

# The Global **NEW LIGHT** of MYANMAR

## Govt is striving to implement a comprehensive education system to turn out necessary human resources in order to build a modern, developed nation: Senior General

IN his message sent to the 103<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary of the National Victory Day, Chairman of the State Administration Council of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Prime Minister Senior General Thadoe

Maha Thray Sithu Thadoe Thiri Thudamma Min Aung Hlaing highlighted that the united strength of all regions and states could be translated into the strength of the Union, depending on the

solidarity of all national brethren.

As such, he noted that only when all citizens avoid racism, localism, party attachment, sectarianism and personality cult and uphold open-mindedness,

forgiveness, equality, goodwill and far-sightedness with national spirit and unity will the Union be peaceful, stable and prosperous with development.

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## Senior General Min Aung Hlaing advocates for equitable provision of quality healthcare services

The Senior General inaugurates the Myanmar Public Health Conference 2023 in Nay Pyi Taw on 6 December 2023.



State Administration Council Chair Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing views round the booths at the conference yesterday.

**A**CCORDING to Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, efforts must be expedited for people, including all ethnicities, to access quality healthcare services at minimal cost.

Chairman of the State Adminis-

tration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing delivered a speech at the Myanmar Public Health Conference 2023 opening ceremony at the Myanmar International Convention Centre-II in Nay Pyi Taw yester-

day morning.

First, the Senior General cut the ribbon to open the archway of the conference.

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# NATIONAL

## Govt is striving to implement a comprehensive education system to turn out necessary human resources in order to build a modern, developed nation: Senior General

### FROM PAGE-1

The Senior General unveiled that the theme of the 103<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary of National Victory Day 2023: From peace of the Union towards the development of the State, it is necessary to strive for handing over the invaluable heritage of peace to new generation youths by taking lessons from the past incidents. Hence, the government signed the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA), playing a pivotal role in forging durable peace for the Union and opening the door to all ethnic armed organizations to join the NCA.

With regard to realizing a democratic system, the Senior General noted that in building the Union based on a

democratic system and federalism, all stakeholders need to enhance their capacity for critical thinking in addition to knowledge and skills.

The Senior General warned all that now is the time for the government and the Tatmadaw to join hands in building the Union based on the democratic system and federalism through the united strength of all ethnic people.

The GCBA Special Conference held at the Jubilee Hall in Yangon on 17 and 18 June 1922 designated the 10<sup>th</sup> waning of Tazaungmone when students opposed the Yangon University Act 1920 as the national day. Now is the 103<sup>rd</sup> anniversary of such a commemorative day. To improve the education sector, the government is striving to implement a com-

prehensive education system to turn out the necessary human resources to build a modern, developed nation.

Regarding human resources development, the Senior General pointed out that the development of human resources, education promotion and unity among all national brethren are national causes and national interests of all citizens.

At present, the message highlighted that youths are being nurtured at basic education schools as well as higher education institutions to become those with five physical and mental strengths. Moreover, they are under nurturing to become good citizens of the State with patriotic spirit and national spirit, and they must be capable of analyzing right

and wrong and following laws and disciplines. Only then will those capable new generations be able to serve the future State.

In conclusion of the message, the Senior General urged all national brethren to implement the objectives of the 103<sup>rd</sup> anniversary of National Victory Day for 2023 with national spirit as a national duty. These objectives are To build the Union based on the democratic and federal system through united strengths of all national people; To implement a comprehensive education system accessible to all; To nurture youths endowed with five physical and mental strengths and a patriotic spirit; and To encourage MSME businesses by emphasizing the economic drive. — GNLM/TTA

### Theme of 103<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary of National Victory Day 2023

From peace of the Union towards development of the State

### Objectives of 103<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary of National Victory Day 2023

10<sup>th</sup> Waning of Tazaungmone 1385 ME  
7 December 2023

- To build the Union based on the democratic and federal system through united strengths of all National people
- To implement a comprehensive education system accessible to all
- To nurture youths endowed with five physical and mental strengths and a patriotic spirit
- To encourage MSME businesses by emphasizing the economic drive

### The Republic of the Union of Myanmar Central Bank of Myanmar Notification No 26/2023

9<sup>th</sup> Waning of Tazaungmone 1385 ME  
6 December 2023

1. The Central Bank of Myanmar, exercising the authority conferred by Section 49 (b) of the Foreign Exchange Management Law, has issued this notification.
2. In Notification No 15/2023, dated 13 July 2023, the Central Bank of Myanmar has determined that 50 per cent of the amount of export revenue received by exporters from exports should be exchanged for Myanmar Kyat according to the instructions of Notification No 12/2022 issued by the Central Bank of Myanmar.
3. By this notification, instead of 50 per cent of the export revenue received from exports, exporters are supposed to exchange only 35 per cent of the export revenue for Myanmar Kyat according to the instructions of Notification No 12/2022 issued by the Central Bank of Myanmar.
4. This notification shall take effect from the date of issue.
5. Failure to comply with this notification shall be subject to action under the Foreign Exchange Management Law.

(Than Than Swe)  
Governor

## Bagan Ancient Cultural Zone draws 500,000 visitors during two holiday periods



Travellers are pictured at the Htilominlo Pagoda in the Bagan Ancient Cultural Zone.

ACCORDING to travel agencies, the number of visitors to the Bagan Ancient Cultural Zone has increased significantly this year, mainly due to local tourism.

Similarly, more foreign tourists visited Bagan this year compared to last year, with Chinese, Russians and Thais leading the increased numbers.

“We expect to receive more visitors in the upcoming 2024 travel season. Previously, people used to come only on weekends. On Mondays, Bagan was mostly de-

serted. But now, we have visitors on Mondays, Saturdays, and Sundays. The number of visitors has increased again. It is more than that of post-Covid 2021-2022 because we see many visitors even on weekdays without any break,” one agency official said.

A senior officer from the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture also said that about half a million local and foreign travellers came to Bagan to enjoy the Thadingyut and Tazaungdine holidays, citing a record of arrivals.

“During these holiday periods, visitor arrivals exceeded the capacity of major hotels in Bagan, and so, it was necessary to arrange for those who did not have a reservation to share accommodations in the monasteries,” the official said.

The Shwezigon Pagoda is packed with devotees and travellers, attracting many local and foreign visitors with a traditional religious festival, local food courts and stalls, and fun fairs. — Thit Taw/ZN

# NATIONAL

## Senior General Min Aung Hlaing advocates for equitable provision of quality healthcare services

### FROM PAGE-1

He continued that as the government could emphasize the public health sector, the maternal death rate could be reduced to 60 per cent in 2020 rather than the per cent in 1990 and the mortality rate by 53.2 per cent in 2021 from 2000. With regard to the success of the health sector, the Senior General underscored that the infant death rate plunged to 42.1 per cent in 2021 in comparison with that of 2000.

The infection rate of TB declined to 20 per cent in 2020. As such, Myanmar is the only country in Southeast Asia that succeeded in reaching the end TB milestone, he added. Moreover, the country remarkably reduced HIV/AIDS and malaria

outbreak rates.

He highlighted that the government has been increasing the allocation of funds for the health sector year after year on the purchase of medications for vaccination, TB and HIV treatments, maternal and child nutrition development, and purchase of medicines for hypertension, diabetes and heart diseases.

The Senior General recounted that under the leadership of the government, health staff, well-wishers, and people joined hands in controlling the COVID-19 pandemic in a short time with the lowest casualties.

He remarked that Myanmar could post a milestone in the health sector without spreading infectious diseases

in the post-COVID-19 period and in the aftermath of cyclone Mocha, which occurred in May 2023.

The Senior General urged all to analyze experiences and knowledge from the conference, apply them in the public healthcare services, and strive to ensure the promotion of pub-

lic healthcare services to increase life expectancy.

The conference is held under the title of "Improving the longevity and health of the nation". More than 1,800 local public health experts will participate in the conference with 30 international experts online until 7 December.

After the opening ceremony, the Senior General visited the booths of relevant ministries and the Directorate of Medical Services.

The conference was also attended by SAC Joint Secretary Lt-Gen Ye Win Oo, council members, Union ministers and officials. — MNA/TTA

### Salient points from the speech of the Senior General at the Myanmar Public Health Conference 2023

- Myanmar is the only country in Southeast Asia that succeeded in reaching the end TB milestone.
- The government has been increasing the allocation of funds for the health sector year after year.
- Myanmar could post a milestone in the health sector without spreading infectious diseases in the post-COVID-19 period and in the aftermath of Cyclone Mocha, which occurred in May 2023.

## SAC Vice-Chair chairs meeting of scrutinizing committee on conferring titles and medals for 2024

**V**ICE-CHAIRMAN of the State Administration Council Deputy Prime Minister Vice-Senior General Soe Win addressed the meeting of the scrutinizing committee on awarding titles and medals for 2024 held at the meeting hall of the SAC Chairman yesterday.

In his address, the Vice-Senior General mentioned that the meeting was convened to confer titles and medals to individuals who demonstrated excellent performance in nation-building. They include members of the Sangha who worked tirelessly for the religion, Tatmadaw members, police force members, and public servants who sacrificed their self-interests for national peace, stability, and the rule of law.

