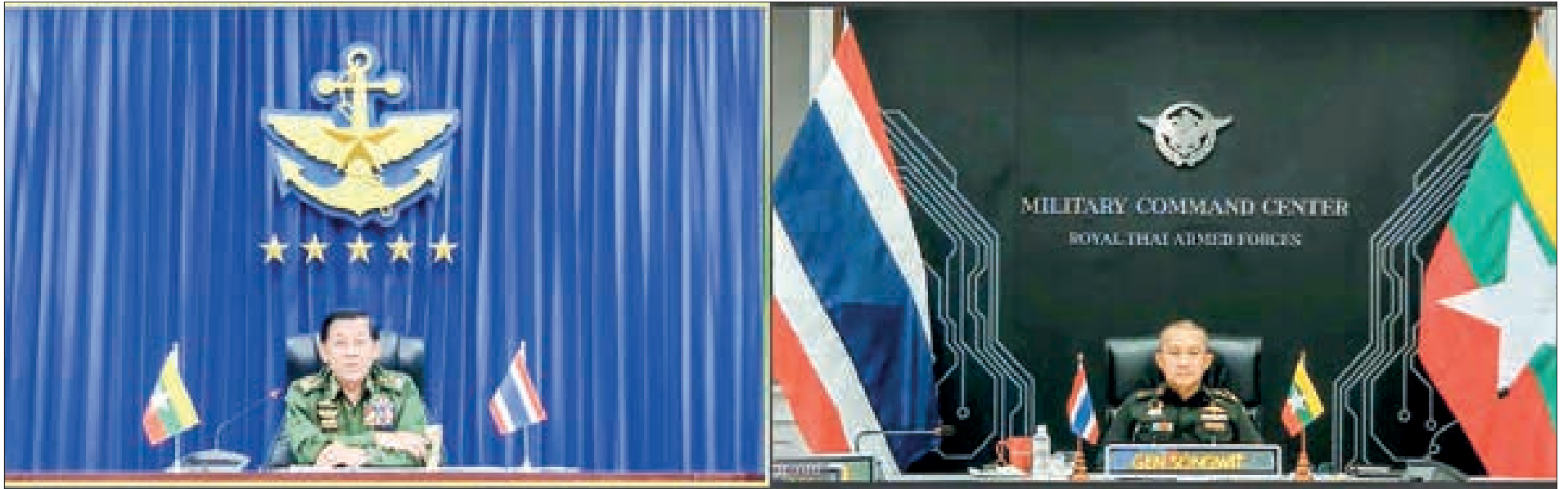


The Global **NEW LIGHT** of MYANMAR

Myanmar, Thailand collaborate to eradicate online gambling, scams at border



SAC Chairman Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing talks with Chief of Defence Forces General Songwit Noonpackdee of the Royal Thai Armed Forces through videoconferencing.

Myanmar and Thailand decided to cooperate with each other in eradicating online gambling and online scams near Myawady of the Myanmar-Thai border area depending on the investigation, according to the discussion between Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and General Songwit Noonpackdee.

Chairman of the State Administration Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing

held talks with Chief of Defence Forces General Songwit Noonpackdee of the Royal Thai Armed Forces via videoconferencing yesterday afternoon.

At the talks, they discussed bilateral cooperation in drug eradication and counter-terrorism, eradication of illegal trade, exchange of information, and efforts for ensuring peace and stability in border areas of both countries.

Both sides cordially exchanged views on a plan for further enhancement of

relations and friendly ties as well as cooperation between the two countries and the two armed forces. They also emphasized cooperation in the secure and smooth process of border trade between the two countries on political trends and the armed forces on security trends. Not only the two armed forces of both countries but also the ministries of those countries will beef up bilateral cooperation in humanitarian and assistance measures.

They also discussed jointly the pre-

vention of forest fire and transboundary haze pollution at the Myanmar-Laos-Thai border areas and cooperation between the governments of both countries and two armed forces on a broader scale.

Also present at the talks were Lt-Gen Ye Win Oo of the Office of the Commander-in-Chief and officials. Air Chief Marshal Chakorn Tawanjang and officials also accompanied the Chief of Defence Forces of the Royal Thai Armed Forces. — MNA/TTA



Irrawaddy dolphin at the Mainmahla Island Wildlife Sanctuary.

Wildlife Sanctuary records Irrawaddy Dolphins' population

THE Wildlife Sanctuary at Mainmahla Island in Bogale Township, Ayeyawady Region, will conduct a survey to record the number of Irrawaddy dolphins in the area between January and

March.

U Sai Wunna Kyi, warden of the sanctuary, said: "We'll begin the survey in the third week of January. Having conducted similar surveys since 2021, last year's

count revealed 16 Irrawaddy dolphins. Dolphins don't linger in the sanctuary. The island has more crocodiles [than dolphins]."

Irrawaddy dolphins love to roam between Mandalay and Kyaukmyaung (Protected Area 1) in Mandalay Region, and Htigyaing-Katha-Shwegu (Protected Area 2) in Sagaing Region. They are also spotted between Malei in Kanbalu Township and Shwegu in Kachin State.

The Mainmahla Island Wildlife Sanctuary encompasses freshwater and saltwater environments, serving as Myanmar's sole natural protected area for crocodiles inhabiting both types of waters. It is also home to dolphins, seals, hogs, native and wintering birds and many other mammals. — ASH/NT

NATIONAL

PAGE-2



MNHRC inspects Mother's Love Home for the Aged

BUSINESS

PAGE-7



Sino-Myanmar border trade sees growth in 9 months

NATIONAL

Mann Shwesettaw Buddha Pujaniya Festival preparations almost complete

AS the Mann Shwesettaw Pagoda Festival is set to commence on 14 February 2024 (5th Waxing of Tabodwe ME 1385), 90 per cent of the preparation work for the festival has already been completed, according to U Tun Tun Win, the administrator of Minbu District, Magway Region.

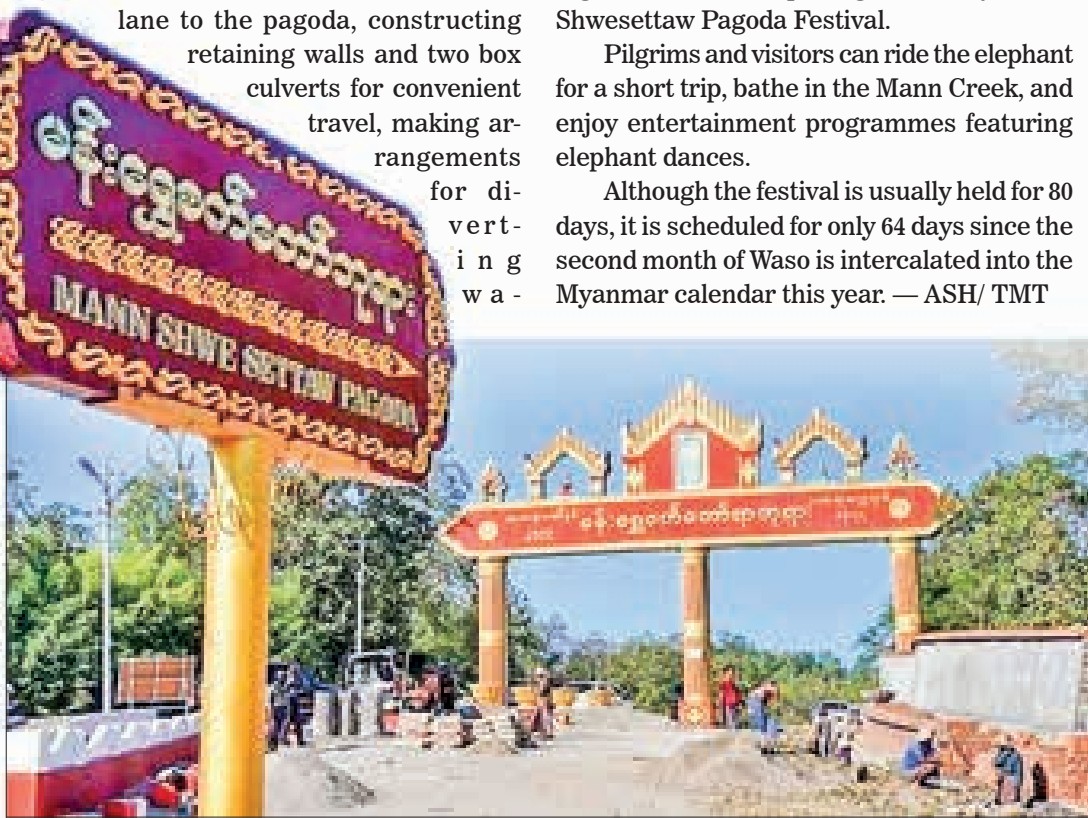
"The preparation work involves decorating the landscape and planting flowers (flower boxes) along the three-mile-long entrance lane to the pagoda, constructing retaining walls and two box culverts for convenient travel, making arrangements for diverting water

ter flow at the festival site, cleaning the land where lodgings and shops will be built, organizing measures to control erosion of the creek bank along the way to the Upper Golden Footprint, renovating the dragon lake, and installing the iron Bailey bridge, etc.," said U Tun Tun Win.

The report also states that the Mann Shwesettaw elephant resort is scheduled to open together with the opening ceremony of the Shwesettaw Pagoda Festival.

Pilgrims and visitors can ride the elephant for a short trip, bathe in the Mann Creek, and enjoy entertainment programmes featuring elephant dances.

Although the festival is usually held for 80 days, it is scheduled for only 64 days since the second month of Waso is intercalated into the Myanmar calendar this year. — ASH/ TMT



The photo shows parts of the preparation work at Mann Shwesettaw Pagoda for the festival.

