

The Global **NEW LIGHT** of MYANMAR



Keen-eyed gem merchants meticulously assessing jade stones at the 58th Myanmar Gem Emporium.

Domestic gold market pulls back following record highs

THE price of pure gold fell again to approximately K3.7 million per tical (0.578 ounce or 0.016 kilogramme) in the grey market after the price gained to K4 million per tical in recent days.

The local currency depreciation against the greenback in the shady dealings at K4,000 drove the gold price to hit a new peak of K4 million per tical. Pure gold fetches K3.7 million per tical in the domestic market presently, while the dollar is exchanged at K3,700.

Nonetheless, YGEA set the reference rate to over K2,239,600 per tical. There is a large price difference of over K1.4 million per tical between the YGEA's reference price and the price in the unauthorized market.

YGEA calculated the price depending on the Central Bank of Myanmar's reference exchange rate of K2,100, with some addition, despite the US dollar being exchanged at over K3,700 in the unauthorized forex market.

The US dollar exchange rate, therefore, heavily weighs on the domestic gold market.

Mandalay Gold Entrepreneurs Association (MGEA) sold over seven visses of pure gold at a special price in two weeks of June to stabilize the gold price.

Myanmar's gold price is highly tied to the spot gold price and the US dollar exchange rate. The soaring dollar exchanging at over K4,500 drove the gold price up to a record high of K3.7 million per tical in August 2022.

To lower the gold price, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation has been selling gold ingots under the competitive bidding system in Yangon, Mandalay and Nay Pyi Taw. — NN/EM

Myanmar gains over US\$120 mln from mineral exports

THE Ministry of Commerce has stated that Myanmar received an income of US\$121.957 million from mineral exports.

The figures showed that the value of Myanmar's mineral exports was worth US\$121.957 million within four months (from 1 April to 4 August) in this financial year.

During the same period of the previous financial year, exports of mineral

products earned US\$138.124 million, which is still over US\$16 million more than this year.

Myanmar's mineral exports bagged more than US\$21 million from state-owned exports and US\$100.532 million from private exports in this financial year.

The export items are gold, jade, pearl, diamond, lead, tin, tungsten, silver,

copper, zinc, coal and other minerals.

According to the Ministry of Commerce, more than US\$200 million was earned from the export of minerals abroad during the nine months from 1 April to 30 December of the 2022-2023 financial year. The annual export of mineral products during the period of the 2021-2022 Mini-Budget was worth US\$288.599 million. — TWA/CT

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NATIONAL

Myanmar Gazette

Duty Assignment of Permanent Secretary/Director-General

THE State Administration Council has concurrently assigned U Nyan Tun, Director-General of Staff Office of the State Administration Council, to the duties of Permanent Secretary/Director-General at the same organization.

Truck traffic to commence on Myawady-Kawkareik road in early September

SIX-WHEEL trucks will be able to pass through the Myawady-Kawkareik Road, which was closed due to a landslide on the Asia highway according to the Road Department (Kayin State), Ministry of Construction.

Due to incessant rain in Kayin State, the places where the road was blocked by a landslide between milepost number (149.5) and milepost (151) of the Myawady-Kawkareik section of the Asia highway have now been cleared since 7 August.

One side of the road was opened on the afternoon of 15 August and vehicles stuck between these two sections are returning to Myawady, and currently, six-wheel trucks are passing through.

“In addition to small private vehicles, small six-wheel commercial vehicles are also on the

way. As we continue to work hard, the situation will improve. If there are no more landslides, then 12-wheel large vehicles could be able to travel by the beginning of next month. About 70 per cent of the road works have been completed,” said an official from the Road Department (Kayin State).

The Myawady-Kawkareik Asia Highway is a major economic route for the smooth flow of goods between Myanmar and Thailand and is part of the East-West Economic Corridor in the Greater Mekong sub-region.

It is a road used for the export and sale of local products such as corn and rubber from Myanmar, and it is also a route that is used by passenger vehicles, trucks, and private vehicles travelling from Myawady to Yangon and Mandalay cities every day. — ASH/KZL



Road section undergoing repairs: Transformation in progress.

Over 100 peace talks held over two-year period



The photo shows peace talks with five NCA-Signatory EAOs held at National Solidarity and Peacemaking Centre on 26 June 2023.

A total of 119 peace talks were held between March 2021 and 27 July 2023, according to the statement of the State Administration Council (SAC).

That announcement was made at the 22nd press conference of the Information Team of SAC held in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

There were 71 peace conferences with NCA signatories and 25 with non-signatories

and 23 with stakeholders and religious leaders including political parties.

Moreover, it also held three-day peace talks with five NCA signatories at the National Solidarity and Peacemaking Centre between 26 and 28 June 2023. These five ethnic armed organizations are Peace Process Steering Team-PPST members – ALP, DKBA, KNU/KNLA-PC, LDU and PNLO

which signed the NCA.

The peace talks focused on common agreements with NCA signatory EAOs, federal principles, humanitarian aid and plans to be able to hold meetings between the UWSA, NDAA, SSPP and political parties.

The SAC conducted 22 peace talks during the first six months of this year. – Htun Htun/KTZH

Republic of the Union of Myanmar Ministry of Education Department of Myanmar Examinations Announcement

23 August 2023

1. The release mentions the requirements for students who will sit for the matriculation examination exam 2024 as follows:
2. The application forms for the 2024 matriculation exam are available on 1 September 2023 at the Department of Myanmar Examinations at the price of K200 per exam form along with a deposit stamp at a price of K700.
3. The application cards will be in two colours—green and pink cards for relevant subjects.
4. Those who passed Grade 10 in the old curriculums and did not sit for the exam for various reasons and those who failed Grade 11 under old the curriculums will be allowed to sit for the exam as external candidates.
5. The external students must buy a deposit stamp worth K700 at the respective township education offices and put the stamp on the upper left-hand corner of the exam forms and submit them between 1 and 29 September 2023 at the respective township education offices.
6. The headmasters of basic high schools, branch BEHS, affiliated BEHS and private schools must buy the K700 stamps and stick the stamps on the application forms for the students and submit them to the Department of Myanmar Examinations between 1 and 29 September 2023.
7. The applicants need to submit the applications within the deadline and check their combination of subjects as they will not be allowed to take the exam for different subjects except for the subjects mentioned in the cards.
8. The application forms and stamps can be bought at Office No 52, Department of Myanmar Examinations (head office), Nay Pyi Taw, and Myanmar Examinations Department (Yangon branch), Parami Street, Ward No 12, Hlaing Township, Yangon.

Department of Myanmar Examinations

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 multi-party democratic elections will be held, and State duties will be handed over to the elected government.

Self-reliant enumeration set for 2024 Census and Household Registration

Preparations intended to successfully overcome possible challenges and difficulties in census enumeration



State Administration Council Vice-Chair Deputy Prime Minister Vice-Senior General Soe Win presides over the second meeting of the Central Census Commission in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

THE State budget will be spent on the census process in 2024 through the collaborative efforts of government departments and organizations as well as public participation, said Patron of Central Census Commission Vice-Chairman of the State Administration Council Deputy Prime Minister Vice-Senior General Soe Win at the second meeting of the commission at the Ministry of Immigration and Population in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday afternoon.

In his address, the Vice-Senior General underscored that as

Myanmar collected the census in 2014, one more enumeration of census must be done in 2024 without fail to contribute to correct and accurate census and socioeconomic data of all administrative areas for building the Union based on the democratic and federal system as well as strengthening the genuine, disciplined multiparty democratic system.

The Vice-Senior General said that the census and household registration will be enumerated from 1 to 15 October 2024, and preparations must be made

to overcome possible difficulties in the process. The pilot census will be collected in 100 set plots in 20 townships in October 2023.

He urged officials to closely supervise the formation of census units in regions and states and enumeration of the test census on schedules.

The Vice-Senior General disclosed that the Ministry of Immigration and Population successfully enumerated census and household registration in 2014 and has experience in the collection of interim population in 2019, adding that the ministry is

making preparations for the collection of census and household registration to be enumerated in 2024.

The country could have techniques and monetary assistance from international organizations for enumeration of past censuses, he said, adding that the State budget will be spent on the census process in 2024 through the collaborative efforts of government departments and organizations as well as public participation.

Enumerating the census needs to deploy a lot of resources

including time, monetary affairs and manpower. As such, the results of the census must be useful for the State, he noted.

