

The Global **NEW LIGHT** of MYANMAR



Natural gas is included in the list of major export items of Myanmar to earn foreign currency as revenue for the State.

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Salon Sea Gypsy enjoys profitable returns from calamari harvesting

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YGN palm oil wholesale reference price rises to K5,200 by week ending 21 Jan

Myanmar's external trade surpasses US\$22 bln in 9 months

MYANMAR'S trade with foreign trade partners amounted to US\$22.72 billion as of 29 December in the current financial year 2023-2024, comprising exports worth \$10.684 billion and imports worth \$12.037 billion.

The total trade value dropped from \$25.447 billion recorded in the year-ago period, the Ministry of Commerce's statistics showed. Myanmar's seaborne trade

value was estimated at \$16.537 billion, while \$6.18 billion of trade was conducted at borders in the past nine months.

Myanmar exports agricultural produce, animal products, minerals, forest products, and finished industrial goods, while it imports capital goods, intermediate goods, raw materials imported by the CMP enterprises and consumer goods.

Myanmar has implemented the Na-

tional Export Strategy (NES) 2020-2025 to bolster exports. The prioritized sectors of the NES comprise agricultural produce, 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

CBM sells almost US\$44 million in 15 days

THE Central Bank of Myanmar (CBM) sold nearly US\$44 million within 15 days, with \$12.93 million on 1 January, \$16 million on 5 January and \$15 million on 15 January.

Also, the CBM injected US\$22.15 million into the fuel oil sector last year, selling \$9.72 million on 18 December and \$12.43 million on 21 December for fuel oil importing companies.

Yet, the CBM did not reveal the exchange rate in selling dollars. The CBM set the reference exchange at K2,100 against a US

dollar. Kyat-US dollar exchange rate is K3,450 at the over-the-counter market.

On 5 December 2023, the CBM allowed authorized dealers (private banks) to operate forex exchanges freely as per the market rate determined by the supply and demand market forces.

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



NATIONAL

Republic of the Union of Myanmar Union Election Commission Announcement

15 January 2024

THE Union Election Commission Management Committee meeting 1/2024 held on 15 January 2024 has agreed to cancel the application of party registration of Danu National Organization Party (DNOP) as the DNOP submitted to cancel their registration from the political party lists as the Chairperson of DNOP passed away while the party applied to continue to exist as a political party under Section 25 of Political Parties Registration Law, and still under review of the Union Election Commission.

Union Election Commission

Myanmar Gazette

Appointment of Heads of Service Organizations confirmed

THE State Administration Council has confirmed the appointment of the following persons as the Heads of Service Organizations shown against each of their names after the one-year probationary period.

Name	Appointment
(1) Dr Thida Tin	Director-General Department of Media Development Ministry of Information
(2) U Kyaw Yin Oo	Director-General Department of Population Ministry of Immigration and Population

COVID-19 report, 15 January 2024

NEW TESTS

15,232

NEW CASES

54

CASUALTIES

NIL

MMPO seeks temporary film production pause for Academy Awards Ceremony

THE Myanmar Motion Pictures Organization has announced its request to halt all film production activities for four days temporarily. This measure aims to ensure the participation of all artistes and filmmakers from the film industry in the Myanmar Film Academy Awards Ceremony 2023.

The grand ceremony is scheduled at the Myanmar International Convention Centre-1 (MICC-1) in Nay Pyi Taw on 3 February. Consequently, the Myanmar Motion Pictures Organization has proposed suspending film production work from 1 to 4 February, allowing all artists to attend the event.

U Aye Kyu Lay, the Vice-Chairman of the Myanmar Motion Pictures Organization, explained, "We routinely seek a temporary postponement of



The stage preparation for the forthcoming Myanmar Film Academy Awards Ceremony for 2023.

film production work each year, and we have issued a statement to this effect for the current year. We intend to facilitate the attendance of all industry artists at the Academy Awards Ceremony."

Twelve shortlisted mov-

ies have reportedly received nominations for the Academy Awards, and all the final viewing processes have concluded. The official Academy Award nominations will be disclosed ten days before the award ceremony celebration. — ASH/TRKM

Taungup local innovates wooden bicycle

A Wooden bicycle constructed in Taungup has gone viral on the internet, and similar new creations will be produced, said Ko Zaw Min Tun, who invented the wooden bicycle.

He said it draws the attention of internet users, and some inquired about the price. The price has yet to be set, and he added that if there are interested buyers, he will set a price depending on the

buyer's demand and cost.

"There are enquires about price. If I have orders, I will invent them for commercial sale. I am delighted that people like the creation I have made. The first invention was made with wood pieces I have at home, so I haven't calculated the cost. I had to buy just some items I needed. If there are potential buyers, I will fix a price depending on what the

customer wants and the cost," said Ko Zaw Min Tun.

He made the wooden bicycle pedal lightly at regular speed he said.

He has been planning to create a similar one in a new design in the next few days, and he explained that an iron axle will be used to ensure its durability.

"I will make another one professionally in a new design that everyone can ride and have durability in a couple of days. This bike was made of wood completely, so I will use an iron axle in my next creation to ensure withstanding rough handling," he said.

He made a wooden bicycle when he was 12 but didn't reach the stage of pedalling capability. He said he resumed the creation when he was over 40 years old for the first time due to a shortage of job opportunities. — MT/ZS



Ko Zaw Min Tun riding wooden bike.

NATIONAL

Working Committee to address impact of COVID-19 on national economy meets

THE meeting of the Working Committee to address the impact of COVID-19 on the national economy 1/2024 was held yesterday morning at Office No 1, Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations.

The meeting was chaired by Dr Kan Zaw, Union Minister for Investment and Foreign Economic Relations and attended by the members of the Working Committee, deputy ministers of the Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations, Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Commerce and Ministry of Hotels and Tourism, and the deputy governor of the Central Bank of Myanmar. Moreover, permanent secretaries and senior officials from the Ministry of Transport and Communications, Ministry of Planning and Finance, and Ministry of Commerce also attended the meeting.

The meeting discussed



Union Minister Dr Kan Zaw talks about impacts of COVID-19 on national economy at the meeting yesterday.

the reimbursement status of K50 billion to the State Revolving Fund and the repayment of K10 billion from K150 billion

issued from the 2019-2020 Financial Year General Reserve Fund (GRF). The total repayment amount of K60 billion

was disclosed at the meeting. The efforts made by Regional/State Credit Supervision Teams to collect loan principal, loan

repayment situations by businesses which have completed three years of the loan term and one-year loan extension to the businesses from Film, Music, Theatrical, Press and Media Sectors are also updated at the meeting.

Moreover, the secretary of the Working Committee, Deputy Minister for Investment and Foreign Economic Relations, Dr Wah Wah Maung, discussed detailed loan repayment monitoring situations in Regions and States and collaboration with concerned Ministries and credit Supervision Teams, as well as the situation of capital and interest return.

The meeting also discussed the process to be carried out by the committee, overdue loan recovery plans and procedures, and cooperation and collaboration with the departmental concerned. — MIFER

Mandalay Region greenlights 2 citizen-owned investments, generating 319 jobs



Some businesses that are being operated in Mandalay Region.

DR Min Zaw Oo, Director of the Mandalay Region Directorate of Investment and Company Administration, announced that two Myanmar citizen-owned investments, capable of providing 319 job opportunities, were approved in January 2024.

The capital amounts for the new investments were K4,368.411 million, as indicated in the report.

Dr Min Zaw Oo stated, "The Mandalay Region Investment Committee's 1/2024 meeting on 12 January gave the green light to the two investments run by Myanmar nationals. The construction period of another investment by a Myanmar citizen has also been extended."

The report highlights that in 2023 in Mandalay Region, the Myanmar Investment Commis-

sion permitted 14 businesses and 10 by the Mandalay Region Investment Commission.

The Mandalay Region Investment Commission issues monthly permits for new Myanmar national investments and foreign investments that will create more employment opportunities in Mandalay Region under the laws, rules, and regulations. — ASH/TMT

Labour advocate warns of online job scams via TikTok in Myanmar

LABOUR activist Daw Myo Aye says scams promising foreign jobs have been taking place on TikTok, Myanmar's most popular social network platform.

The victim was first approached to become a friend, then persuaded and cheated. "In the case I am working on, the victim was asked to become a friend on TikTok. He did not have a passport. So, they persuaded the victim that the agent would pay for all the costs, from applying for a passport to getting a job abroad, and that they would deduct it from his salary. The victim believed that he would get a salary of K1.6 million. The scammers target people who know nothing. They cannot cheat

those who know," she said. Foreign job seekers via agencies need to know whether they are legitimate agencies or not, she suggested.

At present, illegal agencies and fraudulent brokers are targeting those foreign job seekers. "Some ended up in Iran instead of Dubai. They were cheated only after they arrived there. Some didn't even know they had been cheated. I think they were cheated because of a lack of knowledge and information. The swindlers find the targets who know nothing and who can be cheated. They are not going to cheat someone who might raise a problem for them, that's for sure," she explained. — Thit Taw/ZN

NATIONAL

MoI UM greets Academy Award receptionists, inspects printing work

UNION Minister for Information U Maung Maung Ohn greeted the receptionists selected for the 2023 Myanmar Academy Awards event at the Myanmar Motion Pictures Organization office yesterday. He observed the rehearsals conducted by the receptionists and encouraged the young individuals to strive for excellence in the artistic realm. Additionally, he delivered a lecture advising them against adopting the arrogance exhibited by some artistes, emphasizing the importance of adhering to laws and contributing to the country's service.

Afterwards, the Union minister visited the Photolitho Printing Press on Ngar Htat Kyee Pagoda Road in Bahan Township to inspect textbook printing. The factory manager and the director-general of the Printing and Publishing Department briefed him on the operational status.