He also acknowledged the efforts of foreign leaders and diplomats in building bridges between their countries and Myanmar, along with outstand-



The meeting of the Scrutinizing Committee on Conferring Titles and Medals for 2024 in progress yesterday, addressed by Vice-Chairman of the State Administration Council Deputy Prime Minister Vice-Senior General Soe Win.

ing individuals in science and the arts. The scrutinizing body would confer these titles in line with the 2009 regulations for awarding honours, decorations, and medals.

He also stated that the scrutinizing committee would select recipients from directors-general and DG-level of-

officials with three to five years of service following the 2014 amendments to the regulations.

Moreover, he announced that the meeting would discuss providing financial support to civil servants who lost their lives or limbs while serving duties under the guidance of the

SAC Chairman and Prime Minister. Based on the meeting's suggestions, the Union government would make the final decision, and the SAC would announce the recipients on 4 January 2024 (Independence Day).

Following the opening address, Lt-Gen Yar Pyae, Union

Minister for Home Affairs and chairman of the scrutinizing committee, provided a briefing about the preliminary meetings at different levels. Members of the scrutinizing committee, Union ministers and their deputies, military officers, and responsible personnel attended the meeting. — MNA/NT

# NATIONAL

## National Tourism Development Central Committee meeting 2/2023 held

STATE Administration Council Member Deputy Prime Minister Union Minister for Transport and Communications General Mya Tun Oo, as Chairman of the National Tourism Development Central Committee, attended the 2/2023 meeting of the committee in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

Speaking at the meeting, the General said the tourism industry includes hospitality (accommodation and restaurants), transportation (airlines), travel facilitation (travel agents and guides) and entertainment. Therefore, tourism is regarded as the world's largest and developing industry.

Most of the world's countries, including Myanmar, bore the brunt of the COVID-19 outbreak and now emphasize the tourism industry's recovery in the post-COVID-19 period.

The tourist arrivals to Myanmar



The National Tourism Development Central Committee 2/2023 meeting in progress yesterday, during which SAC Member DPM Union Minister General Mya Tun Oo delivered the speech.

show an increase within ten months from January to October 2023, and it offers a 471 per cent increase compared to last year.

He also urged the private tourism entrepreneurs to connect with the target countries so they can promote their market, conduct FAM Trip, broadcast the seasonal festivals of respective regions and states, advertise the information regarding the event

calendar and explore new tourist destinations in the country to attract the local and foreign travellers.

He also called on officials of departments concerned, region/

state government and tourism organizations to ensure the sustainability of tourism that earns foreign incomes for the country and accessible destinations for the whole year round.

Then, Deputy Chairperson of the Committee Union Minister for Hotels and Tourism Dr Thet Thet Khine reported on the tourism-related matters.

Moreover, the committee joint secretary Deputy Minister for Hotels and Tourism U Phyo Zaw Soe presented the implementation of decisions set at the 1/2023 committee meeting, the reshuffle of the tourism committee, six region and state tourism working committees, including Nay Pyi Taw Council, drafting SOP for local pilgrimage agents, security measures in destinations and other matters. — MNA/KTZH

### Counter-argument to false information

#### The Irrawaddy news spread misinformation



Screenshot of The Irrawaddy website validates false news.

A malicious media outlet, The Irrawaddy, has spread false information that the Rakhine State government released on 5 December a statement to take action against those who gave comments and shared the news covered by Rakhine State-based news agencies.

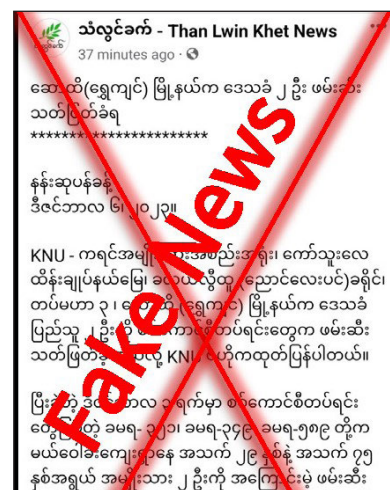
An official of the Rakhine State government claimed that they did not release such a statement and that it was just fake news made up by malicious media that wanted to disturb the government's mechanisms and cause misconception. — MNA/KTZH

#### False reports of security forces killing two locals in Shwegyin Township

INACCURATE information that the members of the Security Force killed two residents of Malwawkhee village of Shwegyin Township in Kayin State on 3 December has spread on social media.

According to the claims of a security officer and a resident, there were no counter-attack activities of the Security Force near the village on 3 December. The armed terrorists asked for money, recruited new members and arrested and killed the locals when they did not get what they asked for.

The anti-government media intentionally spread misinformation to destroy regional stability and mislead the public. — MNA/KTZH



Screenshot validates a fabricated news story.

#### Misinformation about three killed in Tatmadaw's attack

FALSE news that three people were killed at Thanbo village in Sagaing Region's Yinmabin township due to Tatmadaw artillery fire on 5 December has been spread on social media.

Security Force members claimed they conducted security measures in Yinmabin township, but there was no clash on 5 December.

PDF terrorists intentionally attacked using drop bombs and heavy weapons, and some residents were killed and injured.

The malicious media spread fabricated news stories to cause disintegration between Tatmadaw and the people. — MNA/KTZH

Daily newspapers available online

FOR those who would like to read the Myanmar Alinn, the Kyemon and the Global New Light of Myanmar, published daily by the Ministry of Information, please visit [www.moi.gov.mm/mal](http://www.moi.gov.mm/mal), [www.moi.gov.mm/km](http://www.moi.gov.mm/km), [www.moi.gov.mm/nlm](http://www.moi.gov.mm/nlm) and [www.gnlm.com.mm/e-paper](http://www.gnlm.com.mm/e-paper).

News and Periodicals Enterprise

# NATIONAL

## Customs operations at Dagon Myothit (East) Township dry ports inspected

DEPUTY Prime Minister and Ministry of Planning and Finance Union Minister U Win Shein, accompanied by Union Minister U Tun Ohn of the Ministry of Commerce, inspected KM Dry Port and Resources Group Dry Port in Ywathagyi, Dagon Myothit (East) Township, Yangon Region, yesterday. The inspection focused on import and export processes, customs warehouse operations, and collaboration between Myanmar Railways and the Customs Department.

During the visit, officials from KM Dry Port and RG Dry Port provided insights into the business conditions related to importing and exporting goods, including entering and releasing goods into the customs warehouse and utilizing warehouse management systems. The Customs Department elaborated on container import and

export conditions, the issuance of imported goods and electric vehicles, and the inspection of export-bound containers at the customs warehouse.

Union Minister U Win Shein expressed commitment to cooperate with relevant departments, emphasizing the need to extend the dry port operations internationally. He highlighted Myanmar's strategic location in Southeast Asia and stressed the importance of collaborating with countries like Thailand and Viet Nam, which are already developing their dry ports.

The Union minister also mentioned the opportunities arising from the dry port's proximity to manufacturing zones, indicating plans for direct exports from Mandalay (Myitnge) to Yangon (Thilawa) port by train. He emphasized modern technologies, such as the



Deputy Prime Minister and Ministry of Planning and Finance Union Minister U Win Shein looks into ongoing work at the dry ports, Ywathagyi, Dagon Myothit (East) Township, Yangon Region, yesterday.

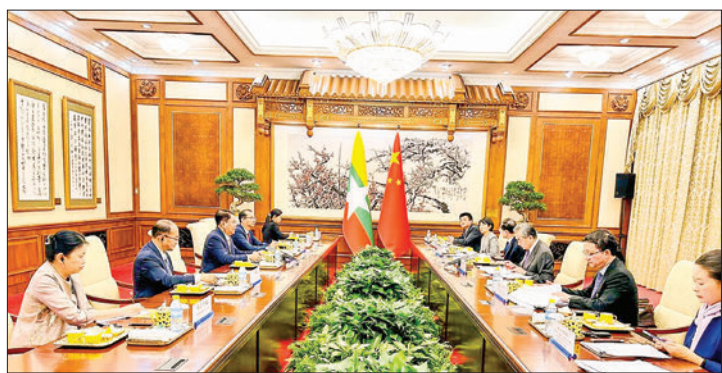
E-Lock system and the future integration of x-ray machines for inspections at dry ports. The Union minister encouraged adherence to rules and regulations in

customs warehouse operations and expressed a commitment to address business difficulties for mutual benefit.

Concluding the inspection,

the Deputy Prime Minister observed ongoing work at the dry ports and addressed coordination and resolution of identified requirements. — MNA/TS

## DPM MoFA Union Minister meets Chinese Foreign Minister



Deputy Prime Minister and Union Minister for Foreign Affairs U Than Swe holds talks with Chinese Minister of Foreign Affairs Mr Wang Yi yesterday at the Diaoyutai State Guest House.

