

# The Global **NEW LIGHT** of MYANMAR

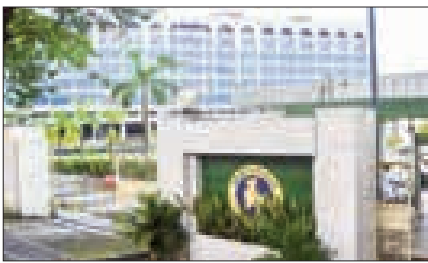
## SUNDAY EDITION

**NATIONAL** PAGE-6



Sitagu Cakkhudana Eye Hospital provides surgeries for 1,600 patients

**BUSINESS** PAGE-7



CBM injects US\$18 mln, 50 mln Thai baht into financial market in two days

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Pure gold dips to K3.8 mln per tical



State Administration Council Chairman Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing pays observation tours at the exhibition to mark the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Artillery Corps Day yesterday.

## SG unveils Diamond Jubilee Artillery Corps Day

**C**URRENTLY, while safeguarding the independence and sovereignty of the State, the artillery corps can stand tall as a modern artillery corps in the international community, said Senior General Min Aung Hlaing.

Chairman of the State Administration Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing spoke words of honour at the ceremony to mark the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary (Diamond Jubilee) Artillery Corps Day at Hsinbyushin Hall of the transit centre in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

First, Adjutant-General Lt-Gen Soe Min Oo, Commander of Nay Pyi Taw Command Maj-Gen Saw Than Hlaing and Director of Artillery Corps Maj-Gen Thet Aung cut the ribbon to open the ceremony to mark the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary (Diamond Jubilee) Artillery Corps Day.

The Senior General pressed the button to unveil a signboard to mark the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary (Diamond Jubilee) Artillery Corps Day ceremony.

Speaking on the occasion, the Senior General praised members of the Artillery Corps, saying that starting from

the Insein battle in 1949 to date, he took pride in the utmost efforts of the Artillery Corps in serving duties in accord with its mission “to explode in necessary sites with necessary number of shells at necessary time”.

He highlighted that members of the Artillery Corps actively participate in welfare tasks of Tatmadaw, search and rescue operations in natural disasters such as Storm Nargis in 2008 and Storm Mocha in 2023, and ordinary military assignments.

**SEE PAGE-3**

Authentic taste of tea, enjoy

# SHWE PHE OO

Sales Department- Ph-09 30881855, 09 420219438  
 STARSMART nine mile Showroom- (9)mile, Pyay Road, Yangon. Ph-09 30660160  
 KHA YAE PIN MART - Mingalarstone, Pyay Road, Yangon. Ph- 09 871443555  
 STARSMART MANDALAY Wholesale -Corner of 20<sup>th</sup> and 66<sup>th</sup> road, Mandalay Ph-09 681703244  
 STARSMART Nay Pyi Taw Yangon- Mandalay Highway Road, Year Gaurk Ward, Pymmarat Ph- 09 685119377

Best Practices Award

# NATIONAL

## National Objectives of 77<sup>th</sup> Union Day 2024

- To protect the perpetuity of the Union by the entire ethnic people through the Union spirit
- To join hands in harmony with the government, Tatmadaw, and the entire people to ensure the state stability and the rule of law
- To promote all-inclusive livestock breeding-based manufacturing industries and MSMEs, ensuring the socioeconomic development of the entire ethnic people
- To make collaborative efforts of all ethnic nationals to ensure the prosperity of the nation and food security which are the two national visions
- To strive to emerge a modern and developing country, as well as a Union based on democratic and federal systems, by all ethnic nationals

## Mottos of 77<sup>th</sup> Union Day 2024

1. Unity is strength  
Power of Union
2. Drifting in one boat, on the same voyage we float  
Ethnic brethren of the land joining hand in hand
3. Marching towards with unity  
Ensuring the destination of the Union
4. Let's firmly join hands among ethnic national brethren  
of the Union
5. Let's go forward with unity of the ethnic nationals



## Yangon to host 2-day Sino-Myanmar Family Spring Festival for Chinese New Year

THE Chinese Culture Centre Yangon has invited the public for free participation in the Chinese Lunar New Year Festival, themed “Let’s spend Chinese-Myanmar Family Spring Festival Together”, which will be held over two days in Yangon.

The event will be held at the Chinese Culture Centre Yangon in Minye Kyawswa Street, Ahl-on Township, Yangon Region, from 10 am to 4 pm on 5 and 6 February.

Visitors can enjoy a photo exhibition on “Flavour of Chinese New Year Festival”, short video clips on “Spring is Coming”, and self-made experiences of Chinese intangible cultural heritage such as tie-dyeing and paper-cutting.

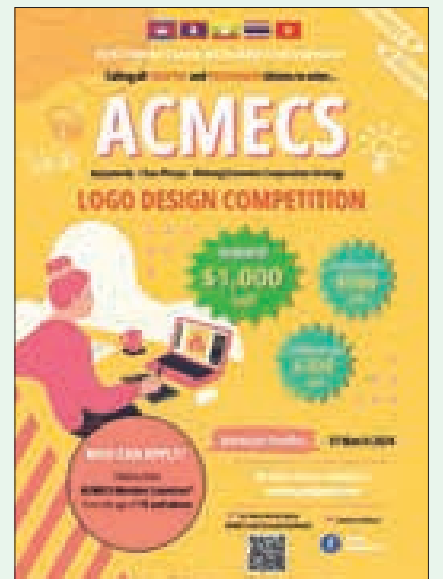
Guests will also be able to taste traditional Chinese delicacies like dumplings and cross-bridge rice noodles, while those interested will be able to try on ancient Chinese costumes.

Moreover, the festival will feature traditional entertainment such as lantern riddle guessing, shuttlecock kicking, and pitch pot games.

The Chinese Ministry of Culture and Tourism will hold the Chinese New Year Culture and Tourism Campaign from 18 January to 11 March, and the Happy New Year Festival section of the campaign will include nearly 500 cultural exchange events in various forms in more than 100 nations and regions, including Myanmar. — Htet Oo Maung/ZN

## ACMECS Logo Design Competition Seeks Creative Citizens

1. Thailand’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs will lead the Logo Design competition for the Ayeyawady-Chao Phraya-Mekong Economic Cooperation Strategy (ACMECS). The awards will be 1,000 US dollars for the first prize, 500 US dollars for the second prize and 300 US dollars for the third prize.
2. Myanmar citizens aged 15 and above can participate in the competition individually or in groups. The Theme of Logo Design is “ACMECS as an adaptive and forward-looking sub-regional cooperation framework and connector with other sub-regional and regional frameworks towards a prosperous and sustainable Mekong Sub-Region”. The application forms can be submitted to acmeecs.sec@gmail.com of ACMECS Interim Secretariat from 1 February to 31 March.
3. The terms and conditions and technological information for those competing in the ACMECS Logo Design competition are as follows: -
  - (a) The contestant must be the designer of Logo Design. The Logo Design must be original. It must not include any dispute/objection. It must not infringe the intellectual property rights of the third party.
  - (b) The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and ACMECS Interim Secretariat are not responsible for any disputes that occur with other external organizations regarding the breaching of copyrights and intellectual property rights of Logo Design.
  - (c) The award-winning Logo Design is the intellectual property of the ACMECS Interim Secretariat, and the winner will not get further benefits for the Logo Design after receiving the prize.
  - (d) Contestants must submit logo designs in JPEG, PNG, or PDF formats. The logo must be high resolution and at least 300 DPI.
  - (e) The selected contestants must submit the logo design with a specification sheet, final design, theme synopsis and concept, and open file format that can remodify the logo design.
4. The contestants will be reviewed as follows: -
  - (a) ACMECS Interim Secretariat will accept the applications, and the award-selecting team of ACMECS countries representatives will analyze and select.
  - (b) The applications will be judged based on innovation, design, structure, technology quality, simplicity, arts, visuals and appropriateness with the Theme of Logo Design.
  - (c) ACMECS Interim Secretariat will not use applications that do not conform to the requirements. If some legal cases occur regarding the competition, application and winners, the processes will go under the judiciary of Thailand.
5. The application form, terms and conditions and detailed information are available at <https://shorturl.at/zAJOW> and attached QR Code starting from 1 February 2024.