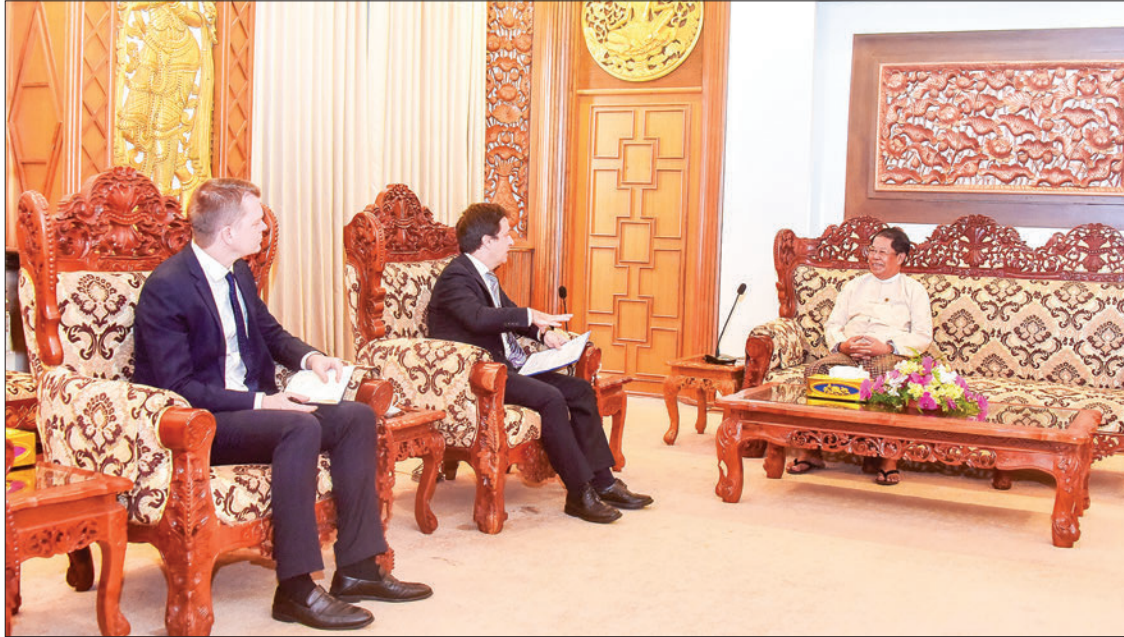
The Vice-Senior General pointed out that the census process would face various challenges and security measures as well as other unexpected difficulties. Hence, preparations must be made to successfully overcome possible challenges and difficulties and solve them. The Vice-Senior General pointed out that news agencies and social media must be applied on a wider scale to raise public awareness about the census including songs, articles and video clips.

The census and household registration must be enumerated on a self-reliant basis by spending the state budget through the collaborative efforts of ministries.

Chairman of the Central Census Commission Union Minister U Myint Kyaing reported on preparations to enumerate the test census before the primary census, formation of the supervisory committees in regions and states, and other different levels, raising public awareness for the census.

Secretaries and members of the central census commission and chairpersons of the region and state census supervisory committees discussed the work process for successful collection of the census and household registration in 2024. — MNA/TTA

NATIONAL



The IOM Myanmar chief calls on Deputy Premier Union Foreign Affairs Minister U Than Swe yesterday.

DPM MoFA Union Minister receives IOM Myanmar Chief

U Than Swe, Deputy Prime Minister and Union Minister for Foreign Affairs, received Mr Dragan Aleksoski, Chief of Mission of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) Myanmar, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

During the courtesy call, they shared their views on the matters pertaining to the

support of the IOM to the people of Myanmar in the field of migration and the cooperation between the two sides.

Also present at the meeting were the senior officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Mr Euan McDougall, Programme Manager of IOM Myanmar. — MNA

Demolition of ancient Shan Wall by TNLA sparks local concerns: RCSS reports

THE RCSS said in a statement that the destruction of the over 1,000-year-old Shan historic wall in Seilant by the TNLA caused local concerns.

The wall was demolished on 7 August and the people felt resentment towards such doing, the statement said.

The historic wall was built

during Shan Saopha Sao Say Khan Pha's reign and is located in Seilant village of Muse Township. No one should destroy the historic cultural heritages of certain national races as the respective national races value and preserve their history, culture and heritage, it said.

The RCSS signed NCA with the government, Tatmadaw, Hluttaw and EAOs and the United Nations, European Union, China, India, Thailand and Japan signed as international witnesses to NCA, and it still adheres to the NCA to date.

Although it intends to transform the administrative system of the country through the peace processes of NCA, the NCA processes are unable to move forward due to the compromising issues, it added.

It also urged to hold talks as the Federal Democracy Union can be established through the dialogues.

The young Seilant residents launched a protest against the abolishing of the historic wall at the scene on 8 August.

Similarly, the SSPP/SSA released a statement strongly condemning the TNLA/PSLF for their demolition of the historical site in the city ruled by Shan Saophas using bulldozers on 12 August. — MNA/KTZH



The 1,000-year-old Shan historic wall in Seilant bulldozed by Ta'ang National Liberation Army: Aftermath revealed.

Myanmar delegation embarks for Moscow to attend ITS 2023



The Myanmar delegation headed by Nay Pyi Taw Council Chair U Than Tun Oo is seen before leaving for the Russian Federation yesterday.

A delegation led by U Than Tun Oo, Chair of Nay Pyi Taw Council, departed from Yangon to the Russian Federation by air yesterday evening to attend the International Transport Summit-ITS 2023 in Moscow.

Scheduled to take place from 24 to 26 August, the summit is a collaborative effort involving the Department of Transport and Road Infrastructure Development of the

Moscow government, as well as the Department of Foreign Business Communication and International Relations. The event aims to strengthen relationship between cities and foster future cooperation. It seeks to address the transportation challenges faced by modern capitals and establish a platform for global technical experts to collaborate in finding solutions to transport issues. — MNA/TS

Global NEW LIGHT of MYANMAR

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Printed and published at the Global New Light of Myanmar Printing Factory at No.150, Nga Htat Kyee Pagoda Road, Bahan Township, Yangon, by the Global New Light of Myanmar Daily under Printing Permit No. 00510 and Publishing Permit No. 00629.
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NATIONAL

SAC Information Team holds 22nd Press Conference

THE 22nd Press Conference of the Information Team of the State Administration Council took place at the Ministry of Information yesterday. Leader of the Information Team Maj-Gen Zaw Min Tun, spokespersons of relevant departments and representatives of departmental information teams replied to queries raised by the media.

First, the Leader of the Information Team explained cabinet reshuffles, amendment of the five-point road map and political, economic and social objectives, political parties registration, losses in Mocha and rehabilitation processes and discussions between Under Secretary General Mr Martin



The 22nd Press Conference of the Information Team in progress yesterday.

Griffiths of UNOCHA through a PowerPoint presentation.

Then, Vice-Governor of Central Bank of Myanmar Dr

Lin Aung, Deputy Minister for Planning and Finance U Maung Maung Win, Deputy Minister for Investment and Foreign

Economic Relations Dr Wah Wah Maung and the Permanent Secretary of Ministry of Commerce U Min Min gave expla-

nations about their respective sectors.

Then, the Leader of the Information Team and representatives of the departmental information team replied to queries raised by media personnel and the press conference was concluded.

The press conference was also attended by SAC's information team members, representatives of relevant ministries, officials from the Tatmadaw Information Team, guests, and reporters from local news agencies, daily newspapers, local TV stations, and local-based foreign news agencies. The full interview will be published later, it is reported. — MNA/KTZH

Contributions to Cyclone Mocha-affected regions: Extending a helping hand



Cash donations and presentation of the certificate of honour in progress yesterday in Nay Pyi Taw.

THE Asia-Pacific Ladies Friendship Society (ALFS) based in Tokyo, the staff of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Myanmar abroad, Myanmar embassies and foreign companies made cash donations for the regions affected by Cyclone Mocha at the Disaster Management Centre (DMC) in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday afternoon.

First, the deputy minister of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs explained the purpose of the donation and then the Union minister of the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement gave a word of thanks.

Afterwards, the deputy

minister of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs presented the donations to the Union minister of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, who returned the certificate of honour.

The Asia-Pacific Ladies Friendship Society (ALFS) donated K931,500 (621,000 Japanese yen), and the staff of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Myanmar embassies abroad, the offices of Myanmar permanent representatives, Myanmar consulates-general, Myanmar citizens abroad, companies and organizations K600,000 as well as K83,514,000 (equivalent to five different foreign currencies). — MNA/KZW

Illegal fuel oil, timbers, foodstuffs, consumer goods and vehicles confiscated

A combined on-duty team nabbed 175 gallons of illegal 92 Octane and 630 gallons of artisanal fuel worth K5.124 million without official documents near the Kyaukka road in Monywa township on 15 August and action was taken under the Petroleum and Petroleum Products Law.

The on-duty teams conducted inspections on 18 August and impounded a Hino truck (approximately worth K40 million) that was parked at the Milepost 14/4 on Mandalay-PyinOoLwin-Lashio-Muse road, carrying a total of 5.311 tonnes of illegal teak, a Nissan diesel truck (estimated value of K30 million), headed to Mandalay from Muse, carrying three kinds of goods worth K8,254,600 including 1,300 kilogrammes of brand new car spare parts

(Crown pinion sets) that exceeded the quantity mentioned in the Import Declaration (ID) at the Milepost 24/1 on Mandalay-Muse road. The action was taken under Customs procedures.

On 20 August, an on-duty team at the Saikkhaung combined checkpoint captured a Toyota Succeed car (approximately worth K20 million), travelling from Mongsat township to Namkyan village, carrying three kinds of goods worth K1.155 million, including 120 bottles of LEO beer without official documents. The action was taken under the Customs procedures. On the same day, the inspection teams at the Yepu permanent checkpoint seized 0.184 tonnes of gum-kino timbers worth about K552,000 near Naungsaing village. The action was taken

under Customs procedures.