Union Minister for Information U Maung Maung Ohn inspects the site for building Sarso Beikman in Mingala Taungnyunt Township yesterday.

The Union minister then discussed the importance of maintaining quality and ensuring timely deliveries.

He then visited the land plot designated for a Sarso Beikman (pantheon) in Uyin Ward, Mingala Taungnyunt Township. The Director-General of the Printing and Publishing Department clarified the design of building and the area of the land. The Union Minister advised collaboration with relevant departments to ensure the timely construction of the project in accord with the guidance of the Head of State and implement the project as quickly as possible in cooperation with relevant ministries.

Myanmar will sign an agreement with Indian government for construction of three-storey RC Sarso Beikman soon, and the estimated cost for project will be K7,918.833 million. — MNA/NT

Counter-argument to false information

Khit Thit Media spreads fake news

THE malicious media outlet, Khit Thit Media, is spreading fake news and misinformation on social networking sites, claiming that security forces torched Taung Khamauk and Maukwin villages in the Thitpok village-tract in Paungde Township of Bago Region on 14 January as the villagers refused to organize militia unit and gather new members.

The relevant security official reported that the PDF terrorists launched an arson

attack on the village, while the security forces conducted security measures on 14 January, and the malicious media outlets spread such fake news to mislead the public.

Similarly, the Khit Thit Media also spread fake news, saying Tatmadaw torched Tawkan village in Sittway Township of Rakhine State yesterday.

On 15 January morning, AA insurgents attacked the security members using small arms and heavy weapons near

Tawkan village in Sittway. They retreated and torched the houses when the security members launched a counterattack. The fire destroyed some houses even though the security forces put out the fire.

The malicious media outlets intentionally spread fake news and misinformation to cover up the wrongdoings of insurgents who launched attacks hiding from the houses and buildings in towns and villages and arson attacks. — MNA/KTZH



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

NATIONAL

Salon Sea Gypsy enjoys profitable returns from calamari harvesting

MOST of the Sea Gypsy (Salon) or (Mawken) live in the Makyon Galet village of the Myeik Archipelago of the southernmost part of Myanmar, and they are currently reaping better profits from capturing squid in early January than in previous years, according to local squid hunters.

Fishing, pearl hunting, etc, are the main livelihoods of the Salon people. Although the catch of squid was low from 2021 to 2023 early periods, the capture of squid early this year is high. Therefore, the squid price becomes stable and puts the market in good condition.

The Salon families catch the squid in their Kaban boats near the Myeik Archipelago and onshore areas and resell the products to the squid wholesalers on the island or large Kaban boats in the sea. They do not run any business except marine-related businesses. When the demand for marine

products decreases, they focus on capturing squid assures the market. They catch the squid in the sea the whole year round. They can catch large squids mostly in monsoon and winter, whereas the catch rate is low in summer. The transactions of maritime products such as sea fish, chiton/barnacle/oyster and sea urchins are slack. The leech fetches K500,00-K100,000 per viss, and the squid is priced at K15,000 per viss. The local suppliers purchase the products and export them to Thailand.

"The capturing rate becomes low compared to previous years. Only Salons catch the squid and leech. But now, other people also catch them. The Salons rig the toy prawn on the hook to catch the squid. They do not get squid every month. During the early period of this year, the catch of squid is high, and they are convenient. The squid prices have not been



Salon ethnics seen in the sea to catch squids for their family incomes. **PHOTOS: SALON LUNGE**

stable for a long time since last year. Although the high prices of commodities are likely to increase the prices of marine products, they (Salons) have to sell at the prices the local merchants offer. Salons do not use the nets to catch squid; they go fishing or dive. They get K10,000-K15,000 per kilo of squid this month. They are very happy for having good prices," said Ko

Nyi Lay, a young Salon leader from Makyon Galet village.

They catch squid in the sea for about 20 days per month. They catch near the islands in summer and rainy seasons, and they get large amounts of squid. They make their living by finding other marine products when they cannot catch the squid in the hot season. Local and foreign travellers visit Ma-

kyon Galet Village during the dry season, and the locals earn their incomes from transporting marine products to hotels and resorts.

In Makyon Galet village, even over 60-year-old Salon women catch the squid. The income of Salon families is good this year as they catch a good number of squid. — Nyein Thu (MNA)/KTZH

Renowned classic song vocalist U Maung Maung Gyi passes away

VOCALIST (U) Maung Maung Gyi, who had sung renowned songs such as 'How to Say to Beloved One', 'Sein-Lei-Nyo' and so on, passed away in Yangon at the age of 92 at 3 pm on 15 January.

The cremation will be held at Yay-way Cemetery on 17 January.

"As far as I knew, the singer was weak in hearing. In his old age, he did

not arrive at MRTV. I knew he lay in bed for just a few days due to disease. He peacefully passed away. I heard his demise news when I returned from a memorial ceremony for famous vocalist Daw Mar Mar Aye at Santisukha Monastery," said U Lwin Myint, Chairman of Myanmar Music Association (Central).

Vocalist U Maung Maung Gyi had been suffering from diabetes and died of old age, said veteran singer Than Myat Soe.

He continued, "I have been emulating U Maung Maung Gyi since my young age. He could attain a significant singing style, and he could sing songs of old film star Khin Maung Yin. The vocalist always took a rehearsal for singing any songs. I had analyzed his songs. In this regard, the song "Sein-Lei-Nyo", composed by Cho Tay Hset Ko Aung Koe, is my favourite. One more song, "Shwe-Nyar-Si-Thwar-Mel", composed by his younger brother Ko Lay Nyunt, was a masterpiece. I mourned for his unexpected demise, and I prayed for him to reach the proper abode."

U Maung Maung Gyi was born to U Khin Sein and Daw Khin Nyunt in Yangon on 1 February 1931. He joined the

musical arena in 1947 and won the gold medal in the classic song-singing event of the cultural fine arts contest in 1953.

His first-ever song was broadcast by the Tatmadaw radio station in 1950 for the college Thingyan troupe. In 1951, his songs from Gita Lulin's amateur band were aired by Radio Myanmar.

He aired classic songs to the accompaniment of harpist U Khin Myint and orchestra master Sein Bo Tint and modern songs of Gita Lulin, Gita Lulin Maung Ko Ko, Cho Tay Hset, War Office, Kay Thi Pan, Harpist Ni Ni, Harpist Chit Swe and Pinyinmana Myint Hlaing troupes. He was a renowned vocalist with popular songs in commercial gramophones and films.

Vocalist (U) Maung Maung Gyi won the hearts of audiences with public favourite songs such as "Ta-khu-te-thaw-yi-hman-chet", "Hna-sint-myitta", "Nwe-hnaung", "Shwe-nyar-si-thwar-mel", "Akyeetan chit-thu", "Kwan-taung-kaing", "Eainmet-naing-ngan", "Myitta Zatlan", "Pin-taing-kyawt-hmu", "Way-pyi-hmwe-yel", "Tan-par-ma-phaya", "Myitta-nunu-saylaryin-kwel", "Sein-lei'nyo", "Ahit-ko-bel-lo-pyaw-ya-mel" and so on. — Htet Oo Maung/TTA



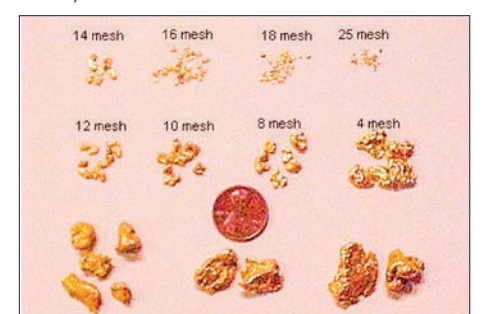
Veteran vocalist (U) Maung Maung Gyi.

YR Gold Association launches online sale of gold pieces

ACCORDING to the Yangon Region Gold Entrepreneurs Association (YGEA), YGEA launched selling pieces of gold (2.1 grains or 136.07 milligrammes) through the online system.

Those who want to collect gold can contact the YGEA and the Myanmar Gold Traders Association to enquire about the shops where they can purchase gold legally.

The system is being implemented in collaboration with a bank, and the software is being written. The system will be connected with other banks, gold shops, and entrepreneurs upon completion. — TWA/TKO



Various karats of gold.

NATIONAL

State Lottery announces 2024-2025 ticket sales: Application and compliance guidelines

ON 14 January, the State Lottery Division of the Internal Revenue Department announced that K1,000-priced Aungbarlay Lottery tickets for the 2024-2025 financial year will be available for sale starting from April. Those interested in selling lottery tickets can contact and apply to the State Lottery Division (Yangon), the State Lottery Division (Mandalay branch), and township internal revenue offices in other states and regions.

According to the statement, applicants must be individuals who operate shops for selling lottery tickets. In the application for selling tickets, the original and a copy of the Citizenship Scrutiny Card and household list are required, along with the



The photo depicts the office of the State Lottery Directorate (Yangon).

letter of commitment to selling the tickets as stipulated.

Similarly, current lottery business owners must submit

the original recommendation letter of tax payment for monthly tickets during the 2023-2024 financial year or the original

recommendation letter confirm-

ing the completion of tax affairs for the lottery business. Application forms should be submitted

to the township revenue offices between 16 and 29 January.

Furthermore, sellers need to agree to buy a constant number of lottery tickets each month, with failure resulting in termination of the right to purchase lottery tickets and the confiscation of insurance money as state revenue.