ဆောင်းစာ မှာယူလိုပါက ဆက်သွယ်နိုင်ပါတယ်

09 454 237 515



# NATIONAL

## SG unveils Diamond Jubilee Artillery Corps Day



Chairman of the State Administration Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing presses the button to unveil the signboard of the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary (Diamond Jubilee) Artillery Corps Day ceremony on 3 February 2024.

### FROM PAGE-1

Moreover, he noted that they show off brilliant skills and performances in assaulting terrorists who commit all sabotage in the country in the time of the government of the State Administration Council, and he recognizes the readiness of the Artillery Corps to fight.

The Senior General continued to say that the Artillery Corps has been equipped with

modern artilleries, ammunition, and necessary accessories in order to keep abreast of the international artillery community, whereas outstanding members are sent abroad to learn advanced technologies.

Training courses are conducted to share knowledge and experiences from foreign training courses with officers and other ranks of the corps in order to accumulate ad-

vanced knowledge and techniques.

The Senior General recounted that the artillery corps could successfully participate in combined military exercises with the army, air force, and armoured forces.

In conclusion, the Senior General urged members of the artillery corps to hand over fine traditions to new generations.

The Artillery Corps direc-

tor clarified the corps's brief history and presented a commemorative gift to the Senior General.

The Senior General cordially greeted retired senior artillery officers who attended the ceremony and visited the exhibition to mark the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary (Diamond Jubilee) Artillery Corps Day ceremony.

The Senior General had lunch together with attendees

in honour of Artillery Day.

Also present at the ceremony were Commander-in-Chief (Navy) Vice-Admiral Zwe Win Myint, Commander-in-Chief (Air) General Tun Aung, senior military officers from the Office of the Commander-in-Chief, Union-level dignitaries, the commander of Nay Pyi Taw Command, retired senior artillery officers and officials. — MNA/TTA



Yangon City Development Committee Chairman Mayor U Bo Htay and party inspect development projects in the University of West Yangon compound, Htantabin Township on 2 February 2024.

## Yangon mayor inspects development projects in Hlinethaya township

YANGON Region Minister for Development Affairs and Yangon City Development Committee Chairman Mayor U Bo Htay and party inspected development projects and provided necessary support in Hlinethaya Township on 2 February.

The mayor inspected the completion of a 665-foot by 110-foot by 8-foot lake in the University of West Yangon compound in Htantabin Township. Additionally, he observed the land modifications between the No 2 Chancellor Road and Sagawa Hall, landscaping efforts by the Department of Parks and Playgrounds, to enhance the lake's surrounding scenery, excavation of two tube-wells, and installation of solar panels for three decorative fountains.

He then proceeded to oversee the mechanized dredging of a new drains within the university compound, cultivation of pigs and fish at the Hteinbin landfill site, summer paddy farming across 60 acres of land, and ongoing expansion of the Yangon-Pathein highway in front of Bayintnaung Park at the intersection of the Yangon-Pathein and Yangon-Nyaungdon highways in Ward 7, Hlinethaya (East) Township. Additionally, he supervised the construction of a parking lot and expansion efforts at Bayintnaung Park.

During his inspections, he urged relevant officials to ensure the timely completion of all tasks and to strive to meet the targeted yield in paddy farming. — MNA/NT



## Vice-Senior General Soe Win honours 2023 Myanmar Academy Awards Ceremony

State Administration Council Vice-Chairman Deputy Prime Minister Vice-Senior General Soe Win attended yesterday's 2023 Myanmar Academy Awards Ceremony at the Myanmar International Convention Centre I (MICC I), Nay Pyi Taw.

The Vice-Senior General and wife first observed the photos of past Academy Award recipients, records of film awards from 1952 to 2022, and outstanding artistes and technicians displayed at the entrance to the Jade Hall of MICC I.

The artistes from the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture and Forever Group then performed the six significant movies from the beginning of the Myanmar movie industry to date, and the activities of handing over the arts through history holding Academy statues.

After the opening procedures of the ceremony, the Vice-Senior General made an opening speech.

He first expressed his delight and pride for having a chance to honour the great artistes on this auspicious occasion, saying the world film industry emerged in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, whereas Myanmar motion pictures appeared in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, so it can be said that the early period of Myanmar motion picture can keep up-to-date with the world.

The first Myanmar movie, "Metta and Athura", screened at the cinema in 1920, was created by a Myanmar author and a Myanmar scriptwriter, and Myanmar actors and actresses starred in it. It is the actual Myanmar film that depicts the living style of Myanmar people. Therefore, it should pay respect to those who created and were involved in that movie.

When looking back at the history of Myanmar film, the artistes made efforts to create various movies that shared the knowledge and experiences with the Myanmar people despite the challenges. In other words, they tried to develop together with the international film industry over 100 years, from silent films



Captivating Moments: Academy awardees cherishing their golden statues at yesterday's grand event in Nay Pyi Taw.

to talkies, black-and-white to colour, and fullscreen to widescreen.

Moreover, the artistes reflect the country's essential role and real situation, including people's living styles, through artworks from the colonial era to silver, gold, diamond jubilees, and centenary celebrations.

He also urged all from the movie industry to serve the interest of the nation and people, utilizing the soft power of the arts.

He then highlighted the participation of artistes from movie, music, theatrical industries and comedian associations in assisting the victims of Mocha that occurred in Sittway and its vicinity areas of Rakhine State on 14 May 2023, saying that the government appreciated their efforts as they implemented the motto of

Myanmar Motion Pictures Organization "Movie is for People".

He continued that the artistes from literature, movie, music and theatrical industries should know the priority while comparing personal affairs, organizational affairs and State affairs. Nowadays, the government sets two national visions: the prosperity of the State and food security. Food security is essential for the prosperity of the State, and promoting the manufacturing of marketable agriculture and livestock-based export products can improve the people's socioeconomic status. Therefore, the Prime Minister leads the Central Committee on Development of Micro-, Small- and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSMEs) and cooperates with the relevant working group and subgroup officials to accelerate the work plans.

Moreover, regional stability, the rule of law, and socioeconomic development are essential, so every citizen should create the country's future based on patriotism and nationalism.

He also stated the role of artistes as a cultural house containing tangible and intangible culture that stimulates the public, reflecting the ability of a nation and a human society. He described it as a bridge for cultural exchange for having colossal power that can change the mindset of the people.

He continued that the messages conveyed by the arts have substantially positive and negative impacts on a nation and race. Therefore, it plays a crucial role in expressing the values of culture.





## Lifetime Awards for Motion Pictures Achievement for 2023

LIFETIME Awards for Motion Pictures Achievement for 2023 went to Director Sithu U Aung Myint Myat, Actress Sithu Daw Nwet Nwet San and Director Alinka Kyawswa Pachi Soe Moe. Union Minister for Information U Maung Maung Ohn announced the awards. State Administration Council Vice-Chairman Deputy Prime Minister Vice-Senior General Soe Win and his wife Daw Than Than Nwe presented awards to the recipients. – Htun Htun

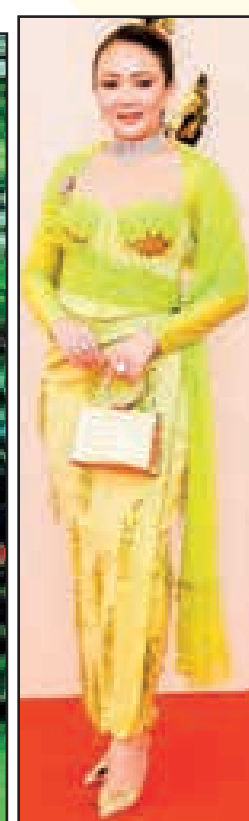
## Artistes to Academy Event receive gold brooch

THE government bears the cost of gold stars of Academy Awards and gold brooch to present to the artistes at the 2023 Myanmar Academy Awards Ceremony.



## Iconic fashion moments at Academy Event

THESE are the collections of iconic fashion moments of artistes to the 2023 Myanmar Academy Awards Ceremony.



# NATIONAL



Eye patients waiting for their turns to undergo treatments.

## Sitagu Cakkhudana Eye Hospital provides surgeries for 1,600 patients

THE Sitagu Cakkhudana Eye Hospital (Yangon) in Dagon Myothit (North) Township is providing eye surgical treatments to 350 patients per day in the hospital's fourth-time donation programme to treat 1,600 eye patients between 2 and 8 February.