On 21 August, the combined teams seized a Hyundai bus (estimated value of K20 million), headed to Yangon from Kawkareik, carrying seven kinds of goods worth K8.567 million, including 240 cartons of Wai Wai instant rice vermicelli, 160 bottles of vegetable cooking oil and 40 child jean short pens near Waw township and a total of 8.636 tonnes of illegal teak, 1.861 tonnes of illegal hardwood and 1.156 tonnes of other illegal timbers worth K6,804,316 in Bago and Toungoo districts. The action was taken under Customs procedures.

Therefore, 13 arrests (estimated value of K146,299,648) were made on 15, 18, 20 and 21 August, according to the Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee. — MNA/MKKS



L & R photos show confiscated illegal commodities in Sagaing Region.

CURRENT AFFAIRS



The photo shows the Kyaiikhityo Pagoda.

MoRAC announces selected prominent pagodas for inclusion in Digital Museums, Pagoda Digital Directory

DEPUTY Minister for Religious Affairs and Culture Daw Nu Mra Zan announced that an initial selection of nine renowned pagodas, including the iconic Shwedagon Pagoda, will be featured in the Pagoda Digital Directory. This announcement was made during a coordination meeting for the implementation of digital museums and pagoda digital directory held at the National Museum (Nay Pyi Taw)

on 21 August.

Daw Nu Mra Zan emphasized the importance of showcasing museums and libraries to the public through modern technologies. She highlighted the need for creating and displaying digital museums and pagoda digital directories at prominent pagodas across Myanmar.

To kick-start the creation of the Pagoda Digital Directory,

a total of nine distinguished pagodas have been chosen for inclusion. These pagodas are the Shwedagon Pagoda, the Shwesandaw Pagoda (Pyay), the Shwemawdaw Pagoda (Bago), the Mahamyatmuni Pagoda (Mandalay), the Kyai-kiyo Pagoda, the Uppatasanti Pagoda, the Shwezigon Pagoda, Ananda Pagoda, and the Shaitthaung Temple in MraukU township. — TWA/MKKS

Yoma Bank provides personal small loans for seafarers

MYANMAR Seafarers' Federation (MSF) has announced that Yoma Bank will offer small personal loans for seafarers. For a personal small loan from Yoma Bank, an amount ranging from a minimum of K1,500,000 to a maximum of K100,000,000 can be borrowed. The annual interest rate is 14.5 per cent (monthly interest rate of 1.2 per cent).

The repayment period ranges from a minimum of six months to a maximum of 12 months. As this is a personal small loan, collateral is not required. However, having sufficient income to repay the principal and interest is necessary. Therefore, this loan plan is well-suited for individuals considering a career in sailing.

To obtain a loan, individuals are encouraged to visit the office of the Myanmar Seafarer's Federation (MSF) after making an advance call and inquiry to acquire the list of necessary documents and forms.

For seafarers employed abroad, Yoma Bank offers convenient salary management through its excellent currency exchange rates and a specialized foreign currency account known as the "Seafarer USD Account". This account is available at various branches including Yangon main bank, Myanmar Plaza branch, Hlinethaya branch, Star City branch and Yankin branch in Yangon, as well as the main branch in Mandalay. — TWA/KZW



Yoma Bank staff engagingly assisting customers at the service counter.

Weekly update prices of Bayintnaung Commodity Market

THE price of onions drastically surged in the Yangon market from 16 to 22 August. The market saw an increase in the prices of palm oil, sugar, jaggery, and garlic, while the prices of black gram, pigeon peas, and potatoes went down.

Onion

On 22 August, the Yangon market received various regional onions weighing 96,000 visses. The wholesale price per viss of Seikphyu and Momywa onions ranged from K2,900 to K3,500, depending on their size and quality.

The price has become the highest for onions this year. The highest price of onions is above K3,000 per viss in regional markets.

Although the Pakokku depot saw a supply of onions on 22 August, there were no transactions in the market. A total of 20,000 visses of onions entered the Pakokku depot on 22 August at a price of K2,200 per viss.

Garlic

On 22 August, Shan garlic was priced at K7,800 per viss for S2, K8,500 for S3, K9,000 for S4, and K9,500 for S5 in the Yangon market. Kyukok garlic is fetching K8,300–K8,500 per viss.

Potato

The Yangon potato market only published the price of Chinese potatoes on 22 August. On 22 August, the wholesale price of Chinese potatoes was K2,200–K2,250 per viss.



The picture shows a dry kitchen grocery outlet.

Chilli pepper

On 22 August, in the Yangon chilli pepper market, the prices of Eainme and Panye long chilli peppers stored in pots were priced between K11,000 and K12,500 per viss, while Sinyukyun and delta region chilli peppers processed in the cold storage were valued at K18,500–K19,000 per viss. New long Shan chilli peppers entered the Yangon market for K14,200 per viss.

Rice

The rice price kicked up again in the Yangon market on 22 August. The price per bag of

multi-cropped rice was K73,000–K75,000; the 90-day rice variety stood at K80,000–K85,000; and the Pawkywe rice variety was priced at K100,000–K102,000. Pawsan rice variants ranged from K115,000 to K145,000 per bag, depending on the producing region.

Palm oil

Despite the set rate of K4,065 per viss for the wholesale reference price of palm oil from 21 to 27 August, the wholesale price of palm oil was K10,300–K10,400 per viss on 22 August. Palm oil was priced at K11,000 per viss

wholesale in the Mandalay oil market and K10,800 per viss in the Meiktila market.

Beans and Pulses

On 22 August, the price of black gram was K2,420,000 per tonne for RC and K2,590,000 per tonne for SQ/RC. Meanwhile, a tonne of pigeon peas was valued at K3,500,000.

Additionally, the price of green gram (Kayan Shwewah variety) and Pakokku variety fetched K3,500 and K3,665–K3,750 per viss, respectively, while that of chickpea was K5,950–K6,200 per viss. — TWA/CT

LOCAL BUSINESS

Trade Dept temporarily waives Ex-Im licence fees during Myawady road repair

EXPORT and import licence fees and related service fees are to be waived while road repair on the Myawady road section is being undertaken, according to the export/import news bulletin (14/2023) released by the Trade Department under the Ministry of Commerce on 18 August.

Torrential rain destroyed some road sections on Myawady, which is a major trade channel between Myanmar and Thailand and road repair is underway.

To ensure smooth trade, the exporters are entitled to move to some Myanmar-Thailand border posts after receiving export licences for the goods. If they want to change the transport mode to maritime shipment, the authority will greenlight it as well, as per the Trade Department's notification released on 9 August.

The related departments have drawn up the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to perform the operations properly. The businesses will be processed under the SOPs accordingly.

The fee waiver period is effective during Myawady road repair works. The eligible traders engaged in the Myawady border will be exempt from licence renewal fee and service fee (K5,000) for the licence amendment procedure on Tradenet 2.0 platform, registration fee (K5,000), licence expired fee import licence fee (from K30,000 to K90,000) during that period.

There are six border checkpoints for Myanmar-Thailand trade; Tachilek, Myawady, Kawthoung, Myeik, Hteekhee and Mawtaung. Of them, Hteekhee performed the largest trade value, followed by the Myawady



Lorries are seen waiting to pass the Myawady Trade Zone on the Myanmar-Thai border.

border.

Myanmar conducts border trade with neighbouring Thailand, China, Bangladesh and India.

Agricultural produce, livestock products, fisheries, minerals, forest products, finished industrial goods and other goods are exported to the neighbouring

countries while it imports capital goods, intermediate goods, consumer goods and raw materials by the enterprises working on a CMP basis. — NN/EM



UMFCCI invites YPGCC to boost investments in MSME sector

THE Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI) has invited Chinese businesses to invest technology and infrastructure establishment for MSME (Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises) sectors of Myanmar in terms of providing, U Aye Win, president of the UMFCCI said.

The invitation was made when UMFCCI met their Yunnan counterpart of the YPGCC (Yunnan Provincial General Chamber of Commerce) led by Dr Gao Feng before the 7th China-South Asia Expo and the 27th China Kunming Import & Ex-

port Fair started in Kunming, China. The invitation is also an appreciation for the Chinese leading role in the advanced technology and energy sector in the world, according to the UMFCCI president.

At the meeting, the two teams discussed in the meeting the matters to be able to get quick approvals for fruits registered in GACC while boosting the trading of agricultural produce. The discussion included ongoing negotiations with relevant departments to facilitate Yuan-Kyat bank transactions to be practised in border trade. — ASH/TH

YGN palm oil wholesale reference price set for rebound after two-week dip

THE wholesale reference rate of palm oil for the Yangon market was set to see an increase after a decline for two straight weeks, according to the Supervisory Committee on Edible Oil Import and Distribution.

The reference price was set at K4,295 per viss from 31 July and 6 August. For the week ending 13 August, the price was set lower at K4,150 per viss. Then, it was on the course of a second consecutive decline at K4,035 per viss for a week from 14 to 20 August. The reference price was set for a rebound to K4,065 per viss for a week ending 27 August. The figure this week showed a small increase of K30 per viss from last week.