MNHRC inspects Mother's Love Home for the Aged



MNHRC member U Kyaw Soe visits Mother's Love Home for the Aged in Hlegu Township.

THE inspection team led by members U Kyaw Soe and Dr Than Myint from the Myanmar National Human Rights Com-

mission (MNHRC) inspected Mother's Love Home for the Aged in Hlegu Township, Yangon Region, yesterday.

They inspected whether older persons in the Mother's Love Home for the Aged can get fundamental human rights, including healthcare services, food supply, provision of purified drinking water as well as the right to freedom of religion, adequate dormitories and arrangements for ease of living and movement within dormitories and arrangement for recreation places.

The inspection team gave warm words of encouragement to the older persons cared for at the Home for Aged.

MNHRC will recommend the findings to the relevant departments during the inspection tour. — MNHRC

U Kyaw Soe Min appointed as Ambassador of Myanmar to Kingdom of Cambodia

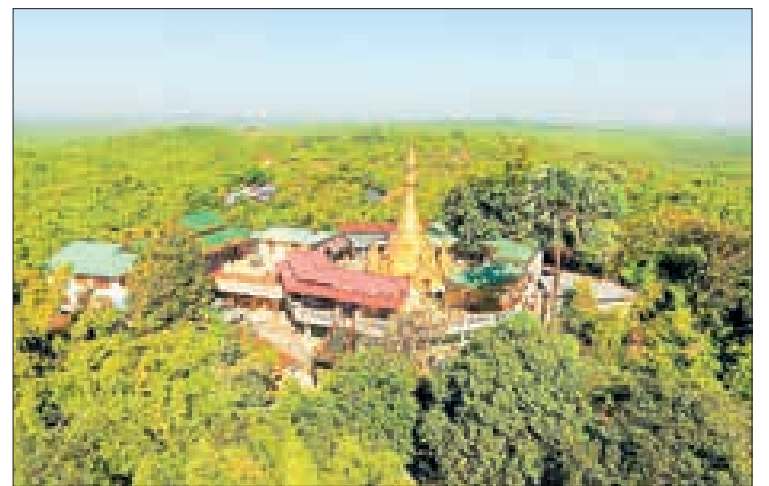
CHAIRMAN of the State Administration Council, Prime Minister of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has appointed U Kyaw Soe Min, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the Kingdom of Cambodia. — MNA

Many visitors flock to Daesunpa Pagoda in Bago Region

THE Daesunpa Pagoda, located on Daesunpa Hill three miles west of Wanbeinn Village in Bago Township, Bago Region, has experienced a growing number of pilgrims, according to U Than Oo, the joint treasurer of the Board of Trustees of the Daesunpa Pagoda.

He mentioned, "Since the December holidays, there has been a surge in visitors from various states and regions, particularly pilgrim groups from Bago Region. On weekdays, the pagoda welcomes around 200 pilgrims; on weekends, this number increases to 200 to 400. In addition to pilgrims, avid climbers often visit, especially during the early mornings of the dry season. Many continue their journey to nearby places like the Shwesunpa and Myasunpa hill pagodas."

The Buddha Pujaniya Festival of the Daesunpa Pagoda is typi-



Pilgrims and visitors throng Daesunpa Pagoda on Daesunpa Mountain.

cally held on the full-moon day of Tabaung each year, and the festival and hill trips around Daesunpa usually span from the full-moon day to the 10th waning of Thadingyut, covering ten days.

Along the route to the Daesunpa Pagoda, several other pagodas, including the Shwesunpa Pagoda, Kyaiksunpa Pagoda, Myasunpa Pagoda, Kyaukphya Pagoda, Kyaukhti Pagoda, Laykyun Aungman Pagoda, Hmyawdawyoung Pagoda, Aung Sekkya Pagoda, Buddha Sekkya Pagoda, Lawka Sekkya Pagoda, Bar Theikdhishin Pagoda, Aung Theikdhi Pagoda, Gamontaung Pagoda, Rathedaung Pagoda, Ingyintaung Pagoda, Maha Bawdi Pagoda, Bawkyo Pagoda, Shwesayan Pagoda, and Manikaytha Hair Relic Pagoda, attract pilgrims as well. — ASH/ TMT

Advertise

with us / Hot Line : 09974424848

NATIONAL

UEC Chair, ASEAN Chair's Special Envoy meet registered political parties

MEETINGS between Union Election Commission Chairman U Thein Soe, Special Envoy of the ASEAN Chair on Myanmar Mr Alounkeo Kittikhoun, and registered political parties were organized at the Yangon Region government office yesterday.

The UEC chair first provided details on the preparations for upcoming free and fair general elections, explained the adoption of a proportional representative system for the coming elections, and briefed the special envoy on the current status of political parties. Subsequently, he addressed any questions posed by the special envoy.



UEC Chairman U Thein Soe and Special Envoy of the ASEAN Chair on Myanmar Mr Alounkeo Kittikhoun meets 42 registered political parties at Yangon Region Government office yesterday.

After the meeting, they convened with representatives from registered parties to discuss election and party affairs. UEC members, the Regional Social Affairs minister and the advocate-general of the Yangon Region government, chairpersons and leaders of 42 political parties, and other officials were also present at the meeting. — MNA/NT

UEC seeks political parties' input for multiparty democratic general elections via paper-reading session



UEC officials meet those from 45 registered political parties at Yangon Region government office yesterday.

THE Union Election Commission and registered political parties held a paper-reading session on suggestions for the successful holding of the multiparty democratic general election at the Yangon Region government office yesterday.

Speaking at the event, UEC Chairman U Thein Soe said the event aims to read suggestion papers for holding multiparty democratic elections and party-related matters. There are now 45 existing parties, and they should organize the political members and establish party offices within a fixed duration under the laws and rules.

He then talked about the proper duties of the UEC, including its inspections of political parties, the requirements to be

performed by the political parties and implementing the genuine, disciplined multiparty democracy through the solid political parties.

He also mentioned the preparations for the elections by the UEC, arrangements to amend and release the relevant Hluttaw election law and rules that are in conformity with the PR system, and compiling of voter lists. He urged the participants to submit constructive advice for holding the general elections peacefully.

The event was attended by UEC members, the Yangon Region Social Affairs minister, the advocate-general, chairpersons of 42 political parties, and relevant officials of the UEC Office and departments. — MNA/KTZH

Ceasefire reached in Shan (North)

MAJ-GEN Zaw Min Tun, SAC Information Team Leader, said yesterday that a temporary ceasefire had been reached between Tatmadaw and three groups of the Northern Alliance in northern Shan State and that they would continue to take necessary measures to strengthen the ceasefire.

Tatmadaw and three groups of the Northern Alliance met and discussed in Kunming, China.

“With the mediation of the People’s Republic of China, Myanmar’s National Solidarity and Peacemaking Negotiation Committee met three groups of the Northern Alliance in Kunming. The meeting

resulted in reaching an agreement for a temporary ceasefire. We will continue to discuss,” he said. China-mediated meetings between these two sides have already been held twice in Kunming.

Five members of MNDAA, seven of ULA/AA, and seven PSLF/TNLA members reportedly attended the meeting

along with the Chinese special envoy.

“We will continue to take necessary measures to strengthen the ceasefire. Afterwards, we will hold bilateral negotiations with the Chinese counterparts to enable reopening the border trade posts,” said Maj-Gen Zaw Min Tun. — Thit Taw/ZN

NATIONAL

SAC Member inspects local development activities in Pantanaw

STATE Administration Council Member Mahn Nyein Maung and officials inspected the completion of the construction work of the Kyonpataw Bridge (first phase) 5 A1 bored piles, 5 A2 bored piles on the Obo-Chaungale road, and P1 bored pile works in Pantanaw township on 11 January 2024.

Officials explained the status of the work, and the SAC member gave instructions to ensure work quality and on-time completion.

The SAC member visited Sinshwekyia 2 in Kyontongyi Field No 534 (A) next to the Yangon-Pathein Highway, Zeephyusu Village, Kyontongyi village-tract. He viewed the successful development of a 10-acre model sunflower farm, met farmers, discussed the benefits of cultivating sunflower crop, and urged them to make it a success. — MNA/TS

SAC Member attends WHG 2024 New Year Thanksgiving ceremony



SAC member Daw Dwe Bu presents gifts to students from School for the Blind in Myitkyina yesterday.

STATE Administration Council Member Daw Dwe Bu attended the 2024 New Year Thanksgiving ceremony yesterday organized by Wunpawng Htunghking Hpung Ginjaw (WHG) at Majwe Hall

in Manaw Compound in Sitapu Ward of Myitkyina.

At the ceremony, the SAC member stressed the need to work together with the government and ethnic people for

the development of the state and country with loving-kindness in the 2024 New Year occasion and added that the priests of Christian associations should support by spreading wishes to be able to pass the 2024 new year peacefully.

The Kachin State chief minister talked about the unity in developing the state, and the event continued as per the procedures.

At noon, the SAC member, accompanied by the wife of the state chief minister and members of the state women's affairs association, visited the Grace Happy Land Orphanage. On arrival at the orphanage, she met with the principal and children and encouraged the children to become educated and outstanding persons for the country, state, ward and village.

The SAC member and party then provided K1 million to the orphanage. Moreover, the SAC member and party proceeded to the school for the blind in Ayemyathaya ward and presented K1 million to the principal. — MNA/KTZH

Counter-argument to false information

Misinformation: Two villagers hurt when security forces open fire with heavy weapons on Taungpu Village



MALICIOUS news media are spreading fake news that security forces entered Taungpu Village and opened fire with heavy weapons, injuring two local villagers and forced residents to pay money on 10 January.