Under the Sitagu Sayadaw's ambitious Sitagu Cakkhudana programme, 522,730 eye patients and

100,854 eye surgical patients were treated between January 1993 and December 2019. Sitagu Sayadaw has established 37 hospitals, and more hospitals are under construction in Sagaing Region's Pale, Khamti, and Indaw Townships, Palaw and Myeik Townships in Taninthayi Region, as well as Kume in Mandalay Region. — TWA/ TMT

## MADB supports 46 farmers with K3,116.65 mln this FY

A total of K3,116.65 million has been disbursed to 46 farmers in 17 townships of seven regions/states during this financial year, the Deputy Minister for Planning and Finance said in a meeting of the agriculture and rural development two-step loan project steering committee held on 1 February.

The Deputy Minister also highlighted the ministry's directives to the headquarters and regional offices of the Myanmar Agricultural Development Bank (MADB) to collaborate with relevant agencies and state/regional governments to ensure the success of

projects, as well as to conduct ongoing evaluation and monitoring of the loans. The companies that are selling farm equipment in the loan programmes are also directed to abide by the guidelines.

For the short term of three years and the long term of five years, individual farmers have received low-interest loans up to K70 million. With the availability of a five-year repayment by instalments plan, 5,703 farmers in 187 townships from 14 regions/states, including Nay Pyi Taw Union Territory, have received loans totalling K238,425.178 million. — TWA/ MKKS



The photo shows a farmer transplanted monsoon paddy saplings last year.

## Vice-Senior General Soe Win honours 2023 Myanmar Academy Awards Ceremony

### FROM PAGE-4

Therefore, the artistes should work with the government to develop the country and people, possessing patriotism and nationalism and the State's peace, unity and progress.

He added that 35 movies were screened in 2023, and the outstanding artistes will be selected for Academy Awards. It can be said the COVID-hit film industry almost return to normal in 2023.

The government also assists in developing the literature, movie, music and theatrical industries, so the artistes should try hard to focus on the State's development, patriotism, raising knowledge of people and achieving State objectives in addition to entertainment purposes.

Currently, the government serves the appropriate duties based on the country's situation. So, all the citizens should understand that non-disintegration of the Union, non-disintegration of the national solidarity and perpetuation of sovereignty are the most essential things and the most

suitable national goal, national objective and national task.

The Vice-Senior General also mentioned the various ways and strategies of powerful countries in influencing small countries in the post-Cold War era, using words like human rights and democracy, standing with the powerful countries and putting pressure and posing a threat to small countries today.

He also urged the artistes to have national awareness and national conscience. In contrast, those who lack national awareness rely on the assistance of other countries and act as stooges, committing destructive activities to topple stability and accelerate the conflicts.

He then called on the artistes to serve the country's and people's interests with the right consideration.

Chairman of MMPO Academy Kyi Soe Tun expressed his pleasure.

Academy Swe Zin Htike presented the Myanmar Academy Fashion Awards to Academy Khant Sithu, Academy Khin

Thida Tun, Henry San and Actress Ei Chaw Po respectively.

The master of ceremonies explained the assessment and selection of academy awards for 2023.

Union Minister for Information U Maung Maung Ohn announced the 2023 National Lifetime Award for Motion Pictures Achievement.

The Vice-Senior General and wife presented the 2023 National Lifetime Award for Motion Pictures Achievement to director Aung Myint Myat, Academy Nwet Nwet San, and Academy director Pachi Soe Moe, who said thanks.

The film artistic and fine arts awards were then announced. The best cinematography award went to Win Lwin Htet, the best film music award to Kaung Hset Paing (Gita Myo), the best film script award to Academy director Nyo Min Lwin, the best film award to Khittiya Film Industry, the best film director award to Tin Aung San (Pan Myo Daw), the best supporting actress award to May Myint

Mo, the best supporting award to Nay Win, the best actress award to Soe Myat Thuza and the best actor award to Yan Aung.

Union Minister for Information U Maung Maung Ohn and veteran Academy award winners and artistes presented Academy gold statues to the winners who spoke words of thanks.

The Vice-Senior General presented Academy gold statues to the best actor and actress award winners and cordially greeted technicians and artistes from the motion pictures, literary, theatrical and musical arenas.

The Academy Awards were presented to the most outstanding artistes and technicians from 35 movies in 2023. The Academy awarding ceremony has been held from 1952 to date. Since 1994, 11 outstanding awards have been given to winners. The silver star from the statue has been changed with two-tical gold star since 1993, and it was changed again with a five-tical star starting in 2017. — MNA/ TTA/KTZH



## Myanmar brings in over 50,000 tonnes of palm oil in Jan

APPROXIMATELY 53,000 tonnes of palm oil were imported in January 2024.

The average prices for palm oil worldwide stood at US\$830 per tonne on 5 January, \$885 on 24 January, \$860 on 31 January and \$852.5 per tonne on 2 February.

The wholesale reference rate of palm oil for the Yangon market was K4,955 per viss on 1 January and K5,380 on 29 January, whereas the retail price was around K5,800 per viss.



The photo shows imported jerry cans of palm oil at the warehouse in Yangon.

The wholesale reference price has remained unchanged at K4,955 per viss for three weeks from 25 December to 14 January 2023. The week ending 4 February 2023's reference rate was higher at K5,380 per viss.

There is only a small price gap between the palm oil market price and the wholesale reference price as the demand for palm oil falters in winter. Meanwhile, the peanut oil price hit K13,000 per viss, and the sesame oil fetched K12,000 per viss.

The annual edible oil consumption is estimated at 1 million tonnes. Around 800,000 tonnes of palm oil have been imported per year since 2020. The palm oil price surged to around K9,000 per viss in August 2022 and 2023. The market sees only a tiny price difference at present.

A consumer emphasized that a high inflow of palm oil can reduce the price in the domestic market depending on the distribution system. — TWA/KK

## Foreign demand weighs on pigeon pea price

THE price of pigeon peas bounced back to K3.94 million per tonne on 3 February from K3.83 million per tonne on 1 February. Foreign demand drove the price rebound.

The figures showed a two-day rise of over K100,000 per tonne.

Similarly, the foreign demand surge pushed the pigeon pea price to a record high of K4.15 million per tonne on 8 September 2023.

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

India has growing consumption requirements for black gram and pigeon peas. According to a Memorandum of Understand-

ing between Myanmar and India signed on 18 June 2021, India will import 250,000 tonnes of black gram and 100,000 tonnes of pigeon peas (tur) from Myanmar for five consecutive years from 2021-2022 financial year to 2025-2026 FY. This G-to-G pact will not affect the pulses' annual quota set by India. Myanmar's exporters are entitled to deliver the pulses to India under that yearly quota.

Myanmar conveyed 1.277 million tonnes of various pulses worth exceeding US\$1 billion over the past nine months of the current financial year 2023-2024 beginning 1 April, the Ministry of Commerce stated.

Myanmar bagged \$1.47 billion from 1.9 million tonnes of pulses exports last FY 2022-2023, the Ministry of Commerce's statistics showed. — NN/EM



Pigeon pea plants bearing ripening pods.

## CBM injects US\$18 mln, 50 mln Thai baht into financial market in two days



The office building of the Central Bank of Myanmar in Yangon.

THE Central Bank of Myanmar (CBM) pumped US\$18 million and 50 million Thai baht into the financial market in two days.

The CBM sold \$13 million on 1 February in the forex market and five million dol-

lars and 50 million baht on an online trading platform for the exporters and importers on 2 February.

CBM concealed the exchange rate for those transactions from the public. The reference exchange rate set by

the CBM is K2,100 against a US dollar, while it was exchanged around K3,550 at the over-the-counter market. A baht is valued at K101 at present.

CBM sold \$68.33 million, 313.5 million baht and 4.2 million Chinese yuan in January 2024. Last December, it also injected \$22.15 million into the fuel oil sector. CBM allowed authorized dealers (private banks) to operate online forex trading freely as per the exchange rate determined by the market forces depending on supply and demand dynamics.

Moreover, outward remittance procedures must comply with rules and regulations of the Foreign Exchange Supervisory Committee. — NN/EM

## Pure gold dips to K3.8 mln per tical

PURE gold price slumped to K3.81 million per tical (0.578 ounce or 0.016 kilogramme) in the unauthorized market after it hit almost K3.9 million per tical on 31 January.