The Supervisory Committee on edible oil import and distribution under the Ministry of Commerce has been closely observing the FOB prices in Malaysia and Indonesia including transportation cost, tariff and banking service, and issuing the wholesale market reference rate for edible oil weekly.

Nevertheless, the palm oil market price is exorbitantly high compared to the reference price.

If those edible oil retailers and wholesalers are found overcharging, storing inventory intentionally and attempting unscrupulous action to manipulate the market, they will face legal action under the Essential Supplies and Service Act, MoC released a statement.

The Ministry of Commerce is also trying to secure edible oil sufficiency, supervise the market to offer a reasonable price to the consumers and maintain price stability and mitigate the consumers' concern over the possible shortage of palm oil.

At present, mobile market trucks operated by oil importing companies, in coordination with Myanmar Edible Oil Dealers' Association, were back to business in some townships on 17 July 2022 to offer palm oil at a subsidized rate. They offer palm oil at a fairer price to the consumers directly depending on



The picture shows a retail shop of palm oil.

the reference price. However, there are limited sources of supply although they directly sell the palm oil at reference rate depending on the volume quota.

The domestic consumption of edible oil is estimated at 1 million tonnes per year. The local cooking oil production is just about 400,000 tonnes. To meet the oil sufficiency in the domestic market, about 700,000 tonnes of cooking oil are yearly imported through Malaysia and Indonesia. — NN/EM

OPINION

Tackle unemployment challenges in the aftermath of Covid-19

THE global outbreak of Covid-19 has spawned a significant aftermath, with unemployment emerging as a pressing concern. The International Labour Organization (ILO) released a report earlier this year underscoring the distressing trend of unemployment, particularly in developing and least-developed nations. The report cautioned that unless low-income countries take decisive action to address employment and social security concerns, the unemployment predicament is poised to exacerbate.

The ripple effects of escalating unemployment can deal a blow to a nation's economy, as it fails to harness the full potential of its workforce. Prolonged joblessness contributes to idle time and mental strain among the unemployed, giving rise to a slew of social issues. The psychological burden they bear can also trigger mental health disorders, impeding not only individual well-being but also societal stability, economic progress, and public health efforts.

Myanmar, grappling with unemployment issues for years, faced a harsh surge in job losses during the period of the terrible Covid-19 outbreak. Additionally, a confluence of existing factors has aggravated the unemployment situation within the nation. Myanmar's Ministry of Labour's March report on labour statistics estimated a successive increase in unemployment rates: 0.17 per cent in 2020, 1.33 per cent in 2021, 2.53 per cent in 2022, and a worrying 3.69 per cent in 2023. It is imperative that responsible governments and policymakers address this challenge proactively, especially as the international community deems an unemployment rate exceeding two per cent as critical.

The repercussions of unchecked unemployment are dire, leading to a self-perpetuating cycle of joblessness just when a nation is grappling with a downturn in its economy. During the Post-Covid-19 period, countries worldwide adopted new strategies to revitalize their economies and resuscitate pandemic-affected sectors. While some developing nations are on the path to recovery of the economic sector, other countries which are ensnared by conflicts and economic hardships continue to languish in economic downturns that span years.

In this climate, governments are faced with the onerous task of resurrecting both public and private economic sectors to alleviate unemployment stressors. A strong emphasis on the manufacturing sector comprising MSME businesses can pave the way for job creation to ease the social tensions of the people while striving to curtail inflation rates affecting domestic and overseas employment. This approach promises to yield fruitful outcomes, granting the populace a reprieve from economic turmoil and unemployment strains to a certain extent.

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The Price of the Commemorative Print

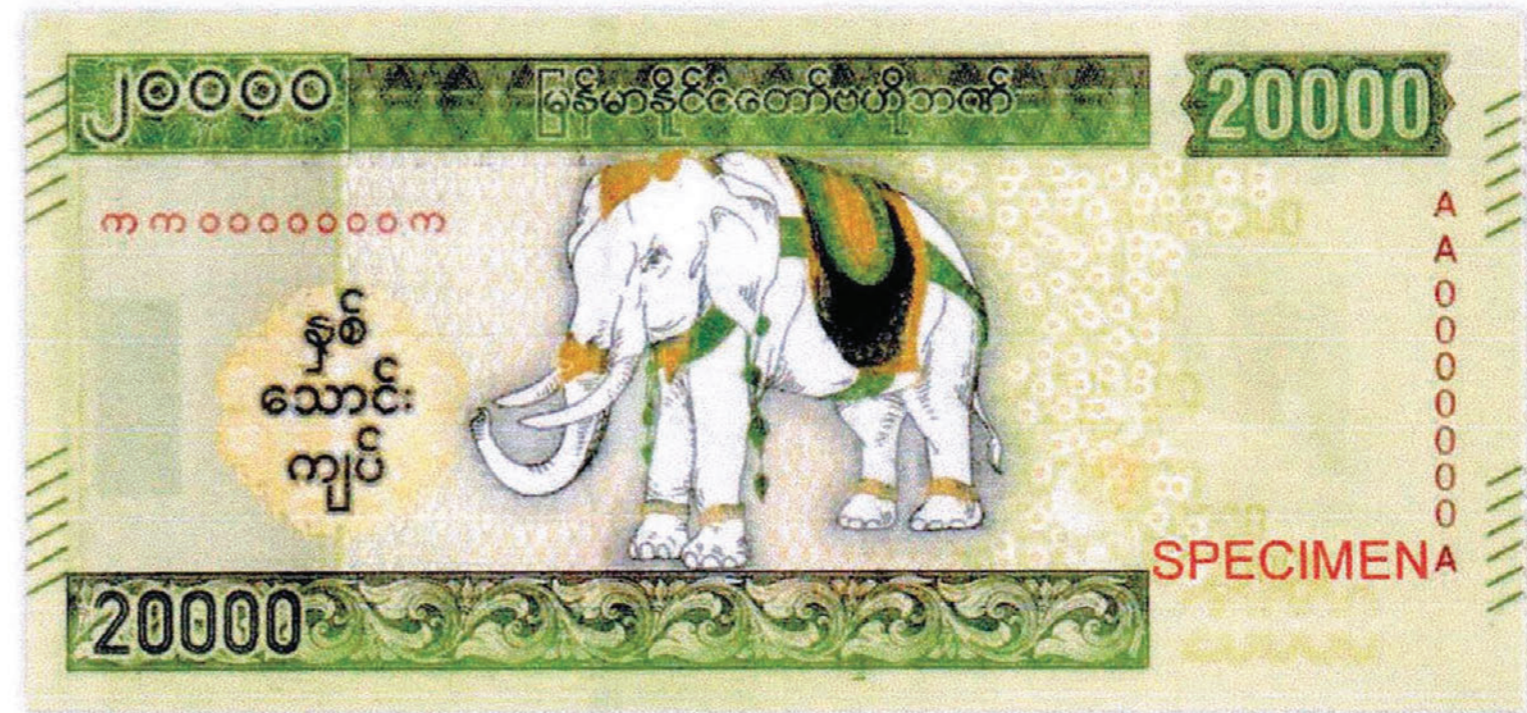
By U A C

END of July 2023, CBM printed for the first time, 20,000 Kyats notes, in commemoration of the completion of the Mahavijaya Buddha image and one year's birthday of a rare white elephant. CBM specifically stated it was a commemorative print and the printed new notes would only be used in exchange for the current worn-out notes in circulation. Yet a signalling theory was witnessed in action. The market is flushed with news of uncontrolled printing of money, a government losing control of the country and its monetary system, unconstrained

rampant potential inflation, businessmen stopping the sale of basic necessities, US\$ and gold prices hitting new highs and the general population scrambling for scraps. 100 per cent negatives with an everlasting supply of misinformation in social media and anti-establishment fake news agencies. QED.

Obviously printing money aka quantitative easing, or increasing the money in circulation without changes in economic fundamentals always represents a risk to the economy. There will be potential inflation due to increased money availability, which could

lead to a devaluation of Kyats. There are also additional costs of printing and administering the distribution of the new notes, a cost born out of budget by taxpayers. The exporters will benefit and importers will suffer, due to the depreciation of Kyats. The financial services sector also bears the cost, with adjustments to ATMs, CDMs (Cash Deposit Machines) and other vending machines. There is also an immeasurable psychological impact on public confidence and perception of Myanmar Kyats. The eventual economic implications would be determined by the scale of the



End of July 2023, CBM printed for the first time, 20,000 Kyats notes, in commemoration of the completion of the Mahavijaya Buddha image and one year's birthday of a rare white elephant. PHOTO: GNLM

denomination issued.

The only positives that can come out of new currency print would be to ease currency shortages in specific denominations and address counterfeiting concerns and security measures.

Alas, the government is not increasing the money supply! As yet, NNCP cyber terrorists and

their lap dogs keyboard warriors ganged up together to attack the government and its apparent incompetence in the management of the country. What a Deja vu! Just like indiscriminate targeting and boycotting Myanmar companies for apparent association with the military or lynching or carrying out mob justice through

the killing of innocent civilians, retirees or civil servants, history has a chance to repeat itself, again and again.

At the time of print, the dollar rate has gone through the roof to nearly 3,600 Kyats (an increase of 25 per cent, from before the announcement of the new note) and domestic gold price has gone up

around 20 per cent. The economic fundamentals of Myanmar simply do not support this abrupt change. The government is aiming for a moderate growth this year of four per cent and the fundamentals have not changed to suggest an alteration to this forecast.

