

# The Global **NEW LIGHT** of MYANMAR

## Constitutionally Unacceptable: Any act harming the State firmly condemned

THE following is a full-text message sent by State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Senior General Thadoe Maha Thray Sithu Thadoe Thiri Thudhamma Min Aung Hlaing to the ceremony to mark the Kayin National New Year Day, today. **Esteemed entire people in Myanmar and national brethren in Kayin**

**State,**

Today, 11 January 2024, 2763 Kayin Era, the 1<sup>st</sup> waxing of Pyatho 1385 Myanmar Era, is a significant day adored by Kayin ethnic people. On the Kayin New Year occasion, I extended warm greetings with my best wishes to all people, including Kayin ethnics, to be able to enjoy physical and mental well-being with auspiciousness.

All nationalities have settled in various regions suitable for their livelihoods since yore. As the Kayin ethnics settled in Myanmar in BC 739, the calculation based on BC 739, when they first ever arrived in Myanmar, shows that this year is the 2763 Kayin Era.

The 1<sup>st</sup> Thalay (Sakaw Kayin) 2763 KE and Htaikhaukpho (Poe Kayin) is the New Year Day of Kayin nationals.

In accord with the Myanmar Era, it is the 1<sup>st</sup> waxing of Pyatho 1385. The government honours the Kayin New Year Day as an official office holiday across the nation.

**Esteemed national brethren,**

The wording 'Kayin national' represents all Kayin ethnics regardless of nationality, lineage, religion and faith.

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## Myanmar aligns ASEAN Five-Point Consensus with SAC's Roadmap

**M**YANMAR implements ASEAN five-point consensus adjusted with the roadmap of the State Administration Council, said Senior General Min Aung Hlaing.

Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing unveiled the process of implementing the ASEAN five-point consensus at a meeting with Mr Alounkeo Kittikhoun, Special Envoy of the ASEAN Chair on Myanmar, at the Credentials Hall of the SAC Chairman Office in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

They cordially exchanged views on prioritized measures to be implemented at a time when the responsibilities ASEAN Alternate Chair will be taken in 2024.

In their talks, both sides cordially discussed the excellent process of friendly relations and cooperation between Laos and Myanmar, serving State

**SEE PAGE-3**



SAC Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing receives Mr Alounkeo Kittikhoun, Special Envoy of the ASEAN Chair on Myanmar at SAC Chairman Office in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

### NATIONAL

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Vice-Senior General Soe Win calls for emergence of more SEZs in the country

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ASEAN Special Envoy meets seven NCA-Signatory EAOs

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Manufacturing sector exports top US\$6.8 bln in nine months

# NATIONAL

## Constitutionally Unacceptable: Any act harming the State firmly condemned

### FROM PAGE-1

There are 11 Kayin ethnic groups namely Kayin, Kayinphyu (Gebar Kayin), Palekee (Palechee), Mon-Kayin (Sarphyu) (East Poe KAYIN), Sakaw Kayin, Tahlaypwa (Tahlayywar), Paku, Bwe, Mawnaypwa, Moepwa (Moepwar), Poe Kayin (Sho) (West Poe Kayin). Of them, Sakaw and Poe Kayin are the primary Kayin tribes but differ in culture, customs and languages.

As Kayin ethnics are Myanmar's ethnics, they reside in all parts of Kayin State and the entire Myanmar. They reside in Mon State, Taninthayi Region, Bago Region, and Ayeyawady Region. They have been residing in all parts of Myanmar together with other ethnicities through thick and thin in unison throughout history. Moreover, it should take pride in its efforts in the independence struggle together with other ethnic peoples with national spirit and patriotic spirit with the sacrifice of life, blood and sweat when Myanmar fell under colonialism.

The prominent symbol of Kayin State is Zwekabin Hill, and the emblems of Kayin ethnicity are the frog drum and buffalo horn. All Kayin ethnic groups celebrate the New Year festival, the house warming festival, the new harvest feast, the soul honouring festival, and the auspicious ceremony of white thread decoration in Wagaung, as well as religious occasions in designated periods. Moreover, Kayin ethnic don dance is a lively and fascinating ethnic culture, catching the attention of local people as well as international guests.

All Kayin ethnics all over Myanmar and all Kayin brethren from various

areas have to preserve their traditional culture and customs for new generations in unison. If all ethnics always preserve their fine traditions, the Union will be perpetual for the long term.

As such, Kayin ethnics have been preserving their literature, dialects, culture, fine arts, traditions and customs, and historical heritage through successive eras. Likewise, I would like to urge the new generation of Kayin youths to continuously preserve fine traditions such as honesty, diligence, loyalty, and decisiveness.

### Esteemed national brethren,

The State Administration Council is implementing the vision for building a Union based on a democratic system and federalism, the five-point roadmap, and nine political, economic and social objectives in accordance with the aspirations of the people. Region and state, as well as self-administered zone governments, together with union-level organizations and ministries, emphasize the implementation of the missions and visions.

Region and State governments and local ethnic people must cooperate in unison for the nation's development. The government is bringing peace and stability to the people and developing the nation in all aspects. This being so, priority is being given to operating agriculture and livestock farms for the socioeconomic development of the people. Moreover, efforts are being made to develop other economic sectors through modern technologies.

Moreover, if the investment can be put in agriculture and livestock businesses benefiting the State and the

people with long-term guarantees, employers, employees, the government, and the people will have many benefits. As such, encouragement is being given to investments. Strengthening the State economy is one of the primary needs for the nation's development. As such, improving the economy by directly importing basic inputs for widely operating MSME businesses based on region-wise agriculture and livestock production is necessary. Based on raw materials available in the state, if efforts can be made to operate the scheme of "One Region-One Product", the socioeconomic life of the ethnic people can be uplifted, contributing to the country's development on the one hand.

### Esteemed ethnic people,

Due to current conflicts in some parts of Kayin State and other parts of the nation, the country and all people face tragic losses in all aspects. People are suffering bad impacts and plights of terror acts and fighting triggered by external and internal instigations without rooting on the truth and conspiracy of some ethnic armed organizations. Those people evade the scenes to safer places, facing many difficulties in food, clothing, shelter, health and education. Peace and development, which were built in a long time, were ruined, and it is necessary to take adequate time, manpower and monetary assistance to regain the previous situation.

All life and property lost in terror acts and armed conflicts in the country are valuable sources of the nation. Everybody needs to notice that the areas lacking peace and stability will not have development and prosperity,

and local ethnic people will face low socioeconomic life.

The State Administration Council is upholding Our Three Main National Causes: Non-disintegration of the Union, Non-disintegration of national solidarity and perpetuation of sovereignty as the national concept. I would like to sincerely express that we cannot totally accept any act harmful to the State firmly formed under the Constitution based on these three national duties.

Moreover, the door is always open to welcome them for peace of the State. I want to reiterate that all ethnic organizations are always welcome to join hands with the government in solving all difficulties keeping in line with the agreements of NCA without deploying the armed struggle line.

Only when all ethnic people, including those from Kayin State, make concerted efforts to ensure peace and stability, rule of law and socioeconomic development for our country can Myanmar stand tall as a modern and developed nation among the global countries. Hence, I send a message in honour of the Kayin National New Year Day by urging all ethnic people to strive to minimize fighting and unrest in their regions so as to ensure peace and prosperity of the Union in unison as well as to serve the interests of the State and the people.

**Senior General  
Thadde Maha Thray Sithu  
Thadde Thiri Thudhamma  
Min Aung Hlaing  
Prime Minister  
Chairman  
State Administration Council**



A YBS bus runs in downtown Yangon. PHOTO: GNLM

## MPyp+ App launches on YBS, enabling mobile QR code payments for bus fares

MPYPS+ Application for paying YBS bus fares via mobile phone QR code was launched on 8 January.

The launch ceremony was held at Yangon Region Public Transport Committee (YRTC). MPYPS+ Application, jointly developed by Asia Starmar Transport Intelligent Co Ltd and

Myanma Platform, can be downloaded from the Play Store.