After receiving the confirmation letter of the available number of lottery tickets, the applicants must pay the insurance money and sign the agreement before 4 March. The Internal Revenue Department has also cautioned that failure to comply with the agreement within the specified time will result in removal from the list of lottery ticket sellers. — TWA/TRKM

Ayeyawady Bridge (Magway) watercourse altered for riverbed conservation

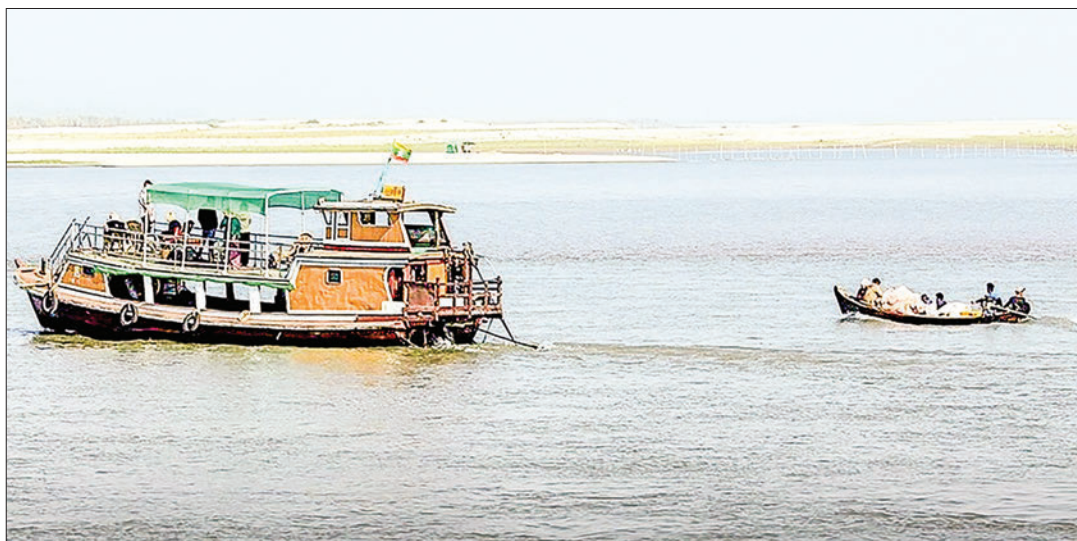
ACCORDING to the Directorate of Water Resources and Improvement of River System (DWIR), the Ayeyawady Bridge (Magway) will change the watercourse starting on 15 January due to riverbed conservation work.

As part of this process, the waterway will now be opened between piers 17 and

18 as upstream and downstream waterways, replacing the previous arrangement where the channel was opened between piers 16 and 17 for the passage of vessels.

The clear width of the altered channel is 110 metres, with a clear height of 17 metres above the highest water level. At the entrance where

vessels must pass, a green triangle will be displayed during the day, and a green light will be exhibited at night. To indicate the water route not to be used, a red cross will be displayed during the day, and a red light will be shown at night. — TWA/TKO



Boats are passing by in the Ayeyawady River.

Preparations underway for 77th Union Equestrian Tournament in Yangon's Dagon Myothit (North)

ACCORDING to the Myanmar Equestrian Federation, new racecourses for the 77th Union Equestrian Tournament are currently under construction at the Horse Racing course of the Myanmar Equestrian Federation.

The tournament is scheduled to take place from 4 to 12 February and features both traditional Myanmar and international equestrian contests. As stated in the report, contestants from various states and regions

are expected to participate in the competition.

On 14 January, U Pyone Maung Maung, the President of the Myanmar Equestrian Federation, along with members of the Central Executive Committee, conducted a visit to inspect the construction progress of the racecourses. Additionally, arrangements are underway for the mess and accommodation facilities for the participating horse riders. — TWA/TMT



The racecourse for the Union Equestrian Tournament seen under construction.

Green gram and chickpea prices rocketing in Yangon

THE prices of green gram and chickpea are surging in the Yangon market while the prices of black gram and pigeon peas fluctuate.

Green grams and chickpeas also have high domestic consumption. However, the black grams and pigeon peas primarily rely on low-consumption exports.

Myanmar exported 307,567 tonnes of green gram worth US\$208.2 million to foreign trade partners between 30 December 2023 and 5 January 2024. Meanwhile, that week, 591,538 tonnes of black gram worth \$541.004 million and 122,394 tonnes of pigeon pea worth \$110.875 million were also shipped to external markets. Green gram ranked second in pulse exports that week, according to the pulse export statistics of the institution concerned.

The prices of pulses stood



The picture shows marketable green grams and pigeon peas found in the market.



at K2.99 million per tonne of black gram (Fair Average Quality) and K3.43 million per tonne of pigeon pea on 15 January 2024, which declined from K3.035 million per tonne of black gram and K3.485 million per tonne of pigeon pea on 13

January.

The prices of green gram and chickpea remained unchanged at K2,750-K3,085 per viss of green gram and K6,500-K6,800 per viss of chickpea on 13-15 January 2024.

The prices were regis-

tered at K2,080-K2,170 per viss of green gram from Pakokku, K2,800-2,920 per viss of green gram (Shwewah), K4,250-K4,440 per viss of gram, K1.667 million per tonne of black gram and K1.83 million per tonne of pigeon pea on 14 January 2023.

The figures reflected an increase of K1.4 million per tonne of chickpea, K500,000 per tonne of green gram (Pakokku), K1.3 million per tonne of black gram and K1.6 million per tonne of pigeon pea within one year. — TWA/KK

YGN palm oil wholesale reference price rises to K5,200 by week ending 21 Jan

THE wholesale reference rate of palm oil for the Yangon market this week ending 21 January 2023 was set higher to K5,250 per viss from K4,955 per viss registered last week, according to the Supervisory Committee on edible oil import and distribution.

The figure reflected a sharp increase of K295 per viss this week.

The Supervisory Committee on edible oil Import and Distribution under the Ministry of Commerce has been closely observing the FOB prices in Malaysia and Indonesia, adding transport costs, tariffs and banking services to decide the wholesale market reference rate for edible oil weekly.

Nevertheless, the market price is

way higher than the reference price.

To control overcharging, the Consumer Affairs Department under the Ministry of Commerce informed the consumers of lodging the complaints for overcharging through the call centre's hotline in late August. The Department urged consumers not to buy palm oil at high prices.

The Department is making concerted efforts to steer the high volatility in palm oil prices in the retail market and offer fairer prices to consumers in coordination with the Myanmar Edible Oil Dealers Association and oil importing companies.

The complaints for overcharging can be lodged over hotline 1535 of the call centre of the Consumers Affairs Department or sent to the Facebook page of the Department and the region and state departments concerned.

The domestic palm oil consumption is estimated at one million tonnes per year. The local palm oil production is just about 400,000 tonnes. To meet domestic demands, about 700,000 tonnes of palm oil are imported yearly through Malaysia and Indonesia. — NN/EM



A cooking wholesale centre fills drums with oil for readiness to sell cooking oil.

MGMA to offer Basic Moterized Sewing-Machine Operating Training Course Batch 232

MYANMAR Garment Manufacturers Association (MGMA) will conduct a Basic Moterized Sewing-Machine Operating Training Course (Batch 232) from 22 January to 9 February 2024 at the Myanmar Garment Human Resources Development Training Centre (MGHRDC).

The course will provide practical approaches and technical know-how of operating sewing machines, different sewing methods, labour laws and practices.

This training will also build the network between those engaged in garment factories and those hunting jobs from regions outside Yangon to create job opportunities for residents. Thus, the training will also help find jobs. Those who wish to attend the training can enrol through the following phone numbers: 09 940858350, 09 450723262, 09 9403912570, 09 784085794 and 09 969865024. — NN/EM

OPINION

Promote healthcare services to elevate public health standards

IN the contemporary landscape, healthcare services, jointly administered by the government and private sectors, are geared towards enhancing the well-being of individuals across the nation, transcending barriers of race, religion, and language. The collaborative efforts aim to ensure comprehensive healthcare accessibility, employing diverse models such as free healthcare systems and cost-sharing mechanisms. This strategy aligns with the efficient budget allocation for the health sector, fostering cooperation with the populace to optimize the impact of healthcare initiatives.

The government orchestrates a multifaceted healthcare infrastructure, spanning different tiers of hospitals to deliver outpatient and inpatient services, including intensive care. This encompasses a spectrum of healthcare financing models, facilitating the effective utilization of allocated funds. The strategic allocation of resources enables a focus on priority areas, such as extending healthcare services to remote regions and bolstering healthcare facilities.

Distributed nationwide, the healthcare system comprises dispensaries, rural health branches, rural health centres, urban health centres, and hospitals with varying bed capacities. Ongoing efforts involve continually establishing new hospitals, augmenting the overall healthcare capacity. This expansion is particularly geared towards ensuring accessibility to health examinations for all citizens.

In a noteworthy move, the government has granted licenses to business entities to operate private healthcare services, broadening the spectrum of healthcare choices for the public. The Central Committee on Private Healthcare Services has issued licenses for 275 private hospitals, 40 labour rooms, 73 specialized laboratory services, 17 radiological services, 20 health services, and 18 general healthcare services as of 31 December 2023. These facilities collectively provide 12,493 beds for inpatients, underscoring the need for private healthcare providers to uphold high service delivery standards.

To safeguard the integrity of private healthcare services, stringent measures are in place, mandating the recruitment of only licensed healthcare professionals. This ensures the safety and security of both the health facilities and the patients they serve. The government has further empowered the private healthcare sector by permitting them to operate Hemodialysis and kidney transplant treatment services, fostering the development of specialized healthcare services.

Crucially, both government and private healthcare services are bound by adherence to government health policies. This shared commitment focuses on elevating the overall health standards of the population. Simultaneously, healthcare professionals are obligated to fulfil their assigned duties, leveraging medical equipment effectively to deliver optimal healthcare solutions. In this collective pursuit, the healthcare ecosystem strives to provide accessible and high-quality medical services, fostering an environment where public health standards continually improve.