Regarding the news, according to ground information sources and a relevant local security official, security forces did not go to Taungpu village on 10 January. There was no heavy fire, and on the same day, local houses in Letme village, Myeik, were burnt down by PDF terrorists.

To cover up the terrorist activities of PDF terrorists, false information is spread on social networks on purpose. — MNA/KZL

Fake news: Tatmadaw sets fire to Kyatyoeogon village for no reason

KHIT Thit, a malicious news media, spread fake news on a social networking site that an army column came to Kyatyoeogon village at 7 am on 12 January and burned the village for no reason.

According to a report from a resident who does not want violence, the truth is that PDF terrorists have arrived in the village and are recruiting new members and threatening to demand money.

According to the report, as the security forces provided security in the area, the terrorists burned down some houses in the village and fled away according to a relevant security official. PDF terrorists often do this kind of house burning, and the malicious news media make up the story that Tatmadaw is doing it. — MNA/KZL



Global NEW LIGHT of MYANMAR

www.gnlm.com.mm



CIRCULATION & DISTRIBUTION

(+95) (01) 8604532,
Hotline - 09 255597511

ADVERTISING & MARKETING

(+95) (01) 8604530,
Hotline - 09 251022355
marketing@gnlm.com.mm
subscription@gnlm.com.mm

Printed and published at the Global New Light of Myanmar Printing Factory at No.150, Nga Htat Kyee Pagoda Road, Bahan Township, Yangon, by the Global New Light of Myanmar Daily under Printing Permit No. 00510 and Publishing Permit No. 00629.
gnlmnews@gmail.com
newsroom@gnlm.com.mm
www.gnlm.com.mm

Write for us

We appreciate your feedback and contributions. If you have any comments or would like to submit editorials, analyses or reports please email aungthuya@gnlm.com.mm with your name and title.

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

2023-2024 Inter-State & Region Judo Competition concludes

THE final game plus awarding ceremony of the 2023-2024 Inter-State and Region Judo competition was held at Wunna Theikdhi Gymnasium A in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

The State Administration Council members enjoyed the final match between the Kachin State and Ayeyawady Region teams. The Kachin State team won over the Ayeyawady Region team after the match.

During the awarding ceremony, the State Administration Council members presented

trophies to the winners of the Kachin State team and medals to the second-placed and third-placed teams, plus outstanding fighters of the men's and women's judo events.

The 2023-2024 Inter-State and Region Judo competition was held from 8 to 12 January with 14 men's teams and 14 women's teams with a total of 266 players to bring out new generations of athletes and raise the standard of Myanmar's judo sports. — MNA/KZL



The SAC member presents Championship trophy to Champion Kachin State men's team in ISR Judo competition in Nay Pyi Taw.

Coord Meeting on development of Strategic Plans for implementation of ASEAN Community Vision 2045 among relevant Ministries of three ASEAN Community Pillars held



Deputy Minister Dr Wah Wah Maung attends the meeting on Strategic Plans for the implementation of ASEAN Community Vision 2045 yesterday.

A coordination meeting on the development of Strategic Plans for the implementation of ASEAN Community Vision 2045 among relevant ministries of three ASEAN Community Pillars was held yesterday at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Nay Pyi Taw. The meeting was led by Dr Wah Wah Maung, Deputy Minister for the Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations and the Eminent Person (EP) of Myanmar for the High-Level Task Force on ASEAN Community's Post-2025 Vision

(HLTF-ACV) and attended by directors-general and high-ranking officials from respective ministries.

During the meeting, the deputy minister explained the progress and way forward on the development of ASEAN Political and Security Community strategic plan and its template for the implementation of ASEAN Community Vision (2045) including the finalization of the ASEAN Community Vision (2045) at the 10th meeting of the High-Level Task Force on ASE-

AN Community's Post-2025 Vision (HLTF-ACV), under the theme of "Resilient, Innovation, Dynamic and People-Centred ASEAN". The deputy minister encouraged the other respective pillars such as ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) and ASEAN Socio-cultural Community (ASCC) to closely coordinate with the relevant sectoral bodies under each pillar on the development of respective strategic plans. She also shared her insights on the proposed action lines of the draft strategic plan of ASEAN Political and Security Community and stressed the importance of providing inputs to the draft action lines in line with our Core National interests.

At the meeting, the proposed action lines under the strategic goals of the ASEAN Political and Security Community Strategic Plan were thoroughly discussed among the participants and exchanged their views in an open and candid manner. The Representatives from the AEC and ASCC Pillars also clarified their works so far on the development of the relevant strategic plans for the ASEAN Community Vision 2045. — MNA

MoI Deputy Minister addresses measures against artwork plagiarism, Myanmar Film Academy Award event

THE third coordination meeting of the Association of Anti-Illegal Plagiarism of Artworks took place at the meeting hall of the Motion Pictures Promotion Branch of the IPRD in Yangon yesterday.

At the event, Deputy Minister for Information U Ye Tint said the preventive measures against illegal broadcasting of Myanmar movies through online platforms are successful to a certain extent. The ministry also scrutinizes the movies per the censorship policies and organized associations to combat illegal plagiarism effectively.

Moreover, the officials and artwork creators should cooperate in fighting against illegal recording in cinemas. The deputy minister also stressed the need to conduct educating programmes regarding illegal recording in cinemas for the public and appreciated the efforts of relevant officials in combatting illegal plagiarism.

At noon, the Deputy minister presided over the first meeting of the Working Committee on Organizing Myanmar Motion Pictures Academy Award Event at the same venue.

At the meeting, the deputy minister, also the Working Committee chairman, urged the participants to raise the perfect presentations, including entertaining programmes, event preparations and ongoing work plans.

He then made instructions after hearing the reports of the officials from relevant organizations. — MNA/KTZH

NATIONAL

2nd CAIEC welcomes Myanmar entrepreneurs



Winners of the China-ASEAN Innovation and Entrepreneurship Competition 2022. **PHOTO: AOSAN**

THE 2nd China-ASEAN Innovation and Entrepreneurship Competition (CAIEC) will be held from February to March, and it also welcomes entrepreneurs from Myanmar.

The name of the competition team is Digital Empowerment for a Shared Future. The candidates can compete in projects such as digital economy, digital manufacturing, digital product service, digital technology application, digital signal driving and digital performance improvement. Then, Awards for Team Groups, Enterprise

Groups, Creativity Stars and Cooperation Stars will be awarded in the competition.

The competition will be held in four stages: Registration, Eligibility check, Initial selection and Final. Registration will be close on 15 February, 2024, and the qualification test will be conducted from 16 to 29 February.

The competition is jointly organized by the Ministry of Science and Technology of the People's Republic of China and the ASEAN Secretariat to promote science, technology

and innovation exchange and cooperation between China and ASEAN member countries and to strengthen the China-ASEAN community through innovation and entrepreneurship in the future. Enterprise Groups and Team Groups can apply to compete through e-mail: caiec2022@vip.163.com.

In the first round, an entrepreneur from Myanmar (Green Toddy Co Ltd) won the third prize, and Thae Phyu Ecolodges and DTVET Team won the Creativity Stars award. — TWA/TKO

Loans offered for edible oil sector development

THE Oil Mills Development Loan Management Body announced on Monday that it would provide capital loans at a yearly interest rate of five per cent for developing the edible oil industry.

The loans will cover working and fixed capital for expanding, upgrading, and developing necessary equipment and new mills. The loans are sourced from the State Economic Development Fund.

Entrepreneurs may borrow from K10 million to K300 million for working capital and K20 million to K300 million for fixed capital investment. Repayment periods span one year for working capital loans and are structured over three years in three instalments for fixed capital loans.

Applicants are required to

provide a valid licence, demonstrate their working capacity, offer immovable property as collateral for the loans, and submit Form 7 for engaging in activities on farmland to apply for the loans.

Application forms are available for download on the Ministry of Planning and Finance websites, Directorate of Industrial Supervision and Inspection, Myanmar Edible Oil Millers' Association, Myanmar Edible Oil Dealers' Association, Myanmar Economic Bank, and Myanmar Agricultural Development Bank.

From July to October 2023, 21 edible oil millers from seven states and regions, including Nay Pyi Taw, borrowed K1.77 billion from the State loans. In the subsequent round, 37 millers applied for K6.78 billion. — TWA/NT



An oil mill in Danubyu, Ayeyawady Region.

Overnight parking stations planned for YBS vehicles in Yangon Region

THE Yangon Region Public Transport Committee (YRTC) has initiated the construction of parking lots to facilitate the overnight parking of YBS vehicles operating in Yangon, aiming to enhance safety measures.

Currently, YBS vehicles are parked overnight on main roads near their stations or turnaround points, leading to incidents of vehicle parts being frequently stolen. To mitigate such occurrences, parking stations are going to be constructed.

A 5-acre plot of land within the Thukha Dagon housing complex in Dagon Myothit (South)

Township is presently undergoing construction to serve as a parking lot and station for YBS vehicles. This measure aims to provide secure and designated spaces for overnight parking, reducing theft risk.

Currently, there are 15 parking lots available in Yangon Region for YBS vehicles to stay overnight, with plans to construct additional facilities in Dagon Myothit (Seikkan), Thakayta, Dagon Myothit (South), North Okkalapa, Shwepaukkan Myothit, Mingaladon (Htaukkyant) and Hlinethaya townships. — TWA/TKO

Extending winter crop loans in Mandalay Region until January's end



The file photo shows the Myanmar Agricultural Development Bank issuing loans for the cost of cultivation to some farmers in Myittha Township.