The Yangon Gold Entrepreneurs Association set the reference price at K3.672 million per tical, showing a price difference of over K130,000 per tical between the YGEA's price and the actual market value.

Earlier, the YGEA used the interbank transaction rate

set by the CBM in calculating the reference price for pure gold, indicating a big gap of K400,000-K500,000 per tical.

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

The kyat-US dollar exchange rate is currently around K3,550 at the over-the-

counter market. When the kyat weakened to K4,000 against the greenback in the forex market, the gold price peaked at K4 million per tical in late August 2023. — NN/EM



Some pure gold seen in the market.



# OPINION

# ARTICLE POEM/BOOKRACK

## Initiate a fraternal society for enjoying peace and prosperity

**P**ROMOTING a fraternal society for the enjoyment of peace and prosperity necessitates universal recognition and respect for diverse cultures, religions, and beliefs. Tolerance, encompassing societal acceptance and respect for religious and cultural diversity, is crucial, extending to the freedom of religious expression.

To foster fraternity in society, individuals must embrace the principle of forgiving others' mistakes, spreading loving-kindness, and eliminating hostility while fostering amicable connections with all members. Everyone needs to shift their mindsets, rejecting discrimination based on factors such as language, nationality, skin colour, lifestyle, qualifications, designations, and lineages.

Education, especially within schools, should play a significant role in promoting tolerance and eradicating discrimination based on religion or belief. Acknowledging the values of tolerance, pluralistic traditions, mutual respect, and the diversity of faiths and beliefs is essential for nurturing human fraternity.

Religions and political systems, unfortunately, can incite hatred within society, leading to disadvantages when fraternity is elusive due to religious and political issues. These challenges may manifest as physical and mental traumas in the minds of individuals from affected societies. It is imperative to proactively prevent misunderstandings and undesirable hostilities by fostering the dispersal of loving-kindness through empathy and compassion.

Everybody is responsible for initiating fraternity among the people. Only when they can forge a fraternity of humans can they enjoy the fruits of peace and prosperity, dedicating themselves to ending conflicts in all arenas. Individuals must not abuse their capabilities and strengths in conflicts and hostilities but must apply their abilities to improve society and themselves. If so, they can see a fraternal society they have been awaiting in successive eras.

Grasping tolerance in problem-solving and upholding fraternity within society is imperative. Encouraging activities that promote interreligious and intercultural dialogue becomes essential to enhance global, regional, national, and local levels of peace, social stability, respect for diversity, and mutual understanding.

The UN General Assembly declared 4 February the International Day of Human Fraternity. The aim is to address global issues by promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, without distinctions based on race, sex, language, or religion.

It is a collective responsibility for everyone to initiate fraternity within society. True enjoyment of the fruits of peace and prosperity comes when individuals forge unity, dedicating themselves to resolving conflicts across all arenas. Individuals should channel their strengths towards societal improvement instead of utilizing their capabilities in conflicts and hostilities. This approach ensures the realization of a fraternal society eagerly anticipated throughout successive eras.

Everybody is responsible for initiating fraternity among the people. Only when they can forge a fraternity of humans can they enjoy the fruits of peace and prosperity, dedicating themselves to ending conflicts in all arenas. Individuals must not abuse their capabilities and strengths in conflicts and hostilities but must apply their abilities to improve society and themselves. If so, they can see a fraternal society they have been awaiting in successive eras.

## Time

Chit Ko Pe



A journey remains and keeps going together exploring more and extending afar.

A journey remains but dropped and left behind vanishing from the track and outing line.

Those on a journey are "living" in kind. Those off a journey are "the deceased" in exile.

Noted duly are their existence and exit. Liable to move on, this is it!



ချစ်ကိုပေ

သူခေါ်သွားရာ၊ မကျန်ခဲ့ဘဲ ရှေ့မှာမှောက်လျက် ခရီးဆက်၏။

သူခေါ်သွားရာ၊ လိုက်မပါနိုင် နောက်မှာကွယ်လွန်း ခရီးဆုံး၏။

ခရီးဆက်သူ "နေသူ"တည်း၊ ခရီးပျက်သူ "သေသူ"တည်း၊ ကမ္ဘာတစ်ရာ ပြုမုန်စွာ ခရီးနှင့်မှာ သူ့ဝန်တော။

## IN THE TWILIGHT OF LIFE

By Maung Swe Ngae



❖ Age is full of care ...  
❖ Age like winter weather ...  
Age like winter bare ...  
Age is weak and cold ...  
William Shakespeare said so years ago.

Shouldn't be denied even a little amenity.

❖ Morning, noon and evening of life I have struggled with all the might As I've walked a thorny way Getting old, infirm and frail today.

❖ Not want to be in a desperate plight Before my exit from this life Craving for my offspring's filial duty For the last leg of life's journey.

❖ Though want to be in a cheerful mood Present days are, for me, to brood As I passed through a day's journey I'm now feeling weary with drudgery.

❖ Do not care who'll show sympathy Had better go on retreat at the monastery Do things best, whatever it may be Younger days never come back to me.

Note: - The first four-line stanza is extracted from the poem 'A Madrigal' by English playwright and poet William Shakespeare (1564-1616).

## Sunday poem

By Nway Thin Naing , Translated by Myint Zan

Under the weather which does not synchronize with the designation as (the cold) season this Sunday, the day having not seen nor discern the cold season: forcing to get out of the overhanging clouds Is engaging in pondering thoughts?

## တနင်္ဂနွေ ကဗျာ

ခေါင်းစဉ်နဲ့စာကိုယ် မကိုက်ညီတဲ့ ရာသီဥတု အောက်မှာ သည်နေ့ တနင်္ဂနွေ ဟာ သူ့ ဆောင်းရာသီကို မမြင် မတွေ့ရတဲ့အတွက် အဖွင့်ခန်းမိုးသားတွေလက်ထဲက အတင်းရုန်းထွက်ရင်း စဉ်းစားခန်း ဝင်နေလေရောသလားကွယ်။။



နွေသင်နိုင် ၂၈ ဇန်နဝါရီ ၂၀၂၄

Letter to the Editor, The Global New Light of Myanmar, Yangon

## The Ocean May Go Dry

The superpowers in the West Claimed the guardian of freedom, Liberty, democracy, and justice The protector of world peace And the human rights! How can it be true When their own people lie flat As homeless on the street?

But have no mercy! Nor hear their cry For the world peace!

They waste their wealth Without feeding the poor Who suffer hunger and thirst Cold winter and hot summer

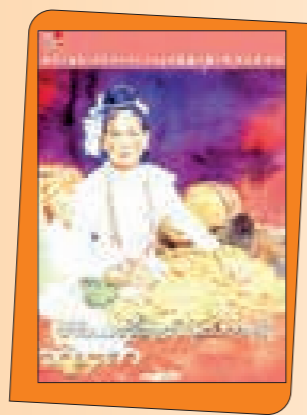
They make various weapons They wage bloody wars To kill innocent peoples How can they boast that They are the saviour of The World Peace?

They are as rich as King Solomon

Any war-mongering state Is the terrible terrorist That would toss a nuke-bomb To evaporate the oceans dry!



Hanthawady Thar



Book Title - Tein Yan Eikmet Moe Htet Nari  
Writer - Hsu Hnget  
Publishing House - Linn Lun Khin  
Publication Date - January 2024 (4<sup>th</sup> Edition)  
Price - K12,000

## Tein Yan Eikmet Moe Htet Nari

THE writer of this book under review won the National Literary Award in the novel genre in 2007 for writing this book titled "Tein Yan Eikmet Moe Htet Nari". In the same year, he also won the Shwe Ahmyutae Literary Award. To our surprise, this is the one and only novel he has ever written. He is known as Hsu Hnget.

