

The Global **NEW LIGHT** of MYANMAR

Manufacturing sector exports bag US\$6.18 bln in 8 months



Employees work at a garment factory in Yangon on 12 May 2023. The export value from the manufacturing sector crossed US\$6.185 billion in the past eight months of the current financial year 2023-2024, beginning 1 April. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

THE export value from the manufacturing sector crossed US\$6.185 billion in the past eight months of the current financial year 2023-2024, beginning 1 April, the Ministry of Commerce's statistics showed.

Industrial goods exports earned \$7.8 billion in the corresponding period last FY. The figures showed a drop of \$1.6 billion this FY compared to the

year-ago period.

Myanmar exports agricultural products, livestock products, fisheries, minerals, forest products, finished industrial goods and other goods. At the same time, it imports capital goods, intermediate goods, raw materials for CMP garment factories and consumer goods.

Myanmar has implemented the Na-

tional Export Strategy (NES) 2020-2025 to bolster exports. The priority sectors of the NES comprise agricultural production, garment and apparel, industrial and electronic device, fishery business, forest product, digital manufacturing and service, logistic service, quality management, trade information service, innovation and entrepreneurship sectors. — NN/EM

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Myanmar Digital News receives tech-related equipment

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National Literary Award winners undergo medical checkups, visit Maravijaya Buddha Image

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Leasing plan for 17 State-owned cotton grinding factories unveiled

Myanmar's rubber exports swell to US\$123 mln in 8 months

ACCORDING to the Ministry of Commerce, Myanmar shipped 99,660 tonnes of rubber to foreign countries as of 1 December in the current financial year 2023-2024, beginning 1 April, garnering over US\$123.69 million.

Myanmar Rubber Association aims to achieve about 300,000 tonnes of rubber export this FY.

The prevailing prices are K1,580 per pound of Ribbed Smoked Sheet Local 3 and K1,560 for sun-dried rubber in Mon

State's rubber market.

Myanmar's rubber prices are influenced by the global demand for rubber, rubber production of the Southeast Asian nations and market supply.

The traders elaborated that the rubber price in Mon State, a significant rubber production state in Myanmar, is closely tied to those factors as well.

Seventy per cent of rubber produced in Myanmar goes to China. It is also

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Workers engaged in export rubber processing on the production line.

NATIONAL

SINCE the peak season began, Kachin State has seen an increase in foreign travellers compared to the previous year, as reported by the Directorate of Hotels and Tourism. Starting from the end of October, local alpinists have explored the four snow-capped mountains in PutaO: Hponkan Razi, Hponyin Razi, Hpangran Razi, and Madwe Razi. PutaO is the most lucrative attraction in the region, providing a nature-based tourism and mountaineering experience.

The directorate has outlined plans to construct a mountain road and creek-crossing bridge in January. Collaboration with the Myanmar Tourism Entrepreneurs Association is also underway for the Myitsone resort project and Panwa snow-capped mountain expedition.

The Ministry of Hotels and Tourism recommends destinations for this peak season, including Nay Pyi Taw, Yangon, Mandalay, Bagan, Ngwehsaung, Chaungtha, Ngapali, PyinOoLwin, Inlay, Kalaw, Taunggyi, Kawthoung, Kyaukpyu, Manaung Island, and PutaO.



The Photo showcases a captivating natural destination in Myanmar. **PHOTOS: KANU**

Kachin welcomes more foreign tourists than last year

Foreign visitors typically access Kachin State by flight, exploring the Myitsone area and Indawgyi Lake. Local visitors often visit PutaO for mountaineering. U Khine Oo, director of

the Directorate of Hotels and Tourism (Myitkyina), mentioned that Myitkyina had received over 1,500 foreign visitors last year, with more than 1,700 until September this year. Bookings from

Thai holidaymakers were recently accepted.

He added that the town welcomed tourists from over 50 countries, with most of them arriving via Yangon and Manda-

lay by flight. These visits often include stops at Indawgyi Lake, Myitsone, and the surrounding areas of Myitkyina. While local alpinists commonly frequent PutaO, access for foreigners may have limitations. Government and private sector efforts are underway to enhance the thriving potential of Kachin's tourism industry.

Migratory birds arrive at Indawgyi Lake (or Indawgyi Wildlife Sanctuary), the largest inland lake in Asia, during this time of the year, attracting both local and foreign birdwatchers. The Kampaiti border allows foreign visitors to travel to Waingmaw for 14 days. The Kachin State government is working to promote this border crossing as an international gateway, enabling foreign travellers to reach as far as Myitkyina directly.

Kachin currently boasts 35 hotels and guesthouses in Myitkyina District, 12 in PutaO, and one in the Indawgyi area. Initiatives are under implementation to introduce homestay-based tourism in some destinations.— Nyein Thu (MNA)/NT



The breathtaking scenery of snow-capped Mt Phonkanrazi.



A camper enjoying the experience at a travel destination.



A trekking team conquering an icy mountain ascent.

Myanmar's rubber exports swell ...

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shipped to Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia, Viet Nam, the Republic of Korea, India, Japan, and other countries.

In Myanmar, rubber is commonly produced in Mon and Kayin states and Taninthayi, Bago, and Yangon regions. As per 2018-2019 rubber season data, there are over 1.628 million

acres of rubber plantations in Myanmar, with Mon State accounting for 497,153 acres, followed by Taninthayi Region with 348,344 acres and Kayin State with 270,760 acres.

The rubber production in the last FY 2022-2023 exceeded 360,000 tonnes, and over 200,000 tonnes of rubber were shipped to foreign trade partners. — NN/EM

National Lifetime Award for Literary Achievement, National Literary Award, and Sarpay Beikman Manuscript Award ceremony for 2023 to be broadcast live

THE National Lifetime Award for Literary Achievement, National Literary Award, and Sarpay Beikman Manuscript Award ceremony for 2023 will be held at the Myanmar International Convention Centre II (MICC-II) in Nay Pyi Taw at 9:30 am on 13 December (today).

The ceremony will be broadcast live on MRTV-HD, MRTV News, MWD-HD, MWD Variety, MITV, MOI Website, MOI YouTube, MRTV Online and App and aired live on Radio Myanmar beginning from 9:20 am today. — MNA/MKKS

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

Myanmar Digital News receives tech-related equipment

THE technical equipment handover ceremony for Online Digital Newspaper and News Portal Services under Myanmar Digital News was held yesterday.

Speaking at the event, Union Minister for Information U Maung Maung Ohn said that science and technology are growing too fast, and the news spread swiftly without delays. Some online media outlets follow media ethics, but some intentionally spread false information to cause political disagreement and raise tension.

When journalists, media and online users from developing countries, including Myanmar, are weak in considering the danger of propaganda, the online media, Myanmar Digital News, was launched on 11 January 2018 to provide the citizens and world countries with trustworthy information and the nation's progress.

The Union minister also highlighted the online version of Myanmar Digital News (MDN), such as Digital Newspaper and News Portal, and expressed



The technical equipment handover event in progress yesterday, attended by Union Minister U Maung Maung Ohn in Nay Pyi Taw.

gratitude to Megalink Advanced Technologies Co Ltd for donating technical equipment.

The Union minister presented certificates of honour to Megalink Advanced Technol-

ogies Co Ltd officials and concluded the ceremony. — MNA/KTZH

UNDP highlights significant healthcare access gaps for Myanmar migrants in Thailand



Myanmar migrant workers at a construction site in Thailand.

A considerable gap exists in access to healthcare for documented and undocumented workers from Myanmar in Thailand, according to a report by UNDP.

Mental health issues are common among those undocumented Myanmar workers.

The report said that healthcare access also varies with their locations, and its coverage is the highest in Thailand.

Due to the hospital registration system based on their work permit, healthcare access is disrupted when they have to move to another location, it stated.

It is estimated that 2.5 million people who entered legally are working in Thailand, most of whom are from Myanmar; Cambodia, Laos and other neighbouring countries. About 75 per cent

of them are Myanmar people, it also said.

The report described unequal working conditions and benefits between legal and undocumented workers.

While sending legal workers, Myanmar held a meeting with Thailand authorities on 6 December to be able to issue identity cards to undocumented Myanmar workers. Among the issues discussed were the renewal of the MOU and labour recruiting agreement, issuance of pink cards for temporary work permits as decided by the Thai government, future plans to allow those with Certificate of Identity (CI) to work and stay, and safe and official channels for sending their remittances home. — Thit Taw/ZN

Speech of East Timor President José Ramos-Horta likely to interfere in internal affairs, sovereignty of other nations, and also lower the role of President as he was hired by NUG: veteran politician

By Myo Khine

THE speech of East Timor President José Ramos-Horta is likely to interfere in the internal affairs and sovereignty of other nations and also lower the role of a president as though if he was hired by NUG, Colonel Khun Okka, Patron of PNLO told The Global New Light of Myanmar (GNLM).

