

The Global **NEW LIGHT** of MYANMAR

Black gram, pigeon pea prices drop after reaching all-time high

The prices of black grams and pigeon peas dropped back from record highs on 5 February, on the back of the FOB price retreat.

The prices peaked at K3.5 million per tonne of black gram and K4.197 million per tonne of pigeon pea on 5 February. The prices plunged to K3.3 million for black grams and K4.027 million for pigeon peas on 9 February, showing a sharp drop of K200,000 for black grams and K170,000 for pigeon peas.

Myanmar shipped over 1.3 million tonnes of various pulses worth over US\$1.123 billion over the past ten months of the current financial year 2023-2024 beginning 1 April, the Ministry of Commerce's statistics indicated.

Myanmar bagged over \$1.47 billion from 1.9 million tonnes of pulses exports last FY 2022-2023.

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

India has growing consumption requirements for black grams and pigeon peas. According to a Memorandum of Understanding between Myanmar and India signed on 18 June 2021, India will import 250,000 tonnes of black grams and



Myanmar shipped over 1.3 million tonnes of various pulses worth over US\$1.123 billion over the past ten months of the current financial year 2023-2024. The picture shows assorted beans and pulses neatly arranged for sale at the market.

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.

Black grams, which India primarily purchases, are commonly found only in Myanmar. In contrast, according to

the Myanmar Pulses, Beans, Maize and Sesame Seeds Merchants Association, pigeon peas, green grams, and chickpeas are also grown in African countries and Australia. — NN/EM



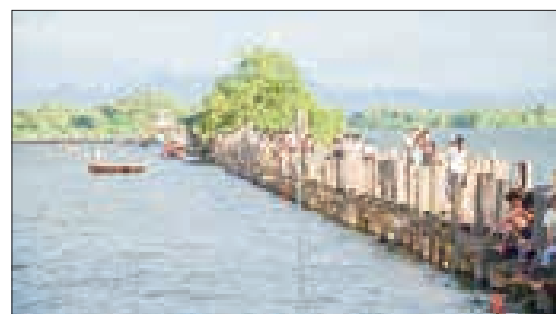
The picture shows dozens of fish holding containers loaded with various species designated for export.

Myanmar's fishery exports shrink to US\$564 mln in ten months

SEE PAGE-2

NATIONAL

PAGE-6



Survey of tourist attraction sites in 19 townships fully completed

NATIONAL

PAGE-11



Myanmar nationals in Russia must pay income tax before accessing passport extension, consular services: ME

NATIONAL

National Objectives of 77th 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 77th 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



Daily newspapers available online

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News and Periodicals Enterprise

Myanmar's fishery exports shrink to US\$564 mln in ...

FROM PAGE-1

MYANMAR shipped fisheries worth US\$564.681 million to foreign trade partners in the past ten months of the current financial year 2023-2024, beginning 1 April, the statistics released by the Ministry of Commerce indicated.

The figures during the April-January period reflected a decrease of \$46 million compared to that of the correspond-

ing period last FY.

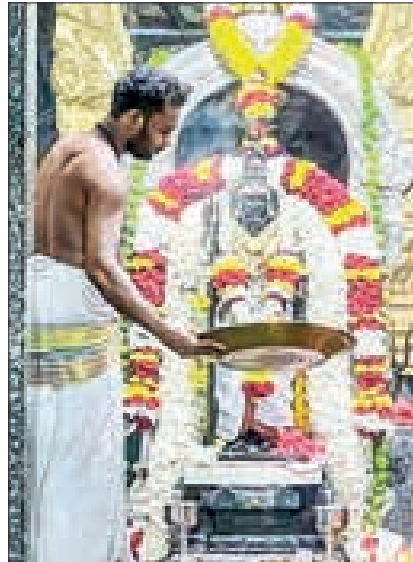
Through maritime and border trade channels, Myanmar delivers fishery products to 45 countries, including Japan, European countries, China and Thailand. The fishery export has yet to return to normality, although the export is steadily going.

Myanmar exported over 2,380 tonnes of ten fish species worth US\$2.211 million to neigh-

bouring Thailand through the Kawthoung border between 30 January and 3 February 2024, as per the Ministry of Commerce.

For the livestock sector, live animals are mainly sent to the neighbouring countries at the border. The fisheries are exported to China, Bangladesh and Thailand via the Muse, Myawady, Kawthoung, Sittway, Myeik and Maungtauw borders. — TWA/KK

Nine new destinations in Yangon designated to boost tourism



Pilakat Hindu Temple and Hon Lim Chin Tsong's OBE palace are included in nine new destinations of Yangon.

DOMESTIC travellers and tourists have been visiting destinations in Yangon throughout the year, and new destinations are added, according to U Nanda Aung, Director of the Directorate of Hotels and Tourism (Yangon Region). Domestic travellers and overseas tourists visit 28 destinations in Yangon Region and the newly designated nine destinations throughout the year, and the monthly festivals, night markets, and shopping malls keep contributing to increasing tourist arrivals.

"In Yangon Region, a total of 28 destinations have been designated, such as pagodas, parks, and museums that are allowed domestic and foreign tourists to visit. In the upcoming travel season, we arranged

nine destinations as expansions, such as Yangon University, Hon. Lim Chin Tsong's OBE palace, and Pilakat Hindu Temple.

"Since we have yet to designate extended destinations, those new destinations are crowded with travellers. The old designated destinations are also crowded with domestic and foreign tourists. Events such as market festivals are also held to commemorate the Kayin New Year, Independence Day, Union Day, etc. Night markets like those on 19th street and shopping centres are always bustling with people every night," U Nanda said.

The 28 old destinations in Yangon Region include Shwedagon Pagoda, Sule Pagoda, Tooth Relic Pagoda, Thi-

ri Mingala Kaba Aye Pagoda, Kyaikkhauk Pagoda (Thanlyin), Botahtaung Pagoda, Daddaw Mwedaw Kanku Pagoda, Meilamu Pagoda, Maha Satkya Atulamaung Ngahtatgyi Pagoda, Chaukhtatgyi Reclining Buddha Image, Koehtatkyee Pagoda, Kamakura Buddha Statue (Japan Pagoda), Kyauktanyeale Pagoda, National Museum, Bogyoke Aung San Museum and Inya Lake.

The Ministry of Hotels and Tourism, the Yangon Region Government, the Myanmar Tourism Federation, the Myanmar Hoteliers Association (Yangon Zone) and relevant associations and officials are cooperating to promote the development of Yangon Region's hotels and tourism industry. — ASH/TKO

NATIONAL

SAC member meets Rakhine officials, departmental staff

STATE Administration Council Member Dr Ba Shwe met Rakhine State officials and other ranks at the state government office yesterday.