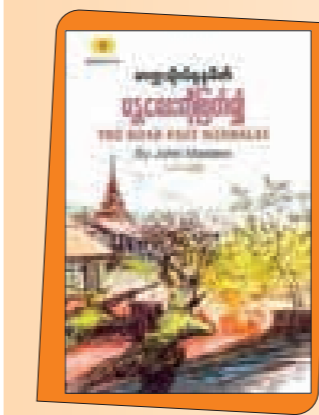
This book is believed to make the readers remember the music, the theatre and the traditional scenes of the City of Mandalay in the post-World War era. This is the love story of Maung Thauung Nyan and Ma May May Oo from the Myoma Musical Troupe of Mandalay, which was and is still quite famous in Myanmar. Their love story has been composed of

songs, music, lyrics, and sweet melody. Their love affairs made them bearable to withstand the sorrows and woes of the Second World War. The city of Mandalay was a sight for sore eyes. The readers will be nostalgic, seeing in their mind's eyes the ruins and the remains of the royal city of Mandalay: the fire-ravaged wards near the Central Railway Station, the flattened apartments, and the mansions. Darkness reigned over the whole city, which had been vividly illuminated previously. The readers will be aware of the difficulty in rehabilitation, the power of resilience of Myanmar and the great tradition of the royal city of Mandalay. Additionally, the readers

will envy the musicians of Mandalay who have mixed Myanmar traditional music with that of the West in an appropriate manner. A proper mixture or combination of Myanmar music and Western music has been able to attract the Myanmar audience. True to the novel's musical storyline, the readers can read the verses and the lyrics of Maha Gita (The Great Classic) in this novel, such as Myit Min Ayar Khway Gar Waing Loe Sagaing Aung Char Myay (River Ayeyawady meandering Sagaing, the land of victory; Yay Hlaing Galay Dway Thwin Thwin Myoo Dawt ... (the water waves riding high and low); Shwedaung Oo Maw Shu Hnyaw Khin Nai Myitwin Than-

thar Bay Ngwe Yang Phyoo Gar Nay (the landscape of Shwedaung Oo Maw and the beautiful silvery river); Hinthazayaw Kyin Phaw Twe Loe (a couple of water birds swimming gracefully).

Hsu Hnget was able to compose the story using the beautiful lyrics from the songs famous in those days in an appropriate way to attract the audience. He has also revealed the background story of the songs titled "Sagaing Taung (Hill Sagaing) and "Tone Kyaw Ma". The song called Sagaing Hill or Mount Sagaing was composed by Saya Myoma Nyein, whereas the song titled "Tone Kyaw Ma" was composed by Nandaw Shay Saya Tin. What makes his novel vibrant is that the characters and cast in it are not imaginary persons; they are real people in the outside world. The novel is, in fact, about the history of Myoma Musical Troupe, which was founded in 1925. This edition of the book under review coincides with the 99th anniversary of the foundation of Myoma Musical Troupe, heralding the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary. This novel was first published in 2007, the second edition in October 2016, and the third edition in 2020 by Linn Lun Khin. This is the fourth edition to answer the readers' call.



Book Title - Mandalay Go Phyat Yway  
Translator - Tekkatho Nanda Meik  
Publishing House - Ah-Hmwa Nyi Naung  
Publication Date - January 2024 [3<sup>rd</sup> Edition]  
Price - K8,500

## Mandalay Go Phyat Yway (The Road Past Mandalay by John Masters)

THE book under review this week is not a novel. The story is based chiefly on the events that have taken place in Mandalay. This book is somewhat like a historical record. The experiences encountered during World War the Second are recorded. This being so, this is a true story. In fact, this is an exciting record of the anti-fascist struggle launched by the Burmese Revolutionary Forces led by General Aung San in cooperation with the British Allied Forces. Burmese Armed Forces were able to drive the Japanese out of the land of Myanmar. This book was written by

John Masters and translated by Sayagyi Tekkatho Nada Meik. John Masters is a British soldier, so readers are encouraged to read this book critically, keeping in mind that the British would be reluctant to heap praise on Myanmar on whom they look down. Sayagyi Thar Ga Doe provided the foreword for this book. In his preface, he writes that the patriotic, revolutionary forces were faced with dramatic hardship in fighting the Japanese troops in cooperation with the British allied forces, that the British did not want to give the Burmese soldiers their due places, that

the British people were reluctant to appreciate the victory of the Burmese patriotic forces and that even General Aung San has once disclosed in the newspapers including the London Times that the role of the patriotic forces was downplayed. In fact, the Burmese armed forces led by the patriots were able to drive out the Japanese soldiers from the land of Myanmar. The Japanese soldiers suffered a considerable loss. The Japanese prisoners of war numbered about three hundred. Even the British Generals have praised the Burmese army. Despite their

verbal appreciation, the Burmese armed forces' victory and combat skills have never been recorded in writing. The swift occupation of the Upper Burma, including the city of Mandalay, can be attributed to the combat skills and the strategy of Col Ba Htoo from the Burmese Army, said No 14<sup>th</sup> Brigade Commander Sir William. He said this over the radio, but he has never praised Col Ba Htoo in writing. This is why I said above that readers need to read a book written by a British soldier critically. Our readers ought to read between the lines to understand the underlying meaning. Only then will they be able to see how brilliant our Burmese patriot forces have been, how great the military strategies our ancestors were possessed with and how noble the patriotic spirit of our Burmese soldiers, who have sacrificed their lives and limbs in their fight against the fascist Japanese soldiers? It is undeniable that this book is highly worth reading, so it is worth being placed on your bookshelf. This book was first published in 1965, and the second edition came out in 2006 thanks to Ah-Hmwa Nyi Naung Publishing House. The third edition of this book under review was published in January 2024.



# NATIONAL

## DSRB terrorists with 107 MM rockets arrested in time

PDF terrorists and other related terrorist groups under the NUG and CRPH terrorist groups are committing terrorist acts in various ways, such as killing innocent citizens, including government servants, burning public buildings and bombing to destroy the government mechanism and the nation's peace and tranquillity by causing fear amongst the public.

Dark Side Revolution Burma (DSRB), under NUG terrorists, was planning to attack with the 107 MM rockets to the crowded areas of Bago town on 3 February when a lot of people would enjoy the Myanmar Academy Awards Ceremony 2023 at night. However, according to the tip-off by informants who do not want violent actions, authorities arrested the members of Dark Side Revolution Burma (DSRB) Htet Naung Naung (aka) Naung Naung,

Aung Naing Myo, Kyaw Kyaw, Hla Oo, Kaythi and U Sobhana (aka) Thar Kyaw Htay on an RLG-4563 Nissan March vehicle together with ten 107 MM rockets and ten detonators made by KIA at the junction of Bago-Thantepin road near

the Kamanatkha village, Bago Region on 2 February.

In the incident, five males and one female, were arrested with one 40 MM handmade grenade launcher and one handmade mine.

According to the detainees,



Photos show confiscated a Nissan vehicle driven by six members of Dark Side Revolution Burma (DSRB), and 10 107MM rockets.



Shine Wai (aka) RI of Dark Side Revolution Burma (DSRB) instructed them to attack the crowded areas of Bago, especially the restaurants and the tea shops, on the night of the Myanmar Academy Awards Ceremony 2023.

The arrested terrorists are facing actions according to the

laws. The authorities have informed the public of secretly passing the information of the terrorists to be able to arrest them as soon as possible. And the informants will be awarded. Authorities also requested the public to cooperate for the nation's peace and tranquillity. — MNA/TRKM

## Counter-argument to false information

### Fake news on 500-pound bomb attacks on Kawkareik Township

THE malicious media are intentionally spreading the misinformation on social media platforms claiming that a school in Mitan village near Kyaikdon Town of Kawkareik Township was shelled by three 500-pound bombs in an air strike, destroying school and residential houses on 1 February.

According to the on-ground information, no flights were reported on 1 February in Kawkareik Township. This means that Tatmadaw's air strike on Mitan village was a fabrication. However, malicious media that support terrorists are circulating misinformation on social sites. — MNA/TKO



Screenshot validates misinformation.

### Khit Thit media fabricates civilian fatality in Thingan-Nyinaung by Tatmadaw's heavy weapon

THE malicious Khit Thit media deliberately circulates fake news on social media that on 2 February, a child was killed and at least five others were wounded by the explosion of the heavy weapon shelled by the Tatmadaw in a section of Asia Highway between Thingan-Nyinaung tactical operations base and Ywathitgon Village in Myawady Township, Kayin State.

However, a security official responsible for the area confirmed no fire occurred in Thingan-Nyinaung military base and Ywathitgon Village on 2 February. On the contrary, the KNLA insurgents and PDF terrorists launched heavy weapons targeting the military

base security outposts, which actually landed in the villages and killed the civilians. The subversive media outlets are fabricating false news intentionally to decay the image of the Tatmadaw. — MNA/TMT



Screenshot validates false claims.

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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.