The East Timor President made a comment, as mentioned above in his video message, urging Myanmar soldiers to leave Tatmadaw.

“It breaks the government-to-government relations and the other nation's internal affairs and sovereignty. The situation might change if a civilian with no political power or who is not a president or prime minister says something like that. But now, he is a president of an authorized government. He should understand the facts to

respect between the countries. He had gone too far. He should say that he supports the charter of ASEAN and urges to follow the ASEAN charter. But now, he said all the soldiers must surrender and mentioned what to do. So, his doings are likely to represent NUG members. He degrades himself. The role of the head of a nation declines, as he said, for being hired by NUG. His dignity also becomes lower. It should not be like that, whatever the perspective is,” Col Khun Okka said.

The State Administration Council regarded the NUG, formed of unlawful Hluttaw representatives, as a terrorist group.

However, the Timor-Leste government met NUG, which was irresponsible, so the charge d'affaires of the Embassy of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste was ordered on

27 August 2023 to leave Myanmar no later than 1 September.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Myanmar also released a statement that Timor-Leste was encouraging to commit terrorist acts in Myanmar.

“Although he encouraged to wave a white flag, his words are supposed to be real violence. He could object if he attended the ASEAN (meetings) as an observer. But he said that, and it is recorded in ASEAN as violence in history. Timor has no geographic link with Myanmar. It is just a small country. The lands are not connected, and the religious perspectives are different. It is not yet a member of ASEAN. All should be against it,” said a former Hluttaw representative.

Timor-Leste is looking forward to becoming an ASEAN member country.

Translated: KTZH

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NATIONAL

National Literary Award winners undergo medical checkups, visit Maravijaya Buddha Image



The literati are pictured during their observation tours in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

THE award-winning doyen writers staying in Nay Pyi Taw to attend the Ceremony of National Lifetime Awards for Literary Achievement and National Literary Awards for 2022 received medical checkups at Nay Pyi Taw's 1,000-bed General Hospital. They paid homage to the

Maravijaya Buddha Image yesterday.

Specialists at the hospital checked their conditions, focusing on diabetes, hypertension, and heart diseases, among other necessary examinations, and provided health advice.

Later in the evening, the

literati visited the Maravijaya Buddha Image, the world's tallest sitting marble Buddha image in Buddha Park in Dekkhinathiri Township.

There, they paid homage to the Buddha image and contributed funds for the comprehensive upkeep of the Buddha image. — MNA/NT

Counter-argument to false information

Fake news: People pressured to return loans in Ayeyawady Region

FAKE news is distributed that "in Ayeyawady Region, the Myanma Agricultural Development Bank is sending a warning letter and asking local people to return loans, saying that they will take action if they don't pay back the arrears of the agricultural loans that the NLD government lent."

Regarding the news, according to an official from the Ministry of Planning and Finance, "Myanma Agricultural Development Bank has been lending annual agricultural loans at low-interest rates to help farmers with their agricultural inputs. In such lending, a new loan system is applied only after the previous year's arrears have been paid off, and efforts are being made in accordance with the procedures to recover the arrears. The district and township branches of the Myanma Agricultural Development Bank in Ayeyawady Region are only collecting arrears through an organized method,

and no case has been lodged against any farmer who fails to settle the loan.

According to the terms of the loan instructions, new loans are given to farmers who have paid their arrears before planting time.

Therefore, the news circulating on social networks is only false information published by the malicious media to mislead the Myanma Agricultural Development Bank and the farmers about the lending of agricultural loans. — MNA/KZL



Screenshot validates misinformation.

Timor-Leste President's remark on Myanmar "intrusive"; commentator replies, "Learn Myanmar's history first"

THE recent remarks by the president of Timor-Leste regarding Myanmar have sparked controversy, with some local political commentators considering them "intrusive" into the country's affairs. In response, they suggest President José Ramos-Horta acquaint himself with Myanmar's history before making such public statements.

The controversy revolves around President Ramos-Horta's message to Myanmar sol-

diers. One observer commented, "He should learn more about Myanmar's history if he wants to make such statements. Criticizing without concrete evidence and reference to back it up is just speculating."

The observer pointed out that the previous election was rife with voter fraud, with some constituents allegedly casting their votes twice or thrice. Regardless of how these cases occurred, the responsibility to

address them falls on the country's leader, and the observer believes that the Timor-Leste president may not fully understand these complexities.

The observer also questioned the president, asking how many nations have closed their embassies and left Myanmar since 1 February 2021 and how many countries have expelled Myanmar's ambassadors. He emphasized that sowing discord within Tatmadaw is akin to fo-

menting discord within the nation, citing historical examples like the division of Viet Nam and the Korean peninsula.

Responding to these remarks, another commentator, U Bobo Kyaw Nyein, expressed nonchalance, stating, "I'm not worried about what he said. He's just wasting his time." He suggested that Timor-Leste, a small nation, uses its president's advocacy for democracy and human rights to attract funds from

Western countries. He asserted that such proclamations would not sway Tatmadaw.

Tin Swe, vice-chairman of the Democratic Party (Myanmar), added, "I think this is just a tactic to amplify his role. Even powerful nations are intervening in our country's affairs. However, we're working in line with the Constitution. No one has the right to intrude in our Mother Law." — Htet Oo Maung/NT

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

NATIONAL

BEFORE presenting about the Rawang people and Azi (aka) hemp, I would like to explain the word “Rawang,” which means a tribe that wears white clothes. The Maru tribe called them Nai Baung. The Chinese called them Kuzi (people living on the bank of the Ayeyawady River). The Kachin and Shan people called them Nung or Khanaung.

They are Tibetan-Myanmar and are included in the Losomuso group. The Rawang people are well-built, have fair complexions, and possess prominent jaws and aquiline noses. Both men and women wear white clothes. The leaders of Nung wear hats made of bamboo and decorated with boar tusks. They carry long spears and knives.

The Rawang people live in the Naung Mon (Kasan Chaung) valley of the PutaO region, the Maykha valley of the Khaunglanphoo region and Khayankhuu at the foot of Mont Khakaborazi. They also reside in the upper parts of Myanmar and along the Tisan, Tamine, Tayone and Inmaikha rivers and lower parts of the Akyan river basin in the PutaO region. They work so hard and do farming, pounding paddy and weaving the whole day. They produce threads from Azi (aka) hemp.

Khalan Village at the foot of the snow-capped mountain

The village is on the road



The tranquil lifestyle of the Rawang people.

Azi (aka) hemp, the heart of the Rawang people

BY HPONKAN (PUTAO)

to PutaO-Mount Phonkanrazi, about 30 miles from PutaO. We visited Khalan Village to make a documentary about Azi (aka) hemp, which is used for the clothes of the Rawang people.

The village has 30 houses with 168 people. We must pass Monelan Chaung, Wanghlinedan

village, Lonenadan village and Khalan village to get to Ziyadang village, at the foot of Mount Phonkanrazi. We can get there after a five or six-hour ride (motorcycle).

The heart of the Rawang people

The Rawang people wear traditional clothes woven from Azi or hemp plant from generation to generation. “We use a hemp plant for weaving that has been used since our ancestors. It is called Azi in our Rawang language,” said U Sayet Dee, secretary of the Myanmar Rawang Literature and Culture Association.

The threads used in the weaving process of the Rawang people are produced step by step, from raw thread to finished ones. He added that the finished threads are used to make traditional clothes and other materials.

“The Azi plants harvested from the farmlands are soaked in the water and chopped into pieces to get threads. When we get thread, they are fastened, and we dry them in the sun. Then, the raw threads are split to get a bundle of threads. Then, we go step by step. We wrap them with materials called Oh-Sal and Oh-Kha to get compact threads. Then, we must boil them

mature. We must bundle them up and keep them in the sun for two weeks. Then, they are soaked in the water, and we peel them and produce thread,” he continued. **Hemp, family of Cannabaceae**

The Azi (aka) hemp plants are prohibited in Myanmar as narcotic drugs, and they cannot be grown officially to weave traditional clothes, U Sayet Dee hesitated about that, showing sadness on his face.

“As our tradition, we have been wearing clothes made of Azi thread since the time of our ancestors. However, it was banned as a drug in Myanmar under the law. Therefore, we cannot grow them officially to weave our clothes,” he said.

The Agriculture, Livestock and Rural Development Committee of Pyithu Hluttaw tried to amend the currently existing Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law in 2019 to legalize the plantation of Industrial Hemp, which is a type of cannabis plant. Industrial hemp contains



The Rawang people wear traditional clothes woven from Azi or hemp plant from generation to generation.

with clean ash powder for two days to get the finished thread. Then, we dry them, and they can be used to weave traditional clothes, bags, and crossbow strings. We mainly use traditional looms, handweaving.”

Azi plant season and cultivation

The Azi (aka) hemp plants are grown at 4,000 feet above sea level in February and in low-lying regions in January. He explained that they are harvested in August and September to produce thread while in December for seedlings production.