Also present at the event were Union Minister for Sports and Youth Affairs U Min Thein Zan, Rakhine State Chief Minister U Htein Lin, Deputy Ministers U Zaw Aye Maung and Daw Nu Mra Zan, relevant officials, entrepreneurs and towns elders.

First, the Chief Minister reported on the destructive actions of AA in the state, transportation

of fuel and foodstuffs from Yangon to Sittway, activities to hold Grade-5, 9, 12 and matriculation examinations for the 2023-2024 academic year successfully, and cooperation works with organizations concerned to harvest monsoon paddy in time.

Then, the state cabinet members and Deputy Minister U Zaw Aye Maung presented matters related to government staff, students who will sit for the matriculation examination, the transport system and interdepartmental cooperation.

The SAC member then



The meeting between SAC Member Dr Ba Shwe and departmental officials and staff yesterday in Rakhine State.

highlighted the rehabilitation processes in Rakhine State after Cyclone Mocha, proper yield of monsoon paddy and other crops thanks to the cooperation of government and people and positive changes in Rakhine State.

He continued that peace is essential to develop a region. The SAC always opens the door to conduct peace-related activities, and the Head of State focuses on Rakhine State.

He also stated the proper

education and health systems in developing a region and urged all to work together to achieve success in ethnic affairs, regional peace and tranquillity, and serve duties based on the Union spirit. — MNA/KTZH

Direct payment in Indian rupees and Myanmar kyats starts in bilateral trade



Central Bank of Myanmar Governor Daw Than Than Swe remarks on the launch of direct payment in Indian rupees and Myanmar kyats for bilateral trade yesterday.

THE briefing on launching the rupee/kyat direct payment system for bilateral trade between India and Myanmar was held at the India Centre in Yangon yesterday.

First, Indian Ambassador to Myanmar Shri Vinay Kumar made a greeting speech.

Then, Central Bank of Myanmar Governor Daw Than Than Swe talked about the dialogues between the Indian Embassy and RBI through diplomacy between the two countries, ranking India as the

fourth largest export market and the sixth largest import partner of the country, the largest trade partner with Myanmar among the ACU member countries, payment goes into operation after the release of Guideline for Special Rupee Vostro Account (SRVA) and mutual benefits of payment system, and added that the merchants can apply for payment and clearance using rupee. It can be officially used through the banking system.

Then, the managing director of the Myanmar Economic Bank, the UMFCCI president and representatives of Punjab National Bank, CT Bank and UAB Bank discussed the rupee/kyat trade settlement mechanism.

Then, the Indian ambassador handed over the present to the CBM governor, and the vice-president of the India-Myanmar Chamber of Commerce expressed gratitude and concluded the event. — MNA/KTZH

Myanmar intensifies drug crackdowns through special operations, regional cooperation

MYANMAR is cracking down on drug trafficking with special operations nationwide as well as through partnerships with organizations and countries in and outside of the region, according to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Vienna-based Permanent Representative to the United Nations Myanmar Ambassador U Min Thein said so at the International Narcotics Control Board's (INCB) conference on an annual report for 2023 and chemical-related report at the International Centre in Vienna on 7 February.

He discussed the progress of amending the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law, which was enacted in 2018, to align with the international

norms outlined in the UN conventions.

The anti-drug operations are being carried out in line with human rights to reduce supply, grow substitute crops in place of poppy, reduce demand, alleviate the dangers of drugs, and conduct research. The government seized and burned drugs worth US\$642 million in 2022 and \$446 million in 2023. The ambassador also pledged the government's commitment to cooperating with regional countries in this course and invited support from the UN-ODC and other countries.

At the event, the INCB chairperson elaborated on the reports and discussed them with distinguished guests. — ASH/NT



The International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) 's conference on the annual report for 2023 and chemical-related report at the International Centre in Vienna on 7 February 2024.

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

NATIONAL

Youths should know media value and apply it effectively in daily life: MoI UM

THE 20th Mandalay Region Mayor's Cup Vegetable, Fruit and Horticultural Show, competition and awarding ceremony were held to commemorate the 77th Union Day at Yadanabon Park yesterday.

Union Minister for Information U Maung Maung Ohn, Mandalay Region Chief Minister U Myo Aung, Consul-General Mr Chen Chen of the Consulate-General of the People's Republic of China in Mandalay, relevant officials, rectors, principals, faculty members and students of universities, degree colleges and basic schools, and entrepreneurs attended the events.

On the agenda, the Union minister inspected the MSMEs booths, sapling shops, prize-winning vegetables, and fruits booths and distributed the saplings to the visitors for free.

The events featured 13 booths from departments, six booths from the MSME sector, 11 sapling shops, and other



Union Minister U Maung Maung Ohn meets relevant officials, academicians and faculty members, students and entrepreneurs in Mandalay yesterday.

stalls.

At noon, the Union minister attended a forum on the "Prevention of Toxic Media" and "State Building and Media Role" at the convocation hall of Meiktila University with students of universities and degree colleges of Meiktila.

Speaking at the event, the Union minister said the media plays a crucial role in the State-building sector, and the ministry also carries out its duties per its three objectives.

The ministry's responsibility is to serve the country's and people's interests through me-

dia platforms and proper public relations in State building. Moreover, the ministry disseminates accurate information through New Media and conventional media. Therefore, the students should be in contact with the developing technologies today.

He also highlighted the dan-

ger of media poison in everyday life of the public, the massive impact of false information, the need to explore accurate information, the primary root of terrorist attacks, and current activities to share information regarding the actual situation of the country and progresses by communicating with the local and foreign media, innovative and modern policy of ministry, Prime Minister's priority on education and youths sectors, and also the needs to know the media value and use it effectively by the students who are the successors of duties in the future.

Then, MTV DTH dishes and DVB T2 Set Top Boxes were distributed to teachers, students, departmental staff and locals through a lucky draw programme.

A total of 710 participants, including rectors, pro-rectors, faculty members and students from eight universities and colleges in Meiktila, joined the event. — MNA/KTZH

Counter-argument to false information

Media spreads fake news saying prisoners on hunger strike at Kyaikmaraw prison



Screenshots validate misinformation and inaccurate Claims.

THE malicious media outlets, DVB and Mizzima, intentionally spread false information, claiming that the prisoners of Kyaikmaraw prison in Mon State staged a hunger strike demanding three facts regarding health issues of political prisoners after two political prisoners were incarcerated for possession of phones.