"We will carry out to enable its use on all YBS lines. We have two systems- flat pay and distance pay. QR code for distance pay will be developed later," said U Kyaw Thein, Chief Operating Officer of ASTI. It is the first app to use MMQR

Code, and recharge can be made at YPS kiosks, specified G&G convenience stores, Capital and Mingala cinemas. Balance and past journeys can be viewed on the MPyp+ application QR Code bus fare payment is initialized in Yangon's metro areas, and its use is planned to expand to the outskirts. — MT/ZN

# NATIONAL

## Myanmar aligns ASEAN Five-Point Consensus with SAC's Roadmap

**FROM PAGE-1**  
responsibilities by the State Administration Council due to voting frauds in the 2020 multi-party democratic general election, committing armed terrorism without solving the political

controversies on the political trend, efforts of the government to ensure peace and stability of the State and national reconciliation, firm standing of Tatmadaw on strengthening the multiparty democratic path

the people aspire to, the five-point roadmap adopted by the State Administration Council with concerted efforts for peace and stability of the State and development, implementation of political and national visions,

and full cooperation of Myanmar in humanitarian aid measures.

Also present at the meeting were SAC Joint Secretary Lt-Gen Ye Win Oo, Deputy Prime Minister and Union Minister

for Foreign Affairs U Than Swe and officials.

The special envoy of the ASEAN Chair on Myanmar was accompanied by the Lao Ambassador to Myanmar and officials. — MNA/TTA

## Vice-Senior General Soe Win calls for emergence of more SEZs in the country

THILAWA SEZ needs to effectively maintain existing investments and try various ways to invite new investments said Vice-Senior General Soe Win.

The Central Committee on Myanmar Special Economic Zones held the coordination meeting 1/2024 at the Ministry of Commerce in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday, with an address by Chairman of the Central Committee, Vice-Chairman of the State Administration Council Deputy Prime Minister Vice-Senior General Soe Win.

Speaking on the occasion, the Vice-Senior General said that Thilawa SEZ needs to effectively maintain existing and new investments and try various ways to invite new investments. The one-stop service system must be implemented for all businesses from the SEZ. Thilawa SEZ is the most successful among the three SEZs in Myanmar. All committee members need to strive for the emergence of more SEZs in the country, he added.

The Vice-Senior General urged all to make efforts for the soonest implementation of Kyaukpuyu and Dawei SEZs. It is necessary to invite more investments. But only when businesses in the SEZ succeed will more investments come in, depending on their success.

He highlighted that Thilawa SEZ has invested US\$2.1 billion from 114 companies in 21 countries till November 2013. In the first year, these companies created an estimated 37,000 jobs for local labourers and 887 foreign experts and employees. Depend-



Chairman of the Central Committee on Myanmar SEZs SAC Vice-Chairman DPM Vice-Senior General Soe Win delivers a speech at the coordination meeting 1/2024 of the central committee in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

ing on increasing investments, experts and labourers will have more employment.

The Vice-Senior General noted that Thilawa SEZ exported garments, Solomon fish, refined metal products, plastic goods, auto parts, imported parts of tractors, raw materials, garment accessories, aluminium materials, and auto parts in November. Importing MSME materials and domestic products contributed to more than K1.3 billion in exports. Hence, it is necessary to boost the export volume of quality products from MSME businesses using domestic raw materials and other products to earn foreign currencies.

In November, he recounted

that export volume was US\$12.95 million and import volume worth US\$42.567 million, totalling US\$55.517 million with different export and import values. The companies from the promotion zone can conduct their process under the Myanmar Special Economic Zones Law 2014; he said they have to minimize spending on foreign exchange at home as much as possible.

He stressed that if Thilawa SEZ is facilitated electricity from solar power and a solar plant, the electricity for the SEZ can be supplied to other necessary areas. So, it is necessary to strive to generate electricity in Thilawa SEZ.

The Vice-Senior General un-

derscored that the management committee of Kyaukpuyu SEZ was reconstituted in 2021. On 26 December 2023, the Addendum to Concession Agreement on the Kyaukpuyu Deep Seaport Project was signed. After signing the addendum, as the 18-month period was extended for the project from 26 December, if the condition precedents can be implemented as quickly as possible, the Kyaukpuyu SEZ project can be successfully implemented.

Regarding the Dawei SEZ Project, the Vice-Senior General continued that, at present, the Italian-Thai Company cannot carry on with its process due to various reasons facing many issues. Due to political changes

in Thailand, it was reported that the Dawei SEZ will be connected with the Thai government. So, Myanmar needs to cooperate with them if necessary. As a policy of the current Thai government, the special economic zone is being established in the eastern province of Thailand as the eastern economic corridor, and it may be connected with Dawei SEZ.

Officials from the Central Committee and Union ministers and management committee chairmen reported on measures being taken to implement the Myanmar SEZs successfully.

The meeting concluded with the remarks of the Vice-Senior General. — MNA/TTA

# NATIONAL

## 76<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Kachin State Day convened

THE ceremony for the 76<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Kachin State Day was organized on the lawn in front of the Kachin State government office in Myitkyina yesterday.

At the event, State Administration Council Member Deputy Prime Minister Union Minister for Defence Admiral Tin Aung San read out the message sent by State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Senior General Thadde Maha Thray Sithu Thadde Thiri Thudamma Min Aung Hlaing to the occasion of the 76<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Kachin State.

Kachin State Chief Minister U Khet Htein Nan then made a greeting speech.

Union Minister for Border Affairs Lt-Gen Tun Tun Naung handed over 150 sets of 120-watt solar home system units for the



The ceremony for the 76<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Kachin State Day in progress on the lawn in front of the Kachin State government office in Myitkyina yesterday.

state, and Union Minister for Information U Maung Maung Ohn presented five sets MRTV DTDs, 50 DVB T2 set-top boxes,

five MRTV DTDs and 50 DVB T2 set-top boxes to the relevant state officials.

SAC members, Union min-

isters, relevant officials and participants joyfully participated in the closing ceremony with the Manaw dance at the same venue.

At noon, the Deputy Prime Minister and party attended the honorary certificate and award-giving ceremony to commemorate the 76<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Kachin State Day.

They also met Christian religious leaders at the Kachin State government office.

At the meeting, the Deputy Prime Minister highlighted the role of unity despite the different religions in Kachin State and provided K1 million each to six Christianity leaders.

The Deputy Prime Minister and party then joined the honorary dinner to mark the 76<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Kachin State Day on the same evening.

They also enjoyed the performance of traditional ethnic dance troupes and gave cash prizes to the performers. — MNA/KTZH

## DPM MoFA Union Minister receives Special Envoy of ASEAN Chair



Deputy Prime Minister and Union Minister U Than Swe holds talks with Mr Alounkeo Kittikhoun, Special Envoy of the ASEAN Chair on Myanmar, at Park Royal Hotel in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

U Than Swe, Deputy Prime Minister and Union Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, received Mr Alounkeo Kittikhoun, Special Envoy of the ASEAN Chair on Myanmar, yesterday at Park Royal Hotel in Nay

Pyi Taw. During the call, they cordially exchanged views on matters pertaining to further advancing the implementation status of the ASEAN five-point consensus in line with the Five-Point Road Map in coordination with the ASEAN Chair and the

Special Envoy, as well as the status of humanitarian assistance. The Deputy Prime Minister and Union Minister also briefed him on recent developments in Myanmar and the Government's effort for peace and stability in the country. — MNA

## Union Constitutional Tribunal Chair represents Myanmar at Legal Year 2024 online meeting

CHAIRMAN of the Constitutional Tribunal of the Union U Aung Zaw Thein represented Myanmar at the virtual Presentation of the Annual Report 2023 and Opening Ceremony of the Legal Year 2024 held by the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Indonesia yesterday in Jakarta, Indonesia.

Chief Justice of the Constitutional Court of Indonesia, Dr Suhartoyo MH, delivered the opening address. Subsequently, he discussed the cases adjudicated by the Constitutional Court, establishing the Judicial Ethics Council, and collaborations with constitutional bodies from other countries. He presented a documentary video regarding the 2023 annual report. Then, the Chief Justice concluded the online meeting with a farewell message.