MYANMAR Agricultural Development Bank Branch has announced that winter crop cultivation loans for farmers in the Mandalay Region will be

extended by one month until the end of January 2024.

Over K4.2 billion have been earmarked for loaning winter crops for more than 40,000

acres, and it is set to be issued from the second week of October to the end of December 2023. Due to the farmers' transportation difficulties, the loan period is planned to be extended by one month until the end of January 2024.

Winter crop cultivation loans are available at K150,000 per acre for rice and K100,000 per acre for groundnuts, green beans, sesame, cotton, chickpeas, soybeans, beans and maize. Loans of K1,450.8 million have been given to 3,268 farmers for 14,165 acres in 12 townships in Mandalay Region. — TWA/KZL

Petrol prices dip, diesel prices rise slightly

THE fuel market sees a decrease in Octane prices and a slight increase in diesel prices.

The prices stood at K2,535 per litre of Octane 92, K2,635 for Octane 95, K2,320 for diesel and K2,405 for premium diesel on 11 January 2024.

The gasoline prices were set at K2,515 for Octane 92 and K2,625 for Octane 95, whereas the diesel prices were registered at K2,360 for diesel and K2,430 for premium diesel on 12 January.

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

Last August 2023, the oil prices hit the highest of K2,605 per litre for Octane 92, K2,670 for Octane 95, K3,330 for premium diesel and

K3,245 for diesel.

The committee has been, therefore, steering the fuel oil storage and distribution sector effectively so as not to have a shortage of oil in the domestic market. It has been issuing daily reference prices to ensure price stability for energy consumers.

The committee is inspecting the fuel stations to see whether they are overcharging. The authorities are taking action against those retailers of fuel stations under the Petroleum and Petroleum Products Law 2017 if they are found overcharging rather than the set reference rate.

As per the statement, 90 per cent of fuel oil in Myanmar is imported, while the remaining 10 per cent is produced locally. The domestic fuel price is highly correlated with internation-

al prices.

The State is steering the market to mitigate the loss between the importers, sellers and energy consumers. Consequently, the government is trying to distribute the oil at a reasonable price compared to those of regional countries. Some countries levied higher tax rates and hiked oil prices than Myanmar's. However, Malaysia's oil sector receives government subsidies, and the prices are about 60 per cent cheaper than Myanmar's. Every country lays down different patterns of policy to fix the oil prices. Myanmar also levies only a lower tax rate on fuel oil and strives for energy consumers to buy the oil at a cheaper rate. — NN/EM



A fuel station is ready to fuel vehicles.

MIC nods 14 enterprises to invest in Mandalay Region in 2023

Those businesses are set to create over 600 jobs for locals.



Authorities are observing some projects approved by the Myanmar Investment Commission in Mandalay Region in December 2022.

MYANMAR Investment Commission (MIC) gave the green light to 13 wholly domestic enterprises invested by Myanmar citizens and one foreign project in 2023, creating over 600 jobs for residents, Dr Min Zaw Oo, director of the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (Mandalay Region), said.

“Those 14 enterprises will bring in K170 billion and US\$0.858 million. They employ over 650 Myanmar workers and 11 expatriate employees,” he shared employment figures. Similarly, the Mandalay Region Investment Committee (MRIC) endorsed nine domestic businesses and one foreign enterprise last year.

Those approved and endorsed projects are set to pump investments into industrial manufacturing, garment manufacturing, electric power distribution and hotel services. Furthermore, the regional investment committee will attract investors to spur investments in garment manufacturing, industrial business and hotel services in the 2023-2024 financial year beginning 1 April. — ASH/EM

Sino-Myanmar border trade sees growth in 9 months

THE border trade value between Myanmar and China surged to over US\$2.6 billion in the past nine months (April-December) of the current financial year 2023-2024 from \$2.076 billion recorded in the year-ago period, the Ministry of Commerce's statistics showed.

The figures reflected a significant increase of \$525.6 million this FY compared to last FY.

Myanmar conducts cross-border trade with neighbouring China via Muse, Lweje,

Chinshwehaw, Kampaiti, and Kengtung. Muse border saw the highest trade figure of \$1.7 billion.

The trade values stood at \$703.06 million via Chinshwehaw, \$95.546 million via Kampaiti, \$70.111 million via Lweje and \$24.086 million via Kengtung, respectively.

Myanmar has been carrying out border trade with the

four neighbouring countries: China, Thailand, Bangladesh and India.

Export items are agricultural, livestock, fisheries, minerals, forest, manufacturing, and other goods. In contrast, capital goods, intermediate goods, manufacturing goods and raw materials by CMP enterprises are imported. — NN/EM



Lorries laden with export cargoes are seen on the Sino-Myanmar border.

OPINION

Raise awareness of natural disasters for successful survivals

IN the dawn of 2024, the world was greeted by the ominous presence of powerful earthquakes, serving as a stark reminder for global citizens to prioritize preparedness and public awareness regarding the perils of natural disasters. The events unfolded, emphasizing the crucial need for individuals to have a well-thought-out survival plan in the face of unexpected calamities.

On New Year's Day, the western part of Japan was struck by a devastating earthquake measuring 7.6 on the Richter Scale, resulting in the collapse of buildings and widespread power outages in homes. The aftermath witnessed the tragic loss of 20 lives as Japan's rescue teams rushed to the scenes amidst tremendous damage, according to media reports.

The earthquake's impact extended beyond its devastation, unleashing tsunami effects engulfing homes and vehicles along the coastline. This tragic spectacle underscored the urgent message that natural disasters serve as a poignant warning, urging humanity to exercise caution and foresight in their daily lives.

By embracing preparedness measures, adhering to guidelines, and being informed, individuals can significantly enhance their chances of surviving and overcoming the challenges posed by unexpected calamities. In fact, society may face disasters unexpectedly. However, if those from society have a high awareness of disasters, proper preparedness against disasters, and readiness to overcome challenges with united strengths, they will successfully overcome disasters with the least number of casualties.

Experts caution that Myanmar, having endured seismic events over the past 160 years, may face similar challenges in the future. Historical records reveal a potent 7.3 Richter Scale earthquake hitting Bago in 1930 and a devastating earthquake ranging from 8.5 to 8.8 on the Richter Scale in Sittway, Rakhine State.

It is imperative for people to remain vigilant and heighten their awareness of intense disasters, particularly earthquakes. Relevant authorities must play a proactive role by disseminating guidelines, dos and don'ts, for citizens during and after natural disasters. These departments should provide valuable tips on surviving such events and seeking shelter both during and in the aftermath of disasters.

By embracing preparedness measures, adhering to guidelines, and being informed, individuals can significantly enhance their chances of surviving and overcoming the challenges posed by unexpected calamities. In fact, society may face disasters unexpectedly. However, if those from society have a high awareness of disasters, proper preparedness against disasters, and readiness to overcome challenges with united strengths, they will successfully overcome disasters with the least number of casualties.

LIVING in a small town plagued by consistent electricity shortages can be a challenging ordeal. In such situations, finding reliable alternatives becomes crucial. I hope this text will delve into the significance of solar power as a viable solution for homes facing persistent electricity shortages.

For years, our town has grappled with a shortage of electricity supply, leaving residents to fend for themselves with alternative power sources. Many households, including mine, have resorted to generators, but even the availability of oil for these generators has become scarce.

The recent announcement from the electricity supply department about reducing the supply to just two hours during the day and six hours at night adds another layer of complexity to this issue.

Solar power emerges as a beacon of hope in the face of these challenges. I recently invested in a solar panel measuring 6 feet by 3.5 feet, an inverter, and a 12-volt battery. This decision was prompted by the need for a more sustainable and reliable power source.

Let's explore why solar power is becoming increasingly essential, especially in regions with inconsistent electricity supply. By the way, I'd like to mention the total cost of it: a solar power panel of the mentioned size - K500,000, a 1,000 V inverter K120,000 (medium quality), a 12 V battery K350,000 and installation fees - K30,000,

respectively. Therefore, the total expenses are ten lakhs.

One of the primary advantages of solar power is its ability to provide energy independence. By harnessing the sun's rays, households can generate electricity, reducing dependency on erratic electricity grids and diminishing oil supplies. This self-reliance empowers individuals to control their energy consumption and contribute to a more sustainable future.

Solar power systems may require an initial investment, but the long-term benefits far outweigh the costs. Once installed, solar panels have minimal operational expenses, as sunlight is a free and abundant resource. With reduced reliance on expensive generators and fuel, solar power proves to be a cost-effective solution, especially in the face of fluctuating oil prices.

Solar power is a clean and renewable energy option unlike traditional power sources that contribute to pollution and climate change. Harnessing the sun's energy produces no harmful emissions, reducing the carbon footprint associated with electricity consumption. Adopting solar power is a step toward a greener and more environmentally sustainable future.

The irregular electricity supply announced by the department poses a challenge for residents who rely on conventional sources. Solar power, however, remains consistent, especially during daylight

hours. Even on cloudy days, the sun is a reliable energy source, ensuring a steady power supply when other sources may fail.

Solar power allows for off-grid living, making it an ideal choice for areas with inconsistent electricity supply. By installing solar panels, inverters, and batteries, homes can operate independently of the main power grid.

This not only provides a

THE SHINING Solutions

By Min Zan

solution to power shortages but also ensures a continuous power supply, day and night.

While solar power presents a promising solution, it is essential to acknowledge and address potential challenges. For instance, the initial cost of solar panel installation can be a barrier for some households. However, government incentives, tax credits, and the decreasing cost of solar technology make it increasingly accessible.