## TOP NEWS

### O'Neill to make history as N Ireland's first nationalist leader

MICHELLE O'Neill on Saturday becomes the first nationalist leader of Northern Ireland's government, when the assembly returns after the end of a two-year boycott by the biggest pro-UK party.

The Sinn Fein politician's nomination will be confirmed at a special sitting of the devolved legislature, which will also see the appointment of a deputy first minister and ministers.

Under the 1998 Good Friday or Belfast Agreement that ended three decades of sectarian violence over British rule in Northern Ireland, the first minister and deputy first minister posts are equal.

But the appointment of a Roman Catholic pro-Irish unity first minister in a nation set up as a Protestant-majority state under British rule is hugely symbolic.

It not only reflects Sinn Fein's position as Northern Ireland's biggest party but also shifting demographics, since the island of Ireland was split into two self-governing entities in 1921.

"Bear in mind, partition itself, the establishment of this state, was on the basis of creating an in-built and permanent unionist (pro-UK) majority," Sinn Fein president Mary Lou McDonald said this week.

"That day has gone," she said, adding that with O'Neill in Belfast, and potentially a Sinn Fein-led government in Dublin at the next election, it could drive "a new constitutional dispensation ending partition". — AFP

### Iraq condemns US strikes, calls it 'violation of sovereignty'

AFTER the US airstrikes targeting militia positions in both Iraq and Syria, the spokesman for the commander-in-chief of the Iraqi armed forces said these strikes come at a time when Iraq is "striving to ensure stability in the region", Al Jazeera reported, citing local outlet Iraqi News Agency (INA).

"These strikes constitute a violation of Iraqi sovereignty, an undermining of the efforts of the Iraqi government, and a threat that will drag Iraq and the region into undesirable consequences, the consequences of which will be dire for security and stability in Iraq and the region," INA quoted

the spokesman as saying.

Meanwhile, Syrian state media accused the "US aggression" for the attacks, which according to them targeted Syria's desert areas and those around the Syrian-Iraq border, resulting in a number of casualties, according to Al Jazeera. Last week, The Islamic Resistance in Iraq, a coalition encompassing militias like Kata'ib Hezbollah and Harakat al-Nujaba, asserted accountability for a drone strike. The attack resulted in the death of three US military personnel and left numerous others injured at a base in northeast Jordan, situated close to the Syrian border. — ANI



US army soldiers prepare to go out on patrol from a remote combat outpost on 25 May 2021 in northeastern Syria. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**



PM Modi emphasized the importance of international collaboration for justice delivery, acknowledging the need to work with other countries in ensuring justice. Glimpses of the new Parliament Building, in New Delhi. **PHOTO: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS**

### India modernizing laws to reflect present realities: PM Modi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi highlighted India's efforts to modernize its legal system by replacing outdated laws from colonial times, with three new legislations replacing century-old criminal laws.

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi has said India is modernizing its laws to reflect the present realities and that in the last few years, the country has done away with thousands of obsolete laws from colonial times.

"India is modernizing laws to reflect the present realities. Now, three new legisla-

tions have replaced more than 100-year-old colonial criminal laws," the Prime Minister said while addressing the inaugural event of CLEA -Commonwealth Attorneys and Solicitors General Conference 2024.

The PM said that India inherited a legal system from colonial times. "But in the last few years, we made a number

of reforms to it. For example, India has done away with thousands of obsolete laws from colonial times." The CLEA -Commonwealth Attorneys and Solicitors General Conference (CASGC) 2024 at the Vigyan Bhawan in New Delhi was also attended by Union Law Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal and CJI DY Chandrachud. — ANI

### Viet Nam National Tourism Authority announces digital boost

VIET Nam's Ministry of Culture, Sports, and Tourism's Viet Nam National Authority of Tourism (VNAT) has announced that the sector is actively pushing forward digital transformation via building a smart tourism ecosystem, a strategic move designed to improve state management and the overall tourist experience.

According to the Vietnam News Agency (VNA), key components of this ecosystem include platforms such as the Viet Nam travel management and business system, the Viet Nam Travel app, a smart tourism card, and notably, an electronic ticketing system. Most recently, the Viet Nam Museum of Fine



Tourists buy e-tickets at Viet Nam National Fine Arts Museum. **PHOTO: TOURISM INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

Arts has collaborated with the VNAT's Tourism Information Technology Centre to launch an electronic ticketing system. It eliminates the necessity for

visitors to queue at counters for ticket purchases, offering a streamlined experience with various user-friendly self-check-in options. — ANI



# ECONOMY WORLD

## Wind turbine workers harvesting power from the sea

In preparation for China's Spring Festival and seizing the final weather window, Wu Peng and Wang Chuan embark on a mission into the Yellow Sea to inspect the offshore wind turbines, also known as "big windmills".

CATCHING up with the final weather window before China's Spring Festival, Wu Peng and Wang Chuan set sail once again into the Yellow Sea, heading toward the cluster of towering offshore wind turbines known as the "big windmills".

These massive structures, also referred to as offshore wind turbine units, symbolize China's

position as a global leader in the renewable energy sector. With a focus on developing five major offshore wind power bases, the offshore wind farm in east China's coastal province of Shandong is where Wu and Wang carried out their duties as on-site operators for the clean energy giant, State Power Investment Corporation. Both 28 years old, Wu hails from



Staff members work at the painting workshop for hubs of wind turbine in Huimin County, east China's Shandong Province, 7 June 2022. **PHOTO: GUO XULEI/XINHUA**

northeast China's Jilin Province, while Wang comes from Qingdao, Shandong. Beyond their routine onshore duties, their most crucial task involves venturing out to inspect the "big windmills" during the brief period of calm winds.

The whims of the sea breeze, essential for the turbines' operation, often create turbulent waves that impede workers and vessels from heading offshore. Hence, days with less wind become the optimal window for offshore wind turbine inspection and maintenance. — Xinhua

## Japan to allow longer stays for digital nomads to boost consumption

Under the proposed plan, these workers can stay in Japan for up to six months, a significant increase from the current 90 days allowed under the short-term tourist visa.

JAPAN plans to enable foreign talent and remote workers, known as "digital nomads", to stay longer in the country under a new visa system in order to boost economic growth and consumption, the government said Friday.

Under the envisioned system, foreign digital nomads, who travel while working remotely for companies, will be able to reside in Japan for up to six months by obtaining the designated activities visa, a rise from the current 90 days allowed under the short-term tourist visa, according to the Immigration Services

Agency.

To be granted the visa, workers will have to meet certain conditions, including being a resident in one of the 49 visa-exempt countries and regions that have tax treaties with Japan and will be expected to have an annual income of more than 10 million yen (\$68,200). Their spouse and children will also be granted entry.

The government will solicit opinions from the public on the plan from Saturday, with an eye on introducing the system within fiscal 2023 ending March. — Kyodo



To qualify, individuals must meet conditions such as residency in one of the 49 visa-exempt countries with tax treaties, and an annual income exceeding 10 million yen (\$68,200). **PHOTO: KYODO**

## Global inflation progress "could be reversed" amid Red Sea tensions: IMF official

AN International Monetary Fund (IMF) official has warned that geopolitical tensions, especially with increased attacks on ships in the Red Sea, could spur global inflation again, reversing the hard-won progress.

"We had a positive surprise where growth went up and inflation came down. Part of that is because supply-side

issues improved, leading to reduced delivery times for goods," Daniel Leigh, who heads the World Economic Studies division in the IMF's Research Department, told Xinhua in a virtual interview Tuesday.

"But now the risk is that some of that could be overturned, and there could be

geopolitical shocks that slow down delivery times and make costs go up again," Leigh said.

Noting that 11 per cent of world trade passes through the Suez Canal, Leigh said that the IMF is concerned that the worsening situation in the Red Sea could increase shipping costs, as it has already done. — Xinhua



The Galaxy Leader cargo ship is surrounded by Houthi boats in the Red Sea in this photo released on 20 November 2023. **PHOTO: HOUTH MEDIA**

## US companies in China more upbeat about business environment, ties, survey says

US businesses in China are increasingly optimistic about China's business environment and bilateral relations, media reports said Thursday.

"Some 40 per cent of survey respondents were optimistic about their profit potential over the next two years, up

from 33 per cent a year earlier," Bloomberg reported, citing an annual China business climate survey released Thursday by the non-profit, non-governmental organization American Chamber of Commerce in China (AmCham China).