“These plants are usually grown in the farmland. They are grown in February in the Khalan region at 4,000 feet above sea level but in January in lower parts like Putao Plain. We can harvest them in August and September to produce thread and in December to keep the seeds when they

only 0.3 per cent tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), and the Ministry of Home Affairs made an initial comment to add to the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law without recognizing them as cannabis plants at that time.

Currently, hemp plants are grown legally in 57 countries, including China, Thailand, Europe, and the US. Some also grow for commercial purposes.

Stand with the Rawang people

It is a dream of the Rawang people to cultivate Azi (aka) hemp freely, which is described as part of the heart of the Rawang people, as it has been worn as a traditional garment since their ancestors. We also wish for honest Rawang people to make their dreams come true quickly.

Translated/KTZH



Above and top photos showcase a Rawang woman skilfully weaving traditional attire from hemp threads, offering a glimpse into the lifestyle of the Rawang people adorned in their cultural garments.

NATIONAL

Myanmar expats in Singapore obliged to pay income tax from 12 Dec



The photo shows Myanmar citizens at the Myanmar Embassy in Singapore.

THE Myanmar Embassy in Singapore has announced that Myanmar citizens residing in Singapore are obliged to pay income tax starting from 12 December 2023.

The Ministry of Planning and Finance, through Notification 79/2023 dated 22 November 2023, has stipulated that Myanmar citizens must pay income tax on salary income earned

abroad, effective from 1 October 2023.

As a result, the Myanmar Embassy in Singapore will handle passport extensions and consular matters only after the payment of income tax from October 2023 onwards. The monthly tax rate to be collected depends on the type of residence permit, with a two per cent tax applied to the set rate. However, holders of student passes will be exempted from paying income tax upon presentation of their current school certificates.

Similarly, individuals classified as dependents, including spouses, parents, sons or daughters of taxpayers, can extend their status by submitting the household list, birth chart, and marriage contracts. Those returning to Myanmar for various reasons are required to bring their income tax receipts, dependency certificates, or student certificates to the Myanmar Embassy in Singapore. — TWA/TKO

HED releases lists of admitted candidates for Distance Education Courses

THE Higher Education Department has published the lists of candidates admitted to distance education courses. Starting 11 December, students who have passed the 2023 matriculation exam can check the lists of admitted students for first-year distance-learning classes. This information is available at their respective degree colleges or universities and can be accessed online via www.moe.gov.mm or www.dhe.gov.mm.

Of the 161,850 individuals who took the matriculation exams in 2023, 109,850 candidates passed. Vocational degree colleges and universities began their programmes in November, and the launch of distance education degree colleges and universities will commence soon. — TWA/NT



Yangon University of Distance Education.

ME in S Korea issues clarification on seasonal worker recruitment

THE Myanmar Embassy in the Republic of Korea clarified that the Korean government has not issued any notification regarding the despatch of seasonal workers from Myanmar.

Similarly, the Korean Embassy in Myanmar emphasized that despite the absence of official notifications, there are continued offline and online advertisements about recruiting seasonal

workers from Myanmar. It cautioned employment agencies against creating advertisements that falsely suggest a connection to official notifications from the Korean government. — TWA/TRKM

FROM 6 to 12 December this year in the Yangon Bayintnaung commodity market, prices of rice, onion, garlic from Shan State, sugar, jaggery, potato and garlic from Kyukok increased while black gram prices decreased.

Onion

Approximately 66,000 visses of old onions from various regions entered the Yangon market on 12 December, with Seikphyu onion prices ranging between K3,300, K4,300, K4,800 and K5,100 per viss; Myingyan (old) onion prices were at between K3,300, K4,300, and K4,700; whereas Myingyan (new) onion prices were between K2,300, K3,300, and K3,700 per viss.

The onion price is said to be turning downward on 12 December 2023 after a year, although it reached the highest point on 4 December 2022. On 11 December, approximately 180,000 old onion visses entered the Pakokku market, and the maximum price was K2,475 per viss.

Garlic

On 12 December, Kyukok garlic was priced at K11,500-K12,500 per viss, whereas the garlic from Aungban, Shan State, ranged between K13,500, K14,300, K14,800,

Weekly updated prices of Bayintnaung Commodity Market



A retail outlet seen selling dry kitchen groceries.

and K15,200 per viss.

Potato

Chinese potato price slightly increased on 12 December to K3,000 per viss from K2,800 per viss on 9 December.

Chilli

Various chilli prices on 12 December were: ordinary Wakema long chilli was

K7,500 per viss; Shan long chilli was K9,000 per viss; and Moehtaung chilli peppers from various regions were K10,000 to 10,500 per viss.

Panye and Myarni bell peppers that are processed in cold storage were priced at K15,500 and K14,800 per viss, respectively. In addition, delta region bell

peppers processed in cold storage were valued at K23,000 (large), K21,000 (medium), and K15,000 (external brown) per viss, respectively. In contrast, the price of Sinphyukyun bell peppers at cold storage was K19,500-K21,000 per viss.

Rice

On 12 December at the Yangon rice market, the price per bag of regular Moe-sangyan rice was K68,000, Manawthukha new rice was K70,000, 90-day mature rice was K95,000, and old multi-cropped rice was K82,000; Pawkywe rice was priced at K95,000, new Ayeyawady Pawsan rice was valued at K130,000, old Pawsan rice at K150,000 and Shwebo rice at K160,000.

Palm Oil

The wholesale reference price of palm oil declined to K4,815 per viss from 11 to 17 December, marking a K105 per viss decrease compared to the previous week.

Beans and pulses

On 12 December, the black gram price was K2,895,000 per tonne for RC, and one tonne of pigeon peas was K3,100,000. Meanwhile, the price of green gram for a viss was K3,750, whereas one viss of Bengal gram was priced at K5,850-K6,100. — TWA/TMT

Leasing plan for 17 State-owned cotton grinding factories unveiled

THE Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation has announced its intention to lease 17 state-owned cotton grinder factories to the private sector through long-term contracts, aiming to foster private sector development.

Among 17, eight are located in Mandalay Region, seven

in Magway Region, and two in Sagaing Region.

Tender proposal forms can be obtained at the Department of Agriculture in Nay Pyi Taw commencing on 12 December, and the deadline for submitting proposals is 27 December. — TWA/ TMT



Cotton seen at a cotton grinding process mill.



A salt worker inspecting the salt field in preparation for harvesting.

Falls in salt prices persist

SALT farmers stressed salt prices dropped at a slower pace in Mon State's salt market.

The price was K190-200 per viss for sun-dried salt in early November. Then, the costs dipped to K145-155 per viss on 12 December.

As it is the time of salt harvesting, salt processed from those blocks will soon flow into the market, salt farmers said.

Salt production commenced in mid-September in Mon State. Harvesting raw salt

is from December to January.

Salt produced in Mon State are distributed to Taninthayi, Bago and Mandalay regions. In addition to domestic demand, it is exported to foreign markets upon the purchase offer.

In the last week of September, Myanmar signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with a company from South Korea for salt exports. It shipped a container loaded with 20 tonnes as a trial run, and further exports are bound

to happen.

Additionally, a container carrying 20 tonnes of raw salt from Panga village, Thanbyuzayat Township, Mon State, was preliminarily exported to Japan in August.

Mon State, the second largest producer in Myanmar, yearly produces 40,000 tonnes of sun-dried salt, beyond magnesium chloride (MgCl₂), iodized salt (I₂) and table salt (NaCl), with 12 salt processing factories. — NN/EM

Egg price on gradual fall

WITH the poultry catcher wages rising, egg prices fell slightly in the domestic market, indicating a drop of K700 within five days.

The price touched a high of K4,900 per viss on 29 November and then moved slowly to K4,700 on 5 December, K4,200 on 9 December and K4,000 on 10 December.

The egg prices move in the range between K145 and K360 per piece depending on weight (17, 20, 21, and 24 kilogrammes) in the wholesale Yangon market.

A mobile egg shop offered lower pricing plus additional benefits (Buy 20 pieces/Get 3 to 5 extra) on 24 November on the corner of Mahabandula Road and 18th Street. Afterwards, the shop offered only one extra if one bought ten pieces.

When the egg prices decreased again, the shop offered the



Card containers holding eggs displayed at the shopping mall.

additional benefit (Buy 20 pieces/Get five extra) again, Ko Aung Kyi from Latha Township said.

Transport disruption amid the fuel oil crunch caused the prices of eggs from the PyinOoLwin and Taunggyi areas to slide.

Nevertheless, the prices of

breakfast food become higher amid the inflation of commodity prices.

The prices of some breakfast delicacies doubled this year. The cooking gas filling costs and charcoal prices have been rising recently. — TWA/KK

Launch of YBS QR Code payment set for late December

YBS QR Code payment system, which enables passengers to pay bus fares using mobile phones, will be launched in late December, said U Lyan Cin Mang, joint secretary of the Yangon Region Public Transport Committee (YRTC).