ON the sidelines of the 8<sup>th</sup> Mekong-Lancang Foreign Ministers' Meetings held in Beijing, People's Republic of China, U Than Swe, Deputy Prime Minister and Union Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, met Mr Wang Yi, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China yesterday at the Diaoyutai State Guest House.

At the meeting, both sides cordially exchanged views on matters pertaining to the consolidation of the existing tradi-

tional bonds of Myanmar-China Pauk-Phaw relations, the acceleration of mutually beneficial cooperation between the two countries, including bilateral projects under the China-Myanmar Economic Corridor (CMEC) and the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) such as Kyaukpyu Deep Seaport, China-Myanmar Railway and cross-border electricity distribution networks, closer collaboration between the law enforcement agencies of Myanmar and China for the

maintenance of security, peace and stability along the Myanmar-China border areas and total elimination of illegal drugs and human trafficking as well as online scams, enhancement of cooperation in the media sector in controlling misinformation that could impact bilateral relations and closer coordination in the Mekong-Lancang cooperation mechanism as well as other regional and multilateral arenas.

Both sides also discussed the possibility of conveying Buddha Tooth Relic for the 5<sup>th</sup> time to Myanmar at an appropriate time to promote further trust, understanding and friendship between the two countries.

Chinese Foreign Minister Mr Wang Yi reiterated China's position of respecting the sovereignty and territory integrity and non-interference in the internal affairs of Myanmar as well as support for Myanmar's development path that suits the country. — MNA

## Union Government Office 2 Union Minister receives CFRD Executive Director

UNION Minister for the Union Government Office 2 U Ko Ko Hlaing received the delegation led by Mr Chen Hongtao, Executive Director of the China Foundation for Rural Development (CFRD), at the Ministry of the Union Government Office 2 in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

During the courtesy call, they cordially discussed people-to-people relations between the two countries and the implementation of more charitable projects for developing education and social sectors in Myanmar. — MNA



Union Minister U Ko Ko Hlaing meets the delegation led by Mr Chen Hongtao, Executive Director of the China Foundation for Rural Development (CFRD) in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

# NATIONAL



Through Phase II of the pilot project, citizenship scrutiny cards (CSCs) were issued to local ethnic people in the Kathtaik Village-tract of Kengtung Township.

## 4,828,202 CSCs issued in Pankhinn Project Phases I & II

ACCORDING to the Ministry of Immigration and Population, the first and second phases of the pilot project have issued registration cards, a legal requirement for everyone, totalling 4,828,202 people.

The Ministry of Immigration and Population, in collaboration with the Department of National Registration and Citizenship, has urged those living without a household list or citizenship scrutiny card to register before the end of December.

The first phase, targeting a population of 3.4 million since

2021, has achieved over 99 per cent completion. Similarly, the second phase, initiated in August 2022 with a target of 1.7 million, has completed 78 per cent. Temporary migrants discovered during field censuses, lacking a genuine household population list or any type of citizenship card, will be processed promptly by a five-member committee comprising departmental staff.

Field census statistics from September to 26 November 2023 indicate the collection of information from more than 12 million families in the household

list and over 2.8 million households gathered on blank forms, totalling more than 14.9 million households.

The collection is 100 per cent complete in nine regions and states, while the remaining six regions are still in progress, with 89.053 per cent of these processes finished.

The National Registration and Citizenship Department, in collaboration with pilot project phases I and II, is actively working to enable all eligible individuals aged 18 and above to vote in the next election under the law. — TWA/TKO

## 77 construction permits issued during Nov last week-Dec first week

A total of 77 construction permits were issued in the area of the Yangon City Development Committee in the last week of November and the first week of December, and a total of 17 building completion certificates (BCC) were granted, according to the Engineering Department (Buildings) of the committee.

In addition, recommendation letters for 65 buildings that have applied for construction permits

have also been sent – four to the Fire Services Department, four to the Engineering Department (Water and Sanitation), four to the Department of Urban Land Management, and one to the Department of Urban Planning.

The Yangon Electricity Supply Corporation will carry out the installation work for electricity supply to the buildings that have been granted BCC. — TWA/MKKS



The photo shows the construction site of a building.

## Weekly market update of dry groceries at Bayintnaung Wholesale Centre

FOR the week from 29 November to 6 December 2023, the prices of onion, Shan garlic, sugarcane candy, jaggery and black gram climbed, whereas potato and Kyukok garlic prices dipped at the Bayintnaung Wholesale Centre.

### Onion

The Bayintnaung Wholesale Market saw the supply of 120,000 visses of onions on 6 December. The wholesale prices moved in the range of K2,400 and K4,200 per viss depending on the quality, size and producing areas (Seikphyu, Taungtha and Myingyan) that day.

### Garlic

The garlic prices from Aungban, Shan State, stood at

K11,500-K13,500 per viss depending on varieties and qualities, whereas Kyukok garlic fetched K10,800-K11,000 per viss on 6 December.

### Potato

Chinese potato price declined

further to K2,800 per viss on 6 December from K3,200-K3,300 per viss registered on 28 November.

### Chilli pepper

The wholesale prices of chilli peppers were K7,500-K10,500 per viss for long chilli pepper

and Moehtaung variety on 6 December. Those red chillies processed in cold storage fetched K14,500-K15,000 per viss. The prices of bell peppers from the Sinphyukyun area and delta regions were K15,000-K23,000 per viss.

### Rice

The prices hit K65,000-66,000 per sack of low-grade monsoon rice, K88,000 for short-mature old rice (90 days), K75,000 per sack of old rice grown under the intercropping season and K90,000 per sack for Pawkywe variety. The high-grade old Pawsan rice prices were K135,000-K160,000 per sack depending on producing areas (Pyapon, Myaungmya, Shwebo)

on 6 December.

### Palm oil

For a week from 4 to 10 December 2023, the wholesale reference price of Yangon Region was set at K4,920 per viss, down by K80 per viss compared to last week.

### Pulses

The prices of various pulses stood at K2,941,000 per tonne of black gram (Fair Average Quality/RC), K3,191,000 per tonne of black gram (Special Quality/RC), K3,100,000 per tonne of pigeon pea (red gram) RC, K3,430 per viss of green gram and K5,800-6,000 per viss of chickpea in Yangon's wholesale markets. — TWA/KK



The photo shows a retail outlet of dry groceries.

## YGEA lowers gold reference price amid spot gold price dip

YANGON Region Gold Entrepreneurs Association (YGEA) dropped the reference price to K3.209 million per tical (0.578 ounce or 0.016 kilogramme) on 6 December, tracking a slight decrease in spot gold price at US\$2,033 per ounce.

Spot gold price hit a high of US\$2,086 per ounce, driving the YGEA to set the reference price higher to K3.28 million per tical on 4 December.

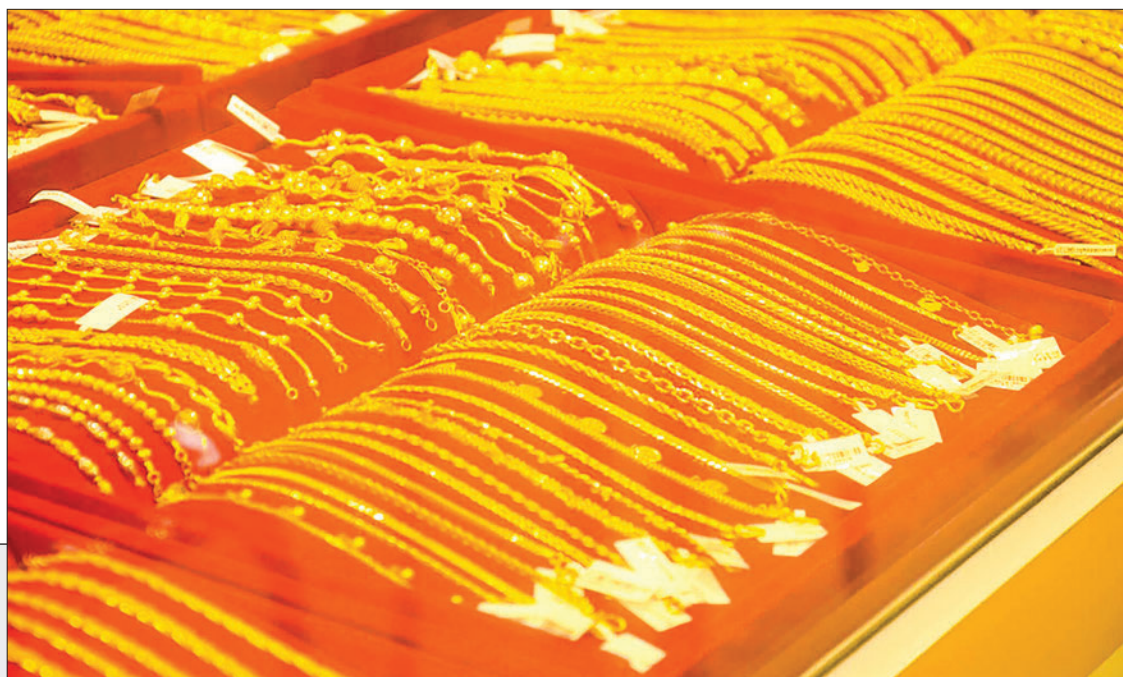
The pure gold market price fluctuated upward to K3.73 million per tical in the grey market. The gap between the YGEA's reference price and the unauthorized market's rate widened to over K520,000 per tical.