The Burma Circle of the Geological Survey of India and their Contributions to the Geology of Myanmar

By THAN HTUN (GEOSCIENCE MYANMAR)

EPISODE:26

ERNEST (WATSON) VREDENBURG

E Vredenburg was born on 17th April 1870 and died in London on 12th March 1923 at the age of 53 years. He was the most senior member of the Geological Survey of India and educated at the Clermont University of France. After working for a short time as an Assistant Chemist in the Creusot Iron Works in France, he joined the Royal College of Science, London, where he took advanced courses in the various branches of Geology. He and Mr. Grimes were appointed Assistant Superintendents in the Geological Survey of India and joined the office in Calcutta, which at that time was situated in the old Museum building, on the 16th of October 1895. Both young officers were sent to Rewah for their camp season under Mr R D Oldham, where the party was greatly handicapped by a phenomenally unhealthy season.

His first official publication in India was a memoir entitled "A Geological Sketch of the Baluchistan Desert and Part of Eastern Persia", which appeared in 1901; he also, together with Mr P N Datta, assisted Mr R D Oldham in a memoir, which appeared the same year, on the Geology of the Son Valley. Towards the close of 1903, after eight years' service, he was promoted to the grade of Deputy Superintendent, the initial salary of which post was then R500 per mensem. Early in 1903, he also acted as Curator; and in 1906, was appointed Palaeontologist, a post he filled during the rest of his service. He was again promoted in 1910 to the grade of Superintendent. He returned from leave on 3 November 1912. Placed in charge of the Burma party and left for the field on 8 December 1912. Twice, he performed the duties of lecturer in geology at the Presidency College, Calcutta, and in 1913, he was appointed Calcutta University lecturer in the same subject. His best-known stratigraphical work is that on Baluchistan, which included some intricate mapping. Mr Vredenburg's energies were, however, devoted chiefly to the subject of Palaeontology, and our knowledge of Indian Tertiary rocks, especially those of Burma, has been clarified and made orderly by much laborious and painstaking work on his part (E H Pascoe, 1923)

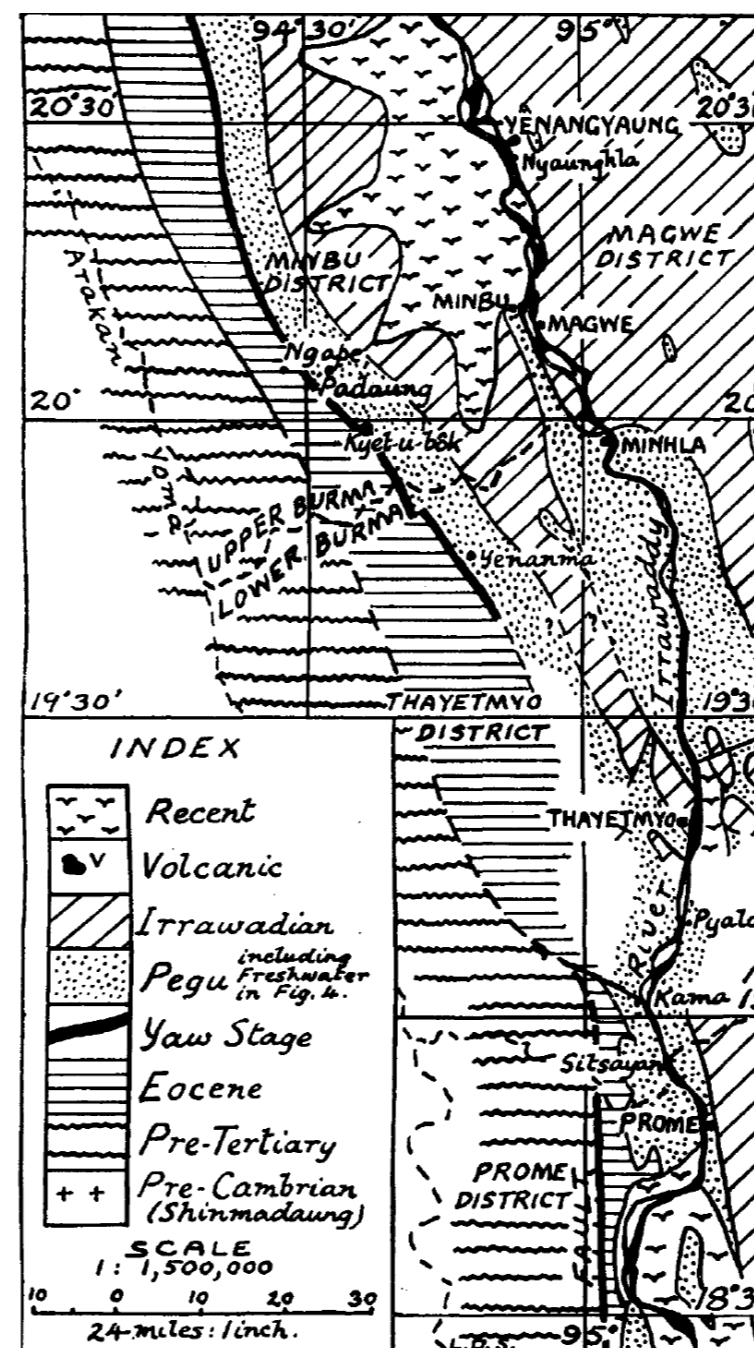
According to H H Hayden's 'general report of the Geological Survey of India for the year 1913', Mr Vredenburg spent the greater part of his time at Yenangaung, where he was permitted to examine in detail the large collections of fossils belonging to the Burma Oil Company. He also visited some of the more important anticlines, the volcanic areas of Popa in the Myingyan district and Shinmadaung in the Pakokku district. Mr Vredenburg's observations have led him to believe that the fossils described by Dr Noetling in his work on "The Fauna of the Miocene Beds of Burma" (Pal. Ind., New Ser., Vol. I) include two separate faunas, an older and a younger and that these two faunas are separated, one from the other, by an important unconformity extending throughout the Tertiary area in Burma. He believes this unconformity to occur within the Pegu series, dividing it naturally into an upper and a lower; the lower being the chief petroliferous group of beds and the upper being either non-petroliferous or only very sparingly so. So far as Mr Vredenburg's work has gone, this unconformity is chiefly a palaeontological one, and no conclusive evidence of a general physical or stratigraphical break has been adduced. The hypothesis of the occurrence of this supposed extensive unconformity has not met with general acceptance on the part of other members of the Geological Survey working in Burma, and it would, therefore, be premature to modify at present our classification of the Tertiary system of that province. Further fieldwork and detailed examination of the extensive collections of fossils made during the last few years by the members of the Burma party will no doubt decide the question. At present, the more generally accepted belief is that the Pegu series, as might be expected in a series of estuarine or shallow-water deposits, contains a large number of small unconformities, none being of very great extent or of more than purely local importance.

Vredenburg has written 51 papers on Palaeontology and of all, the following papers contributed to the Geology of Myanmar. Notes on gem sands from Ceylon and Burma, On the identity of *Ostrea promensis* Notelung from the Pegu system of Burma and *Ostrea digilalina* Eichwald from the Miocene of Europe, Results of a revision of some portions of Dr Noetling's second monograph on the Tertiary fauna of Burma, Illustrated comparative diagnoses of fossil Terebridae from Burma, Comparative diagnoses of Pleurotomidae from the Tertiary formations of Burma, Comparative diagnoses of Conidae and Cancellariidae from the Tertiary formations of Burma, A zone-fossil from Burma: *Ampullina* (*Megatylotus*) *birmanica*, Oligocene Echinoidea collected by Rao Bahadur S Sethu Rama Rau in Burma, Unionidae from the Miocene of Burma and On the Occurrence of *Ostrea latimarginata*, a characteristic Gaj species, in the "Yenangaung Stage" of Burma with M Stuart.

Ostrea latimarginata (Vredenburg)

We are indebted to Mr H J Davies, Geologist to the Burma Oil Company, for one of the most interesting fossils discovered as yet made in Burma. Amongst some fossils sent by Mr Davies from the Pyalo-Kwetha anticline in the Allanmyo subdivision of the Thayet district, there are several shells of an oyster which show the specific characteristics of *Ostrea latimarginata*, one of the principal zone fossils of the uppermost horizons of the Gaj in Western India.

The Burmese specimens attain yet larger dimensions. In the largest specimens forwarded by Mr Davies, these dimensions of fossils made during the last few years by the members of the Burma party will no doubt decide the question. At present, the more generally accepted belief is that the Pegu series, as might be expected in a series of estuarine or shallow-water deposits, contains a large number of small unconformities, none being of very great extent or of more than purely local importance.



Geological sketch map of part of the Tertiary Region of Burma, southern half. Source: L D S

tend to become obsolete, as in the case of some of the larger specimens from northwestern India. The small number of available specimens from Burma and their indifferent preservation prevent us from ascertaining whether this be a racial character of the Burmese specimens.

According to Mr Davies's account, the shell must have occurred some 1,500 feet above the base of the "Yenangaung Stage." At a lower horizon of the Pyalo-Kwetha section, between 500 and 600 feet above the local base of the "Yenangaung," Mr Davies discovered a fauna which he considers to represent the same horizon as Dr Noetling's zone of Par-

allelipipedum prototortuosum. The total thickness of fossiliferous marine beds in the section studied by Mr Davies is over 2,200 feet. It is evident, therefore, that somewhere midway through the "Yenangaung Stage", there occurs one of the most reliable zones fossils of Western India, and, as it characterizes the uppermost horizon of the Gaj, it confirms Dr Noetling's surmise as to the Gaj age of the least a considerable portion of the Yenangaung fauna.