According to the official of

the Prison Department, they conducted a special check on 28 January in prison and found two phones on the shrine. They continued the investigation as no one admitted. All the prisoners told lies, and the owners of the phones were found through proper device intelligence. Two owners were examined under the law and separated them. The electricity went off for a

while, and they were not arrested by switching off the light. There was no hunger strike in the prison, and the department arranged it based on the submission of the prisoners. The prison officials serve their duties decisively as per the law and bylaws. Therefore, the news currently spreading is just fake news to affect stability. — MNA/KTZH

False news accuses Tatmadaw of attacking Pa-O villages without conflicts

MALICIOUS media outlets have circulated misinformation on social media alleging that Tatmadaw attacked villages east of Bannyn Town in Hsingseng Township, Pa-O Self-Administered Zone, Shan State (South), using heavy weapons 16 times without conflicts on 8 February, resulting in the displacement of residents.

According to reports from a responsible official and residents, the Pa-O National Liberation Army, Karenni Nationalities Defence Force, and self-proclaimed People's Defence Force terrorists invaded Bannyn Town.

When the residents fled the town, terrorists reportedly looted the houses and shops and abducted villagers.

Tatmadaw and Pa-O Nation-



Screenshots validates false reports.

al Organization (militia) troops engaged with the terrorists. Terrorists apparently attacked the villages with heavy weapons and dropped bombs from drones, resulting in civilian injuries and casualties.

Malicious media outlets reportedly distort reality to mislead the public. — MNA/NT

NATIONAL

THE country's upper part (Anyar), mainly Bagan-NyaungU, is described as the heart of the city of Myanmar people regarding its culture. Therefore, the saying emerges, "Every Myanmar should have visited Bagan." The people pay visits to the Bagan-NyaungU region. The place offers significant ancient buildings, pagodas, traditions and customs, utensils and local food. Among the foods, Poneyaygyi (horse gram paste) is the most unique local food in Anyar.

Anyar product

Poneyaygyi, a Myanmar traditional food, is mainly produced in NyaungU Township of Mandalay Region. The product is made of horse gram and supports regional and State economic growth.

Although Poneyaygyi can

Gift brought back from up-country trip

Ko Zaw (Chemistry), Diparlin



it can reduce the blood sugar level and risk of diabetes. Moreover, it contains sodium and regular consumption can balance blood pressure and is also suitable for the heart. It is also rich in antioxidants, reducing tiredness and stress. Moreover, it can reduce the risk of premature ageing and chronic diseases.

The fermented horse gram paste can provide protein for the body and is fibre-rich. Therefore, it supports the digestion system and improves gut health. The lower carbohydrate and sugar content also reduces body fat and helps lose weight. Moreover, it contains healthful bacteria to improve the digestion system and stamina.

Support

The horse gram paste industry creates job opportunities for locals. If the industry receives an FDA certificate, it can register at the Directorate of Industrial Supervision and Inspection and accept loans for MSME development provided by the government.

Food manufacturing based on horse gram can meet the market demand in time and support the country's regional economy and economic growth. If it can reduce the challenges in MSMEs and provide technologies and investments, it can invigorate micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) for the fortification of the export sector, leveraging up the momentum of the thriving economic landscape, mentioned in economic objectives of the country, he added.

Best gift

The Poneyaygyi salad containing onion, garlic, chilli, oil, salt, and fried Poneyaygyi will make a delicious meal. It can be added to pork or chicken curry and can be a curry for vegetarians. Therefore, the people residing in the upper and lower parts of the country are fond of eating Poneyaygyi. Moreover, Poneyaygyi is a sign of upper Anyar and the best present for your friends.

Translated by KTZH



be made from various beans, people use horse grams mainly. The horse gram is stored in advance after being purchased from Thawuthi and Yedashe Township of Bago Region, in March.

Production processes

First, horse grams are rinsed thoroughly many times. Then, they are put in the boiling water. Although they were boiled in large glazed jars, aluminium pots and large pans, currently, business people boil them in boilers. If so, it takes only two and a half hours. After boiling horse grams, they are grasped separately and

kept in boiling water. Depending on the taste (sour, rich taste), the solution is stored for many days. If the solution is cooked using a boiler, it takes about one hour to heat, and the production process takes about two hours. It takes about six hours if people use large glazed jars, aluminium pots and large pans.

The Poneyaygyi is put in a dark room for one day and in a bag after weighing. The packaging processes go with vacuum packaging machines, including sticking labels and making parcels containing five or ten packs

or tins. After the packaging stage, they are ready to transport.

There are many Poneyaygyi businesses in NyaungU Township. The Myinnet Poneyaygyi business of U Myo Zaw Naing in Hseywa village of Ngathayauk of NyaungU Township is among these famous Poneyaygyi industries. Although he used large glazed jars, aluminium pots and large pans in traditional ways using firewood in the past, he used boilers in 2016. Using modern equipment can reduce the use of firewood, conserve the environment and save human resources

and time. Moreover, using modern machines like boilers, it can produce 500 visses of Poneyaygyi paste per day. But they make depending on the market status, U Zaw Myo Naing, who ran the Myinnet Poneyaygyi industry in 2023, explained.

Health benefits of Poneyaygyi

The Poneyaygyi is made of beans and is rich in protein, vitamins, iron and lecithin. It is suitable for health. The horse gram is a medicinal bean, so Poneyaygyi controls blood sugar and stimulates insulin secretion. Therefore,

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NATIONAL

Survey of tourist attraction sites in 19 townships fully completed



Foreign and domestic tourists are seen visiting the U Bein Bridge.

THE survey of tourist attraction sites in 19 townships across Myanmar, conducted with the aim of promoting hotels and tourism industry effectively,

has been fully completed, according to the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism.

The survey started on 29 December 2023 at the border checkpoints,

airports, railway stations and tourist attraction sites in 19 townships, including Yangon, Mandalay, Nay Pyi Taw and Bago. A total of over 7,000 domestic travellers and 1,300 overseas tourists were included in the survey.

These survey results, processed under systematic research methodology employed by the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism, will be shared with respective ministries, organizations, and the public so that the organizations may use them to upgrade the hotels and tourism industry effectively.

Travels by foreign and domestic visitors have significantly decreased since the COVID-19 pandemic. However, domestic visitors have increased since the 2022 tourist season started.

— TWA/MKKS

Salon People's Spirit Festival to span 3 locations in Taninthayi

SALON People's traditional Spirit Festival will take place in three places across February and March in Taninthayi Region, according to the Moken Salon Literature and Culture Association in Kyunso Township.

The ceremonies will take place at Nyaungwhee Island on 11 February, Langan Village on 12 February, and Makyongalat Village on 10 March.