Users can search for and download MP YPS on the Google Play Store and use them after registering and prepaid. This system will help passengers to avoid the shortage of banknotes.

"This QR code system can be available late this month. Data collection is in progress. Passengers can use it by installing the application in their phone, in place of the YPS card system," he said.

Currently, the YPS card system has been used on some YBS bus lines, though machines are not working and drivers collect bus fares, said passengers.

"The QR code payment system is good because we no longer need to worry about banknote problems and avoid overcharging. I welcome this system," said a YBS passenger. More than 130 YBS bus lines are running in Yangon, with more than 3,000 buses to commute up to 1.5 million passengers daily. — MT/ZS

OPINION

Stimulate the willingness to work and workability of each citizen

THE vitality of a nation's development hinges significantly on the enthusiasm and capability of its citizens to work. While the willingness to work is tied to the mental disposition of adults, workability is intricately linked to their physical qualifications. It is crucial to recognize that even with high workability, individuals cannot effectively translate their capabilities into tangible accomplishments without a genuine willingness to work.

Therefore, fostering an environment that stimulates the willingness to work among workable adults becomes imperative. Experts contend that a work environment rich with opportunities can act as a catalyst, encouraging individuals with the potential to work to embrace a proactive attitude. Those adults innocently anticipate their opportunities with hard work in daily duties in the workplace.

Myanmar's current gross domestic product reflects progress for the homeland, yet it lags behind other ASEAN member countries. To bridge this gap, there is a pressing need to cultivate an environment that enhances workability while simultaneously stimulating the willingness to work. By doing so, Myanmar stands to have the chance to keep pace with its regional counterparts in due time.

Every citizen of Myanmar plays a vital role in contributing to the prosperity of their families and the nation through substantial export endeavours. A focus on increasing export volumes, coupled with heightened workability and a reduction in daily import values, is imperative. To envision Myanmar as a developed nation, citizens must adopt frugality in all aspects, abstaining from unnecessary expenditures for an extended period if necessary.

Despite Myanmar's abundant natural resources and favourable climatic conditions, the subdued willingness to work among its citizens reflects a diminished manufacturing capacity. Drawing lessons from the experiences of other ASEAN member countries with thriving economies, Myanmar can learn from the concerted efforts of individuals with strong work ethics. Authorities must implement strategic plans that leverage the workability of the people, turning them into a dynamic force to modernize the country.

Despite Myanmar's abundant natural resources and favourable climatic conditions, the subdued willingness to work among its citizens reflects a diminished manufacturing capacity. Drawing lessons from the experiences of other ASEAN member countries with thriving economies, Myanmar can learn from the concerted efforts of individuals with strong work ethics. Authorities must implement strategic plans that leverage the workability of the people, turning them into a dynamic force to modernize the country.

The qualifications and willingness of the workforce are pivotal indicators of a country's development level. That is why relevant authorities must proactively stimulate the workability and willingness to work among individuals engaged in manufacturing, trading, and service sectors. This concerted effort will not only enhance the workforce's willingness but also drive improvements of the workable adults in the overall workplace environment, contributing to the nation's economic development.

*If literature, like water, is high
Nation, like lotus, will be high.
If the literary standard is low
Nation will be at a low.*

My Random Thoughts on Sarsodaw Nay, or Literati Day

By Maung Swe Ngae

ALMOST everyone in the literary arena may be quite familiar with this four-line stanza. I have learned it by heart since the time when I put pen to paper.

Today, Sarsodaw Nay, or Literati Day, has come round once again. Whenever this day draws nearer, my random thoughts on literary activities usually come over to me. Sometimes, they sink into oblivion. But now, may I pen a few lines of my random thoughts on this significant day?

The lists of recipients of the National Lifetime Award for Literary Achievement for 2022, winners of the National Literary Award, and Sarpay Beikman Manuscript Award were announced on 18 November 2023. The award-presenting ceremony is (will be) held on 13 December 2023, which coincides with the 1st Waxing of Nadaw (Nattaw).

Of the twelve months, the month of Nadaw traditional customs, the month of Nadaw has been designated as the month of making obeisance to the literati. Likewise, the award presentation ceremony for the winners of the literary awards, including the recipients of the National Lifetime Award for Literary of Achievement, is held on this auspicious Sarsodaw Day. We do so and will do so. Why? Simply because this enables the people and the posterity to know the full essence of literature and value the role of literati.

Myanmar literature, fine arts and culture have been flourishing

for years countable by the thousand. Throughout Myanmar's history, thanks to the endeavours made by men of letters and those who have served the nation's interests, the heritage of race, religion and national culture has been standing tall till today. In other words, literature is the main taproot that makes the branches of national culture and fine arts alive.

"History and culture are interdependent. They cannot exist and prosper isolated. Metaphorically speaking, there are two essential parts of a tree — history is the root, and culture is the fruit. Culture without history has no root, whereas history without culture bears no fruit. A nation is like a tree. If it has no history, it will never survive and grow; if it has no culture, it will never develop and progress. A nation with history and culture alone is a long-living and flourishing tree that can weather any storm and withstand any climate. Literature is one element of culture, and to study literature, historical background is necessary."

Sayagyi Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Sithu Dr Khin Maung Nyunt pointed out the important role of literature in the prologue of his book "An Outline History of Myanmar Literature".

According to Sayagyi U Pe Maung Tin, a lifelong scholar of



A Literary Award Presentation Ceremony held on the 1st Waxing of Nadaw.

Myanmar literature, periods of literature have been divided into seven periods — Bagan, Pinya, Inwa, Taungoo, Nyaung Yan, Early Konbaung and Late Konbaung. Throughout the past periods, Myanmar classical literature composed of different kinds of poems and prose flourished in accordance with the prevailing political, economic and social situations of

the periods. From the time of King Anawrahta of Bagan up to that of the exile of King Thibaw of the late Konbaung period, one can vividly see the birth and growth of Myanmar literature through the ups and downs of Myanmar political life, the interaction of Myanmar's history and literature and the strong influence of Theravada

Buddhism on Myanmar literature. However, the development of Myanmar Literature was retarded and neglected under the yoke of British imperialists. During the period when Myanmar remained in eclipse, literary works that dealt with political awareness emerged from patriotic writers' hearts. Such works served as guiding lights during

the time of anti-colonialism and national liberation struggles. Literary works agitating for national liberation, both in verse and song, appeared without interruption among the national people.

To put it in a nutshell, the participation of literary men in the political movements — GCBA activities, the 1920 Students Boycott opposing the colonial education system, Peasants Revolution in 1930, publications of Nagani Book Club (1937), 1300 ME Revolution sparked by Chauk Oilfield Strike (၁၃၀၀ ပြည့် ရေနံမြေ အရေးတော်ပုံ) — for upholding patriotism were not only significant but effective too. Again, in the Fascist Japanese occupation, literary men participated in the anti-fascist campaigns, using their pens as weapons. They unitedly showed the strength of their mightier pens.

It is for this reason that in recognition of the noble activities of the literary men, including literati and (literary) scholars, they are honoured by the State.

In the times of Myanmar's kings, the nation had the tradition of honouring outstanding literati, princes, and court officials with little. In the month of Nadaw, the king held a special audience at the palace and honoured those who had literary accomplishments. In this regard, we can read a brief history of Sarsodaw Nay, or 'Literati Day' (formerly used as 'Writers Day' and 'Men of Letters Day' and so on) compiled by Malikha in 'Myanmar Sarpay Abhidan (II)'.

During the Japanese occupation, while the compilation of dictionaries and encyclopaedia was being carried out in Kungyangon, a programme to celebrate the memorial day of U Ponnya was adopted. The Pinyinna Dagon

Association was informed to do so. Then, men of letters, those from the Pinyinna Dagon Association and the Writers Association, held a meeting on 8 May 1944 to observe the Sarsodaw Nay instead of observing a memorial day that would represent only a man of letters. The meeting decided that 'Bama Sarsodaw Nay' (မာမာဆီတော်နေ့) should be celebrated on the 1st Waxing of Nadaw of Myanmar Era (ME) every year instead of holding 'U Ponnya Memorial Day'.

In accordance with the decision, the first Sarsodaw Nay was observed on 15 November 1944 (1st Waxing of Nadaw 1306 ME). Myanmar Writers Association staged 'Wizaya Play' (ဝိဇယာပြဇာတ်) in Yangon. In commemoration of 'Sarsodaw Nay', literary talks, debates, literary competitions, and discussions were held in many parts of the nation.

From that year onwards, Sarsodaw Nay' is celebrated on the 1st Waxing of Nadaw every year. The Myanmar Writers Association mostly conducts the ceremony of Sarsodaw Nay. On this significant day, aged veteran writers and literary scholars are paid obeisance and literary talks are staged in honour of men of letters.