At the same time, it makes it seem more than probable that all the upper subdivisions of Noetling's "Yenangaung Stage" are younger than the Gaj of Sind and must correspond in age with

the lower zones of the "Hinglaj series" of the Mekran province. The bulk of the Gaj strata, abounding as they do with large lepidocyclines, are regarded as Upper Aquitanian. The beds with *Ostrea latimarginata* and the lower zones of the Hinglaj must be ascribed, therefore, to the Burdigalian. (Vredenburg)

Classification of the Pegu system (M Stuart)

The interesting light that Mr Vredenburg's determinations have shed upon Mr Davies' discoveries of molluscan remains amongst the Pegu beds of Pyalo acquires considerable importance, both theoretical and practical, in view of the recent advance lately made in the detailed stratigraphical study of the Miocene of Burma.

With regard to the correlation between "Miocene" and "Pliocene" as formerly applied to the Pegu and Irrawaddy systems, it is barely necessary to point out that these terms cannot be applied any longer, for in view of Mr Vredenburg's identification, it becomes at once evident that much of the Pegu system is really Oligocene, while all investigations in the Irrawaddy system fail to identify the lowest beds as later than Upper Miocene.

In the area specially studied by Theobald near Prome, the Pegu system includes a considerable thickness of sandstones (the "Prome sandstones" of Theobald's classification) intercalated between a lower unfossiliferous shale band constituting the Sitsayan shales, and an upper highly fossiliferous shaley horizon known as the Kama clay. The lower 1,400 feet of the sandstones are locally unfossiliferous, or nearly so, while the upper zones are richly fossiliferous.

Noetling in his classification, has altered the use of the name Prome beds, which he has made to include the unfossiliferous Sitsayan shales and the locally unfossiliferous or poorly fossiliferous lower part of the sandstone, while the fossiliferous beds of Theobald's Prome series have

been united with the Kama clays to constitute the Yenangaung series, thus relying on a purely accidental and local character to split up the well-marked unit constituted by the great sandstone mass.

The discovery of such a characteristic zone fossil as *Ostrea latimarginata* at a definite horizon makes it expedient to return to Theobald's more natural classification. This form occurs at the upper limit of the Prome beds as originally defined, that is, just below the base of the Kama clay. Since *Ostrea latimarginata* is particularly characteristic of the upper zones of the Gaj in Western India, we have, by analogy, the Prome series, as originally defined, coinciding with the Gaj and probably an undermined portion of the Nari, while the Kama clay must be equivalent of a portion of the Hinglaj beds as defined by Vredenburg.

On the strength of its mammalian fauna, the Irrawaddy system has been regarded as the equivalent of the Siwaliks. Mr Vredenburg is of the opinion that the newest Hinglaj beds are older than Siwaliks proper. It is quite possible that the Irrawaddy system contains representatives both of the Upper Hinglaj and of the Siwaliks. The stratigraphical studies so far undertaken are quite insufficient to settle the mutual relations of the beds with marine fossils and those with mammalian remains within the Irrawaddy system. Nor do we know whether any stratigraphical break occurs between mammalian beds and the supposed equivalents of the Upper Hinglaj. A distinct unconformity separates the Kama clay from the basement beds of the Irrawaddy system with marine fossils in Lower Burma. Still, the stratigraphical break is not accompanied by any great change in the fauna and may not, therefore, represent a great interval of time.

Nevertheless, the recognition of this unconformity is of great importance in accounting for the extreme divergences in the thickness of the Kama clay, which expands from a foot to more than 1,200 feet in thickness, bringing the succession into closest correspondence with the vast thickness of supra-Gaj clays, mentioned by Mr. Vredenburg. This inconstancy of the Kama clay is a feature that has been brought to light only by the recent survey and was unknown to Dr Noetling. Consequently, the petroliferous beds themselves were referred by Noetling to his Prome stage proper, that is Theobald's Lower Prome beds and Sitsayan shales, and it has been an accepted idea ever since that those lower beds (Noetling's Promean) constitute the true petroliferous horizon in the Pegu group.

The detailed studies made in the neighbourhood of another petroliferous locality, Padaukpin, have shown that the petroliferous sands are mere intercalations within the Kama clay, which at that place, in consequence of the irregularities depending upon the above-mentioned unconformity, has expanded to a thickness of considerably more than 1,200 feet. In light of the observations made at Padaukpin and other places, it becomes extremely probable that the petroliferous beds at Yenangaung are also intercalations in the Kama clay.

In every instance where the petroliferous horizon in the Pegu system can be definitely identified, it is invariably the Kama clays and their subsidiary sandstones that hold the oil, a fact that should be constantly kept in mind in any further search for oil-bearing localities.

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NATIONAL

Scholar Dr Elizabeth Moore, honoured for contributions to Myanmar, mourned

DR Elizabeth Moore, Professor Emeritus of the Department of History of Art and Archaeology at SOAS University of London, who authored numerous books on Myanmar's history, passed away at University College Lon-

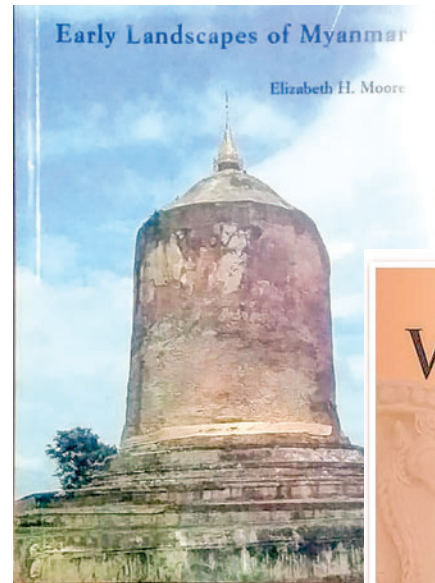
don Hospital at 5:20 pm London Standard Time, as reported by the Department of Archaeology and National Museum. At the time of her passing, she was 75 years old.

Elizabeth Moore conducted

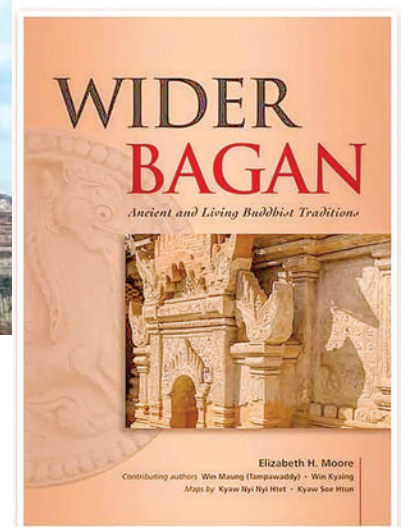
archaeological research with the department from 1989 to 1990. In 1999, she collaborated with the department's external researcher, Tampawady U Win Maung, to explore the culture of Myanmar's Bronze Age and Iron Age.

She also played a key role in writing nomination dossiers for the Pyu Ancient Cities in 2014 and the Bagan Cultural Heritage Zone between 2016 and 2018 for their recognition as World Heritage Sites.

The professor significantly contributed to teaching history and archaeology to the new generation of Myanmar archaeological and historical scholars at SOAS. She organized research paper-reading seminars for diploma and mas-



Books of Dr Elizabeth Moore on religious and cultural works.



Dr Elizabeth Moore during her research trip in Myanmar and some of her works on the country.

ter's degree holders from SOAS University of London to prevent the disconnection of studies.

Moore authored numerous books and papers on Myanmar's history and culture, including "History of the Shwedagon Pagoda", "Early Landscape of Myanmar",

"Pyu Landscape", and "Wider Bagan". Her contribution to ancient history extended beyond Myanmar as she visited Thailand and Cambodia, collaborating with local experts to co-author papers and books. — ASH/NT

CRIME NEWS

Illegal teak, industrial materials, consumer goods, vehicles seized

ON 13 January, a team on duty under the supervision of the Illegal Trade Eradication Special Task Force of Nay Pyi Taw Council Area seized 0.300 tonne of illegal timbers, estimated at K32,122. The action was taken under the Forest Law.

On 14 January, a team on

duty under the supervision of the Customs Department intercepted two cars travelling from Mawlamyine to Yangon and Myawady to Yangon at the Mayanchaung checkpoint. The cars contained three kinds of goods, including 1,000 kilograms of JK Copier copy

paper and 30 used Bridge Stone bicycles, all valued at K5.6 million, without official documents. A Mitsubishi Fuso truck and a Nissan Condor truck were also seized, estimated at K45 million. The total value of the seizures amounted to K50.6 million, and the action was taken under Customs Procedure.

Subsequently, on 15 January, an on-duty team under the supervision of the Illegal Trade Eradication Special Task Force of Bago Region seized 4.710 tonnes of illegal hardwood, estimated at K1.177 million. The action was taken under the Forest Law.

Six arrests were made on 13, 14, and 15 January, with an estimated value of K51.809 million, according to the Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee. — MNA/KZW



Pieces of timber seized in Bago Region.

MDY confiscates over K4 bln worth of stimulant tablets, heroin

AUTHORITIES in Mandalay Region confiscated over 1.6 million stimulant tablets and over 100 kilogrammes of heroin, valued at K4.945 billion.

Following a tip-off, a joint team, including members of the Anti-Drug Police Force, searched a warehouse at 139 (A), 52/53, Ward 9, Pyigyidagun Township on 8 January. During the search, Sar Oo and Mai Aik Kyin were found with 1.11 million stimulant tablets concealed in 9,240 soap containers and 92.4 kilogrammes of heroin.