Representatives from member countries of the Association of Asian Constitutional Courts and Equivalent Institutions, including Myanmar, as well as guests, participated in the virtual meeting. — MNA/NT

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# NATIONAL

## SAC Member MoHA UM receives Special Envoy of ASEAN Chair on Myanmar

STATE Administration Council Member Union Minister for Home Affairs Lt-Gen Yar Pyae received Mr Alounkeo Kittikhoun, Special Envoy of ASEAN Chair on Myanmar, and his delegation at the National Solidarity and Peacemaking Negotiation Committee Centre in Nay Pyi

Taw yesterday. Lt-Gen Sein Win (Retd), a member of the National Solidarity and Peacemaking Negotiation Committee, Lt-Gen Win Bo Shein, Ambassador (retired) U San Lwin and officials attended the meeting. During the meeting, SAC Member Union Minister for

Home Affairs Lt-Gen Yar Pyae and Special Envoy to ASEAN Chair on Myanmar Mr Alounkeo Kittikhoun discussed Myanmar's peace processes, the status of peace talks with ethnic armed organizations, ASEAN Five-Point Consensus and humanitarian aid issues. — MNA/TS



SAC Member Union Minister for Home Affairs Lt-Gen Yar Pyae receives Special Envoy of ASEAN Chair on Myanmar Mr Alounkeo Kittikhoun in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

## ASEAN Special Envoy meets seven NCA-Signatory EAOs



The meeting between delegation led by Special Envoy of the ASEAN Chair on Myanmar and seven NCA-signatory EAOs in progress in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

THE delegation led by Mr Alounkeo Kittikhoun, special envoy of the ASEAN Chair on Myanmar met with seven NCA-signatory EAOs in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

It was attended by Mr Alounkeo Kittikhoun, Special Envoy of the ASEAN Chair on Myanmar and officials of NCA-signatory EAOs: Arakan Liberation Party (ALP), KNU/KNLA-Peace Council, Lahu Democratic Union (LDU), Pa-O National Liberation Organization (PNLO), Democratic Kayin Benevolent Army (DKBA), New Mon State Party (NMSP), Restoration Council of Shan State (RCSS)

and Peace Process Steering Team (PPST).

The Special Envoy addressed the meeting and discussed issues related to the Five-Point Consensus of ASEAN, peace process and humanitarian assistance in Myanmar.

Then, Dr Naw Kapaw Htoo, Vice-Chair of the KNU/KNLA-Peace Council, gave an introductory speech on behalf of the participating NCA signatories. The EAOs openly discussed the views of each group. Next, U Khun Okkar, Patron of PNLO, expressed words of thanks, and the Special Envoy made a concluding remark. — MNA/KTZH

## Handover ceremony of No 8 Industrial Training Centre (Thaton)

A ceremony for the handing over No 8 Industrial Training Centre (Thaton) was held at the Ministry of Industry yesterday.

It was attended by Union Minister for Investment and Foreign Economic Relations Dr Kan Zaw, Union Minister for Industry Dr Charlie Than, Union Minister for Science and Technology Dr Myo Thein Kyaw, directors-general, managing directors and deputy directors-general of the Ministry of Industry, Deputy Chief of Mission of the Embassy of India Mr Ashish Sharma and relevant officials, liaison officer

Ms Yadav, General Manager of HMT International Ltd Mr Y K Vaish and relevant officials.

A video clip featuring the implementation processes of No 8 Industrial Training Centre (Thaton) was screened at the ceremony. Then, the Union Minister for Industry delivered a speech stressing that the No 8 Industrial Training Centre (Thaton) was jointly established by Myanmar and HMT (International) Ltd (India) with the support of the Indian government, and it will benefit Myanmar's industrial sector and promote the human resources

by providing modern technological courses.

It is also the eighth achievement of the Ministry of Industry in Myanmar's TVET sector development process, and the very first rubber technology course will be offered at the centre. It is also the first industrial training centre opened in lower Myanmar.

The Union minister then expressed gratitude to the Indian government for establishing an industrial training centre to provide quality vocational skills to Myanmar's young people and grow their economic status.

Then, the deputy ambassador of mission of the Embassy of India said India has been providing necessary assistance in establishing the No 4 Industrial Training Centre (Pakokku), No 6 Industrial Training Centre (Myingyan) and No 8 Industrial Training Centre (Thaton) for the development of Myanmar's industrial sector and to create job opportunities and improve the quality of the products.

Moreover, arrangements are being made to open the No 7 Industrial Training Centre (Monywa), and he pledged that the Indian government would

continue to support Myanmar in developing its industrial sector firmly. The general manager of HMT International Ltd and the director-general of the Directorate of Industrial Collaboration expressed gratitude and signed the No 8 Industrial Training Centre (Thaton) handing over.

The centre will offer rubber technology, CNC, machinist, electrician, welder and IT courses, and it already launched two short-term skills-based training courses. The plans are underway to open one-year regular training courses this year. — MNA/KTZH

# NATIONAL

## Republic of the Union of Myanmar State Administration Council Order No 6/2024

14<sup>th</sup> Waning of Nattaw 1385 ME  
10 January 2024

### Appointment and Duty Assignment of Deputy Minister

THE State Administration Council has appointed and assigned U Htin Kyaw Thu to the duties of Deputy Minister of Ministry 2 at the Chairman Office of the State Administration Council under Section 419 of the Constitution.

By order,

*Aung Lin Dwe*  
Lieutenant-General  
Secretary

## Information release on newly detected COVID-19 variants in Myanmar

1. The Department of Medical Research under the Ministry of Health conducted Whole Genome Sequencing on 18 samples of COVID-19-positive cases sent by the National Health Laboratory on 28 January 2024, and SARS-CoV-2 Omicron variants were found in 16 laboratory samples – three samples from the returnees from Singapore and 13 from local transmissions.
2. The three patients with Omicron HV.1, JN.1 and EG.5.1.8 variants are the returnees from Singapore; another 11 patients with Omicron JN.1 and two patients with XBB.1.16.17 are local transmissions. They are all in good condition and allowed to be discharged from their respective hospitals. Among the SARS-CoV-2 Omicron Variant, HV.1, JN.1 and EG.5.1.8 are the newly detected variants in Myanmar.
3. According to the statements of WHO, like EG.5, the newly detected Omicron variant JN.1 causes less severe illness despite the high rate of infections. People should get vaccinated as COVID-19 vaccines protect against severe disease.

Ministry of Health

## Exploring Kachin Culture Development through Music and Art: SAC Member and Union Minister engage in discussion

MEMBER of the State Administration Council Daw Dwe Bu and Union Minister for Information U Maung Maung Ohn met with responsible personnel of the Association of Kachin Artistes in the parlour of the Kachin State Government office on the morning of 10 January to discuss measures on describing Kachin culture, customs, and traditions with music and dance.

Officials from the relevant departments, Association of Kachin Artistes President J Z Daung Lwan, and members attended the meeting.

During the meeting, Union Minister U Maung Maung Ohn

mentioned that the film, music, and art industries have revived. Cinemas across the nation are now operating normally, and he wanted all those present to discuss the steps to develop Kachin culture, customs, and traditions through music and art.

He expressed his desire to encourage and support the music and art industry of Kachin national races through state-owned media.

Subsequently, Association of Kachin Artistes President J Z Daung Lwan and members discussed the necessary cooperation with the Ministry of Information. SAC Member Daw Dwe Bu and the Union Minis-



The meeting on describing Kachin culture, customs, and traditions with music and dance in progress in Myitkyina, Kachin State, yesterday.

ter coordinated and fulfilled requirements related to the

current activities of the Association of Kachin Artistes and

the production of music, films, and videos. — State IPRD/TKO

## Free energy device under invention and local inventor will disclose it if successful



Photo shows Light motor vehicles that invented by Ko Zaw Myo Oo from Meiktila.

KO Zaw Myo Oo from Meiktila, who is famous for his inventions of own-designed motorcycles

and light motor vehicles, is now making a new invention that can be useful in areas without

access to grid electricity.

His inventions drew a lot of attentions on social media pages, and in this time, he has been working on generating electricity from a renewable energy source.

“There are experiments I have made now. But I will make them public when I succeed. At present, I have been working on a test for producing free energy that I hope to help the country and for areas that have no access to electricity. It is much

needed. I have been to many villages; some can't get connected with the national grid at all. So my invention will be useful for these places. This is free energy so it can be used by households, depending on their energy consumption. If it works, we will no longer need batteries and solar [panels]. I've tried from a small scale,” said Ko Zaw Myo Oo.

An industrial businessman, Ko Zaw Myo Oo developed three-wheeled motorcycle for

people with disabilities between 2013 and 2018, and sold 53 units.