The first Sarsodaw Nay was observed at 'Myaing Theatre' near Kandawgyi Lake in Yangon. At the ceremony, Literary enthusiasts, men and women of letters, and even education department teachers honoured and praised the virtues of aged Literati.

Today, the government holds a grand ceremony to present literary awards, including National Lifetime Awards for Literary Achievement, National Literary Awards, and Sarpay Beikman Manuscript Awards (for 2022)

to the recipients and winners on this significant day of the literary world.

The lofty aims of holding the ceremony are to praise the literary virtues of professionals who have served the interests of the nation and the people with the might of pen, to enable the entire people to know and value the precious role of the literary and their works, and for the people to always keep the value and benefits of Myanmar literature in their mind.

Literati are honoured on the Sarsodaw Nay as they have developed and handed over literature to new generations by inheriting and preserving it.

Literature is the soul of a nation. A country's ups and downs solely depend on that nation's literary standard. No one can deny that.

Like world literature, Myanmar literature is a repository of progressive ideas and thoughts. To cherish and safeguard it is the unavoidable duty to be carried out by all and sundry of the literary world.

As long as the ceremony of Sarsodaw Nay and the literary awards presentation ceremony are maintained and promoted, we will gain many benefits from literature.

Adorable Myanmar literary heritage should be preserved.

Reference :

- *An Outline History of Myanmar Literature* by Dr Khin Maung Nyunt, Revised Edition (2023)
- *The New Light of Myanmar*, 4 December 2013

Phase 1 study of breast cancer vaccine present positive data in US

The vaccine, targeting high-risk operable triple-negative breast cancer (TNBC) and patients at high genetic risk, showed promising outcomes. Hopes are high for FDA approval to distribute the vaccine to the public following the completion of Phase 2 and 3 trials.

POSITIVE results from the Phase 1 clinical trial of a breast cancer vaccine were announced by Anixa Biosciences and Cleveland Clinic, with hopes of FDA approval to distribute the vaccine to the public after Phase 2 and 3 trials are complete.

In a poster session called "Phase I Trial of alpha-lactal-

bumin vaccine in high-risk operable triple-negative breast cancer (TNBC) and patients at high genetic risk for TNBC," the data were presented by George Thomas Budd, a staff physician in the Taussig Cancer Centre at Cleveland Clinic and the principal investigator of the study, at the 2023 San Antonio Breast Cancer Symposium this week.

This vaccine is designed to direct the immune system to destroy TNBC cancer cells through a mechanism that has never previously been utilized for cancer vaccine development.

The target of the vaccine is a protein called alpha-lactalbumin, which is produced by a woman's breast cells during lactation.

However, alpha-lactalbumin

is present in the tumour body of more than 70 per cent of TNBC patients, so researchers designed the vaccine by instructing the immune system to attack the tumour and keep it from growing entirely.

The Phase 1 clinical trial consisted of 16 patients diagnosed with TNBC. To each patient, three vaccinations were given

once every two weeks. Molecular markers of immune responses from both T-cells and B-cells were measured to evaluate the vaccination effect.

Data from the 16 patients treated to date showed that most patients developed significant T-cell responses, with a measurable but lesser magnitude of response in the remaining patients.

Dr Amit Kumar, CEO of Anixa Biosciences, stated: "The data from our Phase 1 trial to date has exceeded our expectations. We look forward to reviewing additional data as the trial continues to completion, and we are in the planning stages of the Phase 2/3 studies of this vaccine."

SOURCE: Xinhua



Magnetic resonance imaging may be used to diagnose breast cancer. PHOTO: PIX FOR VISUAL PURPOSE/CDC

NATIONAL

Report accepted for illegal storage, distribution

“THE public is worried and buying more than usual due to the recent misinformation on social media that there will be a fuel shortage soon.

Due to the greediness of some people, they repeatedly took out and resold oil at petrol stations. Some filling stations in

states and regions could not supply it, and there were some situations where sales were stopped temporarily before the arrival of bowzers.

To provide enough oil for public travel and general business matters, officials have distributed approximately three

times more to states and regions than before. However, people are still buying oil in queues at some petrol stations.

Due to the current state of the domestic oil balance and the continuous flow of oil ordered from abroad, there is no oil shortage in the country, so the public

can buy and use as much oil as they need with peace of mind without having to worry.

Many queues at petrol stations to purchase and resell and illegal storage and sales are also investigated and arrested, and effective action is taken under the law. People are urged to report

such activities to the relevant state and region supervisory and inspection offices of the Department of Petroleum Product Supervision and Inspection, as stated by the Fuel Oil Import, Storage and Distribution Business Supervision Committee. — MNA/KZL

CRIME NEWS

K10.44 bln worth of drugs, prohibited chemicals seized in Nay Pyi Taw, Mandalay and Sagaing

THE Police Force seized over K10.44 billion worth of drugs and restricted chemicals in Nay Pyi Taw council territory, Mandalay, and Sagaing regions, according to the Myanmar Police Force. Acting on a tip-off, a combined team, consisting of members of the Anti-Drug Police Force, searched a Chenglong tipper truck driven by Tin Zaw Latt, accompanied by Kyaw San Htay, in Lewe township at 7 pm on 1 December and seized 4,200,000 stimulant tablets. According to the investigation, the Police Force arrested Htan Kho Htay, who is in charge of drug transportation, at 11 pm on the same day at a hotel in Chanayethazan township of Sagaing region. The police seized a Toyota Land Cruiser car used in the transportation of drugs, along with K120.2 million in cash from his house in Hmawbi township.

Similarly, the police ar-



Offenders seen alongside seized drugs and a vehicle.

rested Win Aung, connected with drug transportation in Chanayethazan township at 4 am on 2 December, with 1.8 million stimulant tablets and a Toyota Prado car. Afterwards, the police arrested Than Than Htun (aka) Ah Sai with 176,000 stimulant tablets, 8.8 kilogrammes of heroin, and a Super Custom in Patheingyi township at 10 am on December 5, and Ma Lar Sanku Mie with 3.2 tonnes of the prohibited chemical Caffeine in Ka-

lay township at 3:30 pm on 9 December.

Offenders admitted not only to transporting the seized drugs from Shan State to Mandalay and Yangon by organizing a drug smuggling gang but also to transporting the seized restricted chemicals from Kaly to Shan State. The police have taken legal action against the offenders, and an investigation is underway to identify the perpetrators of the crime chain. — MNA/MKKS

Over K1 bln worth of ketamine and happy water seized in Hopong township

THE Police Force seized over K1 billion worth of ketamine and happy water in Hopong township, according to Myanmar Police Force.

Following a tip-off, a combined team, including members of the Anti-Drug Police Force, conducted a search on a Toyota HiAce vehicle driven by Sai Htun Lu (aka) Sai Naw Kae on the Taunggyi-Loilem Road in

Hopon township at 10:30 am on 10 December.

The operation resulted in the seizure of 9.09 kilogrammes of happy water and 100 grammes of ketamine, valued at over K1 billion. Legal action has been taken against the offender, and an investigation is underway to identify the perpetrators of the crime chain. — MNA/MKKS



An arrestee seen with confiscated drugs and a vehicle.

Illegal timbers, fuel oil, crude oil, motorbikes and vehicles confiscated



THE combined on-duty teams under the management of the Magway Region Illegal Trade Eradication Task Force confiscated 25 gallons of illegal crude oil and a Kenbo 110 motorbike valued at K275,000 in Minbu township and three unregistered

Confiscated illegal commodities in Sagaing Region.

motorbikes worth K900,000 near the Ayeyawady bridge in Magway township on 11 December. These actions were taken under the Public Property Protection Law and the Export and Import Law.

During inspections on 12 December, the combined teams seized 700 gallons of informal diesel oil worth K3.36 million without official documents in Monywa township and a Nissan UD (approximately K18 million)

carrying 1.129 tonnes of illegal teak and 5.956 tonnes of illegal other timbers worth K3,665,550 near the Milepost 2/2 on Nay Pyi Taw-Yangon expressway. The action was conducted under the Forest Law.

Thirteen arrests were made on 11 and 12 December, with an estimated value of K14,966,524 million, as reported by the Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee. — MNA/MKKS

Sex, death and madness on the night train from Tolstoy to Bond



English writer Dame Agatha Christie, at work on a typewriter in March 1946 in her home, Greenway House, in Devonshire. **PHOTO: AFP**

THE return of the sleeper train from Berlin to Paris is a reminder of the romance of railways that has long inspired writers, musicians and filmmakers.

One of the first-ever films, the 50-second "Arrival of a Train at La Ciotat Station", reportedly terrified audiences in 1896 who thought they were about to be squashed in their seats.

Long before and since, trains have provided a setting for love, mystery and danger

in some of the most enduring works of art.

Love and intrigue

Despite the romance, night trains fell out favour early this century, and most lines in Europe closed in the 2010s.