The YGEA switched to the interbank transaction rate in calculating the reference price for pure gold. The US dollar is currently exchanged at approximately K3,530 at the over-the-counter market.

The US dollar exchange rate influences the domestic gold market value gap and YGEA's reference gold price.

When the dollar exchange rate surged to K4,000, the gold price peaked at K4 million per tical in late August 2023. — NN/EM

Varieties of gold jewellery are seen in the gold outlet in Yangon.



## Myanmar-Russia B2B matching highlights sustainable business model innovation

BUSINESS matchmaking between Myanmar and Russian companies was held at the Pan Pacific Hotel on 5 December to promote business and trade between the two parties.

This B2B matching aims to develop sustainable business model innovation and deepen the economic ties between the two nations.

The Diversified International

Business Mission of Russian companies, under the guidance of the Russian Export Promotion Center and Trade Office, organized the B2B meeting with Myanmar entrepreneurs to build cooperative connections for mutual interests.

Those Russian representatives engaged in IT, the education sector, food production, agriculture and automobile busi-

nesses, and power and energy sectors met Myanmar entrepreneurs with common business interests.

Daw Khine Khine Nwe, General Secretary of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry, officials concerned, representatives of the Russian mission and businesspersons attended the meeting. — NN/EM

## Black gram price recovers in domestic market



A customer checks the quality of black grams.

THE black gram price bounced back slowly in the domestic market following an increase in FOB price.

The black gram price stood

only at K2.78 million per tonne on 29 November. It rebounded to K2.98 million per tonne on 6 December, indicating a significant rise of over K200,000 per tonne

within one week.

Myanmar primarily exports black grams, green grams and pigeon peas to foreign markets. Black grams and pigeon peas are mainly shipped to India, while green grams are exported to China and Europe.

Myanmar's various pulses export earnings were estimated at over US\$884 million from 1,046,000 tonnes in the nearly eight months of the current financial year 2023-2024 beginning 1 April. Myanmar's pulses exports bagged over US\$1.47 billion from over 1.9 million tonnes in the previous FY 2022-2023, the Ministry of Commerce's statistics indicated. — NN/EM

## Kyat weakens to over K3,500 against US dollar

KYAT depreciated to over K3,500 against the greenback at the over-the-counter market.

The Kyat-dollar exchange rate was only K3,380 on 1 December, and the rate surged to K3,550 on 6 December in the forex market.

Central Bank of Myanmar no longer sets a reference exchange rate and allows authorized dealers to trade dollars at a liberalized exchange rate, according to a notification released on 5

December.

CBM will not intervene in the forex market with a fixed exchange rate, and the authorized banks are entitled to exercise online trading according to the market rate determined by supply and demand dynamics.

Additionally, the CBM notified that outward remittance must comply with the rules and regulations of the Foreign Exchange Management Committee. — NN/EM



Central Bank of Myanmar no longer sets a reference exchange rate and allows authorized dealers to trade dollars at a liberalized exchange rate.

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# OPINION

## Preserve the cultural legacy of ancient religious monuments in Bagan

**B**AGAN is the heart of all Myanmar people regardless of religion, race, political doctrine, age, gender and so on, as Bagan is full of cultural heritage, attracting travellers at home and abroad. As such, all nationalities are responsible for the preservation of ancient cultural heritage in Bagan.

The Bagan cultural heritage site stands as a collective treasure, encompassing 3,837 ancient structures that hold immense value for the entire nation. However, from 2010 to 2020, this revered site faced the wrath of earthquakes on 22 occasions, resulting in damage to 389 religious monuments.

A concerted effort has been underway to safeguard this historical site, with notable progress achieved during the initial phase. While a total of 388 stupas and temples, excluding the Thabyatnyu Stupa, have been successfully maintained, urgent renovations to the Thabyinnyu Stupa were completed with the assistance of Chinese experts.

Ground inspections revealed that an additional 110 religious edifices require renovation, and quick action has been taken to address the impact of adverse weather conditions. In a short span, 41 more ancient buildings and 119 damaged structures have undergone renovation, underscoring the commitment to preserving the cultural heritage of Bagan.

To fortify the site against the challenges posed by heavy rains, meticulous land preparations have been carried out. A well-designed drainage system ensures the proper flow of water, enhancing the site's resilience. Furthermore, in a bid to mitigate the danger of lightning strikes in the raining season, 11 religious buildings in the region will be equipped with lightning conductors, further securing these invaluable structures.

International collaboration plays a pivotal role in preservation efforts. The Chinese government, in partnership with its Myanmar counterpart, has committed to a nine-year plan for the renovation of the Thabyinnyu Stupas. Simultaneously, the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) is actively implementing a ten-year plan, spanning from 2018 to 2028, aimed at renovating 92 ancient religious monuments. These collaborative initiatives underscore the global importance attached to conserving the rich cultural heritage of Bagan.

Recognizing the perpetual threat of natural disasters, the government has issued directives to officials, emphasizing the systematic preservation of ancient works within the cultural heritage of Myanmar, particularly in the Bagan Ancient Cultural Zone. This proactive approach seeks to shield these invaluable structures from the year-round impacts of natural calamities, ensuring that future generations continue to marvel at the historical significance encapsulated within Bagan's ancient religious monuments.

Recognizing the perpetual threat of natural disasters, the government has issued directives to officials, emphasizing the systematic preservation of ancient works within the cultural heritage of Myanmar, particularly in the Bagan Ancient Cultural Zone. This proactive approach seeks to shield these invaluable structures from the year-round impacts of natural calamities, ensuring that future generations continue to marvel at the historical significance encapsulated within Bagan's ancient religious monuments.

**T**HERE are about 8 factors that cause Global Warming.

1. Power plants fueled by fossil fuels like coal or natural gas produce large amounts of CO<sub>2</sub>. Since the beginning of the Industrial Revolution, when large-scale consumption of fossil fuels began, atmospheric concentrations of CO<sub>2</sub> have increased by over 30 per cent.
2. Agriculture is both a victim of and a contributor to climate change. On the other hand, agriculture contributes approximately 30 per cent of total greenhouse gas emissions, mainly due to chemical fertilizers, pesticides and animal wastes.
3. The environmental effects of transport are significant because transport is a primary user of energy and burns most of the world's petroleum. This creates air pollution, including nitrous oxides, and contributes significantly to global warming through carbon dioxide emissions.
4. Solid waste contributes directly to greenhouse gas emissions by generating methane from the anaerobic decay of waste in landfills and nitrous oxide emission from our solid waste combustion facilities.
5. Nearly 30 per cent of all oil and gas production comes from offshore drilling, which generates greenhouse gas emissions throughout the entire process that contribute to global warming.
6. Trees absorb and store carbon dioxide. If forests are cleared or even disturbed, they release carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases. Forest loss or damage is the cause of around 10 per cent of global warming. There's simply no way to fight the climate crisis if we don't stop deforestation.
7. Franking contributes to the worst kind of climate change at the top of the list. Climate instability is a threat to millions of lives across our planet, and we simply can't let the fossil fuel industry push for more franking. Many people really know what franking is. It is a new style, thanks to the Google search for "franking", peaked on top during that season, but the public often



Approximately 30% of total greenhouse gas emissions stem from agricultural activities, primarily attributed to the use of chemical fertilizers, pesticides, and animal wastes. **ILLUSTRATION: FREEPIK**

## Is it true that humankind's destruction caused by global warming is inevitable

*Deforestation is a key factor contributing to 10 per cent of global warming. Addressing and preventing deforestation is imperative in the broader effort to combat the climate crisis.*

By U Win Sein

skips over these crucial details to all the problems it causes and impacts for our climate and our communities. Franking refers to the process of drilling down into the Earth and injecting water, sand and chemicals into rock at high pressure. This pressure cracks the rock, which allows the once-trapped oil and gas to flow to the surface.

8. While overfishing does not directly influence climate change, it makes marine habitats less resistant to the impacts of climate change. It can also directly influence climate change by destroying valuable species, such as seagrass, for the uptake of greenhouse gases.

Is it true that humankind's destruction caused by global warming is inevitable? The short

answer is no. It is not unavoidable, and it is, however, possible. It likely depends: we are talking about the prediction of the future state and behaviour of the most complete system known to mankind. The study of planetary atmosphere in general and Earth's atmosphere dynamics, in particular; is, in combination, the most extensive research project humankind has ever embarked upon. From a policy-making and managerial point of view, it largely affects risk assessment and cost-benefit analysis. This is the wrong approach. Now, few honest scientists will tell you exactly what is going to happen because we, too, do not precisely know in public discussion, which renders scientists easy efforts to curb the lobbyists who never hesitate to make bold claims and lie outright in the face of the public to push through their agendas. Scientists

cannot stand up to the con men who need to seed doubt and divide the fragment of public opinion. Yes or no. It is inevitable that there will be more global warming. We cannot stop burning fossil fuels overnight, so we will continue to let out more CO<sub>2</sub> into the air. Even if we could eliminate all additional CO<sub>2</sub> from being added to the air overnight, there would be continued warming due to the time between the time CO<sub>2</sub> is added and the time the atmosphere temperature reaches equilibrium with the new level. Therefore, you could say that the continued global warming is now inevitable.