Have you imagined having a friend who's always there for you, shining brightly every day and giving you free energy? That friend is the sun, and with

something called solar power, we can use its energy to make electricity. In this article, we'll explore what solar power is and take a little journey through its history.

What is Solar Power?

Solar power is like magic from the sun. It's a way of using the sunlight to create electricity. The main players in this magic show are solar panels. These special things take sunlight and

started using solar power, showing that it could work in outer space!

Solar Panels for Everyone

As technology got better, the cost of making solar panels went down. This meant regular people like us could use solar power, too. In the 21st century, solar panels started popping up on rooftops, in gardens, and even in some pocket-sized gadgets.

Saving the Planet

Today, solar power is not just about having cool gadgets. It's also a superhero in the fight against climate change. Unlike burning fossil fuels, solar power doesn't make yucky pollution. So, it's helping to keep our planet healthy.

Friendly to the Earth

One big reason why solar power is awesome is because it's kind to our planet. We don't make bad stuff like smoke or pollution when we use solar panels to make electricity. This helps keep the air and the Earth clean and happy.

Always Sunny (Almost)

The sun is like a never-ending battery in the sky. It gives us light and heat every day. Even when it's a bit cloudy, solar panels can still catch the sunlight and make power. So, we can have electricity even when the weather is not super sunny.

Saving Money

Using solar power can also save us money. Once we have solar panels on our rooftops, they can make electricity without needing to buy fuel. This means fewer bills and more money for other cool things we want to do.

Helping in Emergencies

Solar power can be like a superhero when there's no electricity because of a storm or other problems. Homes with solar panels can still have power when others don't. It's like having a little piece of the sun right at home.

Future Fun with Solar Power

Now, let's talk about what might happen in the future with solar power. Scientists and clever people are working on making solar panels even better. They want to make them more powerful and less expensive so that more people can use them.

Solar Cars and Spaceships

Imagine cars that run on sunshine! That's one cool idea

people are working on. Solar-powered cars could zoom around without needing gas. Even spaceships might use the sun's power to explore space without running out of fuel.

Solar-Powered Homes Everywhere

In the future, lots of homes might have solar panels. This means more people can have electricity without hurting the Earth. It's like a sunny revolution, making the world a brighter and better place.

Durable Period

As mentioned earlier, the requirements for normal household use can last at least over ten years except for the battery, which will have to be replaced in two years if it is a low-cost one.

Therefore, using solar power is like making friends with the sun. It's good for the Earth, helps us save money, and can be a superhero in emergencies. The best part? The future looks even brighter with new ideas and inventions. So, let's embrace the sunny side of life, use more solar power, and make our world a happier and healthier place for everyone!

In a nutshell, solar power is like a sunny superhero that turns sunlight into electricity. It has been part of human discoveries for a long time, and now, it's helping us create a cleaner, greener world. So, next time you see the sun shining, remember it's not just giving us light; it's also sharing its power for us to use in our everyday lives. Solar power is a bright idea for a better future!

In brief, the importance of solar power in overcoming electricity shortages cannot be overstated. As our town faces reduced electricity supply hours, the need for sustainable and reliable alternatives becomes paramount. Solar power emerges as a beacon of hope, offering energy independence, cost-efficiency, environmental benefits, and reliability in unpredictable conditions. Embracing solar power is not just a practical solution for today's challenges but a commitment to a greener and more resilient future. As more households adopt solar power, the collective impact will contribute to a more sustainable and energy-efficient community.

Researchers give new insight into tuberculosis treatment

The discovered compounds show potential for re-treating tuberculosis, including drug-resistant strains, by enhancing the efficacy of existing treatments.



The findings, titled 'Discovery of dual-active ethionamide boosters blocking the Mycobacterium tuberculosis ESX-1 secretion pathway,' were published in Cell Chemical Biology. **ILLUSTRATION: PIXABAY**

RESEARCHERS discovered new antibiotic molecules that target Mycobacterium tuberculosis and make it less pathogenic for humans in collaboration with research partners in Germany and France. Furthermore, some of the found compounds may enable the re-treatment of tuberculosis with existing treatments, including strains of the bacterium that have already established drug resistance. The findings were published in Cell Chemical Biology as 'Discovery of dual-active ethionamide boosters blocking the Mycobacterium tuberculosis ESX-1 secretion pathway'.

It is curable

Tuberculosis (TB) — or 'consumption', as it used to — lungs, but can also damage other organs. If diagnosed early and treated with antibiotics, it is curable. Although the disease is relatively rare in most western European countries, it still ranks among the infectious diseases that claim the most lives worldwide: According to the World Health Organization (WHO), only Covid-19 was deadlier than TB in 2022.

The disease also caused almost twice as many deaths as HIV/AIDS. More than 10

million people continue to contract TB every year. This is mainly due to insufficient access to medical treatment in many countries. Multidrug-resistant tuberculosis is emerging especially in eastern Europe and Asia. That is of particular concern to researchers because like all bacteria that infect humans, Mycobacterium tuberculosis possesses only a limited number of targets for conventional antibiotics. That makes it increasingly difficult to discover new antibiotic substances in research laboratories.

Working together with colleagues from the Institute Pasteur in Lille, France, and the German Center for Infection Research (DZIF), the researchers at University Hospital Cologne have now identified an alternative treatment strategy for the bacterium.

The team utilized host-cell-based high-throughput methods to test the ability of molecules to stem the multiplication of bacteria in human immune cells: From a total of 10,000 molecules, this procedure allowed them to isolate a handful whose properties they scrutinized more closely in the course of the study.

SOURCE: ANI



PHOTO CREDIT: GOOGLE

NATIONAL



Photo shows progress of Yangon-Dala Bridge.

Nearly completed Yangon-Dala bridge sends Dala property prices soaring

PROPERTY sales in Dala township are increasing with very high prices, thanks to Yangon-Dala bridge project, real estate agencies said.

The new Myanmar-Korea Friendship Yangon-Dala River bridge has been completed more than 50 per cent so far, and due to this project, land plots in Dala are being sold for billions of kyats, they said.

“There are many buyers

for land in Dala. Prices are skyrocketing. The high completion rate of Dala bridge is one of the reasons. Prices are around 1 or 2 billion kyats. Since the road has been paved, the plots on the main road are selling well,” said a Dala realtor.

Dala land prices have been rising month by month and a piece of land that used to cost 80 million kyats now costs around 1 billion kyats, locals said.

Yangon-Dala bridge is expected to complete by the first week of 2024, according to the Ministry of Construction.

When the bridge is completed, people will be able to travel easily and quickly from Yangon to Dala, Twantay, Kawhmu and Kungyangon, and it can solve the problem of traffic congestion in Yangon to some extent. — Thit Taw/ZN

Korean students majoring in Myanmar on study tour to Myanmar Embassy in Seoul



The Myanmar ambassador and embassy staff seen taking a commemorative photo with the students of Busan University.

STUDENTS majoring in Myanmar for their bachelor's degree at Busan University of Foreign Studies in Busan, Republic of Korea, visited the Myanmar Embassy in Seoul on a study tour on 10 January, according to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The team, including 12

students, a teacher, and a secretary, was received by the Myanmar Ambassador to the ROK U Thant Sin and officials in the embassy meeting room.

Busan University of Foreign Studies is the only university in the ROK with a Myanmar language department

currently attracting nearly 40 students.

Myanmar Ambassador U Thant Sin explained to the study group from Busan University of Foreign Studies about Myanmar-Korea diplomatic relations, the status of mutual investment between the two countries, the activities of the Myanmar Embassy, including those for citizens' interests, issues of Myanmar workers, and educational cooperation, before answering the questions raised by the group.

The Myanmar ambassador and embassy staff introduced the study group to Myanmar coffee and snacks before touring the embassy and taking commemorative photos. — ASH/TH

Artistic creations of Kachin nationality to manage TV broadcasting

THE Kachin Artists Organization stated that they are managing to broadcast their artistic creations on television channels.

It is known that they conversed about cooperating with the Ministry of Information to show the traditions and cultures of the Kachin nationality through artistic creations.

The chairperson of the Kachin Artists Organization, JZ Daung Lwan, talked about how they discussed with the officials from the Ministry of Information after the Kachin State Day ceremony in Myitkyina, Kachin State. According to the conversation, the artistic creations of the Kachin people, such as movies and music based on Kachin traditions and cultures, are being managed to broadcast on television channels.

It is also reported that Union Minister U Maung Maung Ohn



The poster of Kachin cast members of the Kachin series “Jade City” airs on SkyNet channels.

and officials from the Ministry of Information, chairperson of the Kachin Artists Organization JZ Daung Lwan, G Zomeki, other team members, SAC member Daw Dwe Bu attended the discussed conservation. — ASH/TRKM

MFF to adopt Vietnamese technology for eel production

DAW Toe Nandar Tin, Vice-President of the Myanmar Fisheries Federation (MFF), announced that the MFF is conducting research and tests to produce eels in Myanmar commercially using technology from Viet Nam. If successful, the methods will be shared with local farmers.

She stated, “World Fish provides technical assistance for Tilapia production. We noticed a significant presence of eels during our visit to a Tilapia production site. Upon inquiry with the farmers about their interest in producing eels using Vietnamese technology, they responded positively. Consequently, this technology is being applied

to eel production. The MFF had previously employed this technology, yielding satisfactory results.”

The testing of eel production with Vietnamese technology began in 2018 but was temporarily halted during COVID-19. The programme resumed in 2022 at fish farming sites in Yangon and Ayeyawady regions.