“I invented a lot; a blue coloured motor vehicle with 250 engine power (three-wheeled engine) in 2013 and a similar type of vehicle in yellow and white colour in 2015. I made an orange car in 2018. And I made 53 units of three-wheeled motorcycle for the disabled because they asked me and delivered them to different towns and cities,” he said. — Thit Taw/ZS

# NATIONAL

## Maj-Gen Zaw Min Tun clarifies terrorist acts by MNDA, TNLA, AA regarding religion

LEADER of SAC Information Team Maj-Gen Zaw Min Tun clarified violence of MNDA, TNLA and AA terrorists against the religion as follows: -

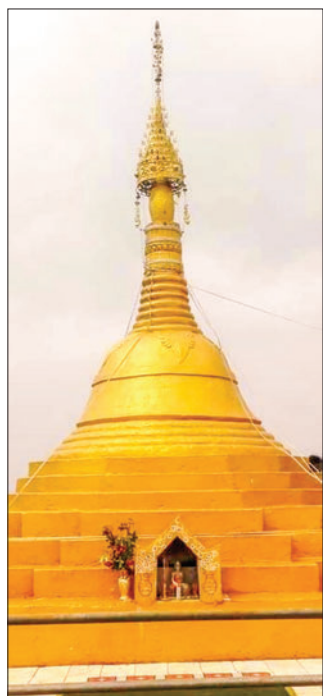
I pray for the health and prosperity of all citizens of Myanmar and the world.

Today, we want to inform the whole world about the actions of terrorists who brutally insult Buddhists, which is practised by more than 80 per cent of the entire population of Myanmar people and over 500 million people in the world.

All the people of the world and all the religious leaders,

The MNDA terrorists live in our country and drink Myanmar's water. They make a living depending on Myanmar. But now, they have rudely destroyed the religious buildings that we care about.

The MNDA Kokang terrorists destroyed a pagoda on the hill of Sin Oo Kin Hillock (Point-2202), northern part of Siaw Village, Laukkai Township, on 8 January 2024. This pagoda represents Buddha, which is sacred to us



Photos show the pagoda and a terrorist destroying the pagoda in Laukkai Township.

Buddhists. This barbaric and despicable incident saddens all of us Buddhists. I am saddened. This action will shock Buddhists from not only Myanmar but from Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, Sri Lanka, India, and China, including Tibet region and Yunnan Province. They also bombed with driverless drones on the monastery in

the compound of the Yatawmu pagoda, Muse, Shan State, on 4 December 2023. These are acts of violence against religion by three terrorist groups, MNDA, TNLA and AA.

All the people of the world, and religious leaders,

Our country has four main religions: Islam, Christianity, Hin-

du, Buddhism and other religions. The State leaders always encourage and support all religions. All the people of the world, and religious leaders,

The basic teachings of all religions that we all believe in and worship are to love each other, to treat each other with love, and to respect and value each

other. I want the whole world to know about the heinous acts of the terrorists who are opposing these values. I want all the people of the world to prevent such conducts. I have presented it so that the people of the world can see it and be able to take care of it. May all the people of the world be safe and healthy. — GNLM

## Protest Against Terrorism: People condemn destruction, desecration of religious edifices



A rally takes place yesterday in Yangon, to denounce the acts of terrorists destroying and insulting religious edifices.

A protest against the terrorist insurgents who are destroying and insulting religious edifices that are not related to the military was held near Maha Bandoola Park in front of Yangon City Hall yesterday.

The people of the Yangon re-

gion started in front of Thamada Cinema and marched along Sule Pagoda Road, shouting slogans and entering the place where the ceremony will be held. The protesting people sang the national anthem in chorus where the protest was staged. — MNA/KZL

## New Year's Eve celebrations kick off in Taungkalay Village, Kayin State

THE Kayin New Year Festival, organized by the Taungkalay village committee, commenced with the opening ceremony featuring the symbolic image of the frog drum and buffalo horn at 7 am on 9 January.

The event occurred at the Kayin New Year Ground in Taungkalay Village, Hpa-an Township, Kayin State, said Saw Kyaw Min Sein, a committee member.

In anticipation of the Kayin New Year festival scheduled for 11 January in regions and states with Kayin communities, Taungkalay village traditionally holds its festivities two days earlier. The village becomes a hub of the celebration, attracting people from across Kayin State who come to partake in dance performances, tradition-

al sports, and other activities.

The opening ceremony witnessed the participation of Kayin ethnic dance troupes, traditional Kayin folk dance troupes, and cultural groups from different townships in Kayin State, all joining to mark the symbolic image unveiling

for the 2024 Kayin New Year.

The upcoming festival in Taungkalay Village, Hpa-an Township, Kayin State, from 9 to 11 January, is expected to feature sports competitions and traditional Kayin ethnic dance competitions. — ASH/TKO



Unveiling image of Phasi (frog drum) to mark the Kayin New Year festival in Taungkalay village.

# OPINION

## Don't underestimate pandemics in global community

**T**HE Myanmar Buddhist society acknowledges three significant calamities: famine, war, and epidemic diseases, all of which profoundly impact living beings, particularly humans, and pose significant obstacles to social and economic progress. To some extent, complete avoidance remains elusive despite humans' ability to mitigate the effects of these disasters.

Various global catastrophes have adversely affected humanity, causing tragic social and economic development disruptions. Unfortunately, some nations have failed to learn crucial lessons from previous outbreaks, such as SARS, avian influenza, Zika, Ebola, and other highly infectious diseases. For countries grappling with the repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is imperative to invest more in disease prevention, virus research, and swift response mechanisms.

The history of human society shows the outbreak of a number of pandemics in successive eras. Millions of global people lost their lives and property, as well as ruins of families. But humans strived to seek ways to control the infection of pandemics so as to save their lives. As infectious diseases can break out anywhere, all global countries must comprehensively understand the important role of international cooperation in responding to and preventing infectious pandemics.

As of 23 December 2023, a new variant, JN-1, of the COVID-19 virus has been identified in Southeast Asian countries, including Singapore, Malaysia, and Thailand. The virus has infected individuals in 41 countries, as reported by international media. The ongoing discovery of new variants emphasizes the need for sustained global efforts in monitoring, preventing, and responding to the evolving landscape of infectious diseases.

The global community must not underestimate the potential impact of pandemics. Learning from past experiences and actively investing in prevention, research, and response mechanisms is crucial for mitigating the devastating consequences of infectious diseases on human societies and global development.

The history of human society shows the outbreak of a number of pandemics in successive eras. Millions of global people lost their lives and property, as well as ruins of families. But humans strived to seek ways to control the infection of pandemics so as to save their lives. As infectious diseases can break out anywhere, all global countries must comprehensively understand the important role of international cooperation in responding to and preventing infectious pandemics.

Throughout history, numerous pandemics, claiming millions of lives globally, have originated from animal-borne diseases and viruses, ranging from viruses and bacteria to parasites. These diseases have spread worldwide through direct or indirect contact with animals and carrier species. Vigilance against pandemics and infectious viruses is essential for timely responses and preventive measures.

The World Health Organization (WHO) officially declared COVID-19 a pandemic on 11 March 2020. Variant strains of the virus swiftly infected individuals, resulting in a significant loss of lives. In 2021 alone, the pandemic claimed 3.5 million lives worldwide. Although the WHO, on 5 May 2023, declared that COVID-19 no longer posed a global public health emergency, its variant viruses continue to spread globally.

The Spring Festival, which falls on 10 February this year, is China's biggest festival and a day for family reunions. It will serve as an important window for observing vitality and consumer confidence levels in the world's second-largest economy.

With record demand for travel, this year's Spring Festival holiday is poised to become the most vibrant and prosperous in recent years, experts said.

## Jointly build a community with a shared future for mankind Promote the in-depth development of China-Myanmar relations

By Ambassador Mr. Chen Hai

**T**HE Central Conference on Work Relating to Foreign Affairs was held in Beijing on 27-28 December 2023. Chinese President Xi Jinping attended the conference and delivered an important address. Xi Jinping presented a systematic review of the historic achievements and valuable experience of major-country diplomacy with Chinese characteristics in the new era, gave a profound exposition on the international environment and historical mission of China's external work on the new journey, and made comprehensive plans for China's external work for the present and coming periods. I would like to introduce the conference to friends from all walks of life in Myanmar and share some views on promoting the development of China-Myanmar relations.