Global warming is inevitable and will pose difficulty to humankind if industrialized countries like the United States of America and China, the world's two gigantic manufacturers, keep on competing in producing superior quality manufactured goods, re-

lentlessly wasting valuable raw materials from all sides, resulting in creating an immense amount of emission of carbon dioxide into the Earth's atmosphere, making more greenhouse gases that trapping the Sun's radiation, so as to make the world atmosphere more warmer and warmer. If we visualize that the Earth is being heated to a high degree, the total destruction of mankind's sustainable state of living would be in great danger in a short period. All living animals could not escape death after all. This planet Earth would become an empty, vast land area, silent with no residing animals' noise or sound whatsoever. Or perhaps with the ghosts of the dead world population roaming, groaning dimly, aimlessly around all the empty streets of this forever empty Earth.

## Montreal research hub spearheads global AI ethics debate

*Professor warns of the rapid pace of AI developments, posing a risk of creating a new species capable of making decisions that could potentially harm humans.*

**R**APID developments in artificial intelligence — and recent turmoil at industry powerhouse OpenAI — have brought fresh attention to a key hub of ethics research related to the technology in Montreal, led by Canadian "godfather of AI" Yoshua Bengio.

Bengio — who in 2018 shared with Geoffrey Hinton and Yann LeCun the Turing Award for their work on deep learning — says he is worried about the technology leapfrogging human intelligence and capabilities in the not-too-distant future.

Speaking to AFP at his home in Montreal, the professor warned that AI developments are moving at breakneck speed and risked "creating a new species capable of making decisions that harm or even endanger humans."

OpenAI's recent dismissal and then rehiring a few days later of chief executive Sam Altman — who has been accused of downplaying risks in his push to advance its ChatGPT bot — illustrates some of the turmoil in the startup sector and fierce competition in the race to commercialize generative AI.

For some time, Bengio has been warning about companies moving too fast without guardrails, "potentially at the public's expense".

It is essential, he said, to have "rules that'll be followed by all companies".

At a world-first AI summit in Britain in early November, Bengio was tasked with leading a team producing an inaugural report on AI safety.

The aim is to set priorities to inform future work on the security of the cutting-edge technology.

### Society and AI

The renowned AI academic has brought together a "critical mass of AI researchers" (1,000+) through his Mila research institute, located in a former working-class neighbourhood of Montreal.

His neighbours include AI research facilities of American tech giants Microsoft, Meta, IBM and Google.

"This concentration of experts in artificial intelligence, which is greater than anywhere else in the world," is what attracted Google, says Hugo Larochelle, the hoodie-wearing scientific director of the Sili-

con Valley giant's AI subsidiary Deepmind.

Early on, these researchers began thinking about the future of AI, and consultations with the public and researchers from all disciplines led in 2018 to a global AI charter called the Montreal Declaration for a Responsible Development of Artificial Intelligence.

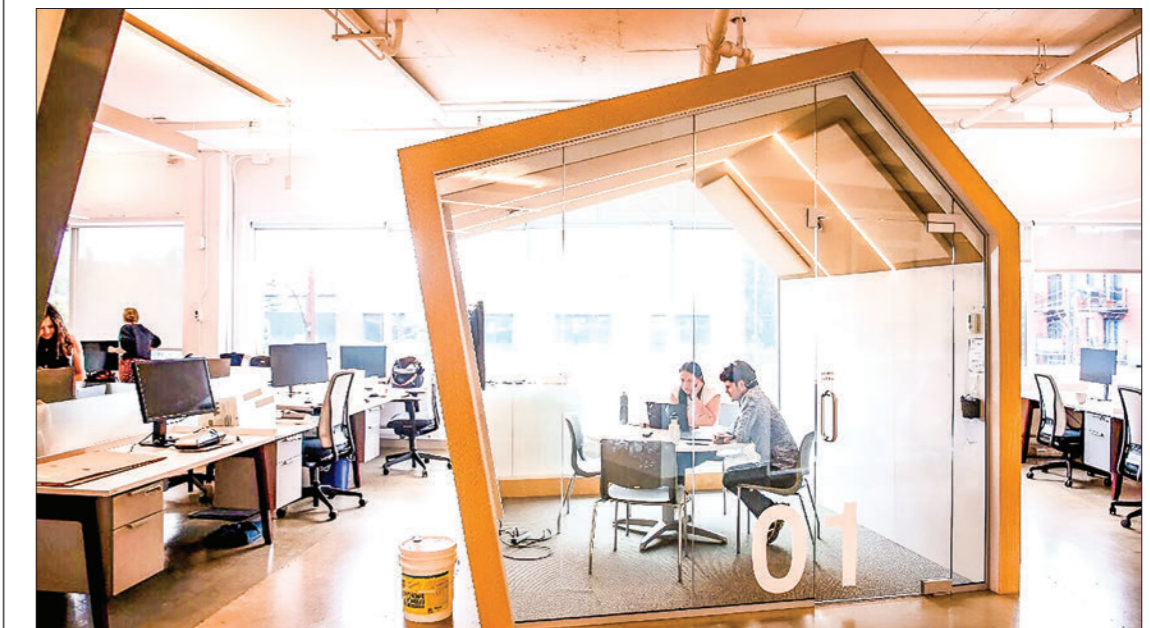
"We knew early on that the scientific community needed to think about the integration of AI into society," explained Guillaume Macaux, vice-president of OBVIA, an international observatory studying the social impacts of AI.

Its 220 researchers advise government policies and raise public awareness of the possible positive effects and negative impacts of this cutting-edge technology.

### Art 'demystifying AI'

Artists too are playing a part in "demystifying AI," says Sandra Rodriguez, who splits her time making art in Montreal and teaching digital media at the prestigious Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in the United States.

She showed off to AFP her latest art installation. — AFP



Neighbours to the Mila institute include AI research facilities of American tech giants Microsoft, Meta, IBM and Google. **PHOTO: AFP**



# NATIONAL

## MoI UM engages Mawlamyine Education College faculty, students to tackle misinformation

UNION Minister for Information U Maung Maung Ohn met with the faculty members, students and departmental officials at the Mawlamyine Education Degree College yesterday.

It was attended by state government officials, departmental officials, district and township administrators, faculty members and students of Mawlamyine University, Education Degree College, Technological University and ethnic people of literature and culture troupes.

Speaking at the meeting, the Union minister said that the insurgents spread false information and misinformation with the help of media. They also kill innocent civilians and commit various crimes. He added that they also conducted wrongful actions, such as explosions of roads, bridges, and



Union Minister for Information U Maung Maung Ohn discusses false information with the faculty members, students and departmental officials at the Mawlamyine Education Degree College yesterday.

buildings, even though the government had established these infrastructures. Although it is easy to do such destructive elements, rebuilding them will take time and cost a lot. Therefore,

the residents should be protected to ensure regional stability.

He also talked about the false information regarding the clashes occurring in Shan State (North) to disintegrate

the bilateral relations between Myanmar and China, efforts of the ministry to address such misinformation and provide the people with trustworthy information and personal consider-

ation regarding the activities of powerful countries that affect the image of the country using media.

He then expressed appreciation for students who will be good leaders of the country in the future and urged all to fight against terrorist acts.

He then donated 1,000 DVB T 2 Set Top Boxes for townships and villages of Mon State and the state military station.

At noon, the Union Minister inspected the affiliated departments and provided cash assistance to the staff.

Moreover, he visited the blackboard slates shop in Mudon village and the pipe and wood curving industry in Ywaloon village of Chaungzon Township. He highlighted the support of the government in developing MSMEs. — MNA/KTZH

### Nay Pyi Taw to host Youth & Literature Festival on 20-22 Dec

THE Youth and Literature Festival is scheduled for 20 to 22 December at the Wunna Theikdi Stadium in Nay Pyi Taw, as announced by the Information and Public Relations Department.

U Kyaw Zin Soe, the department's deputy director-general, stated, "We organize this annual festival to celebrate the 76<sup>th</sup> Independence Day. Thirteen ministries will collectively present 60 to 70 exhibitions to share knowledge with the youth."

The festival will include book sales, displays of notable works and photos of remarkable 20<sup>th</sup>-century authors, cultural exhibitions and cuisines representing ethnic groups, games, and entertainment programmes, he added.

Students from the high school in Nay Pyi Taw, along with students from universities and colleges in Mandalay Region, and families of Nay Pyi Taw staff will attend the event.

The exhibition will run from 9:30 am to 4:30 pm. — ASH/NT

## Public Health Conference 2023 held

THE first day of the Myanmar Public Health Conference 2023 was launched yesterday afternoon at the Myanmar International Convention Centre-II in Nay Pyi Taw.