In eel production sites using Vietnamese technology, cost-saving measures are implemented as eels are sourced from paddy fields, and only snail are used for their feed. Eels are abundant in Yangon, Bago, Ayeyawady, Sagaing regions, and Mon State and are mainly exported to China. — ASH/TMT



The photo shows exported eels.

Exhibitions launched at Palace Museum shed light on Chinese, West Asian civilizations



Tourists visit the Palace Museum in snow in Beijing, capital of China, 13 December 2023. PHOTO: LI XIN/XINHUA

Three captivating exhibitions at the Palace Museum provide visitors with a visual journey into the historical interactions between ancient Chinese and West Asian civilizations.

THREE ongoing exhibitions at the Palace Museum are offering visitors a captivating visual experience, showcasing the historical exchanges between ancient Chinese and West Asian civilizations.

The exhibition, titled “Historic Encounters — Interaction Between China and West Asia in History”, opened to the public on Friday and will run through 11 April. It showcases over 260 pieces and sets of items and pictures from 10 archaeological and heritage preservation institutions

both at home and abroad.

Held simultaneously with the event, the exhibition “The Glory of the Ancient Persia” brings 216 cultural relics from different Iranian museums, demonstrating the profound cultural heritage of the ancient Persian civilization. Days earlier, the Palace Museum kicked off another exhibition, “AlUla, Wonder of Arabia,” which features over 230 exhibits that immerse visitors in the grandeur scenery and rich history of the northwestern Saudi city of AlUla. — Xinhua

Watching people visibly dislike veggies may cause onlookers to dislike them too: Study

The study focused on women to account for potential gender differences in the modeling of eating behavior.

HUMANS learn which behaviours pay off and which don't by observing others. Based on this, we can make decisions about how to act or eat. People may consult one another to determine what and how much to eat. This is known as social modelling and is one of the most potent social influences on eating habits. In a new study, researchers in the UK investigated whether observing others' facial expres-

sions while eating raw broccoli influenced young women's liking and desire to eat raw broccoli.

“We show that watching others eating a raw vegetable with a negative facial expression reduces adult women's liking of that vegetable, but not their desire to eat it,” said Dr Katie Edwards, a researcher at the Aston University School of Psychology and lead author of the study published in *Frontiers in Psychology*. — ANI



A study conducted in the UK explored the impact of observing facial expressions while eating raw broccoli on young women's liking and desire to consume the vegetable. PHOTO: REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE/ ANI

Bathing in red wine is a beauty trend, but health experts caution against it

ON TikTok, a video posted last month has got people talking. And with good reason, since it shows a woman filling her bath with red wine, orange and cinnamon, not to make her own mulled wine, but to bathe in.

But this practice, which is supposed to be relaxing and enhance skin beauty, is far from being all that beneficial, experts say.

In a video posted by the user (@jettsetfarmhouse), a web user pours red wine, orange segments, cinnamon sticks and sweet cranberries into her bathwater... ready for her to get it. The mixture is said to help you relax and unwind.

The problem is that the video was then reposted by Dr Kiarra King, an obstetrician-gy-



A viral TikTok video shows a woman filling her bath with red wine, orange, and cinnamon for a supposedly relaxing and skin-enhancing experience. PHOTO: SEBASTIEN BOZONS, /AFP

necologist with a huge following on TikTok.

The expert warns of the potential risks of immersing oneself in this kind of bath. In particular, she points out the risk of

catching infections where you really don't want them.

“Christmas Candidiasis is on the way with this concoction,” reads the post accompanying the video. — AFP

‘Parasite’ director slams police, S Korean media over star's death

OSCAR-WINNING “Parasite” filmmaker Bong Joon-ho and other South Korean stars called for an investigation on Friday into police and media conduct in the days leading to actor Lee Sun-kyun's death.

Lee, best known globally for his starring role in Bong's 2019 film “Parasite”, was found dead in a car in Seoul last month, after a two-month police investigation over suspected drug use.

Following his death, police were accused of leaking confidential details of their probe, triggering frenzied mainstream media coverage and a flurry of damaging social media content on YouTube and beyond. — AFP

ECONOMY WORLD

Cambodia-China trade continues to grow despite global demand slowdown

Cambodia-China trade witnessed a continued increase in 2023, defying global demand slowdown, attributed to the positive impact of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) agreement and the Cambodia-China Free Trade Agreement (CCFTA), both effective since 2022.



Workers slice ripe mangoes at the Zhong Bao (Cambodia) Food Science & Technology Co., Ltd. in Kampong Speu province, Cambodia on 7 March 2023. **PHOTO: VAN POV/XINHUA**

CAMBODIA-CHINA trade continued to rise in 2023 despite a slowdown in global demand, thanks to the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) agreement and the Cambodia-China Free Trade Agreement (CCFTA), a commerce official and experts said on Wednesday.

Cambodian Ministry of

Commerce's Secretary of State and Spokesperson Penn Sovicheat said the RCEP and the CCFTA, both of which took effect in 2022, had provided strong momentum into this growth.

"Under the two agreements, our products, especially high-quality agricultural produce such as milled rice, yellow

bananas, mangoes, longans, cassava and pepper, have been exported to China with preferential tariffs," he told Xinhua.

"The two trade pacts have become catalysts for Cambodia's long-term trade growth and a magnet to attract more foreign direct investment to our country," he added. — Xinhua

IEA: World added 50pc more renewable energy but more needed

THE world added 50 per cent more renewable energy capacity in 2023 over the previous year but more is needed in the

battle against climate change, the International Energy Agency said on Thursday.

The increase was the fast-

est growth rate in the past two decades and the 22nd year in a row that renewable capacity additions set a new record, the Paris-based IEA said.

Massively scaling up the deployment of solar and wind power while winding down the use of fossil fuels is crucial to achieving the goal of limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius from pre-industrial levels.

But the world is not on pace to reach the goal of tripling renewable capacity by 2030, a target agreed by nearly 200 nations at the UN's COP28 climate summit in Dubai last month, the IEA said. — AFP



The IEA emphasized the need to significantly expand the deployment of solar and wind power while reducing reliance on fossil fuels to achieve the crucial goal of limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius from pre-industrial levels in the fight against climate change. **PHOTO: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS**

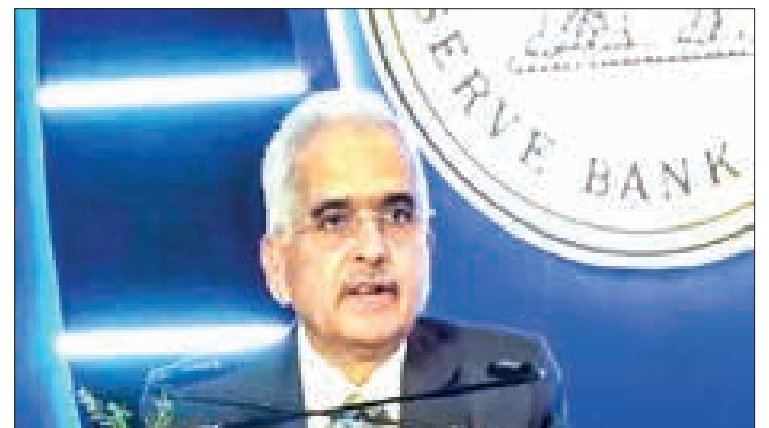
Indian banking system well-placed to support growth: RBI Governor

RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das stated that India's banking sector has strengthened in the face of challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic and geopolitical events, with the system now well-positioned to support India's future growth.

RESERVE Bank of India (RBI) Governor Shaktikanta Das said on Thursday that India's banking sector as a whole has emerged stronger from the unprecedented challenges of the recent COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent geopolitics. Today, the Indian banking system is well-placed to support India's growth story in the years ahead, Das said.

All key indicators of scheduled commercial banks (SCBs)—capital adequacy,

asset quality, and profitability—have shown improvement in the last four years, noted the RBI Governor, addressing the Mint BFSI summit in Mumbai. "The credit growth has now become broad-based and backed by the strong fundamentals of the financial institutions. The financial indicators of non-banking financial companies are also in line with that of the banking system as per the latest available data," Das asserted. — ANI



Das emphasized the positive trends in key indicators such as capital adequacy, asset quality, and profitability of scheduled commercial banks over the past four years, speaking at the Mint BFSI summit in Mumbai. **PHOTO: ANI**

Bitcoin a dud in El Salvador, first country to make it legal tender

HARDLY anyone used bitcoin last year in El Salvador, the first country anywhere to make the cryptocurrency a form of legal tender, said a poll released Wednesday.

The government of President Nayib Bukele took this pioneering step in 2021, introducing bitcoin in circulation alongside the US dollar, which replaced the Salvadoran colon in 2001.

The goal was to make remittances — they account for a quarter of GDP here — cheaper to send and to get Salvadorans to open bank accounts, which 70

per cent of the population lacked.

However a poll by Central American University found that 85 percent of people questioned did not use bitcoin to pay for a good or service last year, and three percent have never ever used the currency.

The poll was carried out from December 9 to 22 among 1,280 people and had a margin of error of 2.7 per cent.

A total of 77.8 per cent of those questioned said that with bitcoin as legal tender their family financial situation has remained unchanged. — AFP

Over 300 enterprises signed up for 7th CIIE

Registration for the 7th China International Import Expo (CIIE) has commenced, attracting over 300 enterprises with a total exhibition area exceeding 130,000 square metres.

REGISTRATION for the 7th China International Import Expo (CIIE) has begun, with over 300 enterprises signed up to participate so far and a total exhibition area of over 130,000 square metres booked.