After interrogations, Hla Thein was apprehended with 4.4 kilogrammes of heroin at his residence to the corner of 58 A Street and 115 Street in Kanthaya Ward, Chanmyathazi Township, on 9 January. Subsequently, officials seized 4.4 kilogrammes of heroin and 0.5 million stimulant tablets from the farm of Hein Latt and Ma Aye Aye Aung in Ward 3, Ohnchaw village, Patheingyi Township on 10 January. In total, 1.61 million stimulant tablets and 101.2 kilogrammes of heroin, valued at K4.945 billion, were confiscated.

Further investigations revealed that the seized stimulant pills and heroin were intended for transportation from Shan State to Mandalay and then to Kachin State.

Legal action have been initiated, and authorities are actively investigating and identifying individuals involved in this crime chain. — MNA/KZW



From panettone to pasta, China's love affair with Italian food

PANETTONE, a traditional festive pastry from Italy, has gained increasing popularity among young people in China over the recent Christmas and New Year holiday.

Liu Haozhe, who runs an Italian pizzeria in southwest China's Chongqing Municipality, introduced Panettone to his customers at Christmas 2023. Within five days, he baked nearly 30 loaves, which were snapped up by curious diners.

"This bread contains sugared orange peel, raisins and rum, which provide sweetness and flavour," said Liu. "The addition of butter adds a dense taste to the bread body. The towering and fluffy shape is very festive and can be shared with friends."

In Chongqing, renowned within China for its red peppers and spicy cuisine, another red colour has appeared on its food map — tomatoes, a common ingredient in Italian food.

On a local street famous for its exquisite bistros, a restaur-

ant called Richang specializes in handmade pasta. In 2023, it was listed as a recommended restaurant by an online guide to local food.

Their signature dish is spaghetti Bolognese, while it serves Tagliatelle, a form of pasta from Emilia-Romagna region, with beef and pork belly. The white wine in the sauce stimulates the aromas of tomato, carrot, onion and meat. With such additions, the city is equipped to serve up authentic Italian flavours, with all kinds of pasta tempting the taste buds of local young people.

Richang is owned by Sun Wei, who once studied overseas and loves to eat fresh homemade pasta. She opened the restaurant because she wanted to let people in her hometown experience an authentic Italian style of cuisine.

"The taste of Italian food is more based on tomatoes, which is in line with the tastes of Chinese people," she said. "With the growing awareness of catering, Chinese people are increasingly



A chef prepares Margherita pizza at a restaurant in Chongqing, southwest China, 16 November 2023. PHOTO: XINHUA

fond of a diverse array of food. Italian food ingredients are very rich in taste, and diversified, so it can meet the needs of different customers."

The Italian Food Week held in late 2023 saw a series of food activities held in Chinese cities like Beijing, Shanghai, Chongqing and Hong Kong, including more than 30 activities in southwest

China. These included tasting events, cooking classes and various types of promotional activities. At Richang, diners took part in spaghetti-making classes and learned how wheat flour is turned into spaghetti.

At Bella Napoli, a restaurant in Shanghai, diners not only eat authentic oven-baked pizza but also enjoy Italian-style perfor-

mances all year round, complete with Mediterranean-style decorations. At various bakeries across China, Italian-style bread is favoured by customers. Wang Yuxuan from Beijing is a lover of Italian bread. She believes that breads such as focaccia and ciabatta are not only chewy but also low in oil and sugar, making them a good carbohydrate choice for people who want to keep fit.

As a representative of the Mediterranean diet, Italian cuisine is not just a list of foods, but more of a lifestyle that helps people maintain their health while building and strengthening social interactions.

Olive oil provides healthy oils, tomatoes inhibit the oxidation of cholesterol and reduce the risk of heart disease, and the use of spices reduces the amount of oil and salt used, making dishes light and healthy. Such food has become increasingly popular on the Chinese dinner table, as people pursue diverse health options. — Xinhua



People prepare to cook during the festival of Thai Pongal in Colombo, Sri Lanka, 15 January 2024. Thai Pongal is a Tamil thanksgiving festival in celebration of a successful harvest. PHOTO: XINHUA

Exhibition of Victorian era art works held at China's NCPA

MORE than 100 original works of art from the United Kingdom's Victorian era are being exhibited at the National Centre for the Performing Arts (NCPA) in Beijing.

Titled "Echoes from the Age of Steam: Art in the age of Victoria", the exhibition

presents audiences with oil paintings, watercolours, sketches and sculptures created by numerous celebrated artists from the era, such as landscape painter William Turner.

The exhibition, co-hosted by the NCPA and National

Museums Liverpool, focuses on the development of British art during the period, and enables audiences to witness the vibrant and diverse artistic landscape of the United Kingdom during its heyday.

The exhibition will last until 25 March. — Xinhua

301 ancient tombs unearthed in east China

A total of 301 ancient tombs were recently unearthed in east China's Shandong Province, according to the Archaeology Institute of Jinan.

The tombs, which span from the Warring States period (475-221 BC) to the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911), were discovered in Jinan City, capital of

Shandong Province.

In addition to tombs, other ruins including two kiln sites, three ash pits, and eight wells, were also excavated. From these sites, 850 sets of artifacts, including clay pots, ceramic plates, and copper coins, were unearthed.

According to the institute,

the tombs were distributed and arranged in an orderly manner, and one of the tomb cemeteries, which dates back to the Warring States Period to the Wei and Jin dynasties (220-420), was probably in use for hundreds of years, providing tomb development materials for research. — Xinhua

ECONOMY WORLD

Laos' Huaphan province hopes to attract tourists, investors in 2024



Tourists visit the Patuxay Park in the Lao capital Vientiane on 30 June 2023. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

LAOS' northern Huaphan province is hoping to attract more tourists during Visit Laos Year 2024, and draw potential investors interested in setting up businesses in the province.

According to a report by Lao National TV on Monday, provincial governor Khampheng Xaysompheng hosted a ceremony to mark the start of Huaphan's tourism programme in line with the theme of Visit Laos Year 2024, "A Paradise of Lao Culture, Nature and History".

The province is hoping to attract more than 47,000 tourists during Visit Laos Year 2024, with

an estimated spending of 50 billion kip (2.4 million US dollars).

Speaking at the opening ceremony last Friday, the provincial governor said Huaphan will hold activities each month in the year, including ethnic festivals, traditional Lao New Year celebrations, and a boat racing festival.

It is expected the events will help bring both Lao and foreign tourists to Huaphan in large numbers, and attract potential investors.

The growth of business would create jobs for local people and help to ease poverty levels in the remote mountainous

northern province, the provincial governor said.

In 2023, at least 45,000 tourists visited Huaphan province, generating more than 32 billion kip (1.5 million US dollars) in revenue, according to the report.

Huaphan, some 310 km northeast of the Lao capital Vientiane, boasts an abundance of all the elements of the theme for Visit Laos Year 2024, as it is spectacularly endowed with stunning landscapes, a rich culture, and fascinating historical links due to its role as the country's revolutionary stronghold. — Xinhua

Philippine remittances rise by 2.9% in November

PERSONAL remittances from overseas Filipinos reached 3 billion US dollars in November 2023, 2.9 per cent higher than the 2.9 billion dollars recorded in November 2022, the Philippine central bank said Monday.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) said the cumulative personal remittances grew by 2.9 per cent to 33.6 billion dollars in the first 11 months of 2023 from 32.6 billion

dollars recorded in the same period in 2022.

The BSP said the growth in cash remittances from the United States, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates contributed mainly to the increase in remittances from January to November 2023.

Personal remittances remain a significant source of the Southeast Asian country's foreign exchange inflows. Over-

seas Filipinos send an annual remittance equivalent to about 10 per cent of the Philippine gross domestic product (GDP).

Personal remittances from overseas Filipinos hit an all-time high of 36.14 billion dollars in 2022, 3.6 per cent higher than the 34.88 billion dollars recorded in 2021. The full-year 2022 level accounted for 8.9 per cent of the GDP of the Southeast Asian country. — Xinhua

Indonesia posts trade balance surplus of 36.93 bln USD in 2023

INDONESIA recorded a trade balance surplus of 36.93 billion US dollars throughout 2023, the Statistics Indonesia (BPS) announced on Monday.

"This is the 44th month in a row of surplus since May 2020," BPS Deputy for Distribution and Services Statistics Pudji Ismartini, said in a virtual press conference.

BPS said that, however, the 2023 surplus was lower than the number it recorded during 2022, which amounted to 54.46 billion dollars, due to the decrease in the

export and import values.

"Indonesia's exports during 2023 were 258.2 billion dollars, slumped by 11.33 per cent compared to 2022 which reached 291.90 billion dollars, while the imports were 221.89 billion dollars, decreased by 6.55 per cent from 237.45 billion dollars," Ismartini said.

Indonesia's top trading partner countries during 2023, to which it experienced surplus for goods trade, were India, the United States, and the Philippines, according to the BPS. — Xinhua

China's shipbuilding industry retains top spot globally in 2023

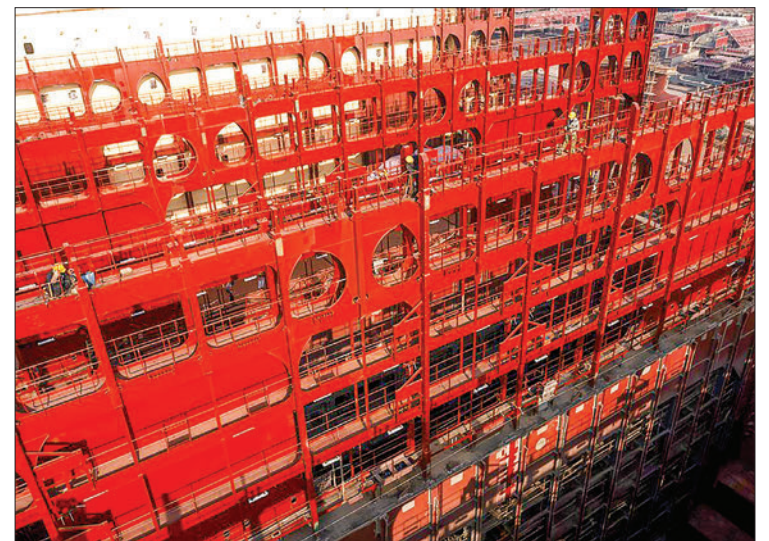
CHINA has maintained its top position in the global shipbuilding market in 2023, with strong growth in both output and new orders, industry data showed on Monday.