Union Minister for Health Dr Thet Khaing Win attended the panel discussion and gave a welcome speech.

The Union minister said that this seminar was held for the first time in Myanmar, and the Ministry of Health has prepared 12 working committees to prepare for the conference.

The Union minister said that local public health experts plus 24 public health professionals from countries such as China, Russia, India, Maldives and France will share their experiences.

Representatives discussed titles named Saving Lives of Mothers and Children: Synergistic Approaches for Sustaining Achievements and Accelerating Progress to RMNCAH-related SDGs and Go Beyond SDGs in Section One and Take Actions: All Hands for NCD Prevention and Control SDGs in Section 2.

They also shared good practices on health sector preparedness, response and recovery to disasters, maintaining essential Public Health Services, Digital Transformation in



The Myanmar Public Health Conference 2023 in progress in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

health information and health care, Empowering Public Health Education, Essential for addressing 21<sup>st</sup>-century community challenges through academic institutions, Achieving the SDG 3.3: Bringing innovations to infectious diseases control and elimination, Road map on Maintaining Polio-free status and achieving Measles and Rubella elimination respectively.

On the first day of the conference,

11 public health experts from foreign countries and 26 local experts presented 37 papers.

A total of 27 academic paper posters were submitted in 40 galleries, showing public health educational activities from the Ministry of Health and various related departments. About 1,800 public health experts from home and abroad attended and exchanged knowledge. — MNA/KZL

# NATIONAL

## NCA-signatory ALP party helps find missing people in conflicts

SINCE the resurgence of conflicts following the Arakan Army's assault, the Arakan Liberation Party has actively engaged in assisting missing-person cases and supporting those displaced by armed conflicts, as stated by the party.

Major Khaing Thurein, the party's spokesman, stated, "We've been helping find missing people and reunite families since the conflict reignited. When someone reports a case to us, we assist. Food shortage

is also one of the issues we address."

He further highlighted the involvement of charitable organizations in rescuing the sick and elderly trapped in the conflicts, as well as tending to the injured. He emphasized the necessity of rendering assistance in every possible way if something happens in one's region.

The party has signed the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement with the government. — Thit Taw/NT

## Myanmar transfers 77 illegal immigrants to China

MYANMAR on Wednesday announced the deportation of 77 illegal immigrants back to the People's Republic of China.

The transferred immigrants included 68 men and nine women.

From 31 October to 6 December, 11,260 were returned to China. The government will investigate the foreigners residing in the border areas illegally and transfer to their respective countries. — MNA/KTZH

## Two AA insurgents confess to deliberate arson in Manawthiri Village, Pauktaw Township

FOLLOWING are statements of two AA insurgents who set fire to Manawthiri Village, Pauktaw Township, Rakhine State, at the behest of AA insurgents.

My name is Tun Kyaw Lin. I am from Manawthiri Village, Pauktaw Township. About two weeks ago, there was a battle in Pauktaw. After the battle, there were AA members in and out of our village. The villagers fled because they were afraid of armed conflicts possible in the village. Oo Oo Ba Tun and I were told by AA to wait to report when the army arrived.

The AA army said there

are about ten people in Phayagon, east of the village. They said there was also a mine in the upper part of the village. If Tatmadaw came, we were forced to burn the village and run away, as if Tatmadaw would burn the village. In Pauktaw, they also asked the villagers to burn the village and told them that Tatmadaw had burned them.

When Tatmadaw came, we were burning the village as AA ordered. When we were burning the village, Tatmadaw saw us, and both of us were arrested.

I am Oo Ba Htun from

Manawthiri Village. There was a battle between AA and Tatmadaw two weeks ago. AA arrived at the Manawthiri Village, and the villagers ran away from the village. If Tatmadaw came, we were forced to burn the village and run away, as if Tatmadaw would burn the village. In Pauktaw, they also asked the villagers to burn the village and told them that Tatmadaw had burned them.

When Tatmadaw came, we were burning the village as AA ordered. When we were burning the village, Tatmadaw saw us, and both of us were arrested. — MNA/KZL



Maung Tun Kyaw Lin



Oo Oo Ba Tun



## Two Heavy Industry 2 cement factories set for upgrade

ACCORDING to the statement from Heavy Industry 2, plans are underway to upgrade No 31 Cement Factory (Thayet) and No 32 Cement Factory (Kyangin). Director-General U Than Zaw

The photo shows the No 31 large cement factory (Thayet) in the upgrading process.

Htay of Heavy Industry 2 mentioned that the upgrade process involves a collaboration through the Public-Private Partnership system (PPP).

"No 31 Cement Factory (Thayet) and No 32 Cement Factory (Kyangin) have temporarily ceased operations to transition from the uneconomical wet method to the cost-effective dry method. Additionally,

new production lines are being constructed within the factory," he added.

Heavy Industry 2 and a private company are producing Alpha Cement. Out of the country's 19 public and private cement factories, 11 factories are operational, producing 8,123,570 tonnes of cement during the 2022-2023 financial year. — ASH/TRKM

## Sufficient fuels for domestic consumption

ADEQUATE fuels have been transported to 3,391 gas and fuel stations thanks to the 1,729 bowsers in Yangon Region on 5 and 6 December 2023.

Denko Terminal, Max Termi-

nal, MMTM Terminal, Brighter Energy Terminal, PSW Terminal, Regency SPC Terminal and PT Power Terminal from Yangon Region are fuels to petrol stations.

In addition, ten oil tankers

from abroad were in the estuary, and three oil tankers were also waiting at the jetties at Thilawa Port. They are under process to fill them out to the respective terminals promptly.

In the current situation, the public is worried about fuel shortages and high prices due to misinformation, and they are buying more than the average domestic consumption amount.

Officials warned that people can continue to buy according to the amount of regular consumption and it is unnecessary for them to buy more than they need. — MNA/KZL

# ECONOMY WORLD



This photo taken on 12 August 2023 shows a container vessel of the China COSCO Shipping docking at Port of Hamburg, Germany. **PHOTO: REN PENGFEI/XINHUA**

## Europe, China should boost trade relations, says ESM managing director

THE managing director of the eurozone bailout fund, the European Stability Mechanism (ESM), told Xinhua on Monday he was positive about the outlook for China's economy in 2024 and that an increase in trade between China and Europe will have a positive impact on global growth.

"We are at a time when it's important to try to do everything to strengthen bi-

lateral relations between China and the European Union, and in particular, with the European Stability Mechanism," Pierre Gramegna said in an online interview. Last month was the first time he visited Beijing since 2019.

"We had very fruitful meetings with the Ministry of Finance, the People's Bank of China, and Chinese investors in our ESM bonds. We also had a

meeting with Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) President Jin Liqun."

The ESM is the permanent crisis resolution mechanism for the countries of the eurozone. Like its predecessor, the temporary European Financial Stability Facility (EFSF), it provides financial assistance to eurozone member states experiencing or threatened by financing difficulties. — Xinhua

## Markets on front foot as US jobs data provide new rate cheer



Data showing a fall in US job openings indicated the labour market was softening, giving fresh hope that the Federal Reserve could cut rates soon. **PHOTO: SCOTT OLSON/AFP**

EQUITIES rose Wednesday after a tepid start to the week as data pointing to a softening US labour market restoked

hopes the Federal Reserve will cut interest rates in the new year.

The below-forecast job openings figure bolstered optimism ahead of the closely watched non-farm payrolls report due Friday, which investors hope will confirm the economic slowdown sought by the central bank.

Markets rallied in November on growing hope that with inflation continuing to fall and other parts of the economy easing, the Fed will be able to slash rates in 2024, with some suggesting as soon as the first quarter. — AFP

## EU approves ban on destruction of unsold clothing

THE European parliament and EU member states announced on Tuesday (5 December) new rules to crack down on fast fashion and reduce waste, including a ban on destroying unsold clothes.

The new rules, first proposed by the European Commission last year, impose tougher rules on products to ensure they last longer and are easier to repair and recycle.

The law bans the destruction of unsold textiles and footwear, and will apply two years after the law enters into force. Medium-size companies will have a six-year exemption, while small-

er companies are wholly exempt from the ban.

The commission, the EU's executive arm, will also have the power to extend the ban to other unsold products beyond clothing and footwear.

"It is time to end the model of 'take, make, dispose' that is so harmful to our planet, our health and our economy," said MEP Alessandra Moretti who spearheaded the legislation through parliament. "New products will be designed in a way that benefits all, respects our planet and protects the environment," she added. — AFP



The law bans the destruction of unsold textiles and footwear, and will apply two years after the law enters into force. **PHOTO: AFP**

## High speed rail between LA and Las Vegas gets \$3 bln boost

PROPOSED high-speed rail lines in the western United States moved a step closer to reality Tuesday with the announcement of \$6 billion in government grants.

The cash will come from President Joe Biden's signature infrastructure bill aimed at re-vamping the country's creaking railways, roads and bridges, and is part of a plan to double the number of people taking the train by 2040.