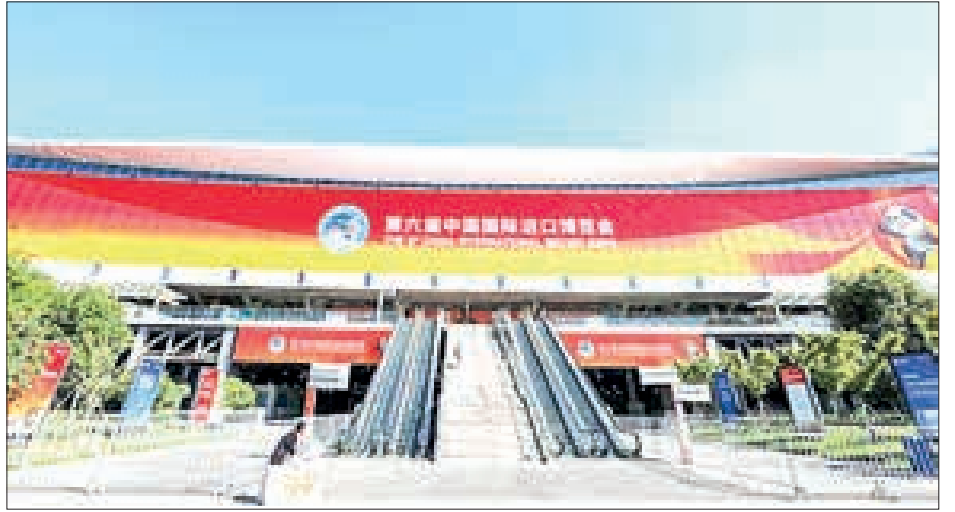
At the signing ceremony of the 7th CIIE business exhibition on Tuesday, 23 enterprises such as PepsiCo, Tesla and Bayer signed

up to attend this year's event, with a contracted exhibition area of more than 12,000 square metres.

In 2023, PepsiCo participated in the CIIE for the first time. "Through the CIIE, we have deeply felt China's confidence and determination to firmly promote high-level opening-up and share development opportunities with the world,"

said Daniel Shih, vice president of corporate affairs, APAC and Greater China at PepsiCo.

The 7th CIIE is scheduled to be held in Shanghai this November. The 6th CIIE saw a total of 78.41 billion US dollars' worth of tentative deals reached for one-year purchases of goods and services, setting a record high. — Xinhua



This photo taken on 2 November 2023 shows the exterior view of the National Exhibition and Convention Centre (Shanghai). PHOTO: XIN MENGCHEN/XINHUA

AD Ports initials contract to build, develop, operate, maintain terminals at Egyptian Red Sea ports

Egypt has entered into a contract with AD Ports Group to construct, develop, operate, and maintain passenger and cruise line terminals at the Red Sea ports of Hurghada, Safaga, and Sharm El Sheikh.

EGYPT HAS initiated a contract with AD Ports Group (AD Ports) to build, develop, operate and maintain terminals for passengers and cruise lines at the Red Sea ports of Hurghada, Safaga and Sharm El Sheikh. The contract will also commit AD Ports Group to develop yacht and cruise ship tourism in Egypt, the Egyptian Ministry of Transport said in a statement.

"This contract will contribute to operating cruise



AD Ports to develop and operate terminals at Egypt's Red Sea ports. PHOTO: ANI

lines between Zayed Port and Safaga, Hurghada and Sharm El-Sheikh and, later, Arabian Gulf ports, Aqaba

and Europe and Asia," a statement by the Egyptian Ministry of Transport said. — ANI

Japan tech firm Fujitsu in firing line over UK Post Office scandal

A Japanese technology giant is in the crosshairs of British lawmakers for building the faulty accounting software that led to what has been called the country's biggest ever miscarriage of

justice.

Fujitsu created the Horizon IT system that resulted in some 700 local post office managers being wrongly convicted for theft and false accounting between 1999

and 2005.

The UK government, which plans to exonerate all victims, has warned the company will be "held to account" if a public inquiry finds it guilty of wrongdoing. — AFP

Amazon cuts hundreds of jobs at Twitch, Prime Video and MGM

AMAZON'S gamer streaming unit Twitch on Wednesday announced that it was laying off 500 staff, reportedly one third of the company, as it struggles financially despite strong popularity

among players.

The online shopping giant also said it was slashing hundreds of staff in its entertainment division, targeting both movie streaming service Prime Video and Amazon MGM

Studio, the home of James Bond. The cull comes as part of Amazon's biggest ever job cutting plan launched last year, which it said will reach 27,000 positions across the company. — AFP

French post office opens changing rooms for online shoppers



The changing room is modelled after a French post box. PHOTO: ALAIN JOCARD/AFP

FRANCE'S post office is experimenting with opening changing rooms in some branches to cater to online shoppers who want to quickly return purchases that don't fit.

In a Paris post office participating in the test, a stand-alone changing room in the shape and canary yellow colour of a French mailbox has been installed. Inside is a chair, mirror, and shelf to place

your package for on the spot returns.

France's La Poste said the idea came about after seeing many customers pick up their packages only to return shortly thereafter as their purchases didn't fit. France, like many countries, has seen a boom in online commerce, with clients purchasing items including clothes and shoes that are often returned. — AFP

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V METHI BHHUM VOY.NO. (413N)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V METHI BHHUM VOY.NO. (413N)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **13-1-2024** 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 REGIONAL CONTAINER LINES

ROLLING UPDATES: WORLD

Houthis say retaliatory strikes launched on US, UK warships

Iran-backed Houthi rebels have reportedly launched retaliatory attacks on US and UK warships in the Red Sea in response to what they perceive as Western aggression.

IRAN-BACKED HOUTHIS have initiated retaliatory assaults on the warships of the United States and the UK (United Kingdom) in the Red Sea in response to the assault by Western partners, a senior member of the Houthi group, Abdul Salam Jahaf, said in a statement on Friday, according to CNN. The Houthi deputy foreign minister, Hussein al-Ezzi, meanwhile,



A container ship sails out of Port Botany located in Sydney, Australia 18 October 2023. **PHOTO: PIX FOR VISUAL PURPOSE/ AFP**

issued a dire warning, calling what he described a “blatant act of aggression” and threatening serious consequences for both the United States and Britain.

According to Hussein al-Ezzi, US and UK fighter planes and vessels launched a “massive aggressive assault” on Yemen, according to CNN. “Our country was subjected to a massive aggressive attack by American and British ships, submarines, and warplanes, and America and Britain will undoubtedly have to prepare to pay a heavy price and bear all the dire consequences of this blatant aggression,” CNN quoted al-Ezzi as saying. — ANI

Elite Hamas commanders killed in Israeli airstrikes

DOZENS of Hamas terrorists, including several commanders, were killed in Israeli airstrikes in Gaza, the Israel Defense Forces said on Friday morning.

In the southern Gaza city of Khan Yunis, an Israeli fighter jet struck a Hamas military

compound and killed seven terrorists. One of the terrorists killed was a commander in Hamas’s elite Nukhba force who took part in the massacre of Israelis in Gaza-area communities on 7 October.

In the central Gaza town of Maghazi, Israeli ground

forces killed approximately 20 terrorists, including several Nukhba force commanders.

Elsewhere in Maghazi, soldiers spotted three armed terrorists exiting a Hamas compound and advancing towards them. The soldiers responded with live fire. — ANI

Greek students rally to protest against government’s plans for private universities

Thousands of Greek students protested in Athens and other cities against proposed education changes that would allow the establishment of private universities.



The conservative administration led by Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis is expected to submit a measure to parliament this month, allowing the operation of private universities in Greece. **PHOTO: ANI**

THOUSANDS of Greek students demonstrated against proposed education changes that would permit the establishment of private institutions in the nation in Athens and other towns on Thursday, according to Al Jazeera.

This month, a measure allowing private universities to operate in Greece is anticipated to be submitted to parliament by the conservative administration led by Prime

Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis, who was elected to a second term last year.

The institutions will function as overseas university branches, according to the administration. Many think that the move will make degrees from Greece’s public universities less valuable and that those who cannot afford the private system will be excluded, Al Jazeera reported. — ANI

Papua New Guinea declares state of emergency after violent protests kill 16

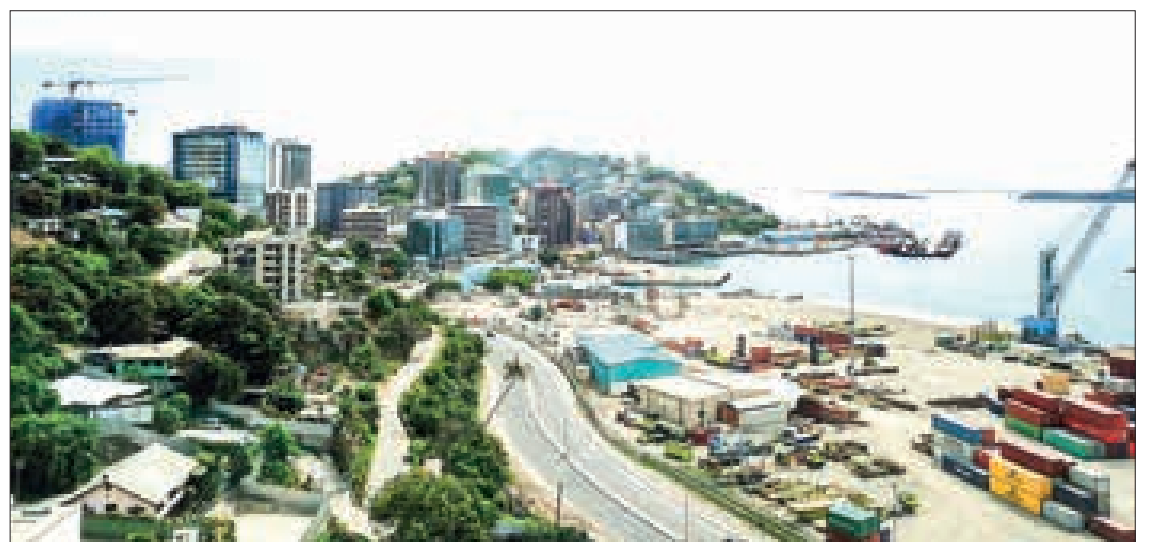
PAPUA New Guinea Prime Minister James Marape on Thursday declared a two-week state of emergency in the capital, Port Moresby, and suspended the Pacific island nation’s chief of police after violent protests killed as many as 16 people in the country, The New York Times reported.