But with growing demand for low-emission forms of travel, several European countries are now looking into bringing them back. On Monday, a number of government ministers were on hand as the first Berlin-Paris

night train in nine years left the German capital on its 10-hour journey to Paris.

The service will run three days a week in each direction before going daily in October 2024.

Night trains became trendy after World War I as prices fell and Europeans sought a break after the war, said Andrew Martin, author of "Night Trains: The Rise and Fall of the Sleeper". — AFP

Japan's oldest person dies at 116

FUSA Tatsumi, a 116-year-old recognized as Japan's oldest person, died of old age Tuesday, according to a city official of Kashiwara in Osaka Prefecture where she lived.

Born on 25 April 1907, Tatsumi had recently spent most of her days in bed at a nursing home in Kashiwara and often greeted the employees working there, the facility said.

She became the oldest living person in Japan in April last year following the death of a 119-year-old woman in Fukuoka, according to the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare. As of January this year, the world's oldest living woman is Maria Branyas Morera in Spain, who is now 116 years old. She was born on 4 March 1907, according to the Guinness World Records. — Kyodo



Photo taken in Kashiwara in Osaka Prefecture, western Japan, on 30 June 2022, shows 115-year-old Fusa Tatsumi, who became Japan's oldest person when a 119-year-old woman died in April 2022. Tatsumi died on 12 December 2023, at age 116. **PHOTO: KYODO**

Patients regain much weight after stopping new obesity drug: study

A new generation of obesity drugs often delivers dramatic weight loss, but many patients wonder what happens when they stop treatment.

One study published Monday in the Journal of the American Medical Association provides an answer: much of the weight comes back, signalling patients may be locked into long term dependence on the drugs.

The research was based on weekly injections of tirzepatide, the compound in Eli Lilly's new weight loss drug Zepbound that was approved by the United States last month.

After 36 weeks, 670 adults achieved a notable mean weight loss of 20.9 per cent.

The group was then split into

two, with half continuing on Zepbound, and the other half given a placebo.

At 88 weeks, those on the placebo regained almost half of the weight they had lost, ending up 9.9 per cent lower than their baseline.

Those on Zepbound continued to lose weight, ending 25.3 per cent lower than where they had started.

The trial patients were mostly women and had a mean age of 48, with a mean weight at the outset was 107.3 kilogrammes (236.6 pounds).

All participants were encouraged to consume 500 calories less each day than they burnt and take at least 150 minutes of exercise per week. — AFP

Senegalese cinemas pay tribute to Sembene on 100th anniversary

THE lights fade and the screen lights up, transporting Senegalese cinemagoers back in time to the world of Ousmane Sembene, who would have been 100 this year.

To celebrate, Dakar mov-

ie theatres are showing some of the best-known works by the father of African film, including "The Money Order", "The Outsiders", "Camp de Thiaroye" and "Black Girl".

Sembene, who died in

2007 at the age of 84, is celebrated for championing social and political issues throughout his career as a writer and filmmaker.

"He showed the way to an entire generation of artists," said Senegalese film critic Baba Diop, arguing that Sembene had enabled African cinema to take the place it deserved.

Thanks to Sembene's team, scores of photos of the director have been rediscovered, pipe in mouth or peering in deep concentration through the lens of his camera.

The African cinema archive fund ASM is now digitalising these old negatives and is due to exhibit them in Burkina Faso, France and Italy. — AFP



(FILES) Senegalese director Ousmane Sembene, 82, poses for a photo in his office in Dakar on 18 February 2005. **PHOTO: AFP**

ECONOMY WORLD

Japan to issue 3 new banknotes on 3 July, 1st renewal in 20 years

JAPAN will start issuing new 10,000 yen (\$69), 5,000 yen and 1,000 yen banknotes on 3 July, marking the first redesign in about two decades, the Finance Ministry and the Bank of Japan said Tuesday.

Even after the new bills begin circulating, the current banknotes will remain legal tender.

The 10,000 yen bill will feature Eiichi Shibusawa, known as “the father of Japanese capitalism”. Umeko Tsuda, an educator who pioneered women’s higher education, will grace the new 5,000 yen bill while the 1,000 yen note will honour microbiologist Shibasaburo Kitasato,

who developed a serum therapy for tetanus.

The reverse sides of the three banknotes will show the Tokyo Station building, Japanese wisteria flowers and a work depicting Mt Fuji by ukiyo-e artist Katsushika Hokusai, respectively. They will include three-dimensional holograms to prevent forgery, the first use on any country’s currency.

At the end of December last year, 18.59 billion banknotes were in circulation, which is equivalent to about eight times the distance between the Earth and the Moon if they were lined up horizontally, according to the BOJ. — Kyodo



File photo taken April 2023 at the Bank of Japan’s headquarters in Tokyo shows samples of new banknotes scheduled to be issued from 3 July 2024. **PHOTO: KYODO**

Foreign tourist arrivals in Philippines surpass 5 mln mark

MORE than five million foreign tourists have visited the Philippines since January this year, exceeding the country’s 4.8 million international arrival target for 2023, the Department of Tourism (DOT) said Tuesday.

As of Tuesday, international tourist arrivals have been logged at 5,067,752, Tourism Secretary Christina Frasco said.

“This has contributed no less than nearly 440 billion

pesos (roughly 7.9 billion US dollars) to the Philippine economy,” Frasco said during a tourism event speech.

Frasco said the tourism industry created over 5.35 million jobs, with 11 in every 100 Filipinos employed in tourism-related jobs.

She expressed confidence that foreign tourist arrivals will rise amid the upcoming Christmas holidays.

Frasco said the tourism department will focus on im-

proving and enhancing the overall tourism experience around the country, vowing to build more tourist rest areas across the country.

Frasco said the Philippines’ goal for 2024 is 7.7 million foreign tourist arrivals.

DOT data showed that 2.65 million international travellers visited the Philippines in 2022, raking in 208.96 billion pesos (roughly 3.8 billion dollars) in revenue. — Xinhua



People sail on a tour boat in El Nido, Palawan province on 12 December 2023. **PHOTO: AFP**

Cambodia logs slight rise in exports during January-November

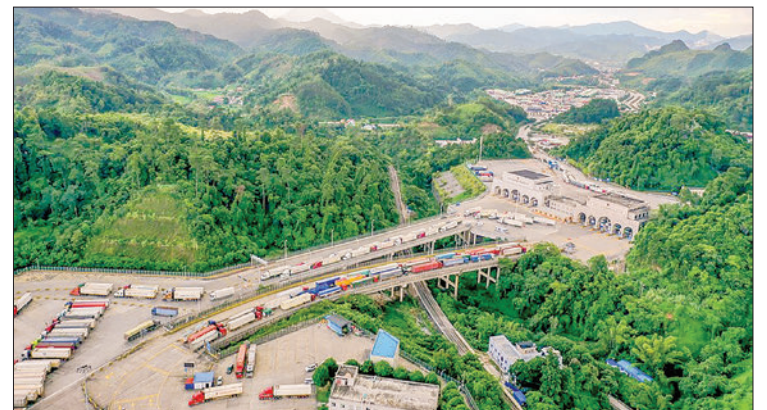
CAMBODIA exported 20.5 billion US dollars worth of goods in the first 11 months of 2023, a slight increase of 1.2 per cent from 20.24 billion dollars year on year, said a General Department of Customs and Excise’s report released on Tuesday.

Meanwhile, the kingdom’s exports to China rose by more than 18 per cent to 1.3 billion dollars during the January-November period from 1.1 billion dollars in the same period last year.

China remains the third-largest export destination for the Southeast Asian country after the United States and Viet Nam, the report showed.

The main items Cambodia exported included garments, footwear, and travel goods, bicycles, and agricultural goods such as rice, rubber, cassava, bananas, mangoes and longans.

Commenting on a significant rise in exports to China, Cambodian Ministry of Commerce’s Secretary of State and Spokesperson Penn Sovicheat said the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) agreement and the Cambodia-China Free Trade Agreement (CCFTA), which both entered into force last year, had given a boost to this growth. — Xinhua



This aerial photo taken on 9 September 2023 shows a view of the port of the Friendship Pass in Pingxiang, south China’s Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

Viet Nam’s farm produce exports to China record speedy growth

VIET Nam’s farm produce exports to China have recorded speedy growth so far this year, Vietnam News Agency (VNA) reported Monday.

The shipments of those products are predicted to keep increasing in the coming time, according to the report.

The agency cited statistics from the Viet Nam Vegetable and Fruit Association showing that Viet Nam’s durian export to China shot up by 161.8 per cent at certain points of time.

Vietnamese authorities are boosting negotiations with China to export frozen durian and fresh

coconut via the official channel to this neighbouring market, Dang Phuc Nguyen, the association’s secretary-general said.