Businesses are trying to get back to normal, picking up the

pieces. NNCP firebrands are on the retreat. Donations for their terrorist activities are dwindling. After the failure of their reputed lottery and ostensible sale of lands and properties that they do not own (including the land inside the Mandalay palace), they have started another scheme called 'Spring (online) Bank' to start defrauding ordinary people, through a collection of deposits.

Projects are restarting, including the large Yoma Central project downtown. Rentals are on the rise with a noticeable increase in demand and viewing of available units. There are those who want the Myanmar government and its people to fail. There was even one diplomat who purposely went to the grave of terrorists and show support for them, within hours of landing in the country. What an ignoramus!

Hence, do not lose heart. The Kyat is in oversold territory right now. The \$ and gold prices would fall back. There is no economic theory that supports such fluctuations, other than market manipulation. By getting back to the basics and through hard work, we would get back to our accustomed way of life and be on the growth track in no time.

BRAIN implants have long been trapped in the realm of science fiction, but a steady trickle of medical trials suggests the tiny devices could play a big part in humanity's future.

Billions of dollars are flowing into a clutch of specialist companies hunting for treatments for some of the most debilitating ailments. And pioneering studies have already yielded results.

In May, a Dutchman paralyzed in a motorcycle accident regained the ability to walk thanks to implants that restored communication between his brain and spinal cord.

That experiment was one of several eye-catching trials that have helped spark a huge buzz around the industry.

In the decade to 2020, investors poured more than \$30 billion into neurotechnology more widely, according to UNESCO.

And the money has continued to flood in thanks, in part, to rapid improvements in artificial intelligence (AI), used by researchers

The race to link our brains to computers is hotting up

to interpret the data from the implants.

Tech titan Elon Musk has refocused some energy on his Neuralink firm after it received permission in May to test its implants on humans, helping it to raise \$280 million in funding.

And other firms with less prominent bosses are proliferating, offering hope for sufferers of ailments from rare nerve diseases to severe epilepsy.

'Turning point'

Synchron, a company formed more than a decade ago, raised \$75 million this year with backing from the likes of Microsoft co-founder Bill Gates and Amazon's Jeff Bezos.

The firm got permission from the US authorities in 2021 to test its implant, and has since rolled it out to nine people with Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS) – the motor neurone disease that physicist Stephen Hawking suffered from.

Its implant allows patients to use messaging apps or browse online using only eye movements and thoughts.

One of the big selling points is that, unlike other implants, it does not require invasive surgery.

The first goals of the Synchron test, said Dr David Putrino, who oversaw the medical trial at Mount Sinai Hospital in New York, were to make sure the implant was safe and could monitor the

brain over long periods.

On both fronts, he said, the trial had been a success.

Synchron founder Tom Oxley thinks the technology, known as brain-computer interface (BCI), is now at a "turning point".

The industry must aim to make the implants widely accessible, he told AFP.

Brain attack

There are still pretty hefty impediments before that can happen, not least that the most powerful results often come from the most invasive implants.

For example, a patient in the US, Ian Burkhart, who was left paralysed from the neck down after a diving accident, told AFP

that getting an implant that allowed him to control his arms and hands again was a "magical moment".

But he was only ever able to do that in a lab and the implant, known as a Utah array, was far from comfortable.

"The brain doesn't like having stuff inside it," said Michael Platt, professor of neuroscience at the University of Pennsylvania.

"And so the immune system of the brain will attack these devices," he said of the Utah arrays.

As the implants get covered by cells, they are less able to transmit signals from the brain and they function less well.

Although far less advanced, some researchers are pinning



In May a man paralyzed in a motorcycle accident regained the ability to walk thanks to implants. PHOTO: FABRICE COFFRINI / AFP

their hopes on techniques that do not involve implants.

In May, scientists at the University of Texas at Austin said they had used brain scans and AI modelling to glean "the gist" of what people were thinking.

The technique relied heavily on the GPT models developed by OpenAI, which are capable of analysing massive chunks of data increasingly quickly. But such research is at the very earliest stage and involves patients spending as

much as 16 hours each time in an MRI scanner.

While most players in the field are exclusively concerned with medical uses for neurotechnology, Musk is different.

SOURCE: AFP

TECH/ENVIRON WORLD

Ecuador votes to stop oil drilling in Amazon reserve

ECUADORANS have voted to stop an oil drilling project in an Amazon reserve, according to the results Monday of a referendum hailed as a historic example of climate democracy.

The “Yes” vote to halt exploitation of an oil block in the Yasuni National Park, one of the most diverse biospheres in the world, won by 59 per cent, with 98 per cent of votes tallied.

“Today Ecuador takes a giant step to protect life, biodiversity, and indigenous people,” the country’s two main indigenous organizations, Confeniae and Conaie, posted on social media.

After years of demands for a referendum, the country’s highest court authorized the vote in May to decide the fate of “block 43”, which contributes 12 per cent of the 466,000 barrels of oil per day produced by Ecuador.

The block is situated in a reserve which stretches over one million hectares and is home to three of the world’s last uncontacted Indigenous populations



(L to R) Victoria Jaramillo, Fred Larreategui, Inty Arcos, and Ivonne Ramos of the “Quito Without Mining” collective attend a press conference in Quito on 21 August 2023. Ecuadorians voted to suspend some oil extraction in an Amazon reserve, according to the results of a historic referendum on Sunday that is considered a global example of the climate debate. **PHOTO: AFP**

and a bounty of plant and animal species.

Drilling began in 2016 af-

ter years of fraught debate and failed efforts by then president Rafael Correa to persuade the

international community to pay cash-strapped Ecuador \$3.6 billion not to drill there.

The government of outgoing President Guillermo Lasso has estimated a loss of \$16 billion over the next 20 years if drilling is halted.

The reserve is home to the Waorani and Kichwa tribes, as well as the Tagaeri, Taromenane and Dugakaeri, who choose to live isolated from the modern world.

National oil company Petroecuador had permission to exploit 300 hectares, but says it is only using 80 hectares.

The Amazon basin — which stretches across eight nations — is a vital carbon sink.

Scientists warn its destruction is pushing the world’s biggest rainforest close to a tipping point, beyond which trees would die off and release carbon rather than absorb it, with catastrophic consequences for the climate.

The fate of the reserve has drawn the attention of celebrities such as Hollywood star and environmental activist Leonardo DiCaprio. — AFP

Milder weather brings relief from ‘apocalyptic’ Canada wildfires

COOLING weather on Monday gave firefighters a slight edge against what the prime minister described as “apocalyptic” wildfires blazing across western Canada, after tens of thousands were evacuated or put on alert.

Two fires threatening large parts of the scenic Okanagan Valley, including the cities of Kelowna and neighbouring

West Kelowna in British Columbia, merged over the weekend.

Around 30,000 people in the province where 385 fires are now burning — out of almost 1,040 nationwide — had been under evacuation orders while another 36,000 were under alert to be ready to flee.

British Columbia’s emergency management minister,

Bowinn Ma, warned that the situation was “highly dynamic.”

West Kelowna Fire Chief Jason Brolund, however, sounded a note of optimism, telling a news conference late Sunday: “We’re finally feeling like we’re moving forward, rather than we’re moving backwards.”

Temperatures in the major wine-producing region around Kelowna were expected to stay cool through Monday, creeping into the low 20 degrees Celsius (68 Fahrenheit) in the afternoon.

There was also some rain forecast starting Tuesday.

Officials said it was too soon to start planning a staged return of evacuees as thick smoke continued to choke the area.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau at a cabinet retreat in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, to discuss the national fire crisis said Canadians “are watching in horror the images of apocalyptic devastation.” — AFP



Police check point to keep people out of the fire zone is seen near Kelowna, British Columbia, on 20 August 2023 as Creek fire continues to burn. With its lakes, mountains and endless rows of pine trees covered in a thick haze, the Canadian town of West Kelowna was on edge 20 August 2023 as residents either evacuated or prepared to do so. **PHOTO: AFP**

AI likely to augment rather than destroy jobs: UN study

ARTIFICIAL Intelligence is more likely to augment jobs than to destroy them, a UN study indicated on Monday, at a time of growing anxiety over the potential impact of the technology.

The launch in November of the generative AI platform ChatGPT, which is capable of handling complex tasks on command, was seen as a tech landmark foreshadowing a potentially dramatic transformation of the workplace.

But a fresh study from the United Nations’ International Labour Organization (ILO) examining the potential effect of that and other platforms on job quantity and quality suggests that most jobs and industries are only partially exposed to automation.

Most are “more likely to be complemented rather than substituted by the latest wave of Generative AI, such as ChatGPT”, the ILO said.

“Therefore, the greatest impact of this technology is likely to not be job destruction but rather the potential changes to the qual-

ity of jobs, notably work intensity and autonomy.”

The study meanwhile highlighted that the effects of technology would vary greatly between professions and regions, while it warned women were more likely than men to see their jobs affected.

It found that clerical work was the category of jobs with the greatest technological exposure, with nearly a quarter of tasks considered highly exposed and more than half of tasks having medium-level exposure.