Salon people wish for abundant catches throughout the year and good health during the ceremony under the leadership of shamans. The festival is a cherished tradition passed down through generations.

The indigenous spirits are diverse among the islands. Inhabitants of Don and Meesane islands venerate the Katoi spirit, whereas those from Zadatgyi and Zadatlay islands in Kawthoung Township pray to Lupone.

Katoi is revered as a guardian and benefactor entrusted with the safety and well-being of worshippers. Salon people pray to the spirits, seeking protection throughout dangerous sea voyages.

The Lupone spirit shrine is constructed on the ground with Thingan wood, and its height is low. Its width spans about 25 square feet. The shrines usually have aged iron sheet roofs and plank floors.

Three totem poles within this hallowed sanctuary, their summits wrapped with flowing white sheets. Each pole's base is adorned with colours, symbolizing the accommodation for spirits.

The village shaman leads residents to the cemetery at 6 pm during the ceremony. The shaman offers chicken and alcoholic beverages to invite the ancestral spirits. The villagers shout the names of their parents and ancestors while dancing.

The festival has traditionally been held at Makyongalat Village, boasting the largest Salon population since immemorial. — TWA/NT



A Salon man catching fish using a traditional way.

MoPF's Budget Department to employ approximately 20 staff

THE Budget Department under the Ministry of Planning and Finance seeks to recruit about 20 employees to serve in the department.

About 20 employees to be appointed for the position of appraiser (Grade 2) in the department need to be any graduates such as BCom, BEcon (Economics), BEcon (Statistics), BAct, BBA, BPA, BPS, BDevS., BBS, BA (BS), BA (Eco), BA (BM), BCS, BC (Computer Science), or BA (English).

Only those who meet the requirements must sit for the Myanmar language, English and general knowledge tests at the Budget Department in Nay Pyi Taw and other offices under the ministry in states and regions. Successful candidates will be further screened through an interview and computer test. Application forms can be obtained from



Office No 26 of the Budget Department under the Ministry of Planning and Finance in Nay Pyi Taw.

the Ministry of Planning and Finance's website at www.mopf.gov.mm. They must be submitted to Office No 26 of the Budget Department (head office)

in Nay Pyi Taw and the relevant offices of budget departments in states and regions by the end of February. — TWA/TKO

28 Buddha's effigies procession festival to be held in Mawlamyine

U Thein Aye, an organizing committee member, announced that the pagoda festival featuring 28 Buddha's effigies will take place in Mawlamyine township, Mon State, following ancient traditions. This festival, which is over a century old, will span four days from 21 February (the 11th waxing day of Tabodwe)

to 24 February (the full moon day of Tabodwe).

"The festival, which has been a tradition for 108 years, was halted due to the Covid epidemic. However, it will resume this year. The Buddha's effigies will traverse all the township streets over the four days," explained U Thein Aye.

The Mawlamyine 28 Buddha's effigies procession festival originated in 1916 and was initiated by the Kuthalawayama religious team in the Pabedan ward to illuminate the U Zina Pagoda. Since 1946, it has evolved into a township-wide celebration. — ASH/MKKS

EV import licence to be granted for car showrooms

THE steering committee on National-level Development of Electric Vehicles and Related Industries announced that car showrooms will get approved for EV imports when they are found to comply with the set rules and regulations.

The committee has authorized 83 companies to carry out EV and related businesses, including two companies executing only charging stations and operating E buses. Yangon Aerodrome Company and Pioneer Aerodrome Company are involved in charging stations. At the same time, Mandalay Min Express Trading Transportation Company and Yar Zar Min Industry Company do e-bus operations.

Starting from 1 February, the showrooms of those authorized companies for EVs and related businesses that meet the set requirements are granted import licences for EVs.

The committee for the development of importation, installation and investment of Electric Vehicle and associated businesses held the coord meetings with EV importing companies in April and June and has already noti-



A glimpse of newly arrived battery electric vehicles (BEVs).

fied them not to make more than 20 per cent profit on CIF price, not to advertise online and not to make pre-order without vehicles arriving at the Port.

The committee warned that if the companies violated those policies, they would get their export and import licences revoked and face legal action under the Consumer Protection Law.

Importation, manufacturing and trading of battery electric vehicles (BEVs) and their components are exempted from

commercial tax, according to Notification 4/2023 released by the Union Government on 8 May 2023, in the exercise of the power conferred by Section 37 of the Union Tax Law 2022, under the approval of the State Administration Council.

Also, according to the Ministry of Planning and Finance, the customs duty exemption on electric vehicles (EVs) and their components was extended until the end of March 2024.

Myanmar Investment

Commission also released a statement on 15 February that electric vehicles and related businesses will be promoted as the priority sector as per its notification dated 15 February.

In exercising the power conferred by Sections 43 and 100 (B) of the Myanmar Investment Law, the MIC issued this statement under the Union government's approval.

Enterprises executing installation, manufacturing and restoration services of the EVs,

renewable electricity generation, EVs charging service businesses, electric vehicle battery production, EV battery and related service business, electric bus operation services, electric taxi and transport service businesses and scientific research development business are included in those priority sectors.

During the establishment and ideation phase for incorporation and operations, those businesses can seek permit from the MIC to enjoy tariff relief or zero-customs tariff status and exemption for other taxes levied in the country under Section 77 (A) of the Myanmar Investment Law and income tax exemption under Section 75 (C) of the Myanmar Investment Law for the importations of machinery, essential equipment and accessories, spare parts and construction raw materials that cannot be found in domestic markets.

According to the Ministry of Commerce, Myanmar has been bringing in EVs and EV chargers under the customs tariff relaxation through seaborne and border trade routes in addition to the Yangon International Airport. — NN/EM

Fuel oil prices indicate downtick

THE fuel oil prices decreased slightly after peaking in early February.

The prices sank to K2,685 per litre of Octane 92, K2,805 for Octane 95, K2,525 for diesel and K2,570 for premium diesel on 9 February.

The prices increased to K2,765 for Octane 92, K2,890 for Octane 95, K2,555 for diesel and K2,600 for premium diesel on 2 and 8 February.

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

Following the MOPS's high price index, the oil prices hit the highest of K2,605 per litre for

Octane 92, K2,670 for Octane 95, K3,330 for premium diesel and K3,245 for diesel last August 2022.

The committee is steering the market for price stability and fuel oil security in the domestic market.

Under the supervision of the committee, the Petroleum Products Regulatory Department has been issuing daily reference prices to ensure price stability for energy consumers.