Viet Nam’s sales of rice to China have also risen sharply, by 55.2 per cent year on year during the 11 months. The same upward trend has also been recorded in the shipment of cashew nuts, coffee, and animal feed to this market, by 11.4 - 42.3 per cent.

According to VNA, Viet Nam has witnessed record growth in the export of many farm produce to China thanks to protocols signed between the two countries. — Xinhua

Sri Lanka awards \$1.7 bln solar project to Australian firm

SRI Lanka's government announced Tuesday it had tapped an Australian company to build the island nation's largest solar energy plant at an expected price tag of \$1.7 billion.

An unprecedented economic crisis last year saw Sri Lanka hit with blackouts of up to 13 hours each day as power generators ran out of funds to pay for fossil fuel

imports.

The government has since fast-tracked a number of renewable energy proposals to diversify the island's grid.

Energy minister Kanchana Wijesekera said the government had approved plans to buy electricity from a proposed 700-megawatt plant to be built by Australia's United Solar Energy. — AFP

Renault sells Nissan stake as part of rebalanced alliance

RENAULT said Tuesday that it was selling to Nissan part of the stake it owns in the Japanese automaker as the two companies rebalance their alliance.

The stake, equivalent to around five per cent of Nissan's equity capital, is valued at 765 million euros (\$825 million) at the closing price of the shares on the Tokyo stock exchange on Tuesday. The transfer at that price will result in a capital loss of up to 1.5 billion for Renault as it had valued the stake at a higher price in its books.

The charge will affect the earnings of Renault, which posted a net profit of two billion euros in the first half of the year, but the automaker said it will not impact operating income and "would improve the net financial position of Renault Group Automotive segment".

Renault previously held a 43.4 per cent stake in Nissan but under a "rebalanced" alliance that the two automakers formally launched last month, the two are to move to holding 15 per cent cross-holdings. — AFP

China, Germany on fast track in NEV cooperation

THE southern Chinese coastal city of Haikou, where the 2023 World New Energy Vehicle Congress (WNEVC) concluded on 9 December, witnessed a promising cooperation between China and Germany, as China's new energy vehicle (NEV) industry goes on the fast track.

The rise of the industry in China was well demonstrated at the congress held in Haikou, the provincial capital of Hainan Province, after its first overseas session in Munich in September.

China remains a driving force in developing electric vehicles, with one out of every two electric vehicles worldwide being found in China, said Timur Gül, chief energy technology officer of the International Energy Agency (IEA), during the congress.

When IEA released its global EV outlook in 2016, China had more than 300,000 EVs. The number is expected to reach 20 million as of this October, according to Gül.

"This success story of



A Volkswagen ID.NEXT electric concept car is displayed during the 2023 World New Energy Vehicle Congress in Haikou, south China's Hainan Province, 7 December 2023.

PHOTO: XINHUA

the EV is also a Chinese success story driven by innovation, government ambitions, and supporting policies," he stressed, adding that in the field of electric vehicles, the huge development potential of the Chinese market is remarkable. According to the data released by the 2023 WNEVC, the sales of NEVs in China constituted 29.8 per cent of the country's total new car sales in the first

three quarters of 2023. The cumulative global sales of NEVs were approximately 37.7 million units as of the end of September, with China accounting for about 60 per cent.

"This achievement is a testament to effective government policies combined with the auto industry's collective efforts — and has opened up a whole new marketplace for carmakers," said Jochen Goller,

a member of the board of management of BMW AG.

"Being BMW Group's largest single market and obviously one of its most strategic, we truly feel at home in China. The BMW Group has made China its largest production base worldwide, the home to our company's largest R&D and innovation network outside of Germany," he said via video. — Xinhua

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V METHI BHUM VOY.NO. (410N)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V METHI BHUM VOY.NO. (410N)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **13-12-2023** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **AWPT** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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
Myanmar Port Authority**

Agent For:

M/S REGIONAL CONTAINER LINES

Ads
TradeMark
09251022355

PESTICIDE TRADE NAME CHANGE ADVERTISING

The following three pesticides distributed by Yoon Yoon Agro Co.,Ltd and here we would like to pesticide trade name change advertising. Anyone who would like to object or inquiry about new trade name contact within 14 days to Joint-Secretary, Pesticide Registration Board, Plant Protection Division, Bayint Naung Road, West Gyogone, Insein Township, Yangon. Yoon Yoon Agro Co.,Ltd Tel:09-401573814

Sr.	Old Trade Name	New Trade Name	Active Ingredients	Registration No.
1.	Morniter	Internet	Epoxiconazole 5% + Pyraclostrobin 13.3% SE	P2023-6133

PESTICIDE TRADE NAME CHANGE ADVERTISING

The following three pesticides distributed by Y Agro Solution Co.,Ltd and here we would like to pesticide trade name change advertising. Anyone who would like to object or inquiry about new trade name contact within 14 days to Joint-Secretary, Pesticide Registration Board, Plant Protection Division, Bayint Naung Road, West Gyogone, Insein Township, Yangon. Y Agro Solution Co.,Ltd Tel:09-401573814

Sr.	Old Trade Name	New Trade Name	Active Ingredients	Registration No.
1.	Chlazo	Kar Shin	Azoxystrobin 60g/l + Chlorothalonil 500g/l SC	P2022-5050
2.	Cyco	Ywet Twin Shal	Cyromazine 500g/kg SP	F2023-4143
3.	Jiujing	Darr Nat Gyi	Chlorfenapyr 240 g/l SC	P2022-5759

ROLLING UPDATES

WORLD

Chinese plant scientists build vertical unmanned greenhouse rack

INSIDE a building on the outskirts of Chengdu, the capital city of Sichuan Province, 16 robots are programmed to tend vegetables grown on 20-tier vertically-installed rack.

Standing beside the 10-metre-high unmanned greenhouse rack, the tallest of its kind in the world, the urban farm's chief scientist Yang Qichang boasted that a total of 24,000 vegetables had been planted in a floorage of 200 square metres.

The plant factory was built at the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences' Institute of Urban Agriculture (IUA). Its cultivation procedures are completely automated, including sowing, thinning, harvesting and packaging.

In an open field, the lettuce usually takes about 70 days to grow from seed to harvest, but in this urban farm, the growth period can be shortened to about 35 days, resulting in 10 crops a year. Its annual output is expected to

reach 50 tonnes.

Nutrition has not suffered as a result of rapid growth and high productivity. The crude protein content of alfalfa grown by crop breeding accelerators has reached 30 per cent, about 10 percentage points higher than that of normal species.

The alfalfa can be harvested once every 12 days. Crop yield has increased by more than 20 times when compared to nature's maximum of four harvests per year.

"Crops grow fast and well, and its key secret lies in the fill light," said IUA's researcher Wang Sen, pointing at LED light above the vegetables. "We sought out an optimal 'light recipe' by adjusting the light source in different growth stages of the crops."

Over the last three years, the plant scientists have created over 1,300 customized light formulas for 72 crops including rice, wheat, and corn.

IUA scientists managed to



The picture shows the plant factory built at the Institute of Urban Agriculture at Chengdu, capital city of southwest China's Sichuan Province. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

harvest high-quality grapes with high yields thanks to the root-limiting cultivation and precise control of water and fertilizers, in order to create and grow more fruits and vegetables in limited

urban residential space.

Artificial planting racks are typically installed to five floors due to safety risks, but the robotic system in a smart factory works to overcome this limitation, ac-

ording to Wang.

"In densely populated cities, plant factories can replenish the city's daily vegetable supply and improve its self-sufficiency," said Wang. — Xinhua

Macron's govt defiant after immigration bill rejection



French Labour Minister Olivier Dussopt (L) and French Interior Minister Gerald Darmanin leave after a cabinet meeting at the presidential Elysee Palace in Paris on 12 December 2023. **PHOTO: AFP**

FRANCE'S government insisted Tuesday it would implement tough measures against illegal migrants as it battled a political crisis following the rejection of its flagship immigration bill in the lower house of parliament.

In a surprise move on Monday, members of the opposition joined forces in par-

liament's National Assembly to vote down the controversial legislation without even debating it, sparking a political crisis.

The rejection of one of the government's flagship initiatives is a humiliating defeat for French President Emmanuel Macron who does not have a majority in parliament and

comes amid a heated debate in society around immigration and security.

Advocacy groups have criticized the bill which seeks to toughen the country's immigration law, saying France relies on migrants including undocumented workers in a lot of industries.

On Tuesday morning, Macron held a crisis meeting with Prime Minister Elisabeth Borne and key ministers at the Elysee, deciding to maintain its bid to pass the bill and send the legislation back to a parliamentary committee, the government said.

Macron rejected on Monday the offer from Interior Minister Gerald Darmanin, who has spearheaded the bill, to step down, instead ordering him to find new ways to break the deadlock and push the legislation through. — AFP

Yemen's Houthi militia attacks Norwegian tanker in Red Sea

YEMEN'S Houthi rebels on Tuesday said they attacked with a naval missile a Norwegian ship loaded with oil and heading for Israel in the Red Sea.