In other occupational groups, including managers and technicians, only a small share of tasks was found to be highly exposed, while around a quarter had medium exposure levels, the ILO said.

The analysis meanwhile indicated that higher-income countries would experience the greatest effects from automation due to the important share of clerical and para-professional jobs in the job distribution there. — AFP

‘Total frenzy’: Swift fever grows in Latin America



(FILES) US singer-songwriter Taylor Swift performs during her Eras Tour at Sofi stadium in Inglewood, California, 7 August 2023. PHOTO: AFP

EXCITEMENT is building among Taylor Swift fans in Latin America who have endured months-long queues, expensive tickets and, in one case, assault to realize their dream of seeing

the pop superstar.

The 33-year-old singer-songwriter, who holds the women’s record for most number one albums, will bring her “Eras” tour to the region from Thursday

starting in Mexico, followed by Argentina and Brazil.

In Rio de Janeiro, Renan Rodrigues camped out for several nights to buy tickets for Swift’s 17-19 November concerts at the Nilton Santos stadium.

The 24-year-old DJ, who performs at parties for Swifties, as the pop star’s devoted fans are known, got tickets to all three performances.

But he paid a high price — an assailant hit him on the head with a bottle for resisting an attempted robbery while he was waiting.

“They wanted to take my cellphone, and inside the case was my card from the only bank authorized for ticket sales. I just thought: they won’t take my card,” said Rodrigues, who suffered superficial injuries.

Tickets for Taylor Swift shows in Brazil cost between \$35 and \$468.

In Mexico, where young people earn an average salary of \$366 a month according to official data, fans had to pay between \$55 and \$614.

Ingrid Cruz, founder of the official Mexican fan club, described the high cost as “abuse” and complained that VIP packages were prioritized over regular tickets.

Fans also reported problems with the platform of US retail giant Ticketmaster. — AFP

AI to create song for school in central Japan, in country’s 1st

A city in central Japan said Monday it will use artificial intelligence to compose a song for a new school to open in fiscal 2026, hailing the project as the nation’s first.

The song will be for merged elementary and junior high school in Tado District of Kuwana, a city in Mie Prefecture. Schools there are being reorganized in response to a declining population.

Cooperating with Japan’s Riken research institute, which is studying school songs using AI technology, the city wants local children and their parents to suggest words they want to be included in the song’s lyrics.

AI is expected to automatically generate the lyrics and melody once the words are input in the system. The final song-making process will involve a panel of local school officials, parents and residents who are preparing for the opening of the new school.

“We hope it will become a school song that children can enjoy singing,” Kuwana Mayor Narutaka Ito told a press



Kuwana Mayor Narutaka Ito holds a press conference at the city office on 21 August 2023. PHOTO: KYODO

conference.

The lyrics and music writing are scheduled for completion by the end of the current fiscal year next March. The “songwriter” is expected to become “the people of Tado and Chokouka AI”.

Chokouka is the name of the research project Riken is involved in. It intends to explore school songs, which it calls “Japan’s unique school culture,” to fit the modern age amid diversifying values and the rapid progress in technology. — Kyodo

RIHANNA has given birth to a baby boy, her second child with rapper A\$AP Rocky, a report said Monday.

The music megastar and beauty entrepreneur became a mother for the second time at the start of month, entertainment outlet TMZ said.

“Sources with direct knowledge tell us the baby arrived 3 August in Los Angeles,” TMZ said.

“We don’t yet know the kid’s name, but we do know it starts with ‘R’ and it’s a boy.”

The “Lift me up” singer welcomed her first child, a son, in May last year.

And she wordlessly announced her second pregnancy at this year’s Super Bowl in Arizona, proudly displaying her baby bump to a global audiences of hundreds of millions.

Rihanna a mom again: report



PHOTO: AFP

Since releasing “Anti” in early 2016, Robyn Rihanna Fenty has taken a break from recording but has by no means taken it easy:

she’s become a billionaire, parlaying her music achievements into successful makeup, lingerie and high-fashion brands. — AFP

Viral ‘Rich Men North of Richmond’ tops US Billboard chart

A country song from a previously unknown singer that touches on class struggle in America and has been seized on by politicians has debuted at the top of the US charts, Billboard said Monday.

Oliver Anthony’s “Rich Men North of Richmond” has overtaken megastars Taylor Swift, Morgan Wallen and Olivia Rodrigo to the number spot on the Billboard Hot 100 singles chart.

Billboard said Anthony, who has identified himself as a farmer in rural Virginia, becomes the first artist ever to launch atop the list “with no prior chart history in any form”.

The song has been streamed 17.5 million times and downloaded 147,000 times in less than a week, Billboard added.

The song was released on YouTube on 11 August and quickly soared to the top of Apple’s country chart as it hit a nerve on social media and garnered millions of views.

In his lyrics Anthony leans into issues of long hours for little pay with high taxes. He also picks up talking points that have persisted since the business-friendly, pro-austerity Ronald Reagan years, namely against the welfare state. — AFP

ECONOMY WORLD



A waiter works in a Japanese Sushi restaurant in Hong Kong on 22 August 2023. **PHOTO: AFP**

Hong Kong to curb some Japan food imports over Fukushima water release

HONG Kong leader John Lee said Tuesday that he had instructed his government to “immediately activate” import curbs on some Japanese food after Tokyo announced it would release water from the stricken Fukushima nuclear plant into the ocean.

“The Japanese government has decided on its own to discharge nuclear wastewater into the sea,” Hong Kong leader John Lee said in a Facebook

post.

“I express my strong objections,” he added, calling the move “irresponsible” as it disregarded food safety and environmental risks.

He went on to say he had “instructed the Secretary for the Environment and Ecology and relevant departments to immediately activate the import control measures to protect food safety and public health in Hong Kong”.

Japan, for its part, insists the gradual release into the sea of the more than 500 Olympic swimming pools’ worth of water that has accumulated at the stricken nuclear plant is safe, a view backed by the UN atomic agency.

Hong Kong is the second-largest receiver of Japanese food imports, after mainland China, according to Japan’s ministry of agriculture. — AFP

N Korea resumes intl passenger flights after COVID hiatus

NORTH Korea resumed Tuesday international passenger flights following their suspension in early 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, with a flight from Pyongyang arriving in Beijing in the morning.

North Korea’s state-run carrier Air Koryo is set to operate a return flight to Pyongyang on Tuesday afternoon, according to the Beijing Capital International Airport. The Chinese Foreign Ministry said Monday it had approved the restart of passenger flights between China and North Korea to be operated by Air Koryo.

Two flights from Pyong-



An Air Koryo passenger plane (back) arrives at Beijing Capital International Airport from Pyongyang on 22 August 2023 **PHOTO: KYODO**

yang are also expected to arrive in Vladivostok in Russia’s Far East on Friday and on 28

August, Tass news agency has quoted a local airport official as saying. — Kyodo

Dubai airport traffic jumps 50%, tops pre-pandemic levels

PASSENGER traffic at Dubai international airport leapt 50 per cent in the first half of the year, surpassing pre-pandemic levels, its operator said on Tuesday.

Dubai, the world’s busiest airport for international passengers before Covid-19, had 41.6 million visits in the six months to June, just over the number recorded in the first half of 2019, Dubai Airports said in a statement.

The passenger figure also marks a 50 per cent increase from the 27.9 million seen in the same period last year.

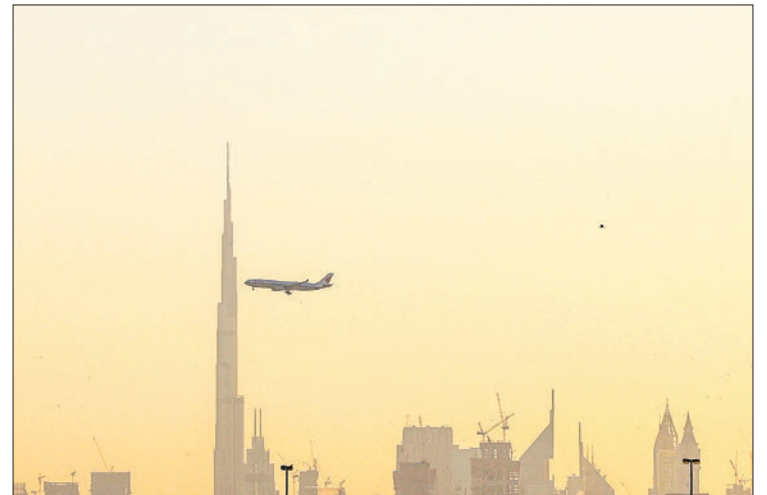
“As we recover with our

(first-half) traffic surpassing pre-pandemic levels, we continue to remain committed to ensuring every guest who travels through our airport leaves with a smile,” said Paul Griffiths, CEO of Dubai Airports.

Passenger forecasts for the year have been raised to 85 million, up from 83.6 million.

“Dubai Airports is optimistic about the levels of demand and is expecting record-breaking numbers during the winter season,” the company said in a statement.