The country's shipbuilding output climbed 11.8 per cent year on year to 42.32 million deadweight tonnes (dwt) in 2023, accounting for 50.2 per cent of the world's total, according to data from the Ministry of Industry and Information

Technology.

New orders surged 56.4 per cent year on year to 71.2 million dwt, taking up 66.6 per cent of the world's total during the period, figures from the ministry showed.

The sector's holding orders totalled 139.39 million dwt at the end of December, expanding 32 per cent year on year. The volume represented 55 per cent of the global market share. — Xinhua



This aerial photo taken on 5 December 2023 shows workers working on a container vessel at a shipyard of Jiangsu Yangzi Xinfu Shipbuilding Co, Ltd in Taixing, east China's Jiangsu Province. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

Chinese firms to travel abroad in search of trade deals



This aerial photo taken on 2 October 2023 shows a container ship docking at an automation wharf of Qinzhou Port for unloading in Qinzhou, south China's Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

CHINA plans to arrange overseas trips for a large number of foreign trade companies in 2024 to help them make deals and expand their markets.

The China Council for the Promotion of International Trade (CCPIT) said on Monday that it will arrange for more than 1,000

groups of enterprises to visit foreign countries this year to participate in exhibitions, conduct market research and hold business talks. According to the CCPIT, these foreign visits will prioritize important trade and economic partners such as Europe, North America, Japan,

South Korea, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and Latin America.

CCPIT head Ren Hongbin said at a national meeting on foreign trade promotion that the council will make further efforts to assist Chinese firms in expanding their overseas markets in 2024. — Xinhua

IMF chief says AI will affect almost 40% of jobs worldwide

THE International Monetary Fund (IMF) Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva said on Sunday that artificial intelligence (AI) will affect almost 40 per cent of jobs around the world, calling for a careful balance of policies to tap its potential.

“We are on the brink of a technological revolution that could jumpstart productivity, boost global growth and raise incomes around the world. Yet it could also replace jobs and deepen inequality,” Georgieva said in a blog, citing a new IMF analysis, which examined the potential impact of AI on the global labour market.

Historically, automation and information technology have tended to affect routine tasks, but one of the things that sets AI apart is its ability to impact high-skilled jobs, the blog noted.

“As a result, advanced economies face greater risks from AI — but also more opportunities to leverage its benefits — compared with emerging market and developing economies,” according to the blog. In advanced economies, about 60 per cent of jobs may be impacted by AI.

In emerging markets and low-income countries, by contrast, AI exposure is

expected to be 40 per cent and 26 per cent, respectively.

However, many of these countries don't have the infrastructure or skilled workforces to harness the benefits of AI, raising the risk that over time the technology could worsen inequality among nations.

Noting that AI could also affect income and wealth inequality within countries, Georgieva said that in most scenarios, AI will likely worsen overall inequality, a troubling trend that policymakers must proactively address to prevent the technology from further stoking social tensions. — Xinhua

Chinese automakers sell record 553,000 cars in Russia in 2023

CHINESE automakers sold a record total of 553,000 cars in Russia in 2023, accounting for almost half of Russia's auto market, says industry experts.

The share of Chinese cars in the Russian market surged from 17 per cent to 49 per cent,

according to a report released on Friday by Otkritie Auto, the auto business unit of Russia's Otkritie Bank.

Last year, 30 Chinese car brands were officially imported into Russia by distributors, while 15 to 17 brands entered the Russian market through

parallel imports, a trade channel through which branded goods are imported into a market and sold there without the trademark owner's consent in that market.

Among the most popular Chinese car brands are Haval, Chery, and Geely. — Xinhua

PESTICIDES DISTRIBUTOR CHANGING

We, Aka Yarzar Co.Ltd, would like to change distributor of the following products, (registered by Saigon Plant Protection Joint Stock Company Limited to Pesticide Registration Board, Myanmar), from former distributor Akari Min Trading Company Limited. If any objection or enquiry, please contact to Pesticide Registration Board, Plant Protection Division, Bayint Naung Road, West Gyogone, Insein Township, Yangon, from here to next 14 days.

AKA YARZAR 09-761844477

Sr.	Trade Name	Active Ingredient	Type of pesticide	Registration No.
1.	Pesle 276 SL	Paraquat Dichloride 276g/l SL	Herbicide	F2020-2378

Notice for Change of Registration Trade Name

Notice is hereby given that official registration trade names have been changed for the following herbicide distributed by Arvis Cropsience Co., Ltd.

No.	Trade Name		Active Ingredients	Registration Type	Registration No.
	Old	New			
1	Foison Bigboss	Closhoot 50 WP	Flumioxazine 50% WP	Provisional	P2022-4726
2	Foison Safa	TutCorn 80 WP	Atrazine 80% WP	Provisional	P2019-4729
3	Foison Trump	Trump 42 EC	Fluroxypyr 8.5% + MCPA 33.5% EC	Provisional	P2022-4725
4	Foison Paniclear	DeTares 50 WP	Quinclorac 50% WP	Provisional	P2020-4825
5	Foison Speed	TutRice 10 EC	Cyhalofop-butyl 10% EC	Provisional	P2020-4822
6	Foison Longstar	Longstar 30 EC	Pretilachlor 50% EC	Provisional	P2020-4824
7	Foison Axe	BushAxe 480 EC	Triclopyr 480g/L EC	Provisional	P2020-4943
8	Foison Weedoff	Weedoff 30 WP	Bensulfuron methyl 5% + Quinclorac 25% WP	Provisional	P2020-4859

Arvis Cropsience Co. Ltd., invites objections to Co-secretary, Pesticide Registration Board, Plant Protection Division, West Gyogone, Insein Township, Yangon within a period of fourteen (14) days from the publication of this notice.

Address: Arvis Cropsience Co. Ltd.

No.14, Block 41, Nawaday Garden Housing, Hlaing Thar Yar Township, Yangon, Myanmar. 09969632704

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V ISEACO WISDOM VOY.NO. (107N)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V ISEACO WISDOM VOY.NO. (107N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 16-1-2024 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.

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ROLLING UPDATES

WORLD

Space-exposed potato seeds enter experimental planting stage in N China

CHINESE researchers have started breeding experiments on 66,500 potato seeds that were taken into space aboard the Shenzhou-16 crewed spaceship and stayed for over 180 days.

After the seed germination, cultivation and transplantation, superior seed varieties will be selected and further evaluated, said Zhang Linhai, director of the technology innovation centre of Xisen Potato Industry Co, Ltd, which is in charge of the task.

Space breeding refers to exposing seeds or strains to cosmic radiation and microgravity in space to mutate their genes, so as to create new species or varieties with greater performances like shorter growth period, higher yield and better resistance to diseases.

Researchers from the centre in Shangdu County in north China's Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region plan to breed potato varieties with salt-alkali tolerance and higher yields through experiments that use advanced gene-editing technology to assist traditional genetic breeding.

This approach has the potential to reduce the breeding cycle from over a decade to just a few years, Zhang said.

It is the second time Xisen Potato Industry Co, Ltd has sent seeds into space. In June 2022, 20,000 potato seeds selected



A staff member records information of potato seeds at the technology innovation centre of Xisen Potato Industry Co, Ltd in Shangdu County, north China's Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, 8 January 2024. Chinese researchers have started breeding experiments on 66,500 potato seeds that were taken into space aboard the Shenzhou-16 crewed spaceship and stayed for over 180 days. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

by the company were sent to China's space station via Shenzhou-14, returning to earth after 182 days.

It was in 1987 that China sent its first crop seeds including rice and pepper into space, marking the start of the country's

space breeding journey. Over the past thirty-odd years, it has conducted over 30 such space experiments involving plant seeds, seedlings and strains, resulting in the cultivation of almost 1,000 new varieties. — Xinhua

Cyprus sees protest against UK airbase

HUNDREDS of demonstrators protested against the use of a British airbase in Cyprus for military activities related to the Gaza conflict.

The Cyprus Peace Council, the organizer of the event, said that around 500 people marched to the gate of the Akrotiri airbase on the fringes of the southern port city of Limassol. During the demonstration, the organization repeated its appeal for an immediate closure of the British airbases in Cyprus, saying they have been posing a constant danger to the security of the island country and its people.

The demonstrators held banners calling against the involvement of the base in the Gaza conflict. They handed a written message to a British officer at the gate of the base, saying that the Cypriot people do not want their country "to be involved in any way in the bloody massacre taking place in the Gaza Strip," according to local media. — Xinhua

6 killed, 9 injured in karaoke fire in Indonesia

A blaze tore through a three-storey karaoke lounge in Tegal City in Indonesia's Central Java province on Monday morning, killing six people and injuring nine others, the city police said.

Tegal Police Chief Rully Thomas said that the fire occurred at around 8 am local time and firefighters with two fire engines and a crane truck were immediately sent to the location.

"We are still carrying out an investigation into the cause of the fire," said Thomas. Meanwhile, the city's Health Agency head Zaenal Abidin said that 15 people have been evacuated and brought to a nearby hospital.

He said the six deaths were caused by smoke inhalation of toxic gas, while the nine injured were still receiving intensive care at the hospital. — Xinhua

Tanzania gov't shuts down collapsed gold mine as death toll reaches 22

TANZANIAN authorities on Sunday closed down mining activities at a gold mine that killed 22 miners after it had collapsed on Saturday morning in Simiyu region in northern Tanzania.