It was pointed out at the conference that building a com-

munity with a shared future for mankind is the core tenet of Xi Jinping's Thoughts on Diplomacy. The goal is to build an open, inclusive, clean and beautiful world of lasting peace, universal security and shared prosperity, and the pathway is promoting global governance that features extensive consultation and joint contribution for shared benefit; the guiding principle is to apply the common values of humanity, the basic underpinning lies in building a new type of international relations, the strategic guidance comes from the implementation of the Global Development Initiative, the Global Security Initiative and the Global Civilization Initiative, and the platform for action is high-quality Belt and Road cooperation. On this basis, we seek to bring countries together to meet challenges, achieve prosperity for all and usher in a bright future of peace, security, prosperity and

progress for our world.

To build a community with a shared future for mankind, China calls for an equal and orderly multipolar world and a universally beneficial and inclusive economic globalization. An equal and orderly multipolar world is one in which all countries, regardless of size, are treated as equals, hegemonism and power politics are rejected, and democracy is truly promoted in international relations. The purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter must be observed by all, the universally recognized basic norms governing international relations must be upheld by all, and true multilateralism must be practised.

A universally beneficial and inclusive economic globalization is one that meets the common needs of all countries, especially developing countries, and properly addresses the development

imbalances between and within countries resulting from the global allocation of resources. It is important to resolutely oppose the attempt to roll back globalization and abuse the concept of security, oppose all forms of unilateralism and protectionism, firmly promote trade and investment liberalization and facilitation, overcome the structural problems hindering the healthy development of the world economy, and make economic globalization more open, inclusive, balanced and beneficial to all.

China and Myanmar, linked by mountains and rivers, enjoy a profound "Pauk-Phaw" friendship. During President Xi Jinping's historic visit to Myanmar in 2020, the two sides agreed to work together to build a China-Myanmar community with a shared future. This year marks the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of China, Myanmar and India jointly advocating the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence. We are

willing to implement the spirit of the Central Conference on Work Relating to Foreign Affairs, carry forward the wisdom and experience of China-Myanmar friendly exchanges, practice the Principle of Amity, Sincerity, Mutual Benefit and Inclusiveness in Neighbourhood Diplomacy, and work with Myanmar to continue to implement the outcomes of President Xi's historic visit to Myanmar, strengthen exchanges of experience in governance, forge synergy in implementing GDI, GSI and GCI, and deepen cooperation and pursue tangible progress in building a China-Myanmar community with a shared future.

We are willing to work with Myanmar to build the Belt and Road and the China-Myanmar Economic Corridor with high quality so as to benefit the peoples of the two countries with more practical cooperation fruits. We support Myanmar in pursuing a

development path suited to its national conditions and will continue to play a constructive role in supporting the peace process in northern Myanmar and jointly maintaining peace and stability along the China-Myanmar border. We will always adhere to the people-centred development approach, deepen China-Myanmar law enforcement and security cooperation, and jointly crack down on cross-border criminal activities such as telecom and online fraud to safeguard people's lives and properties. We are willing to work with Myanmar to deepen cooperation among Lancang-Mekong, China-ASEAN and other regional mechanisms to create a better homeland for all.

At the beginning of the New Year, I wish the people of Myanmar a harvest of peace, prosperity and happiness.

**Views expressed in the article belong solely to the author.**

**C**HINA is on track for a bumper travel season, with travel authorities and tourism industry players expecting record-breaking journey numbers during the upcoming Spring Festival, adding new steam to the country's economic recovery.

The Spring Festival, which falls on 10 February this year, is China's biggest festival and a day for family reunions. It will serve as an important window for observing vitality and consumer confidence levels in the world's second-largest economy.

With record demand for travel, this year's Spring Festival holiday is poised to become the most vibrant and prosperous in recent years, experts said.

### NEW RECORDS

An estimated 80 million passenger trips, a record high, are likely to be handled by China's civil aviation sector during this year's Spring Festival travel rush, which starts on 26 January and

## China expects record-breaking Spring Festival travel rush

*The Spring Festival, China's largest festival, falling on 10 February is a key window for observing economic vitality and consumer confidence. Experts predict that this year's holiday will be the most vibrant and prosperous in recent years, with an estimated 80 million passenger trips, a record high, during the travel rush from 26 January to 5 March.*



People visiting giant snowmen in Harbin. (L) Tourists have fun at Harbin Ice-Snow World in Harbin, northeast China's Heilongjiang Province, 2 January 2024. (R) PHOTO: XIE JIANFEI/ZHANG TAO/XINHUA

# ARTICLE



## Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 7:00 pm Wednesday 10 January, 2024)

**BAY INFERENCE:** Weather is a few cloud over the North Andaman Sea and partly cloudy to cloudy over the South Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal.

**FORECAST VALID UNTIL NOON OF THE 11 January 2024:** Weather will be partly cloudy in Upper Sagaing, Bago, Taninthayi Regions and Kachin, Kayin, Mon States and a few cloud in Magway, Ayeyawady Regions and Rakhine State and generally fair in the remaining Regions and States.

**STATE OF THE SEA:** Sea will be moderate in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about (4-7) feet off and along Myanmar Coasts.

**OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS:** Likelihood of slight decrease of night temperatures in Sagaing, Mandalay, Magway, Bago, Yangon, Ayeyawady Regions and Kachin, Shan, Chin States.

**FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 11 January 2024:** Generally fair weather.

**FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 11 January 2024:** Generally fair weather.

**FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 11 January 2024:** Generally fair weather.

ends on 5 March according to the Civil Aviation Administration of China (CAAC).

This figure represents a 44.9-percent surge compared with the same period of 2023 and is an increase of 9.8 per cent from the level recorded during the Spring Festival travel rush in 2019.

To handle the spike in air travel passenger levels, the country's airlines have planned to add over 2,500 flights during the 40-day period, taking into consideration the likely demand for trips to popular destinations including Southeast Asian countries, Japan, the Republic of Korea and other neighboring regions, said Liang Nan, a CAAC official. Liang said the CAAC has urged airlines to intensify efforts to increase international flights, especially those to neighboring regions and countries, and ensure safe operation during the Spring Festival travel surge.

The 2024 Spring Festival is likely to elevate the tourism market to a higher peak, judging from

the online booking situation, said Qi Chunguang, vice president of Tuniu, a Chinese online travel services provider.

Qi said some of the company's tourism products designed for the Spring Festival were sold out much earlier than in previous years, with the list including trips to popular destinations in northern European countries.

Concerning domestic travel, he said trips to the country's northeastern regions have become so popular that local tourism reception capacity there has proved almost saturated in recent times. "Such a situation never happened before," he said.

### SOLID START

The eight-day Spring Festival holiday, which starts on 10 February, is the first major holiday after the New Year holiday, which produced a travel boom in China's culture and tourism market, ensuring a solid start for China's economic recovery efforts in 2024.

**SOURCE: Xinhua**



# NATIONAL



Overseas tourists were seen on the beach of Ngapali in October 2023.

## 2023 sees five-fold year-on-year increase in tourist arrivals

MYANMAR attracted 1.28 million international tourists in 2023, a five-fold increase over 2022, according to the Directorate of Hotels and Tourism under the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism.

According to the statistics of the ministry, 288,902 foreign tourists visited Myanmar with visas. At the same time, 995,829 entered the country from the border checkpoints of China and Thailand, bringing the total number to 1.28 million.

Since October 2021, Myanmar's domestic tourism has started to improve, and on 17 April 2022, international air-

lines were allowed to resume operations. The e-Visa was approved on 20 May, and in 2022, more than 0.23 million international tourists entered the country, making a 43 per cent increase in visitor arrivals compared to 2021.

However, due to the low number of tourist arrivals compared to neighbouring countries, State Administration Council Member Deputy Prime Minister Union Minister for Transport and Communications General Mya Tun Oo, Chairman of the National Tourism Development Central Committee, said at the meeting on

6 December that government, private and local people need to cooperate in a balanced manner to be able to attract more tourists from abroad.

The chairman also advised the private tourism entrepreneurs to connect with the target countries so they can promote their market, participate in tourism expos, 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 be able to attract the local and foreign travellers. — TWA/TH

## Changing chilli market dynamics: Demand shifts from cold storage to fresh produce

A chilli trader informed the Global New Light of Myanmar that the demand for high-priced chilli peppers, precisely long chilli and Moehtaung chilli processed in cold storage, has been decreasing with the arrival of new chillies at the Bayintnaung's chilli market in Yangon.

