to the Czech Republic in the semi-final played in Thailand yesterday.

The Czech team scored two goals in the first half and three goals in the second half. Hlaing Min Tun scored an equalizing goal for the Myanmar squad.

Mr Bunlert Charoen Wong, head coach of the Myanmar futsal team, revealed his words of confidence after the semi-final match against the Czech Republic.

"I am satisfied with the result of this match. The Czech team is a team with a higher world ranking than ours. My boys also played their best in this match. As soon as we come back, we will fix the mistakes and prepare the players to play according to the technique. We will also prepare the best to play in the Asian Cup," the head coach stated.

Team Myanmar will battle for third place in the Continental Futsal Championship 2023 at 4 pm on 13 August, as stated by the Myanmar Football Federation. — KZL

Liverpool agree British record £110 million fee for Caicedo

LIVERPOOL manager Jurgen Klopp confirmed on Friday the Reds have reached an agreement with Brighton for the transfer of Moises Caicedo, for a reported British record fee of £110 million (\$140 million, 127 million euros).

However, Sky Sports reported that the 21-year-old Ecuador international is still to decide his future with Chelsea also interested.

Caicedo had been a long-standing target for Chelsea, but Liverpool stole a march on the Blues after Brighton set a deadline for bids on Thursday evening.

The reported fee would surpass the previous British record of £107 million that Chelsea paid for Enzo Fernandez in January. It would also represent another huge profit for Brighton, who signed Caicedo from Ecuadorian side Independiente del Valle for just £4 million in 2021.

"I got told I can confirm a deal with (Brighton) is agreed," Klopp said at his pre-match press conference ahead of Sunday's trip to Chelsea on the opening weekend of the Premier League season.

Klopp has previously criticized the idea of spending £100 million on a single player, but admitted he has had to change his approach due to spiralling transfer fees. — AFP

2023-2024 Premier League season countdown concert held

A concert to welcome the new Premier League season 2023-2024 was held at Shwe Htut Tin Park on 11 August at 6 pm by SkyNet.

Famous singers: Thadee Lu, Tha Nge, Phyo Myat Aung and Ni Ni Khin Zaw entertained with sweet beautiful songs during the event. Movie stars, artistes and athletes also joined the ceremony.

All matches of the Premier League football tournament to be held on 12 August this year will be broadcast live as an exclusive on SkyNet Sports channels.

The Premier League season countdown concert was broadcasted live on "Channel 9 HD, MNTV, Music Channel, SkyNet Sports HD" television channels starting at 6 pm yesterday. — TWA/KZL



Enthusiastic crowds gather for Premier League 2023-2024 welcoming and countdown concert.



Photo taken on 11 August 2023, shows a multinational naval exercise named Malabar that began off Sydney on the same day. **PHOTO: AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE DEPARTMENT/KYODO**

US, Japan, Australia, India begin joint naval exercise in Sydney

THE naval forces of the United States, Japan, Australia and India began their Malabar joint defence exercise in Sydney on Friday, marking the first time Australia has hosted the war games amid China's growing assertiveness in the region.

The four Indo-Pacific nations, part of a cooperation framework known as the Quad, will conduct joint training involving maritime and air defence

drills through 21 August in Sydney Harbour and off Australia's east coast, with some 2,000 personnel taking part, including around 170 Japanese.

At a press conference ahead of the exercises on Thursday, naval commanders from the four countries called for all parties operating in the region to do so transparently in support of the international, rules-based order.

The 31st edition of the international

drills is scheduled to take place from 11-21 August. For the first time, the drills, previously held in the Indian Ocean, will take place in the Pacific Ocean off Australia's east coast. The countries' navies will be represented by three destroyers, one frigate, one landing and one surface vessel. A P-8 maritime patrol and reconnaissance aircraft will also take part in the drills.

— Kyodo/SPUTNIK

Global Covid cases up 80% as new subvariant rises

THE number of new Covid-19 cases reported worldwide rose by 80 per cent in the last month, the World Health Organization said on Friday, days after designating a new "variant of interest".

The WHO declared in May that Covid is no longer a global health emergency, but has warned that the virus will continue to circulate and mutate, causing occasional spikes in infections, hospitalizations and deaths.

In its weekly update, the UN agency said that nations reported nearly 1.5 million new cases from 10 July to 6 August, an 80 per cent increase compared to the previous 28 days. However the number of deaths fell by 57 per cent to 2,500.

The WHO warned that the reported number of cases and deaths do not reflect the true numbers, in part because countries carry out far less testing and monitoring than during earlier stages of the pandemic. — AFP



The number of Covid cases reported to the WHO rose by 80 per cent in the last month, despite testing being reduced in much of the world. **PHOTO: KOEN VAN WEEL / ANP/AFP/FILE**

US grappling with worst political violence since 1970s: Reuters

THE United States is grappling with the biggest and most sustained increase in political violence since the 1970s, Reuters reported on Wednesday. The report identified 213 cases of political violence since the 6 January 2021 attack by supporters of former President Donald Trump on the US Capitol, quoting three academics who reviewed the cases as saying they added to growing evidence that political violence is at its worst since the 1970s.

About two-thirds of the politically violent incidents documented by Reuters were assaults by lone assailants or clashes between rival groups at public events, such as demonstrations over police killings, abortion and transgender rights. The rest



Supporters of US President Donald Trump gather near the US Capitol building in Washington, DC, the United States, on 6 January 2021. **PHOTO: LIU JIE/XINHUA**

involved substantial property damage.

In the early 1970s, American political violence was perpetrated more often by radicals on the left and focused largely on destroying property, such as government buildings, said the report, citing Rachel Kleinfeld, who studies political conflict and extremism at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, a Washington think tank. In contrast, much of today's political violence is aimed at people and most of the deadly outbursts tracked by Reuters have come from the right, it said. Of the 14 fatal political attacks since the Capitol riot in which the perpetrator or suspect had a clear partisan leaning, 13 were right-wing assailants. — Xinhua