The Minister of Minerals Anthony Mavunde announced the closure of the gold mine when he addressed a public rally at Ikinabushu in the Bariadi district.

Mavunde said the gold mine will remain closed until mining experts undertake a detailed assessment before it reopens.

"Her Excellency President Samia Suluhu Hassan has sent a condolence message following the deaths of the 22 miners," he said.

The 22 miners were killed on Saturday after the gold mine collapsed at about 5 am, said Simiyu regional commissioner, Yahaya Nawanda, on Saturday, adding that the collapse of the mine was triggered by ongoing heavy rains.

Edith Swebe, the Simiyu regional



Rescuers search for survivors at a gold mine after it collapsed following a heavy downpour in Simiyu region, Tanzania, 14 January 2024. Tanzanian authorities on Sunday closed down mining activities at a gold mine that killed 22 miners after it had collapsed on Saturday morning in Simiyu region in northern Tanzania. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

police commander, said the rescue and search for survivors and bodies was halted

on Saturday night after it was confirmed that the mine had been cleared. — Xinhua

SPORTS

Riders listed to participate in international equestrian competition

THE Equestrian Sports Federation of Myanmar has announced that an equestrian sports subcommittee has been established in Mandalay Region, and the list of riders who will participate in the international equestrian sports competition was collected on 12 January.

The equestrian sports subcommittee forming ceremony was attended by the general secretary, officials of the Equestrian Sports Federation, and equestrian

sports enthusiasts. The subcommittee was led by U Aung Myat Tun, a member of the Mandalay Region subcommittee as chairperson, and 33 members were selected.

The list of athletes and horses that will be represented in the traditional and international categories of the Inter-State and Region Union Cup, commemorating the 77th Union Day, was collected. — TWA/KZL



Jockeys ride their horses during the previous domestic equestrian competition on 3 January 2023. PHOTO: XINHUA

Wimbledon champion Vondrousova stunned at Australian Open



Marketa Vondrousova of the Czech Republic returns the ball to Dayana Yastremska of Ukraine during the women's singles 1st round match at Australian Open tennis tournament in Melbourne, Australia, 15 January 2024. PHOTO: XINHUA

WIMBLEDON champion Marketa Vondrousova crashed out of the Australian Open on Monday after a straight sets defeat to qualifier Dayana Yastremska in the first round.

The world No 7 was completely outplayed by an aggressive Yastremska of Ukraine, who ran out with a comfortable 6-1, 6-2 victory in 76 minutes.

Vondrousova had withdrawn from

the Adelaide International last week due to a right hip injury, but did not show any visible signs of distress. The Czech had started her season with a three-set loss to China's Zheng Qinwen at the mixed teams United Cup.

It was the latest disappointment for the 24-year-old left-hander at Melbourne Park, where she has never progressed past the fourth round.

She had been thrust among the favourites after a memorable 2023 highlighted by becoming the first unseeded player to win the women's title at Wimbledon.

But Vondrousova was blown off the court in the first set by a confident Yastremska, who had 13 winners and won 81 per cent on first serve.

Yastremska, who hit a career-high ranking of 21 in 2020, continued her charge even though she was unable to convert a match point in the seventh game. But she held her nerve to power through to a second-round clash against France's Varvara Gracheva. — Xinhua

Milan revives by dominating Roma in Serie A

AC Milan bounced back from their Coppa Italia setback as they saw off Roma 3-1 at San Siro on Sunday, with three Frenchmen getting on the scoresheet.

AC Milan suffered a Coppa Italia exit in midweek, losing 2-1 to Atalanta, while Roma were also eliminated by city-rivals Lazio.

The home side broke the deadlock in the 11th minute when Yacine Adli got the

ball on the edge of the box before shaking off a defender to finish with a low strike. It is his first goal in a Milan jersey.

The Rossoneri doubled the lead in the 56th minute when Simon Kjaer nodded for Olivier Giroud to steer a header into the net from a close range.

Roma pulled one goal back in the 69th minute through Leandro Paredes' penalty, but Theo Hernandez's block-

buster on Giroud's assist sealed the win for Milan minutes later.

With the win, Milan still sit third with 42 points, eight points ahead of Fiorentina who fought back twice to draw with Udinese 2-2.

Also on Sunday, Lazio registered the fifth consecutive win on all fronts by edging past Lecce 1-0, and Cagliari beat Bologna 2-1. — Xinhua

Vinicius scores hat-trick as Real Madrid smash Barca in Spanish Supercup final

VINICIUS Jr scored a hat-trick as Real Madrid thrashed FC Barcelona 4-1 to win the Spanish Supercup in Riyadh on Sunday night.

Real Madrid tore Barca apart to confirm the worst fears about Barca's recent form, which piled the pressure on coach Xavi Hernandez, whose side were second best in almost everything and also committed some basic errors in defence.

While Barca struggled, Real Madrid looked quick and sharp, with two early goals quickly putting them on their way to victory.

Real Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti replaced Kepa Arrizabalaga in goal with Andriy Lunin after Kepa's errors against Atletico Madrid in the semifinal. Toni Kroos was also in the starting 11 after being booed by the Saudi fans four days earlier.

Vinicius opened his account in the seventh minute as he found a big space between the Barcelona central defenders to latch onto a through ball from Jude Bellingham to round Inaki Pena and score.

The Brazilian doubled his account three minutes later after some more poor defending from Barca. The ball was slipped to Rodrygo who advanced into the acres of space behind him and squared for Vinicius to push the ball into an empty net.

Barca had to react and they controlled possession, despite lacking the pace to trouble Madrid. In the 32nd minute, a ball into the Madrid area was headed to Robert Lewandowski who scored with a crisp volley from the edge of the box. — Xinhua

Space-exposed potato seeds enter experimental planting stage in N China

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WORLD

Israeli PM vows to continue fighting against Hamas as Gaza conflict hits 100 days

THE bloody Israel-Hamas conflict entered its 100th day on Sunday, with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu pledging to continue the military campaign in the Gaza Strip until “total victory” is achieved.

“We must conduct this war, and it will yet take many months,” said Netanyahu despite growing international calls to halt the war due to the deepening humanitarian crisis in Gaza.

During his weekly cabinet meeting, Netanyahu presented a 2024 budget proposal to his government, seeking approval for a plan that involves tax hikes and the implementation of a uniform three per cent reduction in the budgets of all government ministries to secure funding for the ongoing war against Hamas.

“At this moment, what is required is, first of all, to cover the expenses of the war and to allow us to continue the war



Israeli soldiers conduct military operations in Gaza Strip, on 11 January 2024. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

and complete it,” Netanyahu told ministers.

His remarks came as Israel awaited a ruling by the International Court of Justice in The Hague, with a possible decision

against its massive and crippling offensive in Gaza.

Launched following the Hamas assault on 7 October 2023, Israel’s relentless strikes in the densely-populated Pal-

estinian enclave have killed at least 23,843 people, with approximately 75 per cent of them being women, children, and the elderly, according to the Hamas-run government

media office.

The strikes have displaced most of Gaza’s about 2.3 million population and levelled many parts of the territory.

Since Saturday, thousands of Israelis have rallied in Tel Aviv and other major cities, calling for the return of the hostages and the replacement of the government.

During the 7 October rampage, Hamas militants killed about 1,200 people, including 790 civilians, and kidnapped over 200 people, 132 of whom are still being held in Gaza.

According to figures released by the Israeli military on Sunday, since the commencement of the war, its troops have killed approximately 9,000 militants in Gaza.

Additionally, 170 militants from the Lebanese armed group Hezbollah and Palestinian factions were killed in clashes with Israeli forces on the Lebanon front. — Xinhua

Indonesian civil group protests against Japan’s discharge of nuclear-contaminated water into sea



People protest against Japan’s discharging contaminated water into the ocean in front of the Japanese embassy in Jakarta, Indonesia, 15 January 2024. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

AN Indonesian civil group on Monday held a demonstration in front of the Japanese embassy in Indonesian capital Jakarta to protest against Japan’s discharge of nuclear-contaminated

wastewater from the crippled Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant into the Pacific Ocean.

“We warn the Japanese government to stop dumping the nuclear wastewater

which has bad impact on the Pacific water and marine biota, including fish that migrate to Indonesia such as yellowfin tuna,” said Julius Ibrani, a member of the civil group, which calls itself the Anti-Toxic Waters Community Advocacy Team (Tampar).

The disposal of nuclear-contaminated water violates Indonesian and international laws as Japan didn’t consult countries affected by the Pacific Ocean currents, including Indonesia, before the discharge, Ibrani noted, who is also chairperson of the Indonesian Legal Aid and Human Rights Association.

Another Tampar member, Marthin Hadiwinata, who is the national coordinator of Indonesia’s non-governmental organization Maritime Ecology, added that Indonesian civil groups urged the Japanese government to stop discharging the nuclear wastewater into the ocean and examine the environmental impacts thoroughly. — Xinhua

US navy shoots down anti-ship missile fired from Yemen: Central Command

THE US navy airforce shot down an anti-ship cruise missile fired by the Houthis in Yemen toward a navy battleship, the US Central Command said in a statement on early Monday morning.

The missile, which was fired at approximately 4:45 pm (1345 GMT) on Sunday toward a destroyer of the US navy operating in the southern Red Sea, was intercepted in the vicinity of the coast of Hodeidah by US fighter aircraft, said the central command, adding that no injuries or damage were reported.

Nearly at the same time on Sunday, the Houthis claimed that a warplane of the US-Britain maritime coalition hit a camp of the group in northern Hodeidah port city. But US officials reportedly denied the allegation. — Xinhua