As of 10 January chilli prices in the Yangon market are as follows: Delta bell pepper was priced at K24,000 per viss, Sinphyukyun bell pepper at K21,000-K21,500 per viss, and the new Sinphyukyun bell pepper on the same day declined to K18,500 per viss. Other chilli prices include Chinese moderate bell pepper at K19,500 per viss, Shan Busoh bell pepper at K11,000 per viss, Thazi bell pepper at K15,500 per viss, and Zee bell pepper at K13,500 per viss. Consequently, the demand for Delta and Sinphyukyun bell peppers processed in cold storage is decreasing, while the demand for new bell peppers is rising.

The average price of new Moehtaung chillies from Pyawbwe, Yamethin, and Thedaw areas is K10,500 per viss, nearly equaling the price of Moehtaung chilli from cold storage (K10,700 per viss). As a result, the demand for the latter is gradually

declining. The red long chilli from cold storage is priced at K15,500 per viss, but they lack significant demand in the market since buyers prefer reasonably priced long chillies (both new and old).

On 10 January the red long chilli from the Salin area will be priced at K14,000 per viss, while the Shan long chilli (new) will be priced at K11,500/K11,800 per viss. The price of old long chilli from the Delta region, produced in the 2023 chilli harvesting season, is K7,000 per viss. Consequently, buyers prefer old and new long chillies over cold storage ones. — TWA/TMT



Shan Moehtaung's new chillies have recently arrived in the market.

## Black gram, pigeon pea prices dip; green gram prices stable

THE prices of black grams and pigeon peas declined slightly on 10 January 2024, while the green gram price remained unchanged.

The prices stood at K3.061 million per tonne of black gram (Fair and Average Quality), K3.41 million per tonne of black gram (Special Quality), K3.505 million per tonne of pigeon pea, K3.830 per viss of green gram (Shwewah variety), K2,665-K3,000 per viss of green gram from Pakokku area and K6,250-K6,500 per viss of chickpea on 9 January 2024.

The prices decreased slightly to K3.05 million per tonne of black gram (FAQ), K3.395 million per tonne of black gram (SQ),

and K3.495 million per tonne of pigeon pea on 10 January 2024. Meanwhile, the prices of green grams and chickpeas stayed strong.

The FOB prices were US\$940-960 per tonne of black gram (FAQ), \$1,040-1,060 for black gram (SQ), \$710-740 for green gram from central Myanmar regions and \$840-870 for green gram (Shwewah).

Myanmar annually exports 1.5 to two million tonnes of varieties of pulses to India. India is the primary market for Myanmar's pulses. Myanmar's black gram and pigeon pea prices are closely tied to India's demand. — TWA/KK

## 2023 sees 163 accidents on YGN-MDY Expressway: Increased fatalities despite fewer incidents

A black Toyota Hilux car rear-ended a white KIA light truck near Milepost 338/1 on Yangon-Mandalay Expressway on 9 November 2023. PHOTO: FSD



IN 2023, the Nay Pyi Taw Expressway Police Office reported 163 accidents on the Yangon-Mandalay expressway, causing injuries to 326 individuals and claiming the lives of 86. Various factors contributed

to these highway accidents, including high-speed driving, drivers nodding off in drowsiness, negligence of pedestrians, motorcycle driving, reckless driving, tyre punctures, and machine malfunctions.

A expressway police officer stated, "Upon examining the causes of accidents, we find that they result from high-speed driving, driver drowsiness, vehicles jumping on medians or veering off the road due to the driver's inability to control the vehicle's speed at bends. The primary reason for all these incidents is human errors."

Comparing the data to 2022, which recorded 169 traffic accidents, 280 injuries, and 57 fatalities, the number of traffic accidents in 2023 was slightly lower, but there was an increase in both the number of deaths and injuries. — TWA/KZW

## Pure gold price hits around K3.75 mln in domestic market

PURE gold price gained to approximately K3.75 million per tical (0.578 ounce or 0.016 kilogramme) in the unauthorized market despite dip in spot gold price and reference price by the Yangon Gold Entrepreneurs Association.

The spot gold price stands at US\$2,031 per ounce at present. The YGEA sets the reference price at K3.6514 million per tical. There is a price difference of K100,000 per tical between the YGEA's price and the actual market value.

Earlier, the YGEA used the interbank transaction rate set by the CBM in calculating the reference price for pure gold, indicating a big gap of K400,000-K500,000 per tical. The greenback is valued at around K3,500 at the over-the-counter market.

On 5 December, the Central Bank of Myanmar (CBM) allowed authorized dealers (private banks) to operate forex exchange transactions freely as per the market rate determined by the supply and



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

demand forces.

The Kyat-US dollar exchange rate is currently around

K3,450.

When the Kyat depreciated at K4,000 against the greenback

in the forex market, the gold price peaked at K4 million per tical in August 2023. — NN/EM



An aerial view shows factories in Thilawa Special Economic Zone in Yangon.

## Manufacturing sector exports top US\$6.8 bln in nine months

THE export value from the manufacturing sector crossed US\$6.8 billion in the past nine months of the current financial year 2023-2024, the Ministry of Commerce's statistics showed.

Industrial finished goods exports earned \$8.569 billion in the corresponding FY period. The figures reflected a significant drop of \$1.7 billion this FY compared to the year-

ago period.

Myanmar exports agricultural produce, 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 National 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

## Myanmar earns US\$279 mln in corn exports in Apr-Dec

MYANMAR shipped 934,883 tonnes of corn worth over US\$279 million to foreign trade partners as of 29 December in the current financial year 2023-2024, beginning 1 April, as per the Ministry of Commerce.

Myanmar Corn Industrial Association forecast corn exports to reach over two million tonnes in the 2023 corn season, Patron U Min Khaing said.

The prevailing corn prices are K1,180-K1,200 per viss in the domestic market, according to the Yangon Region Chambers of Commerce and Industry (Bayintnaung Commodity Centre).

Myanmar exports corn to China and Thailand through the border. Also, it ships corn to China, India, Viet Nam and the Philippines via maritime trade, according to the Myanmar Corn Industrial Association.

Thailand gave the go-ahead to the corn imports under zero tariff (with Form-D) between 1 February and 31 August. However, Thailand imposes a maximum tax rate of 73 per cent on corn imports to protect the rights of their growers if the corn is imported during the corn season of Thailand.

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

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

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

# ECONOMY WORLD

## South Korea logs current account surplus for seventh month in Nov 2023

South Korea achieved a current account surplus for the seventh consecutive month, driven by export recovery, with a surplus of US\$ 4.06 billion in November 2023, as reported by the Bank of Korea.



This photo taken on 7 March 2023 shows a container yard at the port of Busan, South Korea. The port of Busan is the largest seaport in the country. **PHOTO: WANG YILIANG/XINHUA**

SOUTH Korea logged current account surplus for the seventh straight month due to export recovery, central bank data showed on 9 January.

Current account balance, the broadest measure of cross-border trade, recorded a surplus of US\$4.06 billion in November 2023, staying in

black since May, according to the Bank of Korea (BOK).

Trade surplus for goods stood at US\$7 billion in November, hovering in black since April.

Export grew seven per cent from a year earlier to US\$56.45 billion in November, while import dwindled eight per cent to US\$49.45 billion.

The outbound shipment kept an upward trend for the second consecutive month on the back of solid demand for locally-made semiconductors and automobiles. Services account deficit came in at US\$2.13 billion in November, up from a deficit of US\$1.25 billion in the previous month. — Xinhua

## HKSAR inks FTA amendment protocol to boost ASEAN trade

THE Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) on Tuesday signed the first protocol to amend free trade

agreement (FTA) with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) to boost economic and trade ties.

The deal is to update the Product Specific Rules (PSR) of origin under the FTA, enhancing the coverage of the PSR from more than 200 categories of products to almost 600.

The specified products incorporated into the FTA through the protocol include various categories of products of interest to Hong Kong traders and manufacturers, such as jewellery, medicaments, food products and textile products. — Xinhua



The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) signed the first protocol to amend its free trade agreement (FTA) with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) on Tuesday, aiming to strengthen economic and trade connections. **PHOTO: THE HONG KONG TRADE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL**

## UAE economy expected to grow by 3.8% in 2025: World Bank

The Global Economic Prospects report anticipates growth in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries to reach 3.6 per cent in 2024 and 3.8 per cent in 2025, citing robust non-oil sector activity from the previous year.