"And 44 per cent indicat-

ed they felt good about market growth, a slight uptick from a year ago," it added.

Meanwhile, around 19 per cent of survey respondents expressed confidence in China-US relations over the next two years, up from eight per cent a year ago, it said. — Xinhua

## Chile jobless rate hits 8.5% in Q4 2023

*The growth was attributed to the labour force expanding at a higher rate (3.6 per cent) than the increase in the number of employed individuals (2.9 per cent).*

UNEMPLOYMENT in Chile reached 8.5 per cent in the last quarter of 2023, an increase of 0.6 percentage points compared to the same period of 2022, the National Statistics Institute (INE) reported on Tuesday.

According to the National Employment Survey conducted by the INE, the increase was due

to the pool of labour growing at a higher rate (3.6 per cent) than the number of employed people (2.9 per cent).

The number of jobless grew by 11.6 per cent over 12 months, due to the rates of unemployed people (11.5 per cent) and those entering the workforce for the first time (12.9 per cent).



Workers work in a factory of Agricola Garces in Mostazal, Chile on 19 January 2018. **PHOTO: XU RUI/XINHUA/FILE**

By gender, the unemployment rate was 8.8 per cent among women and 8.2 per cent among men. In the case of informal

employment, the employment rate stood at 27.5 per cent, an increase of 0.1 percentage point in one year:

Employment in Chile has yet to bounce back to pre-pandemic levels, according to the INE report. — Xinhua

## UM consumer sentiment index soars in January

*For the second consecutive month, there was a broad consensus of higher sentiment across age, income, education and geography.*



Staff members install red lanterns inside Dallas' Galleria mall in Dallas, Texas, the United States, 31 January 2024. **PHOTO: DAN TIAN/XINHUA**

THE Consumer Sentiment Index released Friday by the University of Michigan (UM) Surveys of Consumers rose to 79.0 in the January 2024 survey, up from 69.7 in December and

above the 64.9 in January 2023.

The Current Index rose to 81.9, up from 73.3 in December and above last January's 68.5. The Expectations Index rose to 77.1, up from 67.4 in December and above the previous January's 62.6.

UM consumer sentiment soared 13 per cent in January to reach its highest level since July 2021, primarily on the basis of an improving outlook over inflation and personal incomes, according to UM Surveys of Consumers.

Over the last two months, sentiment has climbed a cumulative 29 per cent, the largest two-month increase since 1991. — Xinhua

## Meta, Amazon beat expectations with stellar results

META and Amazon on Thursday blew through expectations in their latest quarterly results as Big Tech continued to impress Wall Street.

Meta, the tech titan behind Facebook and Instagram, reported a profit of \$14 billion in the final

three months of last year, beating analyst forecasts as revenue climbed to \$40.1 billion in the quarter.

The company said Facebook's monthly users stood at 3.07 billion people, 20 years after the platform was founded by Mark

Zuckerberg in a Harvard dorm.

"We had a good quarter as our community and business continue to grow," Meta CEO Zuckerberg said in an earnings release.

Meta shares jumped more than 14 per cent to top \$445 in after-market trade. — AFP

## Shipper CMA CGM suspends Red Sea transit again

FRENCH maritime transporter CMA CGM has again suspended the transit by its vessels of the Red Sea, where Iran-backed Yemeni rebels have targeted numerous ships, a source told AFP on Friday.

The decision, taken on Friday, halts the use of the key transit route until further notice in order to "not take any risks" with its crews and vessels, said the source. The Huthi rebels, part of the anti-Western, anti-Israel "axis of resistance" of Iranian-backed groups, have been harassing Red Sea shipping for months, triggering US and British reprisal attacks. The Huthis say they are

targeting Israel and Israeli-linked vessels to push for a stop to the offensive in the Gaza Strip, where Israel is battling Hamas militants.

The attacks prompted many shipping companies, including CMA CGM, to avoid the Red Sea, a vital route that normally carries about 12 per cent of global maritime trade, for a period in December.

But the detour around southern Africa to avoid the Red Sea, which adds considerable cost and time, led many shippers to resume using the route, although many halted once again in January following a new spate of attacks. — AFP



Yemeni rebel attacks prompted many shipping companies, including CMA CGM, to avoid the Red Sea in December. **PHOTO: AFP**



# ROLLING UPDATES

## WORLD

## Scholz's ruling coalition braces for another budget crisis in 2025

*The recently approved 2024 budget may not provide relief for Europe's economy, and Chancellor Olaf Scholz's coalition must address the deficit issue, potentially requiring political consensus.*

GERMANY'S ruling coalition is not yet out of trouble after scraping through a vote to pass this year's budget. Challenging times lie ahead as the nation's 2025 spending plan faces a gaping €20 billion deficit, which must be reduced in line with the constitutional debt limit.

The Bundestag's hard-fought 2024 budget will most likely fall short of offering relief for Europe's economy.

The spending bill passed on Friday addresses last November's government debt crisis.

While it seems that Chancellor Olaf Scholz's fractious traffic light coalition has passed a difficult test, next year's budget poses a similar challenge with a €20 billion (\$21.7 billion) deficit remaining on the books, according to individuals acquainted with the calculations.

tions.

Closing the budget gap will need agreement between political parties. The problem stems partly from a constitutional court verdict to bar the coalition government from using COVID-19 funds.

The borrowing cap puts limits on the lavish spending commitments in the coalition's founding agreement. The country has been in a constitutional debt brake since 2020, thanks to the pandemic and the Ukraine conflict.

Germany's budget disaster has hit the approval ratings of Scholz's Social Democrats, Economic Minister Robert Habeck's Greens, and Finance Minister Christian Lindner's Free Democrats.

The trio's compromise on the budget means withdrawing financial cuts for farmers and depleting a reserve of over €6 billion.

Cuts in social benefits and agricultural subsidies, causing protests by farmers across the country and the European Union also weigh on their negotiations. — SPUTNIK



People show support to tractor-driving farmers during a protest in the Hessian state capital of Wiesbaden, Germany, 8 January 2024. **PHOTO: ZHANG FAN/XINHUA**

## Panama to host anti-tobacco talks as industry courts new, younger smokers

*Delegates from over 180 countries will gather to focus on issues like tobacco advertising, sponsorship, and the rise of new products like electronic cigarettes.*



The emergence of new products, such as electronic cigarettes, has added complexity to the landscape of tobacco consumption. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

A global anti-tobacco meeting opens in Panama on Monday to halt the harmful consequences of smoking, as tobacco companies endeavor to hook more users — including children — with addictive products. Delegates from more than 180 countries will gather in Panama City for the biennial meeting, which will focus on tobacco advertising and sponsorship — as well as new tobacco products, such as trendy electronic cigarettes.

The number of smokers around the world is steadily dropping, but the World Health Organization warned earlier this month that Big Tobacco was working hard to attract young people.

Tobacco use is estimated to kill more than eight million people each year, including an estimated 1.3 million non-smokers who are exposed to second-hand smoke, WHO statistics show. — AFP

## Record cereal output drives down food prices in January: FAO

GLOBAL food prices continued to decline in January thanks to a record cereal output in the latest cycle, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) said on Friday.

FAO said that global cereal production was seen on track to an all-time high of over 2.83 billion tonnes last year, up 1.2 per cent from 2022. The increases were attributed to strong growing conditions, expanded land use, and improved efficiency.

This allows the global cereal stocks ratio to climb to 31.1 per cent for the 2023-24 growing season, up from 30.9 per cent for 2022-23, providing

downward pressure on prices.

FAO's overall food price index was down one per cent in January compared to December and it was 10.4 per cent below levels from the same period of last year.

Prices for grains and cereals, the largest component in the index, declined by 2.2 per cent.

Meanwhile, meat prices were 1.4 per cent lower than the level in December thanks to strong output from major producers. Sugar prices rose 0.8 per cent amid worries that heavy rain in Brazil, the world's leading sugar producer, could cut production. — Xinhua



The FAO's overall food price index dropped by one per cent in January compared to December, registering a 10.4 per cent decrease from the same period last year. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

# SPORTS

## Myanmar Football Federation to hold executive election for 2024-2028

ACCORDING to the Myanmar Football Federation, the election will be held for the executive positions of the Myanmar Football Federation for the 2024-2028 term.