"We did not resort to targeting the Norwegian ship until its crew rejected all our warning calls," Yehya Sarea, a Houthi military spokesman, said in a statement aired by the Houthi-run al-Masirah TV.

"We will not hesitate to target any ship heading to Israel that rejects our warnings ... Over the past two days, our armed forces succeeded in preventing the passage of several ships that responded to our warnings," he said.

"We will continue to prevent all ships from heading to the ports of the Israeli enemy unless food and medicine aid be allowed to enter the Gaza

Strip," said the Houthi military spokesman.

Meanwhile, Britain's Maritime Trade Operations agency, wrote on X that the attack occurred late Monday at 15 nautical miles west of the Yemeni port of Mokha, near the Bab al-Mandab Strait.

This is the latest attack on the international waters of the Red Sea claimed by the Yemeni militia since the Israel-Hamas war broke out on 7 October.

On 19 November, the Houthi fighters hijacked a commercial ship, Galaxy Leader, and brought it to the Houthi-held Red Sea port city of Hodeidah.

The Houthi group controls much of northern Yemen, including the capital Sanaa and the strategic Red Sea port city of Hodeidah. — Xinhua

SPORTS

Myanmar's medallists return from Penang Invitational Judo Championship 2023

THE Myanmar Judo team, which won four gold medals, two silver medals and two bronze medals at the Penang Invitational Judo Championship 2023 held in Penang, Malaysia, from 9 to 10 December, returned to Yangon yesterday from Penang, Malaysia.

Officials and players' parents welcomed them at Yangon International Airport.

Teams from France, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, Singapore, Brunei and Myanmar competed in the tourney. Myanmar joined 28, 32, 73, 66, 24, 90, 57, 50 and 60 kilo-

grammes events.

Myanmar's Aung Zey Htet grabbed one gold medal in the 28-kg event, while Hnin Oo Wuttyi secured another gold medal. Next, Kyaw Khant Soe won another gold in the 73-kg event, and Htet Aung claimed another gold medal in the 66-kg event.

Meanwhile, Bhone Pyae Chantha Htun picked one silver while Aung Wai Phyo garnered one silver, and Ngwe Pon Chit and Khaing Khant brought one bronze medals each in 57-kg and 50-kg events. — MNA/KZL



Officials welcome back the Myanmar Judo team that participated in the Penang Invitational Judo Championship 2023 at Yangon International Airport yesterday.

Inter Miami confirm Saudi Arabia friendly dates

INTER Miami on Monday confirmed details of two upcoming friendlies in Saudi Arabia next year which will include a showdown between Lionel Messi and old rival Cristiano Ronaldo.

The Major League Soccer club had already announced plans for the team to face Ronaldo's Al Nassr in Riyadh, without confirming a date.

Inter said on Monday the team would take on Saudi powerhouses Al Hilal at the Kingdom Arena in Riyadh on 29 January.

They will then face Al Nassr at the same venue on 1 February, giving Messi the chance to lock horns once again with Ronaldo in the latest installment of a rivalry that has spanned decades stretching back to their first meeting in 2008.

"These matches will offer important tests for our team, which will benefit us as we approach the new season," said Chris Henderson, Miami's chief soccer officer and sporting director.

Miami will travel to Hong Kong following the Saudi Arabia games to play a team made up from the Chinese territory's First Division on 4 February.

The team will then head back to the US for the start of the MLS season later in February. — AFP

(FILES) Inter Miami's Argentine forward (10) Lionel Messi celebrates after winning the Leagues Cup final football match against Nashville SC at Geodis Park in Nashville, Tennessee, on 19 August 2023. PHOTO: AFP



Baseball: Dodgers announce 10-year contract with Ohtani

THE Los Angeles Dodgers have signed two-time American League MVP Shohei Ohtani to a 10-year contract, the club said Monday.

The \$700 million contract is believed to be the largest in professional sports history.

"Dodger fans, thank you for

welcoming me to your team," Ohtani said in a press release from the Dodgers. "I can say 100 per cent that you, the Dodger organization and I share the same goal — to bring World Series parades to the streets of Los Angeles."

The two-way star joins the

Dodgers after spending six seasons with the Los Angeles Angels.

In 2023, Ohtani led the AL with 44 home runs and a 1.066 on-base plus slugging percentage while posting a 10-5 record with a 3.14 ERA in 23 starts as a pitcher. — Kyodo

Ronaldo says not done yet after 50th goal this year

CRISTIANO Ronaldo said he had more left in him this year after scoring his 50th goal of 2023 in Al Nassr's 5-2 Saudi King Cup victory over rivals Al Shabab.

The former Manchester United and Real Madrid forward lashed home from close range with his right foot in the 74th minute.

"Great victory and I'm thrilled to announce my 50th goal in 2023," the 38-year-old Portuguese wrote on Instagram after his goal helped Al Nassr reach the semi-finals on Monday in Riyadh.

"All thanks to the unwavering support of my teammates, fans, and my family! There's still room for a few more this year."

The skipper averages nearly a goal a game since joining Al Nassr at the end of last year.

He has also struck 10 times for Portugal in nine matches in 2023. — AFP

Nassr's Portuguese forward (7) Cristiano Ronaldo quicks the ball during the King Cup quarter-final football match between Al-Shabab and Al-Nassr at the Al-Shabab Club Stadium in Riyadh on 11 December 2023. PHOTO: AFP



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Xi says China-Viet Nam ties to enter new stage with joint efforts

Xi Jinping, general secretary of the Communist Party of China Central Committee and Chinese president, said on Tuesday that with joint efforts, China-Viet Nam ties will enter a new stage of greater political mutual trust, more solid security cooperation, deeper mutually beneficial cooperation, stronger popular support, closer multilateral coordination, and better handling of differences.

In his meeting with General Secretary of the Communist Party of Viet Nam Central Committee Nguyen Phu Trong, Xi said China firmly supports Viet Nam's cause of socialist construction and always sees its ties with Viet Nam from a strategic and long-term perspective.

China takes its relations with Viet Nam as a priority in its neighbourhood diplomacy, Xi said.

With a view to seeking national development, happiness for the people as well as progress for mankind, Xi said he stands ready to jointly announce with Trong the new positioning of the relationship between the two parties and countries, as well as the building of a China-Viet Nam community with a shared future that carries strategic significance on the basis of deepening the China-Viet Nam comprehensive strategic cooperative partnership. — Xinhua

UAE to try again for climate deal after fury on fossil fuels



This image grab taken from AFPTV video footage shows an activist protesting on stage against fossil fuels during an event at the United Nations Climate Conference (COP28) in Dubai on 11 December 2023. **PHOTO: AFP**

THE United Arab Emirates promised Tuesday to try again to strike a deal as the Dubai climate summit passed their deadline, with at-risk nations and Western powers rejecting a proposal that stopped short of phasing out fossil fuels.

The 13-day COP28 summit in the glitzy metropolis built on petrodollars has

debated a historic first-ever global exit from oil, gas and coal, the main culprits in a planetary crisis of warming.

But a draft put forward on Monday by COP28 president Sultan Al Jaber, himself head of the UAE oil company, fell well short, instead presenting reductions in fossil fuels as one of several options.

Negotiators described a mood of an-

ger and tension in talks that again ran through the night, with activists confronting delegates and island leaders saying their very existence was at risk.

The Emirati hosts put a brave face on the outrage, saying they were working on a new draft and noting that UN rules require consensus from the nearly 200 countries at COP28. — AFP

Israel battles Hamas as UN labels Gaza 'hell on earth'

ISRAELI forces battled Hamas militants and bombed more targets in the devastated Gaza Strip on Tuesday as the UN General Assembly was due to vote on a new demand for a ceasefire.

More than two months into the war sparked by the 7 October attack, the visiting chief of the UN agency for Palestinian refugees, Philippe Lazzarini, likened Gaza to "hell on earth".

Gaza's Hamas-run health ministry charged Tuesday that

Israeli forces were raiding a hospital in Gaza City, the biggest urban centre, in the north of the coastal territory.

"Israeli occupation forces are storming Kamal Adwan hospital after besieging and bombing it for days," ministry spokesman Ashraf al-Qudra said, accusing troops of rounding up men in the hospital courtyard, including medical staff.

The army did not immediately comment, but Israel has

repeatedly accused the Islamist militant group of using hospitals, schools, mosques and tunnels beneath them as military bases — claims Hamas has denied.

The UN humanitarian agency OCHA said earlier that "the hospital remains surrounded by Israeli troops and tanks, and fighting with armed groups has been reported in its vicinity for three consecutive days". — AFP



Smoke billows following Israeli strikes in Rafah near the Palestinian Egyptian border in the southern Gaza Strip on 12 December 2023 amid ongoing battles between Israel and the militant group Hamas. **PHOTO: AFP**