THE WORLD Bank expected the UAE's real GDP to grow by 3.4 per cent in 2023, rising to 3.7 per cent in 2024 and to 3.8 per cent in 2025. According to the Global Economic Prospects report released today, the World Bank forecast the growth in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries to rise to 3.6 per cent in 2024 and 3.8 per cent in 2025, noting to last year's robust non-oil sector activity.

The report said that the growth rate in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region slowed down sharply to 1.9 per cent in 2023, as the region faced multiple headwinds, including oil production cuts, elevated inflation, and weak private sector activity in oil-importing economies. The report also expected the growth rate in the MENA region to pick up to 3.5 per cent in 2024 and 2025. — ANI



The World Bank projects the UAE's real GDP to grow by 3.4 per cent in 2023, with further increases to 3.7 per cent in 2024 and 3.8 per cent in 2025. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

## New US labour rule may help gig workers qualify as employees

A rule issued Tuesday by the US Labour Department making it tougher for companies to classify workers as "independent contractors" could take a toll on the gig economy — and is likely to face challenges.

The Biden administration rule rescinds requirements under former president Donald Trump which made it easier to consider workers contractors rather than employees. This includes drivers of ride-hailing services such as Uber and Lyft, or delivery workers for companies like DoorDash.

But the Department of Labour said Tuesday that it believes

the Trump-era rule is not in line with US law and judicial precedent.

Its latest rule "seeks to combat employee misclassification", which impacts workers' rights and "facilitates wage theft", the department added. Employees generally cost more to companies, given their right to minimum wage and overtime pay, among other benefits and protections.

"Misclassifying employees as independent contractors is a serious issue that deprives workers of basic rights and protections," said Acting Secretary of Labor Julie Su. — AFP

## Swiss central bank logs loss after rate hikes

SWITZERLAND'S central bank expects to have logged a loss of CHF3 billion (US\$3.5 billion) last year, it said yesterday, as it was hit by its own interest rate hikes.

The loss means the country's government and cantons will not receive their annual pay-out from the Swiss National Bank (SNB) for a second year in a row, it said.

Like other central banks worldwide, the SNB has raised its interest rates out of negative territory in efforts to tame inflation. — AFP

Like other central banks worldwide, the SNB has raised its interest rates out of negative territory in efforts to tame inflation. — AFP



The SNB, like other central banks globally, raised interest rates to address inflation, leading to the payment of interest to banks depositing money at the central bank. PHOTO: FREEPIK

## Indian Railways achieve 6,577 route kms electrification in calendar year 2023

Indian Railways declared the electrification of 6,577 route kilometres in 2023, bringing the total Broad Gauge (BG) electrification to 93.83 per cent of the 65,556 route kilometres network.

INDIAN Railways on Monday announced that it achieved 6,577 route kilometres (RKMs) electrification in the calendar year 2023. According to an official release issued from the Ministry of Railways, this accomplishment brings the total Broad Gauge (BG) electrification to 93.83 per cent of the extensive 65,556 route kilometres network.

With a steadfast commitment to eco-friendly practices, the Indian Railways' electrification drive



The achievement, driven by a commitment to eco-friendly practices, has transformed 61,508 route kilometres into an electrified network by December 2023, as per the Ministry of Railways. PHOTO: ANI

has transformed 61,508 Route Kilometres into an electrified network by December 2023. This remarkable achievement marks a substantial increase from the 21,801 Kilometres electrified until 2014.

able achievement marks a substantial increase from the 21,801 Kilometres electrified until 2014.

The electrification initiative by Indian Railways promises a myriad of benefits, including a reduced operating cost, enabling the haulage of heavier freight trains and longer passenger trains due to the higher haulage capacity of Electric Locomotives. This results in an increased throughput, enhancing the overall efficiency of the railway network. — ANI

## Viet Nam exports 1<sup>st</sup> bird's nests to China by air

VIET Nam exported bird's nest products to China by air for the first time last week, Vietnam News Agency reported Tuesday.

The exported products were from The Hai Yen company, based in Nha Trang city of central Khanh Hoa province.

They were delivered from Tan Son Nhat International Airport in Ho Chi Minh City to a company

based in Shenzhen city in southern China.

Tran Thanh Hai, chief executive officer of The Hai Yen, said the company chose to ship the bird's nests by air to ensure the best quality as this means of transport is quick, thus minimizing impact on product quality.

The export once again reflects opportunities for the bird's nest

industry to develop sustainably, especially after a protocol on bird's nest export to China was signed, said the report.

Vietnamese firms were granted export codes for bird's nest products in October last year.

In November, the first Vietnamese bird's nests entered the Chinese market via the official channel by land. — Xinhua

### THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR MINISTRY OF ENERGY MYANMA OIL AND GAS ENTERPRISE (INVITATION FOR OPEN TENDER) (25/2023-2024)

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

Sr No.	Tender No.	Description	Remarks
(1)	DMP/L-173(23-24)	Conceptual and Basic Engineering Design for the New Dry Dock (Dock Yard) (1) Lot	Ks

2. The Open Tender forms including Description of Materials / Qty with details specifications and Tender Terms & Conditions can be available during office hours commencing from 10<sup>th</sup> January, 2024 to 24<sup>th</sup> January, 2024 at the Finance Department, Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise, No. (44) Complex, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar.

3. The interested Bidders should submit the **Technical Specifications and Commercial Quotation with Original Bid Bond in each separate sealed envelopes** on which to be addressed to the Managing Director, Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise and should reach in Tender Box of the Meeting Room(1), Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise not later than 13:00 pm on 23, February 2024.

4. Tender Closing Date & Time – 23-2-2024, 13:00 pm  
Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise  
Ph No. + 95 67 - 411 206

## The Global New Light of Myanmar

www.gnlm.com.mm

ဆောင်းစာ မှာယူလိုပါက ဆက်သွယ်နိုင်ပါတယ်

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## CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V ISEACO GENESIS VOY.NO. (213N/S)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V ISEACO GENESIS VOY.NO. (213N/S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 11-1-2024 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  
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S NEW GOLDEN SEA LINES

## CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V IAL 001 VOY.NO. (W168)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V IAL 001 VOY. NO. (W168) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 11-1-2024 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  
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S INTER ASIA LINES

# ROLLING UPDATES

## WORLD

## DPRK top leader calls South Korea “principal enemy”, urging bolstering up self-defence



A launching ceremony of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's first tactical nuclear attack submarine is held on 6 September 2023. **PHOTO: KCNA**

THE top leader of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) called South Korea a “principal enemy” and asked his country to bolster up self-defence capabilities, the official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) reported Wednesday.

Kim Jong Un, general secretary of the Workers' Party of Korea (WPK) and president of the State Affairs of the DPRK, made the remarks during his inspection of major munitions factories earlier this week, according to the KCNA report.

Kim stressed that the

DPRK should prioritize in bolstering up the military capabilities for self-defence and the nuclear war deterrent when it comes to its relations with South Korea, the KCNA report said.

The DPRK leader said the historic time has come at last when the DPRK should define South Korea as “a state most hostile”, a designation which he stressed his country should view as “unavoidable and irrevocable reality”, since South Korea “has pursued a history of vicious confrontation with bloodshot eyes to overthrow our re-

gime and social system for nearly 80 years”, the report said.

Noting the grave security situation on the Korean Peninsula, Kim made clear that the DPRK “would by no means unilaterally bring a great event”, but it has “no intention of avoiding a war”, it said.

He warned if South Korea attempts to use armed forces against the DPRK or threaten its sovereignty and security, his country will have no hesitation in annihilating South Korea by mobilizing all means and forces, it added. — Xinhua

## Ecuador's Army Chief designates criminal groups operating in country as ‘military target’

THE unrest came as authorities raided prisons in search of weapons and in an effort to disperse gang members to different facilities. During Sunday's search of the Guayaquil prison, law enforcement officials failed to find the leader of the Los Choneros gang, Jose Adolfo Macias Vilamar.

Ecuadorian Armed Forces Joint Command chief RADM Jaime Vela Eraso on Tuesday, following a security council meeting, declared 22 criminal groups operating in the country as a “military target” and said

there would be no negotiations with them.