The election will be held on 30 March in Yangon.

One president for the Myanmar Football Federation, three vice presidents, six from state and region, one from Myanmar National League 1, another one from Myanmar National League 2, one referee committee member, one coaching committee member,

one player committee member, one women's football committee and one committee member for Futsal and Beach Soccer totalling 19 will be selected in line with election rules.

Candidate nomination forms for the positions to be selected can be picked up at the Election Commission office in Goal Hotel, Yangon, where the Myanmar Football Federation office is located, from 10 am to 3 pm and must be submitted in person at the Election Commission office by 3 pm on 29 February. — TWA/KZL



An executive meeting of the Myanmar Football Federation was held at Novotel Yangon Max in 2023.

## Myanmar National League clubs recruit new players



Defender Ye Yint Aung is seen holding the insignia of the Ayeyawady United. **PHOTO: AUFC**

THE Myanmar National League is recruiting new players to prepare for the new football season.

The Ayeyawady United team signed defender Ye

Yint Aung as the first signing for the new season. Ye Yint Aung played for Yadanabon and Hanthawady and was also selected for the youth and Myanmar national teams.

The Ayeyawady United also parted ways with some players, including head coach U Myo Hlaing Win, whose contract expired at the end of the 2023 season.

The Shan United team has been continuously recruiting new local players, and the back row player Aung Min Soe, who played in the GFA team, has been recruited again. Shan United team has recruited four new local players. Before that, Sa Aung Peng, Good Thing and Thet Wai Moe have already been summoned. The Maha United team has also recruited young local players such as Khant Zin Hein, Win Ko Htay, and Supoor. — Ko Nyi Lay/KZL

## Beijing Olympic Museum reopens to public after renovations

AFTER having been closed for renovations lasting more than two years, the Beijing Olympic Museum (BOM) reopened to the public on Saturday to mark the second anniversary of the 2022 Beijing Olympic Winter Games.

Located south of the National Stadium known as the "Bird's Nest", the BOM, founded in 2009, now covers a total

area of 26,000 square metres. Through more than a thousand exhibits, the museum demonstrates Beijing's legacy as a dual Olympic city.

Thomas Bach, president of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), expressed his best wishes to the Chinese people for the upcoming Spring Festival and noted via video link, "All Chinese people can

take great pride in the fact that when Beijing became the first city in the world to host both the summer and winter editions of the Olympic Games, you were writing great Olympic history". "The new and improved Beijing Olympic Museum is a shining example of a living legacy and will continue to inspire every visitor with timeless Olympic values," said Bach. — Xinhua

## AFC Asian Cup: Son Heung-min drags S Korea into semifinals

*South Korea and Jordan advanced to the AFC Asian Cup semifinals.*

CAPTAIN Son Heung-min won a stoppage-time penalty and scored an extra-time free-kick on Friday night to propel South Korea to the AFC Asian Cup semifinals following a 2-1 comeback victory over Australia.

The two-time winners of the tournament, moving a step closer to reclaiming the continental title for the first time since 1960, will face Jordan in a last-four clash on Tuesday.

"I want them to experience what it would mean to get to the end of a tournament, all the way to the end and to play for the trophy," South Korea head coach Jurgen Klinsmann from Germany

said before the match.

Klinsmann's encouragement for his side was well responded in the thrilling quarterfinal against Australia, the champions in the 2015 edition. On a windy and a little cold night at Al Janoub Stadium in Doha, the Socceroos started the game well with full energy and fluent transition from defence to attack. Craig Goodwin, the left winger in a 4-3-3 formation, grabbed possession on the edge of the area after a misplaced pass from the opponent, and smashed a left foot volley for the opener in the 42<sup>nd</sup> minute following good combination with Nathaniel Atkinson. — Xinhua



Son Heung Min (top) of South Korea celebrates with teammates after Cho Gue-Sung scored their first goal during the round of 16 match between Saudi Arabia and South Korea at AFC Asian Cup Qatar 2023 in Doha, Qatar, 30 January 2024. **PHOTO: JIA HAOCHENG/XINHUA**



## Mexican community revives customs with ancient fire ritual

*In an Indigenous community in Mexico, the Purepecha people have revived an ancient fire ritual, forgotten for centuries, with the assistance of historians and anthropologists in the 1980s.*

Incense fills the air and burning sticks light up the night in an Indigenous community in Mexico where an ancient fire ritual has been brought back to life.

The tradition, which had been forgotten for centuries, was revived by the Purepecha people in the 1980s with the help of historians and anthropologists.

For three days each year, participants wearing traditional dress carry the precious flames nearly 100 kilometres (62 miles) from village to village through the mountains of violence-ridden western Mexico.

The “Fuego Nuevo” (New Fire) ceremony takes place on the night of 1 February to mark the turn of the year based on



The annual “Fuego Nuevo” (New Fire) ceremony, celebrated on the night of 1 February involves participants wearing traditional attire carrying flames over nearly 100 kilometres from village to village in the violence-prone mountains of western Mexico. **PHOTO: AFP**

the Purepecha’s variant of the Mesoamerican calendar.

“When the Spanish (conquistadors) arrived, they took away our way of dressing, our way of speaking, but we are trying to recover the customs of our ancestors,” said Catellana Nambo, who still works in agriculture at the age of 80.

The trek through Michoa-

can state culminated this year in Ocumicho, where Purepecha people from around the state gathered in a burst of colour, music and dancing. The fire will be kept alight in the small town for a year before making the journey to another village.

“We realized that our ancestors held this celebration before the conquest. It’s now our turn to

revive it and we have been doing so since 1983,” said Javier de la Luz. These days the community faces a struggle to protect its forests from logging, the 66-year-old agricultural worker said.

“In some way, this celebration empowered our communities to come out in defence of their natural resources,” he added. — AFP



A seller displays stone rings at his shop in the city of Shahr-e Ray. **PHOTO: AFP**

## Iran’s long-lasting love for gemstones

AT a prominent Shiite shrine in southern Tehran, Qasem Ashgari was buying yet another gemstone ring in the hope it would help his prayers to be answered promptly.

Asghari, in his 30s, who was already wearing several bands on each hand, had a specific ring in mind: a silver one, adorned with yellow agate and engraved with religious scripts.

“The reward of one prayer is multiplied... if done with an agate ring,” he told AFP while strolling through the meandering alleys of the market near the

shrine of Shah Abdolazim.

Asghari’s appreciation for gemstones is shared by many Shiite Muslims in Iran, where prominent male scholars and senior officials are often seen publicly sporting similar rings. Many in the Shiite-majority country attribute high religious significance to gemstones, which they view as a way to ensure divine protection, ward off evil, and prevent poverty. Common beliefs associated with gemstones are largely what motivates people to buy them, said Hassan Samimi, a lapidary at the market.

*Appreciation for gemstones is common in Iran, with notable male scholars and officials often seen wearing similar rings in public.*

“It is very rare to find someone who wears a ring just for its beauty,” said Samimi, 52, in his workshop where he carves large uncut gemstones for rings, necklaces, prayer beads and other items.

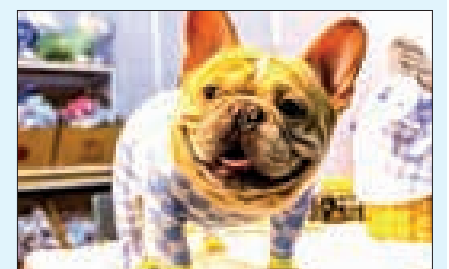
### Agate and turquoise

Inside, one customer, Maryam, browsed through a collection of rings bearing agate, turquoise, topaz, lapis lazuli, emeralds and other stones.

“I get a good feeling from these stones,” said the 50-year-old teacher after picking a turquoise set comprising a ring, earrings, and a bracelet. — AFP

## Which dogs live the longest? Small ones with long noses

SMALL dogs with long noses, such as whippets and miniature dachshunds, live for years longer than large flat-faced breeds such as English bulldogs, new research said on Thursday. The study, which is based on data from more than half a million dogs across the UK, aims to help people planning to get a dog ensure they choose a breed that will have a long and healthy life. Lead author Kirsten McMillan, data manager at UK charity Dogs Trust, said it was the first study to look at how life expectancy varies across such a broad range of factors, including breed, size, face shape and gender. — AFP



French bulldogs are extremely popular dogs but their short faces come with health problems. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**