“We’re preparing for an exceptionally busy rest of the year.” — AFP



(FILES) A commercial airplane flies past Burj Khalifa as it starts landing at Dubai international airport in the United Arab Emirates, on 9 January 2021. **PHOTO: AFP**

UK regulator to examine new Microsoft buyout deal for Activision

MICROSOFT has submitted a new deal to Britain’s competition regulator for the acquisition of video gaming giant Activision Blizzard, the CMA said Tuesday.

The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) said it has “opened a new phase 1 investigation into a new, restructured deal by Microsoft to buy Activision”, after blocking a previous version of the deal in April.

Microsoft launched a bid for Activision Blizzard early last year, seeking to establish the world’s third biggest gaming firm by revenue after China’s Tencent and

Japan’s PlayStation maker Sony.

But the \$69 billion deal has faced significant scrutiny by antitrust regulators. The CMA said in a statement that the new deal follows confirmation by the regulator that “the original deal would be blocked to protect innovation and choice in cloud gaming”.

Under the new proposed deal “Microsoft will not acquire cloud rights for existing Activision PC and console games, or for new games released by Activision during the next 15 years (this excludes the European Economic Area),” the CMA added. — AFP

ADB approves \$85 mln loan for horticulture development in Indonesia

THE Asian Development Bank (ADB) on Tuesday said it has approved an 85 million US dollars loan to promote the development and profitability of the horticulture sector in Indonesia.

The Manila-based bank said the Horticulture Development in Dryland Areas Sector Project will improve the climate resilience, sustainability,

efficiency, and profitability of horticulture production in dryland areas located in several provinces across Indonesia.

The ADB said an estimated 25,000 poor and near-poor farmer households, including 5,000 women farmers, are expected to benefit from the project directly.

The ADB said Indonesia's horticultural sector

faces several challenges, including a lack of access to quality and affordable seeds, inadequate infrastructure and technology, and insufficient logistics support. Improving horticulture in Indonesia is vital to meet the country's growing food needs and to help smallholder farmers profit from their plots of land.

The International



A villager carries durians, often hailed as the "king of fruits", at a farm in Lhoong, Aceh province, on 21 June 2023. PHOTO: AFP

Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD) will also

extend a 40 million US dollars loan to the project to

be partially managed by the ADB. — Xinhua

Viet Nam considers easing regulations for foreign workers

VIET Nam will consider a proposal to create favourable conditions for the recruitment of foreign workers with high professional, technical qualifications and experience to positions that local workers are not qualified for, local media reported on Tuesday, citing the Ministry of Labour-Invalids and Social Affairs.

Under the proposal, either the Department of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs or People's Committees of provinces and cities will manage

foreign labourers working in their localities, including granting work permits, local newspaper Vietnam News reported.

In the first option where the Department of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs is authorized to manage foreign workers, employers have only to go to one agency to apply for foreign workers' work permits. In the second option, the provincial or municipal People's Committee will authorize a local agency to manage foreign workers. — Xinhua

Markets rise after latest selloff but traders fret over outlook

STOCKS rose Tuesday after a recent streak of losses, though investors' mood remained dimmed by concerns over China's economy and the outlook for US interest rates.

Markets globally have struggled this month on the prospect that the US Federal Reserve will hike borrowing costs once more before the end of the year as it looks to bring inflation to heel. A string of data out of Washington in recent weeks has indicated the world's top economy remains resilient and the



A man walks in front of an electronic board showing a share price of the Tokyo Stock Exchange along a street in Tokyo on 2 August 2023. PHOTO: AFP

jobs sector tight, even after more than a year of tightening. However, there are fears that a further turning of the screw could be fatal.

A planned speech this week by Fed chief Jerome Powell at a gathering of central bankers and business leaders will be

closely watched for some guidance on officials' thinking and future policy. The remarks come as debate swirls among policymakers and investors over whether more work is needed, though some observers say the market has largely priced in another hike. "Each incremental hike that they have from here just raises the risk that we have a much sharper slowdown in 2024 and perhaps even a recession," Lori Heinel, at State Street Global Advisors, told Bloomberg Television. — AFP

SoftBank-backed chip firm Arm to list on Nasdaq in over \$60 bln IPO

SOFTBANK Group Corp-backed British chip designer Arm said Monday it has filed to list its shares on the Nasdaq stock exchange in the United States, with its market capitalization estimated to reach \$60 billion to \$70 billion in what could be the largest initial public offering this year. The chip giant, whose technology powers most smartphones worldwide, is expected to go public in September, people familiar with the matter said, although it did not specify the timing of the listing or the offer price. SoftBank will continue to hold the majority of its shares. — Kyodo

The Global New Light of Myanmar

www.gnlm.com.mm

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CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V SITC QIUMING VOY.NO. (2312S)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V SITC QIUMING VOY.NO. (2312S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 23-8-2023 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of HPT where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: 2301185
Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:
M/S SITC CONTAINER LINE CO., LTD

ROLLING UPDATES

WORLD

Fishermen, locals decry Japan gov't Fukushima water discharge

FISHERMEN and other locals in northeastern Japan have expressed opposition to the government's decision Tuesday to begin discharging treated radioactive water from the Fukushima nuclear power plant into the sea later this week. One fishing industry worker in coastal Fukushima Prefecture said the decision to start releasing the water Thursday was a "surprise attack" because it was made without the national fisheries federation first being notified. In the capital, too, activists came out to protest the move.

Takashi Nakajima, who runs a supermarket in Soma in the prefecture that sells local seafood, expressed anger, saying, "It's like a scheme to release the water before public opposition can flare up".

The announcement came a day after Prime Minister Fumio Kishida met with the head of Japan's fishing federation in a bid to gain understanding for the plans, with the decision made despite concerns in northeastern Japan's



A protester (L) holds signs reading "Don't throw polluted water into the sea" (L) and "keep your promise" (C) as they take part in a rally against the Japanese government's plan to release treated wastewater from the crippled Fukushima Daiichi power plant into the ocean, outside the prime minister's office in Tokyo on 22 August 2023. **PHOTO: AFP**

Tohoku region over reputational damage.

Nakajima said he could nev-

er forget the way customers had flatly refused to sample local octopus in 2012, shortly after trial

fishing began in nearby waters following the nuclear accident triggered by a devastating earth-

quake and tsunami the preceding year.

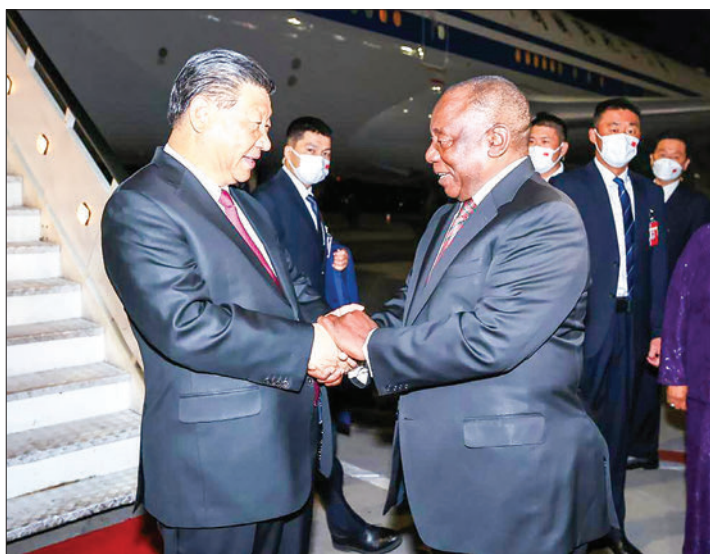
"Catch from the area won't sell, it will be a repeat of before," the 67-year-old said.

Meanwhile, a worker at a local produce market for tourists in Iwaki, Fukushima, said, "I'm not worried because they're probably releasing the water because it's okay to do so," calling for enhancing the attractiveness of the region. Makoto Sakamaki, 38, who visited the shop from Saitama Prefecture near Tokyo, expressed the view that the lack of explanation by the government and the plant operator, Tokyo Electric Power Company Holdings Inc, is causing confusion.

But he added, "I will continue buying tasty Fukushima fish."

Masanobu Sakamoto, the head of the National Federation of Fisheries Cooperative Associations who met Kishida on Monday over the plans, reiterated his organization's objection to the measures following the government decision. — Kyodo

Xi arrives in South Africa for 15th BRICS Summit, state visit



Chinese President Xi Jinping is warmly greeted by South African President Cyril Ramaphosa upon his arrival at the OR Tambo International Airport in Johannesburg, South Africa, 21 August 2023. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

CHINESE President Xi Jinping arrived in Johannesburg on Monday to attend the 15th BRICS Summit to be held here, and pay a state visit to South Africa.

South African President Cyril Ramaphosa, together

with South Africa's International Relations and Cooperation Minister Naledi Pandor, and Nkosazana Clarice Dlamini-Zuma, minister in the Presidency for Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities, warmly greeted Xi at the OR Tambo Interna-

tional Airport of Johannesburg.

A group of South African women presented Xi with flowers, honour guards saluted him, and people dressed in South African traditional costumes performed dances. President Ramaphosa warmly welcomed Xi for his state visit to South Africa. Xi said that he is very glad to visit South Africa again and looks forward to having in-depth exchanges of views with Ramaphosa on deepening China-South Africa relations and issues of common interest.