Half of the cash will go towards the construction of a high-speed line spanning 218 miles (350 kilometres) between Las Vegas and downtown Los Angeles,

slashing the current five-hour car journey time to two-hours and 40 minutes.

The rest will be used to support a long-touted line linking Los Angeles with San Francisco.

While high-speed rail is the norm in much of Europe and Asia, particularly in China and Japan, the United States has long lagged behind.

But there has been a renewed emphasis on projects like this as the United States hurries to overhaul its polluting transport sector and make it more environmentally friendly and give them an alternative to gas-guzzling cars. — AFP

# German travel group TUI books record year for sales

TUI, the world's largest tourism operator, reported record sales in its 2023 summer season, indicating confidence for the upcoming year. The German group recorded a net profit of €305.8 million (\$330 million) in its last financial year.

THE world's largest tourism operator TUI said Wednesday it had seen record sales on the back of a strong 2023 summer season and signalled confidence for the coming year.

The German group booked a net profit of 305.8 million euros (\$330 million) in its last financial year, which ran from October 2022 to September 2023, TUI said in a statement.

The figure was more or less on a par with



A woman walking past a branch of the travel firm TUI in Berlin. PHOTO: TOBIAS SCHWARZ/AFP

its results before the spread of the coronavirus pandemic in 2020, when heavy restrictions

on international travel weighed heavily on the economy and especially the tourism sector.

The return to form came on the back of record sales totalling 20.7 billion euros, a 25-per-cent increase on the previous year.

TUI, which offers everything from hotel stays to cruises and charter flights, welcomed 19.1 million guests over the course of the year, up from 16.7 million the previous year. — AFP



US antitrust regulators are seeking additional details on the ExxonMobil-Pioneer deal. PHOTO: AFP

## US antitrust regulators probe ExxonMobil's Pioneer deal

US antitrust officials are seeking additional information related to ExxonMobil's megadeal to acquire Pioneer Natural Resources for about \$60 billion, according to a securities filing Tuesday.

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) lodged a second request for "additional information and documentary materials" with both companies on Monday, Pioneer said in

the filing.

"Pioneer and ExxonMobil continue to work constructively with the FTC in its review of the merger and continue to expect that the merger will be completed in the first half of 2024, subject to the fulfillment of the closing conditions, including receipt of required regulatory approvals and approval of Pioneer's stockholders", the filing said. — AFP

# German electric car sales plunge in November

SALES of new cars fell in Germany in November, official data showed Tuesday, dragged down by plummeting demand for electric vehicles as government incentives ran out.

A total of 245,701 new cars hit the road in Europe's largest economy last month, a drop of 5.7 per cent on a year earlier,

according to the KBA federal transport authority.

The setback was driven by a 22-per-cent plunge in sales of battery-powered electric cars, to just under 45,000 vehicles in November.

Customers had raced to buy electric cars late last year to take advantage of government incentives before they were

phased out, and demand has declined sharply since then.

Uncertainty about whether there would be new subsidy schemes risked placing Germany's target of putting 15 million electric vehicles on its roads by 2030 even further out of reach, said EY analyst Constantin Gall. — AFP



The setback was driven by a 22-per-cent plunge in sales of battery-powered electric cars, to just under 45,000 vehicles in November. PHOTO: AFP/FILE

### PESTICIDES DISTRIBUTER CHANGING

The manufacture of **Shandong United Pesticide Industry Co.,Ltd** have registered the following products in Pesticide Registration Board of Myanmar to distribute in Myanmar. Now, we have to change from old distributor name "**Huynh Zaw Co.,Ltd**", to new distributor name "**Yazt Pone Thee Co.,Ltd**". If any object or enquiry, please contact to Pesticide registration Board, Plant Protection Division, Bayint Naung Road, West Gyogone, Insein Township, Yangon, from here to next 14 days. Yazt Pone Thee Co.,Ltd. Ph-09401573814

Sr.	Trade Name	Active Ingredient	Registration No.
1.	Thiame	Thiamethoxam 21% SC	P2020-5117
2.	Acet	Acetamiprid 5% EC	P2019-4533

### PESTICIDES DISTRIBUTER CHANGING

The manufacture of **Shandong United Pesticide Industry Co.,Ltd** have registered the following products in Pesticide Registration Board of Myanmar to distribute in Myanmar. Now, we have to change from old distributor name "**Huynh Zaw Co.,Ltd**", to new distributor name "**Diamond Light Interantional Trading Co.,Ltd**". If any object or enquiry, please contact to Pesticide registration Board, Plant Protection Division, Bayint Naung Road, West Gyogone, Insein Township, Yangon, from here to next 14 days. Diamond Light Interantional Trading Co.,Ltd. Ph-09401573814

Sr.	Trade Name	Active Ingredient	Registration No.
1.	Carbo	Carbosulfan 200g/l EC	F2023-4142

### PESTICIDES DISTRIBUTER CHANGING

The manufacture of **Weifang Sino-agri Union Chemical Co.,Ltd** have registered the following products in Pesticide Registration Board of Myanmar to distribute in Myanmar. Now, we have to change from old distributor name "**Shwe Sike Khinn Co.,Ltd**", to new distributor name "**Diamond Light International Trading Co.,Ltd**". If any object or enquiry, please contact to Pesticide registration Board, Plant Protection Division, Bayint Naung Road, West Gyogone, Insein Township, Yangon, from here to next 14 days. Diamond Light International Trading Co.,Ltd. Ph-09401573814

Sr.	Trade Name	Active Ingredient	Registration No.
1.	Penlin	Pendimethalin 330g/l EC	P2020-5068

# ROLLING UPDATES

## WORLD

## UNESCO to list ceviche, opera as 'intangible heritage'

*UNESCO is considering various global traditions for recognition as intangible cultural heritage, including Italian opera, Bangladeshi rickshaw art, and the Peruvian dish ceviche.*

DOZENS of global traditions are candidates for inscription as intangible global heritage by UNESCO this week, ranging from Italian opera singing and Bangladeshi rickshaw art to the Peruvian delicacy of ceviche.

The UN cultural agency's Intangible Cultural Heritage Committee is expected to examine and approve 55 nominations in total as it meets in the town of Kasane in Botswana.

These include a bid from Italy to include opera singing, an art "transmitted only orally" between maestro and pupil that attracts many students from abroad.

Bangladesh is hoping to inscribe the art of painting the

three-wheeled rickshaws that ply its capital's streets, contributing to a "roving exhibition of paintings" that is an "emblematic feature of urban life in Dhaka".

Peru has put forth the "preparation and consumption of ceviche", a traditional dish of raw fish marinated in lemon and seasoned with chilli, pepper and salt, for which the recipe is "inherited from generation to generation".

Azerbaijan, Iran, Uzbekistan and Türkiye are together pushing for iftar, the meal shared by Muslims at the end of a day of fasting during the month of Ramadan, and its traditions to be recognized.

Other applicants include the "traditional skills of loincloth



A Peruvian artisan fisherman prepares a traditional ceviche for himself and colleagues, using grey mullets ('lisa' in Spanish) caught in the early morning, while floating in the Lima Bay. **PHOTO: AFP**

weaving" in Ivory Coast, as well as bolero — "identity, emotion and poetry turned into song" — from Cuba and Mexico.

The UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage and its list were adopted in 2003, then ratified by 30 member states in 2006. In the beginning, there was initial reluctance from some countries who feared certain states would seek to hog shared traditions for themselves, UNESCO Assistant Director-General for Culture Ernesto Ottone said.

But two decades on, 181 countries are signatories, and many have instead put forward joint petitions for traditions they share. — AFP

## Indonesia rescuers find last missing hiker on volcano, toll rises to 23

THE last hiker missing after a volcano eruption in Indonesia was found dead Wednesday, rescuers said, raising the death toll to 23 three days after the disaster.

Mount Marapi on the island of Sumatra in Indonesia's west spewed an ash tower 3,000 metres (9,800 feet) — taller than the volcano itself — into the sky on Sunday as 75 people hiked in the area.

Hundreds of rescuers have worked tirelessly to find the

missing hikers, who have been carried down the mountain in bodybags in an arduous search effort hampered by further eruptions and bad weather that sometimes forced workers to take shelter.

"The joint search and rescue team has found one victim of the Mount Marapi eruption, who is now in the process of being evacuated," Abdul Malik, head of the Padang Search and Rescue Agency, told reporters on Wednesday evening. — AFP



Mount Marapi on the island of Sumatra spewed an ash tower 3,000 metres into the sky on Sunday as scores hiked in the area. **PHOTO: AFP**

## US facing growing Middle East crisis tied to Israel-Hamas war

*Feltman expressed concern that incremental escalation could unintentionally lead to a regional conflagration.*

WASHINGTON is facing an increasingly complex and dangerous crisis resulting from the Israel-Hamas war, which has sparked repeated militant attacks and drawn US military attention and assets back to the Middle East.

The United States has deployed two aircraft carriers and other forces in a bid to deter a devastating region-wide conflict. But the current violence in the Middle East — while not rising to that level — still carries significant danger.