The committee is inspecting the fuel stations to see whether they are overcharging. The authorities are acting against those fuel station retailers under the Petroleum and Petroleum Products Law 2017 if they are found overcharging rather than the set reference rate. As per the statement, 90 per cent of fuel oil in Myanmar is

imported, while the remaining 10 per cent is produced locally. The domestic fuel price is highly correlated with international prices. The State is steering the market to mitigate the loss between the importers, sellers and energy consumers. Consequently, the government is trying to distribute the oil at a reasonable price compared to those of regional countries. Some countries levied higher tax rates and hiked oil prices than Myanmar's. However, Malaysia's oil sector receives government subsidies, and the prices are about 60 per cent cheaper than Myanmar's. Every country lays down different patterns of policy to fix the oil prices. Myanmar also levies only a lower tax rate on fuel oil and strives for energy consumers to buy the oil at a cheaper rate. — NN/EM

Construction begins on bran oil, cooking oil production plant

THE construction project for the bran oil and cooking oil production plant has started, according to the Myanmar Rice Federation (MRF).

Under the guidance of MRF, Myanmar Rice Bran Oil Co Ltd (MRBO) held the groundbreaking ceremony of the construction project at MAPCO rice mill complex located in Pinyinana Township, Nay Pyi Taw, on 7 February.

Construction plans of the solvent extraction plant for rice bran oil and cooking oil production were revealed at the ceremony in the presence of the Union ministers for Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation, for Cooperatives and Rural Development, for Industry and for

Commerce and the Nay Pyi Taw Council chairman.

That plant aims to produce 9,000 tonnes of bran crude oil and 6,300 tonnes of edible oil annually. It will become the first-ever refinery for edible oil.

The federation will accelerate bran oil and cooking oil production plans. — NN/EM



The signage showcasing the construction project of the cooking oil production plant.

OPINION

Notice warnings of lung cancer in the society

LUNG cancer has been a devastating affliction for centuries, claiming numerous lives throughout history. Extensive surveys conducted in the 1940s and 1950s provided compelling evidence linking lung cancer to smoking, though the precise origins of the disease remained elusive in the early 20th century.

In the contemporary era, the spectre of lung cancer looms over individuals in developed, developing, and underdeveloped nations alike. The pervasive threat is fuelled by a myriad of pollution sources, primarily stemming from industrial processes that contribute to a global surge in lung cancer cases. In addition to environmental factors, personal behaviours such as smoking, unsanitary living conditions, malnutrition, and a lack of personal hygiene serve as significant contributors to the rise of lung cancer.

The perilous nature of tobacco is highlighted by research from 1980, revealing over 340 chemical elements within it that have carcinogenic potential. Alarmingly, lung cancer patients face bleak prospects, with an 80 per cent majority being smokers. It is crucial for individuals to reject smoking and embrace healthier choices so as to mitigate the societal and personal toll of this disease.

contact with particulate matter, chemical elements, chronic lung diseases, air pollution, and radiation treatment all contribute to the prevalence of lung cancer.

In Myanmar, lung cancer disproportionately affects male citizens, with one in five cancer-related deaths attributed to this ailment, as reported by the Department of Public Health. Notably, 90 per cent of these cases are linked to smoking. It is evident that smokers face a staggering 15-25 times higher risk of developing lung cancer compared to non-smokers, emphasizing the imperative for everyone to shun this hazardous habit for the sake of their well-being and the well-being of those in their proximity.

The perilous nature of tobacco is highlighted by research from 1980, revealing over 340 chemical elements within it that have carcinogenic potential. Alarmingly, lung cancer patients face bleak prospects, with an 80 per cent majority being smokers. It is crucial for individuals to reject smoking and embrace healthier choices so as to mitigate the societal and personal toll of this disease.

A recent joint statement by the World Health Organization's Cancer Agency and the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) released on 1 February disclosed alarming statistics. Approximately 20 million people worldwide were diagnosed with new cases of cancer in 2022, resulting in 9.7 million fatalities. Lung cancer emerged as a formidable adversary, claiming the lives of 1.8 million patients, constituting 18.7 per cent of all cancer-related deaths. This underscores a concerning upward trend in cancer-related mortality across the globe.

As the urgency of the lung cancer epidemic is recognized, countries worldwide are intensifying efforts to combat smoking. The insidious nature of the disease is not confined to active smokers; passive smoking, exposure to Radon emissions,

“WRITING: A piece of cake?” by Hu Wo (Cuckoo's Song) appeared in The Global New Light of Myanmar (GNLM) of November 2023 issue, and the article “Work Out Your Worries by Writing” by Mya Thae (Research) in the GNLM of 1 January this year issue inspired me to write this article. Besides, I have read a few ‘Letters to the Editor’ on page 9 of the GNLM. The letters to the Editor I have read recently remind me of the days when the “Working People's Daily and the ‘Guardian’ (daily and the Guardian Monthly Magazine) were all the rage. They usually conveyed letters to the Editor almost every day (or every day). I never forget the role they played because they forced my hands to take a pen for life.

Some write because of their hobby. Others write for pleasure or money. You may ask me why I write. My answer is quite simple. I write because I want to do so.

When I began to write, I was only 15. After reading many novels written by famous writers such as Tekkatho Phone Naing, Aung Lin, Thakin Mya Than, Bhamo Tin Aung etc. I envied them. Before I passed the High School Final Examination, my dreams for the future varied with what I saw in my mind's eye. However, after I had passed the High School Final Examination, I came across a book, ‘Thu-lo-lu’ by Journal-kyaw Ma Ma Lay. That precious book provided me with an impetus to become an editor as well as a writer because I loved the life of Great Journalist Journal-kyaw U Chit Maung, who had fluency in English and his mother tongue. (Later, I came to know that his literary experiences forced me to learn English.)

When I was about to take the matriculation exam, I was attracted by periodicals such as ‘Doh Kyaung Thar’ and ‘Shaytho’ (The Forward), which were the favourite journals among the student readers at that time. I contributed several poems and short stories to some literary magazines of those days. Some were selected, and some were rejected. When I saw my first short story in the ‘Burma Star’, which cost only ten pyas, my fellow contributors from my na-

Letters to the Editor that Inspire Me to Be a Writer

By Maung Swe Ngae



This photograph depicts the front cover of The Guardian newspaper published in Myanmar on 7 December 1970. The “People's Forum” (Frank views and Free Comments) was a dedicated column in The Guardian newspaper at that time, providing a space for the general public to express their opinions freely. PHOTO: LOSTFOOTSTEPS.ORG/RENAUD EGRETEAU/FILE

ive town and I were over the moon. Gradually, I could see my literary works on the pages of some literary magazines. The result was that I failed the matriculation examination.