In a written speech, Xi extended heartfelt greetings and best wishes to the people of South Africa on behalf of the Chinese people. Noting that this year marks the 25th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and South Africa, Xi emphasized that the comprehensive strategic partnership between the two countries has entered a new stage. — Xinhua

Thailand's ex-PM Thaksin jailed on return from exile

FORMER Thai leader Thaksin Shinawatra returned to the kingdom Tuesday after 15 years in exile and was immediately jailed, just hours before his party's candidate was elected prime minister.

The Supreme Court ordered the 74-year-old billionaire to serve eight years on old graft charges, though it is not clear how much time he will serve behind bars, as his Pheu Thai party forms the government and ru-

mours swirl of a deal for leniency.

Thaksin, loved and loathed in almost equal measure in Thailand, landed in a private jet at Bangkok's Don Mueang airport Tuesday morning, and was greeted by hundreds of noisy "Red Shirt" supporters waving banners and singing songs.

He emerged briefly to bow and offer a floral garland at a portrait of King Maha Vajiralongkorn as a mark of respect before waving to supporters. — AFP



Former Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra (C) is pictured upon arrival at Bangkok's Don Mueang Airport on 22 August 2023. **PHOTO: KYODO**

SPORTS

Chelsea defender Hall joins Newcastle on season-long loan

LEWIS Hall has joined Newcastle on a season-long loan from Chelsea with the option for a permanent deal for the defender; the northeast side announced Tuesday.



Chelsea's English midfielder Lewis Hall controls the ball during the English Premier League football match between Manchester United and Chelsea at Old Trafford in Manchester, north west England, on 25 May 2023. **PHOTO: AFP**

The clubs have been in talks over a move for the 18-year-old academy graduate, with Newcastle reportedly offering £28 million (\$36 million, 33 million euros) to their Premier League rivals.

Hall signed a new six-year contract to stay at Stamford Bridge earlier in August but Newcastle's interest has led Chelsea to part with a defender who made 11 first-team appearances last season, including nine in the Premier League.

"Boyhood Newcastle fan Hall told the Magpies' website: "I'm very proud. Me and my family are Newcastle fans, and for me and my brother growing up, it was drilled into us that we were Newcastle. It's a big club and I can't wait to get started.

"I got a lot of experience last year in some big fixtures and I was really proud of the way I progressed as a player and a person. To now be here at Newcastle, the club that I've supported since I was a kid, I'm honoured and very proud to wear this shirt." — AFP

Greenwood to leave Man Utd after abuse allegations

MANCHESTER United and Mason Greenwood have mutually agreed for the forward to leave Old Trafford after he faced allegations of abuse involving a young woman, the club announced on Monday. The 21-year-old forward has been suspended by the Premier League giants since January 2022 over the allegations after images and videos were posted online. Prosecutors said in February they were dropping charges, including attempted rape and sexual assault, against Greenwood, after key witnesses withdrew and new evidence came to light. On Monday, the club said that after a six-month internal investigation into his conduct, it was releasing Greenwood so he could attempt to rebuild his career elsewhere. The club said Monday: "All those involved, including Mason, recognize the difficulties with him recommencing his career at Manchester United. — AFP



Manchester United's English striker Mason Greenwood gestures during the English FA Cup third round football match between Manchester United and Aston Villa at Old Trafford in Manchester, north-west England, on 10 January 2022. **PHOTO: AFP**

Pulisic strikes as Milan open well at Bologna

CHRISTIAN Pulisic netted one and helped set up another in AC Milan's hard-fought 2-0 win at Bologna on Monday in which the USA star made a big impression.

The 24-year-old is looking to give his club career a jump start at Milan after being sold by Chelsea and he was key to Stefano Pioli's side claiming the points in their opening match of the season. Pulisic played the defence-splitting pass which led to Olivier Giroud's 11th-minute opener and then doubled Milan's lead 10 minutes later with a superb strike from the edge of the penalty area.

"We saw some really good things today and also some things on which we still need to work loads," Pioli told DAZN. — AFP



Myanmar team players are seen celebrating in an international football match. **PHOTO: MFF**

Myanmar make ready for friendly match against Nepal

THE Myanmar national team will train in a few days for the friendly match against Nepal, which will be played in September's international week.

The Myanmar national team will play two international friendlies against Nepal on 8 and 11 September at the Thuwunna Stadium in Yangon.

Team Myanmar will have around two weeks for this warm-up match and Michael Feichtenbeiner will serve as a head coach for the team.

The Myanmar squad played friend-

ly matches in March and June international weeks and will play again this September's international week.

Myanmar played friendly matches against India and Kyrgyzstan in the international week of March and China and Macau in June respectively. Team Myanmar is preparing for the 2026 World Cup Asia Zone First Round Qualifiers in October. — Ko Nyi Lay/GNLM



Thai parliament elects Srettha Thavisin as PM: AFP count



Members of parliament attend the second prime ministerial vote at the Thai Parliament in Bangkok on 22 August 2023. **PHOTO: AFP**

THAI lawmakers approved tycoon Srettha Thavisin as the kingdom's new prime min-

ister on Tuesday, ending three months of political deadlock on the day former premier Thaksin

Shinawatra returned from exile. Srettha easily secured a majority across the two hous-

es of parliament to be approved as Thailand's 30th prime minister, despite his Pheu Thai party coming second in the May election.

He sailed past the 374 votes needed for a majority of elected lower house MPs and senators appointed by the last junta, according to an AFP count of votes broadcast live on Parliament TV.

Pheu Thai's coalition of around a dozen parties commands 314 of the lower house's 500 seats.

But it has stirred controversy by welcoming former foes into the partnership, including the pro-military parties of former coup makers that ousted Pheu Thai's last prime minister.

The vote came hours after Pheu Thai founder and figurehead Thaksin returned to Thailand for the first time since 2008 and was immediately jailed.

Pheu Thai stepped in to form a government after the reformist Move Forward Party

(MFP) — which won the most seats — saw its leader denied the prime minister spot by conservative, pro-military forces.

Srettha, the former head of Thai property giant Sansiri, on Friday vowed to tackle poverty and inequality -- and rejected corruption allegations made by an anti-graft whistleblower.

A wave of urban and youth discontent with nearly a decade of military-backed rule carried MFP to a surprise first-place finish in May's election.

But the party's pledges to reform royal insult laws and tackle powerful business monopolies saw it run into bitter opposition from the kingdom's powerful elites.

MFP leader Pita Limjaroenrat failed to win enough support from pro-military and royalist senators in a prime minister vote last month and was later suspended from parliament by the Constitutional Court. — AFP

China urges Japan to cancel plan to release nuclear-contaminated water into sea

CHINA strongly urges Japan to cancel the plan to release nuclear-contaminated water into the sea and dispose of it responsibly, a Foreign Ministry spokesperson said Tuesday in Beijing.

Spokesperson Wang Wenbin told a news briefing that in disregard of the strong concerns and firm opposition from the international community, the Japanese government announced the decision to start releasing the Fukushima nuclear-contaminated water into the ocean from 24 August.

"This is extremely selfish and irresponsible, as the discharge will spread the risks of nuclear contamination to the rest of the world, and by doing so, Japan is putting its selfish interests above the long-term well-being of the entire humanity. China is gravely concerned and strongly opposed to this. We have made serious demarches

to Japan," said Wang. For the past two years and more, the legitimacy, legality and safety of Japan's ocean discharge plan have been questioned over and over again by the international community. Japan has yet to address major international concerns such as the long-term reliability of the purification facility, the authenticity and accuracy of the nuclear-contaminated water data, and the effectiveness of the monitoring arrangement, he said.

China and other stakeholders have pointed out on multiple occasions that if the Fukushima nuclear-contaminated water is truly safe, Japan wouldn't have to dump it into the sea and certainly shouldn't if it's not, said Wang, adding that it is unjustified, unreasonable and unnecessary for Japan to push through the ocean discharge plan. — Xinhua

Hun Manet confirmed as Cambodia's new PM in parliament vote



This handout from the Cambodia National Assembly taken and released on 22 August 2023 shows Cambodia's Prime Minister Hun Manet (C) and newly elected members of parliament raising their hand to vote during a parliamentary meeting at the National Assembly building. **PHOTO: HANDOUT / AFP**

CAMBODIA'S National Assembly on Tuesday confirmed Hun Manet as the new prime minister for a five-year term after his ruling Cambodian People's Party (CPP) won a landslide victory in the 23 July general election, ac-

ording to the state-run National Television of Cambodia (TVK).

Some 123 lawmakers in attendance unanimously voted for him as the new prime minister.

The National Assembly also approved Hun Manet's new cab-

inet members for the 2023-2028 term.

Addressing the parliament after the vote, Hun Manet said it was a historic day for Cambodia and expressed his profound gratitude to all lawmakers for giving a vote of confidence to him and his cabinet members.

He vowed to safeguard the country's independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity, peace, stability, security and safety, as well as to further develop the economy. "The new government is committed to working harder to accelerate socioeconomic development and to promote the implementation of deeper and broader reforms," Hun Manet said. "The government will give priority to governance reform so as to strengthen state institutions, build clean administrations, enhance the rule of law and social justice, and increase the quality of public services," he added. — Xinhua