Iran-backed Huthi rebels in Yemen raised the stakes over the weekend by striking commercial vessels in the Red Sea, while a US Navy destroyer shot down several inbound drones as it operated in the area and responded to distress calls.

"Without question there's been escalation," but all parties, especially the United States, "are trying to manage



A handout picture courtesy of the US Navy shows the guided missile destroyer USS Carney firing on missiles and drones launched from Yemen on 19 October 2023. **PHOTO: US NAVY/AFP/FILE**

these clashes in ways that do not explode into a regional war," said Jeffrey Feltman, a visiting fellow at the Brookings Institution and former US assistant secretary of state for near eastern affairs.

However, "I think we should be deeply, deeply worried that step-by-step escalation, while perhaps no party intends it to turn into a regional conflagration, could lead us there," he said. — AFP

# SPORTS

## New sliding track in Cortina for 2026 Olympics back on table

*Milan-Cortina chief Giovanni Malago stated that the Italian government has ordered the relocation of bobsleigh, luge, and skeleton competitions due to rising costs.*

ITALIAN deputy prime minister Matteo Salvini has insisted a new track for sliding events at the 2026 Milan-Cortina Olympics could be built at Cortina d'Ampezzo, despite the plans previously being shelved.

Milan-Cortina chief Giovanni Malago told an International Olympic Committee Session in Mumbai in October his organization had been effectively ordered by the Italian government to move the bobsleigh, luge and skeleton competitions due to spiralling costs.

Malago had said the events would likely be held outside Italy.

But Salvini, also transport minister, told a steering committee for the 2026 Games on Tuesday evening that a new proposal for a track at Cortina could be made.

"The ministry of transport will develop a proposal that will not cost Italians a cent more," the ministry said at the end of the meeting.

"The aim is to present a project to decision makers as soon as possible."



The track in Cesena used for the 2006 Turin Olympics has been tipped as a possible replacement. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

The ministry quoted Salvini as saying: "We have already lost too much time."

The IOC has said it supports moving the sliding sports competitions outside of Italy, although

renovating the track in Cesena which was used for the 2006 Turin Games has also been touted as an option.

The 2026 Milan-Cortina organizing committee said in

a statement it was "waiting to receive the projects (for Cortina and Cesana) in order to carry out a verification phase with the IOC and the international federations concerned". — AFP

## Bayern Munich agree deal to sign Spain's Zaragoza next season

BAYERN Munich have reached an agreement to sign Spain winger Bryan Zaragoza from La Liga side Granada next summer, the German champions announced on Wednesday.

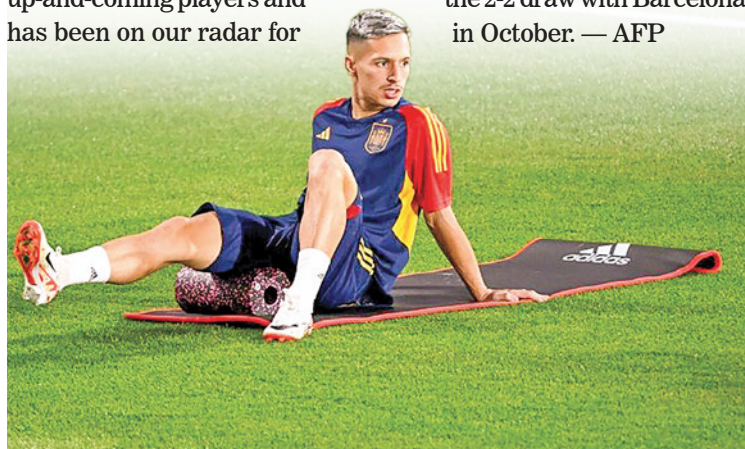
The agreed fee for the 22-year-old winger is a reported 15 million euros (\$16 million) and Bayern said he will pen a five-year deal running until 2029.

"Bryan is one of Spain's up-and-coming players and has been on our radar for

a while," Bayern's sporting director Christoph Freund said.

"He'll increase our attacking options. We wish him the best of luck for the rest of the season with Granada and look forward to him joining us in the summer."

Zaragoza has scored five goals and laid on two assists in 14 league matches this season, including netting a double in the 2-2 draw with Barcelona in October. — AFP



Winger Bryan Zaragoza was called up to the Spanish national side for the first time in October. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

## Newcastle 'keeper Pope out for 'around four months' with injury

NEWCASTLE goalkeeper Nick Pope will be sidelined for "around four months" with a shoulder injury, manager Eddie Howe said on Wednesday as his list of absentees continued to grow.

England's Pope, who needed surgery on his same left shoulder in 2018 while a Burnley player, suffered a dislocation when diving during last weekend's 1-0 Premier League victory over Manchester United.

He joins Newcastle's lengthy injury list which has left Howe making very few substitutions in recent matches, with several youth-team players on the bench.

"There's no doubt he needs an operation so he will be out for a period of time, we think around four months," Howe told a press conference ahead of Thursday's league game at Everton.

"It's the same shoulder (as 2018 injury) but a different part of the shoulder. There was no



Nick Pope suffered a shoulder dislocation in Newcastle's win over Manchester United. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

reason for that happening."

Media reports have linked Newcastle with both out-of-favour Arsenal 'keeper Aaron Ramsdale and former Man United number one David de Gea, who is a free agent.

But Howe was keen to play down speculation of signing a short-term replacement in January. "I've seen a lot of the media headlines and press spec-

ulation regarding goalkeepers and other players," said Howe.

"We've not made any enquiries or decisions regarding our recruitment leading into January and I have said many times that is because if we were to recruit now we would probably be recruiting in every position on the pitch because we have injuries everywhere throughout the squad. — AFP



RECOVERED  
ARTIFACTS

## US returns \$8 mln of stolen treasures to Türkiye

UNITED States authorities have returned \$8 million of stolen antiquities — some of which were plundered as far back as the 1960s — to Türkiye, a prosecutor said on Tuesday.

Among the 41 pieces returned were two Heads of the Roman emperor Caracalla and the Bust of a Lady which were trafficked from Bubon, a Roman-era site in southwest Türkiye which was extensively looted in the 1960s.

"During my administration we have returned 90 antiquities to Türkiye, valued at more than \$60 million," said Manhattan district attorney Alvin Bragg, announcing the returns.

The pieces were returned at a ceremony attended by Türkiye's Deputy Culture Minister Gokhan Yazgi.

"Together I believe we can put an end to the blows dealt to the identity and history of nations," he said. — AFP

# Putin arrives in Abu Dhabi for talks with UAE President

*Russian President Putin visits UAE to discuss bilateral, regional, and international affairs with President Al Nahyan, focusing on Gaza conflict, Middle East crises, and progress of Russia's military operation in Ukraine.*

**S**PUTNIK is live as Russian President Vladimir Putin arrives in the United Arab Emirates to meet with UAE President Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan and discuss bilateral, regional, and international affairs.

The talks will cover the ongoing conflict in the Gaza Strip and other crises in the Middle East, including Syria, Yemen, and Sudan. The progress of Russia's special military operation in Ukraine is also expected to be on the agenda.

Both Gulf monarchies have received an invitation to join BRICS this year, and their accession during Russia's upcoming chairmanship in the organization is also expected to be discussed. With Saudi Arabia's leader, Putin will discuss energy cooperation within the OPEC+ format.

Russian President Vladimir Putin has not travelled to the Middle East since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic — the last time he was in the region was in 2019, when he also visited the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia. — SPUTNIK



This pool photograph distributed by Russian state agency Sputnik shows Russia's President Vladimir Putin arriving for a ceremony to receive credentials from newly appointed foreign ambassadors to Russia at the Kremlin in Moscow on 4 December 2023. PHOTO: PAVEL BEDNYAKOV/SPUTNIK

## Southeast Asia banks on aviation boom



Southeast Asia accounts for 10 per cent of global traffic and Boeing expects it to grow about 9.5 per cent annually over the next two decades. PHOTO: LILLIAN SUWANRUMPHA / AFP

MAJOR airport expansion projects are taking off across Thailand, Cambodia and Viet Nam, and a new airline is set to launch next year — all banking on an expected boom in air travel in Southeast Asia, fuelled by Chinese and Indian tourists. Thailand's Really Cool Airlines is expected to start flying between Bangkok and Japan around mid-2024, but CEO Patee Sarasin — a veteran of the region's cutthroat budget sector — says it has been a battle to launch a new carrier just after a pandemic.

Patee ran budget carrier Nok Air for more than a decade, but while he is coy about the finer details of the new venture, he claims it may yet "change the aviation paradigm". He added: "Southeast

Asia is going to be probably one of the centres of the universe in the future, with the slowdown in Europe, and in the US".

Flying took a hammering globally during the pandemic as international travel all but shut down, but the industry is bullish about its bounceback, evidenced by a flurry of big-ticket orders at this month's Dubai Air Show and bumper profit jumps for the likes of Air France-KLM and Ryanair. **Airport boom**

Southeast Asia is becoming a hot property, with private and public players competing for an expanding market.

The region currently accounts for 10 per cent of global traffic — more than 500 million passengers in 2019. — AFP