The unrest began on Wednesday after police, defence officers and other public servants appeared to walk off their jobs to protest what they said was an unexpected pay cut.

The Papua New Guinea government blamed the error on a computer glitch and promised

to fix the problem, but the situation in Port Moresby devolved quickly. In the protests, more than a dozen stores were set on fire, and there were reports of widespread looting as the unrest lasted into the night. There were also reports of fatalities in Port Moresby, the capital, and in Lae, the nation’s second-largest city, but the authorities did not release any official figures.

The violence came amid the backdrop of high unemployment and a rising cost of living in the country of about ten million people, according to The New York Times. — ANI



Papua New Guinea Prime Minister James Marape on Thursday declared a two-week state of emergency in the capital, Port Moresby. **PHOTO: REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE/WIKIMEDIA COMMONS**

SPORTS

Myanmar-Thai traditional Lethwei event to be held in Yangon

WITH the supervision of the Myanmar Lethwei Federation, the Myanmar-Thai traditional Lethwei event will be held at Theinbyu Gymnasium in Yangon on 14 January.

Tun Min Aung (Myanmar) will face 28-year-old Taksila Kamsing (Thailand), a former champion of Cambodia's 72-kilogramme class, who knocked out Sovin. He has won the WMC 2018 Tournament, the 2019 Lumpini Stadium Championship, the Rajadamnern Stadium Championship, and the 2021 J-Middleweight Championship.

He has 94 fights and is the only top fighter with beau-

tiful skills who has won precisely 72 fights in Thailand. If Tun Min Aung wants to win again against a Thai legend like Tasila Pan, the only thing left is to challenge one of Myanmar's top fighters. Thant Zin (Myanmar) will face Vachvicha (Thailand) in the following fights, and Arhman will take on Maung Zaw. Similarly, Saw Arkar will battle with Nyi Ye Khant, and Ko Shumawa will fight against Ko Kyan Sitt Aung. Tickets are priced at K10,000, K20,000, K30,000 and K50,000 for the Myanmar-Thai traditional Lethwei event. — Bala Soe/KZL



Poster bearings information about Myanmar-Thai Lethwei event.

Qatar Embassy hosts sporting event for AFC Asian Cup Qatar 2024



The Chargé d'Affaires of the Embassy of the State of Qatar to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, Dr Rashid Abdulla AL-Kuwari, delivers the speech during the sporting event marking the inauguration of the AFC Asian Cup Qatar 2023 in Yangon on 12 January 2024. PHOTO: QATAR EMBASSY

THE Chargé d'Affaires of the Embassy of the State of Qatar to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, Dr Rashid Abdulla AL-Kuwari, organized a sporting event on 12 January 2024, marking the inauguration of the AFC Asian Cup Qatar 2023 at Wyndham Grand Yangon Hotel.

Heads of diplomatic missions in Myanmar attended the event, as well as embassy staff, their families, and honourable guests.

At the opening of the said sporting event, Dr AL-Kuwari welcomed the attendees and delivered a short speech stating that he is so proud that the State of Qatar is hosting the

AFC Asian Cup 2024 after the success it achieved in hosting the FIFA World Cup 2022, wishing all the participating teams the best of luck.

Afterwards, Dr AL-Kuwari hosted the dinner, and all participants enjoyed watching the opening ceremony and the first match between the Qatar and Lebanon teams, which was played at the Lusail Stadium, Qatar.

This is the 18th edition of the AFC Asian Cup, which Qatar hosts for the third time with the participation of 24 teams competing from 12 January to 10 February 2024.

Qatar previously organized

the Asian Cup in 1988 and 2011.

The 1956 AFC Asian Cup was the first AFC Asian Cup to take place in Hong Kong.

The AFC Asian Cup Qatar 2024 emblem represents Qatar and Asia's vibrant culture, rich heritage, and unbridled passion, including the falcon, the lotus flower, the players, and football fans from all over the continent.

The tournament's Official Song is "Hayya Asia", which means "Let's go, Asia", reflecting the tournament's vitality and unifying nature. It's also a rallying call for the participating teams to deliver their best performance. — KZL

Olympic athletes permitted with two-minute posts on social media

ACCREDITED athletes are permitted to post audio and video recordings of up to two minutes per post of the Olympic Games Paris 2024 and the Winter Youth Olympic Games (YOG) Gangwon 2024 under the guidelines of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), IOC announced on Thursday.

IOC released its official Social and Digital Media Guidelines to give the permission to athletes to share their experience at the Olympic Games on their personal

digital accounts, while also protecting the rights of the Media Rights-holders (MRHs). Athletes are able to post recordings from the Opening and Closing Ceremonies, the Olympic Village, competition and training venues, as well as the practice areas.

The competition venues are open for the recording of athletes up to one hour before the start of their competition and after they have left the mixed zone or doping control station, IOC explained. — Xinhua



Accredited athletes are permitted to post audio and video recordings of up to two minutes per post of the Olympic Games Paris 2024 and the Winter Youth Olympic Games (YOG) Gangwon 2024 under the guidelines of the International Olympic Committee (IOC). PHOTO: ANOCOLYMPIC.ORG



Remarkable resilience: Russian economy grows despite sanctions, becomes world's top 5

Russian President Vladimir Putin recently stated that the country's economic growth at the end of 2023 may exceed the projected 3.5%, marking a notable advancement in the global economic landscape. Putin emphasized Russia's surpassing of Germany, ranking first in Europe and fifth globally in terms of economic size.



Russia has one of the largest and most resource-rich economies globally, and a significant portion of its revenue historically comes from the oil and gas industry. **PHOTO: SPUTNIK**

IN a recent statement, Russian President Vladimir Putin revealed that the Russian economy's growth at the end of 2023 might surpass the projected 3.5 per cent. This development is not just a numerical triumph but symbolizes Russia's significant leap in the global economic arena.

Putin highlighted that Russia has now overtaken Germany, becoming the first in Europe and the fifth worldwide in terms of economic size.

"In purchasing power parity, we have overtaken all of Europe, but per capita - we still have to try harder," Putin noted, emphasizing the remarkable nature of this achievement, especially given the backdrop of Russia facing stringent sanctions and international pressure. "This is an amazing result," Putin added.

Tiberio Graziani, chairman at Vision & Global Trends - International Institute for Global Analyses, sheds light on this "Russian phenomenon," as the rise of

Russia's economy amidst sanctions and global pressures raises questions about the effectiveness of such measures.

Graziani explains that despite the sanctions, which began a decade ago due to the crisis between Ukraine and Russia, Russia's economy has shown remarkable resilience.

"For ten years now, the Russian productive economic fabric has managed to withstand the shock wave of the sanctions," Graziani sated. — SPUTNIK

NEW GOVERNMENT MINISTERS

France's new PM forms government

FRENCH President Emmanuel Macron on Thursday nominated a list of ministers in the new government based on the proposition of the newly-appointed Prime Minister Gabriel Attal.

According to a press release of the presidential palace, the Elysee, the new government now consists of 11 ministers and three ministers delegate attached to the Prime Minister, down from 16 ministers and three ministers delegate in the previous government.

Among the new ministers in Attal's government is 38-year-old Stephane Sejourne, nominated as Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs.

The labor ministry and the health ministry are now combined into Ministry of Labour, Health and Solidarities, which is led by Catherine Vautrin.

The new Minister of Culture is Rachida Dati, an experienced political veteran who served as justice minister under the presidency of Nicolas Sarkozy.

The two most senior members from the previous government, Bruno Le Maire and Gerald Darmanin keep their positions as Minister of Economy, Finances and Industrial and Digital Sovereignty, and Minister of the Interior and Overseas France, respectively. — Xinhua

Iranian Navy detains US oil tanker in Gulf of Oman



Iran's naval forces on Thursday detained a US oil tanker in the waters of the Gulf of Oman, Iran's Tasnim news agency reported. According to Tasnim, the tanker was detained by court order. **PHOTO: SPUTNIK**

A US oil tanker, previously embroiled in tensions between Iran and the US, was reportedly boarded by armed individuals off the coast of Oman and appeared to be heading toward Iran.

ON Thursday, a US oil tanker, previously caught in a regional standoff between Iran and US, was reportedly boarded by a group of armed individuals off the coast of Oman and appeared to have changed course toward Iran.

Iran's naval forces on Thursday detained a US oil tanker in the waters of the Gulf of Oman, Iran's Tasnim news agency reported. According to Tasnim, the tanker was detained by court order.

The vessel was once involved in a dispute with the US Justice Department that saw a million barrels of Iranian crude oil seized.

UKMTO (United Kingdom Marine Trade Operations), which provides warnings to sailors in the Middle East, previously reported "of vessel being boarded by 4-5 armed unauthorized persons" who are "wearing military style black uniforms with black masks". — SPUTNIK