“Daniel Noboa, the president of the republic, has set a very clear mission for us in his decree No. 111. From now on, every terrorist group identified in the above-mentioned decree becomes a military target. The present and future of our country are at stake, and no act of terrorism will make us surrender. We are not going to retreat or negotiate,” the army chief said in a video address posted by the Ecuadorian presidency on X. — SPUTNIK



The Ecuadorian Armed Forces Joint Command chief declared 22 criminal groups as a “military target” after a security council meeting, emphasizing a no-negotiation stance with these groups. **PHOTO: AFP**

## Bangladesh PM Hasina emphasises strong ties with India, vows to work for economic progress of her country

BANGLADESH Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, who secured her fifth term in the recent general elections, outlined her plans for the country's international relations and highlighted the strong bond between Bangladesh and India.

She expressed gratitude towards India, emphasizing its pivotal role in supporting Bangladesh during critical moments in history. In a press conference at her residence, Ganabhaban, in Dhaka, she responded to a question from ANI about her plans for Bangladesh's international engagement over the next five years and the ties with India, saying, “India is a great friend of Bangladesh. They supported us in 1971 and 1975. We consider India our next-door neighbour. I really appreciate that we have a wonderful relationship with India.”

The Prime Minister stressed the historical significance of India's support during the Bangladesh Liber-



Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, in her fifth term, outlined plans for the country's international relations and emphasized the strong bond with India. **PHOTO: ANI**

ation War in 1971 and the subsequent challenges faced by the nation in 1975. She hailed the enduring friendship between the two countries and reiterated the importance of India as a key ally.

“In the next 5 years, our main focus will be on economic progress and fulfilling all the work that we have started. We have already declared our manifesto, and we follow our

election manifesto whenever we prepare our budget and try to fulfil our promises. The development of the people and our country is our main aim,” Sheikh Hasina added.

She further expressed her commitment to serving the people of Bangladesh, emphasising the responsibility she feels towards the citizens who have repeatedly voted for her. — ANI

# SPORTS

## Organizing committee for 2025 Asian Winter Games officially established

Harbin won the bid for the 2025 Asian Winter Games at the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly of the Olympic Council of Asia in Bangkok, Thailand, in July 2023.

THE organizing committee for the 2025 Asian Winter Games in Harbin, northeast China's Heilongjiang Province, was officially established on Wednesday.

The Harbin Asian Winter Games are scheduled to take place in early 2025 and will feature six sports, 11 disciplines and 64 events.

The regional games will be staged in China for the third time following Harbin in 1996 and Changchun, capital city of Jilin Province, in 2007.

Harbin was awarded the 2025 Asian Winter Games by the Olympic Council of Asia at its 42<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly held in Bangkok, Thailand, last July. — Xinhua



Harbin, the capital of Northeast China's Heilongjiang province, will host the 9<sup>th</sup> Asian Winter Games in 2025. PHOTO: XINHUA



Myanmar team players are seen during an international football match. PHOTO: THAW GYI

## Team Myanmar to prepare for 2026 World Cup 2<sup>nd</sup> Round Qualifiers

MYANMAR national team head coach Michael Feichtenbeiner will handle Team Myanmar for the 2026 World Cup 2<sup>nd</sup> Round Qualifiers in March and June.

Team Myanmar will start training this month. Myanmar players are scheduled to train in Yangon from 10 to 20 Janu-

ary, when the domestic league matches are suspended, to ensure that the players are fully trained.

Twenty-eight players have been selected for this training programme, including some playing in foreign clubs.

In the list of players who will be training now, those

who are playing in Thai clubs, players from the Cambodian League and some players from the local league who are injured are not included yet and will come to join only for the second training session.

In this training, veteran striker Kyaw Ko Ko has made a comeback. — Ko Nyi Lay/KZL

## Son set to light up Asian Cup as Qatar takes centre stage again

Over the next four weeks, 24 teams from Australia to Palestine will compete for regional glory, culminating in the final at Lusail Stadium on 10 February.

THE Asian Cup begins Thursday with defending champions Qatar the hosts, Japan favourites and Son Heung-min's South Korea vowing to win

the title for the first time in 64 years.

The 24 teams spanning Australia to Palestine will battle for regional glory over the

next four weeks, culminating in the final at the 88,000-capacity Lusail Stadium on February 10.

It will take something special to beat the last big game at Lusail — the World Cup final 13 months ago when an Argentina side inspired by Lionel Messi defeated France on penalties.

Qatar will mostly use stadiums that staged World Cup matches, a notable absentee being Stadium 974, the temporary arena made partly of shipping containers.

Qatar won plaudits for its organisation of the World Cup but the team flopped on the pitch, their three straight defeats the worst performance of any World Cup host. — AFP



South Korea's Son Heung-min celebrates his goal with his teammates during the match against China at the 2026 FIFA World Cup Asian qualifier. PHOTO: XINHUA

## Chelsea midfielder Cole Palmer admits his intention of staying at Manchester City



Despite the desire to stay, Palmer made a £40 million move to Chelsea on Deadline Day last summer and has become a key player under manager Mauricio Pochettino. PHOTO: ANI

CHELSEA midfielder Cole Palmer stated that he wanted to stay at his boyhood club Manchester City

but was told by the club to go on a loan deal or leave on a permanent transfer. The English midfielder made a stunning £40 million deal with Chelsea on Deadline Day last summer and has fared well in the different shade of blue.

Palmer has proven to be one of the season's best signings, quickly becoming a crucial player for Chelsea manager Mauricio Pochettino, scoring eight goals and assisting four times in 16 Premier League outings.

His efforts have been a huge positive for the club amid a difficult season. His efforts allowed him to break into Gareth Southgate's England squad. However, the 21-year-old talked about his move away from Manchester City, where he had only played three Premier League games after coming through their development academy. — ANI



## India, UAE sign MoUs in presence of PM Modi, UAE President

*The agreements include cooperation in renewable energy sectors, innovative healthcare projects, food park development, and creating sustainable ports.*



India, UAE on Tuesday signed several Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and UAE President Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan. **PHOTO: ANI**

**I**NDIA, UAE on Tuesday signed several Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and UAE President Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan.

An MoU was signed between India's Ministry of New and Renewable Energy and UAE's Ministry of Investment on Investment Cooperation in Renewable Energy Sectors.

Another MoU was signed between India's Ministry of Health and Family

Welfare and UAE's Ministry of Investment on Investment Cooperation in Innovative Healthcare Projects.

There was an MoU between India's

Ministry of Food Processing Industries and

UAE's Ministry of Investment on Investment Cooperation in Food Park

Development and another MoU between DP World (UAE) and the Gujarat Government on Creating Sustainable, Green and Efficient Ports. — ANI

## US moon lander suffers malfunctions after launch

*A new rocket from United Launch Alliance carried Astrobotic Technology's lunar lander, Peregrine, into space from Cape Canaveral. Unfortunately, Peregrine encountered a propulsion issue shortly after separating from the spacecraft.*

**T**HE first US private moon landing mission suffered an anomaly following its launch

from the US state of Florida early Monday.

A new rocket developed

by US space launch company United Launch Alliance lifted off at 02:18 am Eastern Time

(0718 GMT) Monday from Launch Complex 41 at Cape Canaveral Space Force Station in Florida.

The launch vehicle dispatched Peregrine, the lunar lander developed by the American private company Astrobotic Technology, on its mission to the moon.

Shortly after separating from the spacecraft, Peregrine experienced a propulsion issue.

"After successful propulsion systems activation, Peregrine entered a safe operational state. Unfortunately, an anomaly then occurred, which prevented Astrobotic from achieving a stable sun-pointing orientation," the company said in a release. — Xinhua



ULA's Vulcan Centaur rocket launches the Peregrine moon lander on 8 January 2024. **PHOTO: ULA**

### CAREER TRANSITION

#### Gabriel Attal appointed as new French PM

**FRENCH** President Emmanuel Macron on Tuesday appointed Gabriel Attal as prime minister following the resignation of former head of government Elisabeth Borne, announced the presidential palace, the Elysee.

In a short press release, the Elysee noted that the President of the Republic appointed Gabriel Attal as Prime Minister, and tasked him with forming a government.

From 2020 to 2022, Attal served as the spokesperson of the government of former Prime Minister Jean Castex, then he became Minister Delegate for the Budget of former Prime Minister Elisabeth Borne's government. — Xinhua