However, I showed no remorse for what I had done. The happiness I earned from my literary works removed my remorse completely. What I remember was the poem that appeared in the ‘Ngwe Tar Yi Magazine of October 1966 issue with the pen-name of ‘Maung Swe Ngae’. The poem contributed me much to opening the doors of other literary magazines to send other literary works. Up to that time, I had never dreamt of becoming a writer who wrote English articles. It was because my own ambition was to become a writer who wrote novels, short stories and poems in the Myanmar language. Here, at this point, I must tell you how I became interested in English, which I hated most.

After reading Journal-kyaw

U Chit Maung's literary works, I envied him. I wanted to be a journalist like him. (Please don't think I was a blustering person.) I had another reason that made me interested in English.

As I was born and brought up in Wakema, a delta town, I hardly visited the capital city of Yangon. In those days, when university students came back from then Rangoon Arts and Science University (RASU) in the summer holidays, I could not keep slobbering over them. They wore vests printed with the letters ‘RASU’ on the back. They wore white tetron shirts so that the letters would be visible on their back under their shirts. They spoke English. When I heard them speaking English, I desired to become a university student like them.

However, fortune never favoured me. At that time, as the number of university students was so few, being a university student was boastful.

The situation compelled me to write in English.

What I noticed in the English dailies were ‘Letters to the Editor’ of the Working People's Daily and ‘People's Forum’ (Frank views and Free Comments) of the Guardian. All the affairs, including the education system, were reflected in the columns of letters. Superstar contributors were Khin Khin Pyone (Dedaye), Khin Pyone, Khin Mone, Alpha, Omega, U Gyi Mya Han (Thakayta) and so on. (I was told that they were veteran columnists who were well-versed in English.) The debates in their letters were so attractive that I could not help but read them whenever the dailies reached me. In other words, whenever I read the paper, I first turned to the page that conveyed the letters to the Editor.

After reading a lot of letters to the Editor, I felt like writing such letters or participating in their debates on various subjects. Then, I wrote letters saying something about the weaknesses and defects of the government departments and offices.

As for my first letter to the Editor, I showed it to my superior officers, who were good at English. They corrected my English and made me rewrite it. After writing that single letter many times, I sent it to the Working People's Daily. About two or three days later, I saw my first letter under the title of ‘Bus Problems’. Sad to say, the date of issue that conveyed my first letter as it happened over five decades ago. I wrote that letter describing the difficulties encountered by the students of the Workers' College.

The pleasure I had was nothing but seeing the authorities concerned seek the solution to the problems encountered by the students.

My first letter was short, but it instilled in me an excellent hobby of reading English literary works and writing (English).

Another one I envied was Joseph Conrad (1857-1924). He was a Polish-born author who wrote novels and short stories about the sea in English. Although his literary works were too high for me to appreciate, his life was very interesting. He was born in what was then Russian Poland. He left Poland at the age of 16 and arrived in English at 20, unable to speak (or write) English. However, during the next 16 years, he worked his way up from deck-hand to Captain in the British Merchant Navy. He mastered his adopted language (English) so well that he was able to write some of the greatest novels in English literature. As for me, how he learned English in his life inspired me, who was at sea in English, to try my hand at writing in English.

Yet another one was ‘Campus Writing’. In the 1970s (and beyond), the News and Periodical Corporation (now Enterprise) kept producing “The Guardian Monthly Magazine”, which carried various kinds of literary works of fiction and non-fiction. In that magazine, what I loved to read was ‘Campus Writing’, which gave birth to talented young writers, including students. ‘The Guardian Magazine’ was published under the management of the editorial staff of the Guardian, led by the then Chief Editor Sayagyi U Ba Kyaw (MBK). After writing (a few) letters for the ‘People's Forum’, one day, Sayagyi U Ba Kyaw urged me to write articles for the Guardian.

In this way, I have become one of the contributors to the paper since the day (12 January 1974) on which my first article, ‘Library Movement’, appeared in the Guardian. Writing, indeed, is not a piece of cake. Please don't look forward to earning money from writing. It will surely give you pleasure only. I am now addicted to writing in both Myanmar and English.

I am still pining for the ‘Letters to the Editor’ that inspired me to be a writer.

World Insights: Global forum on AI addresses ethics, sovereignty concerns

THE Global Forum on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence (AD 2024), under the patronage of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), was held on Monday and Tuesday, addressing crucial themes such as equality and diversity in the rapidly advancing field of digital technology.

In the past year, countries worldwide have been actively engaged in AI development, tailored for local languages, reflecting their profound considerations in the domain of digital sovereignty.

EMERGENCE OF DIVERSE AI MODELS

In late 2022, the release of the English generative AI ChatGPT by the US-based company OpenAI sparked a global trend in developing generative AI models for local languages.

Notably, in China, models like Baidu's ERNIE Bot and iFlytek's Xinghuo have undergone rapid iterations, showcasing impressive Chinese language-processing capabilities and serving as productivity tools for many businesses.

“China has made rapid progress in relevant research, with some cross-domain large models achieving breakthroughs, and the development trend of

large models for vertical domains is also very promising,” Chen Xiaoping, chairman of the AI Ethics Committee of the Chinese Artificial Intelligence Association, told Xinhua.

The generative AI landscape is also thriving in Europe. In France, by September of the previous year, 79 startups were already specializing in the field. Notably, Mistral, an AI company valued at almost 2 billion euros (around 2.15 billion US dollars), stands out for introducing the versatile “Mixtral8x7B” model proficient in French, Spanish, Italian, English, and German.

In Russia, YandexGPT said it outperformed ChatGPT 3.5 in Russian language responses and has passed the Russian Unified State Exam.

Simultaneously, countries like Japan, South Korea, Vietnam, and Singapore are actively participating in the development of generative AI models tailored to their respective languages.

BUILDING SOVEREIGN AI CAPABILITIES

This global trend not only underscores the dynamic evolution of generative AI across diverse linguistic landscapes, but also highlights the growing significance of “sovereign AI” worldwide.

SOURCE: Xinhua



An utilitarian robot is seen at GoTech World exhibition in Bucharest, Romania, on 9 November 2023. GoTech World, a two-day IT and digital event in Central and Eastern Europe, showcases technological solutions mainly based on Artificial Intelligence. PHOTO: CRISTIAN CRISTEL/XINHUA

NATIONAL

Endorsement of Myanmar Standards Adoption

IN accordance with the duties and functions of Section 5, Article B and vested mandate of Section 33, Article (b) of the Law on Standardization, the National Standards Council endorses the following 63 standards to adopt as Myanmar Standards.

Continue from yestrday

No Myanmar Standards

32. MMS IEC 60811-508:2012+AMD1:2017 CSV Electric and optical fibre cables - Test methods for non-metallic materials - Part 508: Mechanical tests - Pressure test at high temperature for insulation and sheaths
33. MMS IEC 60811-509:2012+AMD1:2017 CSV Electric and optical fibre cables - Test methods for non-metallic materials - Part 509: Mechanical tests - Test for resistance of insulations and sheaths to cracking (heat shock test)
34. MMS IEC 62440:2008 Electric cables with a rated voltage not exceeding 450/750 V - Guide to use
35. MMS UNECE Regulation 112:2013 Headlamps emitting an asymmetrical passing beam or a driving beam or both and equipped with filament lamps and/or light-emitting diode (LED) modules
36. MMS UNECE Regulation 113:2023 Headlamps emitting a symmetrical passing beam or a driving beam or both and equipped with filament, gas-discharge light sources or LED modules
37. MMS 34:2024 Standard for Tamarind
38. MMS 35: 2024 Specifications of Myanmar Standard Rubber (MSR)
39. MMS 36: 2024 Azadirachta indica A. Juss
40. MMS 37: 2024 Moringa oleifera Lam.
41. MMS 38: 2024 Tamarindus indica L.
42. MMS 39: 2024 Terminalia bellirica (Gaertn.) Roxb.
43. MMS 40: 2024 Terminalia chebula Retz.
44. MMS 41: 2024 Mimusops elengi L.
45. MMS 42: 2024 Mesua Ferrea L.
46. MMS 10: 2020/ Amendment 1:2024 Acorus calamus L.
47. MMS 43: 2024 Myanmar Rice Flour (Powder) Standard
48. MMS 44: 2024 National Surface Water Quality Standard
49. MMS ISO/IEC Guide 68:2002 Arrangements for the recognition and acceptance of conformity assessment results
50. MMS ISO/IEC 27006:2015 Information technology — Security techniques — Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of information security management systems
51. MMS ISO/IEC 27006:2015, Amd 1:2020 Information technology — Security techniques — Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of information security management systems — Amendment 1

No Myanmar Standards

52. MMS ISO 50003:2021 Energy management systems — Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of energy management systems
53. MMS ISO 22003-1:2022 Food safety — Part 1: Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of food safety management systems
54. MMS ISO 14066:2023 Environmental information — Competence requirements for teams validating and verifying environmental information.
55. MMS ISO 14067:2018 Greenhouse gases — Carbon footprint of products — Requirements and guidelines for quantification
56. MMS ISO/IEC TS 17021-8:2019 Conformity assessment — Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems — Part 8: Competence requirements for auditing and certification of management systems for sustainable development in communities
57. MMS ISO/IEC TS 17021-11:2018 Conformity assessment — Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems — Part 11: Competence requirements for auditing and certification of facility management (FM) management systems
58. MMS ISO/IEC TS 17021-12:2020 Conformity assessment — Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems — Part 12: Competence requirements for auditing and certification of collaborative business relationship management systems
59. MMS ISO/IEC TS 17021-13:2021 Conformity assessment — Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems — Part 13: Competence requirements for auditing and certification of compliance management systems
60. MMS ISO/IEC TS 17021-14:2022 Conformity assessment — Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems — Part 14: Competence requirements for auditing and certification of management systems for records
61. MMS ISO/IEC TR 17032:2019 Conformity assessment — Guidelines and examples of a scheme for the certification of processes
62. MMS ISO/TS 17033:2019 Ethical claims and supporting information — Principles and requirements
63. MMS ISO/IEC 17060:2022 Conformity assessment — Code of good practice

MIFER holds 45th Friday Talk

THE Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations (MIFER), aiming to develop human resources and improve staff members' capacity, conducted the 45th Friday Talk of Knowledge Sharing Programme (KSP) ceremony at Office No 1, Nay Pyi Taw. MIFER Union Minister Dr Kan Zaw delivered the opening remarks yesterday.

The Union minister pointed out that there are many topics such as local, regional and international affairs in the daily KSP programme are discussed to get not only local knowledge but also foreign experience; to-

day's topic, "A study on Public-Private Partnership application of infrastructure investment in Mandalay Region, and these discussion points need to understand for all MIFER' staff. He highlighted that Mandalay Region is located economically and has investment opportunities. This region is ranked No 5 in Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and No 2 in Myanmar Citizens Investment (MCI). Moreover, there is economic infrastructure and opportunities for investment in the Mandalay Region. The Union minister expressed that three types of economic models,



Union Minister Dr Kan Zaw speaks on the MIFER's 45th Friday Talk occasion yesterday in Nay Pyi Taw.

such as the governmental-led economic integration model, the Public-Private Partnership economic model and the private economic integration model, are implemented harmoniously. He urged all participants to take part actively in the discussion.

Deputy Director Daw M Tsawm Hkawm of the Directo-

rate of Investment Company Administration proposed "A study on Public Private Partnership application of infrastructure investment in Mandalay Region". Afterwards, the deputy minister and attendees openly discussed matters related to the Public-Private Partnership (PPP).

Hailing the 77th Union Day

2024, a traditional food festival was then held at Office No 1 and attended by the Union minister and officials yesterday evening. The deputy minister, the Union Auditor-General, the director-general, and all officials and staff, totalling nearly 300, actively participated in the ceremony. — MIFER

NATIONAL

Myanmar nationals in Russia must pay income tax before accessing passport extension, consular services: ME

THE Myanmar Embassy to the Russian Federation announced that it would provide passport extensions and other consular services to Myanmar nationals working in the Russian Federation only after they paid income tax.

The announcement said that as of 7 February 2024, the Myanmar Embassy in Moscow would levy an income tax equivalent to two per cent of earnings calculated from 1 October 2023 for Myanmar nationals working in the Russian Federation. It said that passport extension and other consular services would be provided for only those who paid income tax.

The Ministry of Planning and Finance said in its announcement No 79/2023 dated 22 November 2023 that Myanmar nationals working abroad

will pay income tax on their foreign currency earnings as of 1 October 2023.

Ultimately, paying income tax at Myanmar embassies or consulate general in overseas countries where they have been living means Myanmar nationals are assisting the country on their own in people's supportive works such as education, health, and transportation projects. Besides, for buying real estate and vehicles in the mother country, Myanmar expats are also entitled to enjoy the amount they paid as a means of income by showing a certificate of monthly income tax payment. Still, it said they are not liable for income tax equivalent to the proven amount.

Those who would pay income tax can visit the Inter-



The picture shows one of the sightseeing locations in the Russian Federation.

national Revenue Department's website <https://paye.ird.gov.mm> to learn about the monthly tax calculation method in the PAYE Tax Calculator in

advance.

To learn about the monthly income tax payment, they can contact the Myanmar Embassy via email at [\[cow@gmail.com\]\(mailto:cow@gmail.com\) and phone numbers +7\(495\)6915684 and +7\(495\)6915614, the Myanmar Embassy in Moscow announced. — MT/ZS](mailto:consularmemos-</p></div><div data-bbox=)

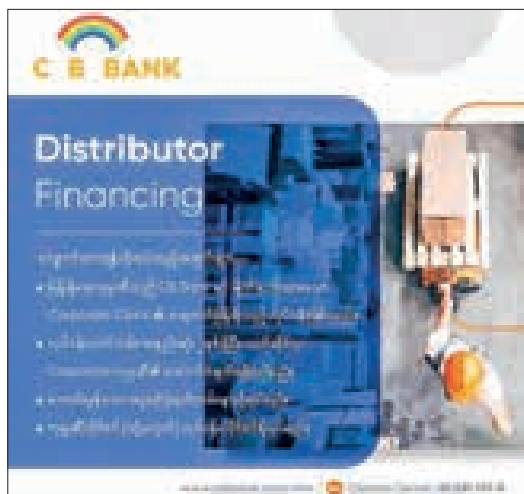
CB Bank announces distributor financing for distribution firms' outstanding payables

CB Bank announced on 8 February that distribution companies can apply distributor financing short-term loans for paying off payable outstandings to businesses that are connected with CB.

Requirements for applying for the loan are – they must be official distributors of CB's corporate client, have at least two years of operation and have a recommendation from a respective corporate company, have a proven satisfactory track record of business and payment performance and have a company licence or a business licence.

Distributor financing allows the loan duration to extend for 90 days, extends the term of payable outstanding, helps the cash flow and goods flow better and has an advantage in the market.

For more details about distributor financing, call 09 405149685 to the Supply Chain Finance De-



Screenshot shows CB Bank's information about Distributor Financing.

partment during office hours or CB Bank contact centre 01 2317770, which is open 24/7. — MT/ZS

Myanmar sees surge in sales of ethnic Chin traditional clothing

ACCORDING to the retailers and wholesalers of Chin clothing, sales of conventional hand-woven Chin clothes, a popular Myanmar costume, are rising.

"The demand for traditional Chinese clothes is good. Both demand and supply rise during this month of the year. We have the Tiddim brand and the Haka brand. Mechanized looms are mostly used here. In Monywa, handlooms are usually used," said an official from the Daw Pwa Chit Chin Costume Distributor.

She suggested that Chin costumes, both hand-woven and machine-woven, attract interest from various buyers, and interested small-scale sellers should

learn the customs of these costumes.

"Most buyers buy them to wear. Not only ethnic Chin people but also different races buy them. I would like to suggest to the sellers that it would be better if they learn the customs of these clothes before selling them so as not to damage the traditional culture," she explained.

Tiddim machine-woven women's costumes cost about K30,000, Haka brand costumes around K20,000 and genuine hand-woven costumes about K200,000 to K300,000. There is a texture difference between machine-woven and hand-woven clothes. — Thit Taw/ZN

Thai goods freight traffic continues on Htawtkawko Road with regular travel

TO transport imported Thailand goods from Myawady, the old road from Myawady-Kawka-reik to Htawtkawko-Yangon has been used, and there is regular travelling, according to Mea Sot-Myawady travel service community.

"Currently, the Htawtkawko route has been used for goods transport from Myawady. Htawtkawko is a feeder road from Shwe Kokko to dodge the Dawna mountain range because the Asian Highway is still blocked. Htawtkawko has been

used to travel from Myawady to Yangon and for Myawady's trading and freight transport. It takes time. Some people went to do business in Myawady," said an official from a Mae Sot-Myawady car rental service.

Moreover, many people

come from Thailand to visit Myawady.

Asian Highway has been blocked for some reasons in Kayin State; therefore, travellers and traders from mainland have been using Htawtkawko to transport freight through

Myawady.

"We have constantly used Htawtkawko road to carry Thai goods to Myanmar. The road is rough, so it is a bit difficult to drive. It is mostly used for ferrying remaining," said a trader from Myawady. — Thit Taw/ZS

ECONOMY WORLD

India projected to drive global oil demand growth: International Energy Agency report

The report forecasts India to become the largest source of global oil demand growth by 2030, driven by factors like urbanization, industrialization, and the growing middle class.



India's robust economic growth and rising aspirations for mobility and tourism are expected to propel the country's oil demand expansion over the next decade, reshaping global oil market dynamics. **PHOTO: ANI**

IN a groundbreaking revelation, the International Energy Agency (IEA) unveiled its latest report, "Indian Oil Market Outlook to 2030," during the second edition of India Energy Week 2024 in Goa.

The report forecasts that India will emerge as the largest source of global oil demand growth between now and 2030, signalling a significant shift in the dynamics of the global oil market.

According to the IEA report, India's pivotal role

in driving global oil demand growth is underpinned by various factors, including urbanization, industrialization, and the burgeoning prosperity of the middle class.

The country's robust economic growth, coupled with demographic trends and rising aspirations for mobility and tourism, are expected to fuel the expansion of oil demand in India over the next decade.

The report projects that India's oil demand is set to

increase by almost 1.2 million barrels per day (mb/d), accounting for more than one-third of the projected 3.2 mb/d global gains by 2030.

This surge in demand will propel India's total oil consumption to 6.6 mb/d by 2030, solidifying its position as a key player in the global oil market.

Diesel/gasoil is identified as the primary driver of India's oil demand growth, accounting for nearly half of the nation's demand increase and more than one-sixth of total global oil demand growth through 2030.

Additionally, jet-kerosene demand is poised for strong growth, albeit from a relatively low base, while gasoline demand will witness moderate growth due to the electrification of India's vehicle fleet.

The report also highlights the significant role of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) in India's oil demand growth, particularly driven by investments in the petrochemical industry and clean cooking initiatives. — ANI

Gold sales boom before Spring Festival despite price hike

At China Minsheng Bank's Xi'an Tumen branch, gold bar sales in January 2024 surged by 50 per cent compared to the second half of 2023, indicative of the booming market.

WITH the Spring Festival around the corner, gold sales continued to boom despite the soaring price.

At a well-known gold retailer in the city of Xi'an, northwest China's Shaanxi Province, consumers were snapping up New Year-themed gold products, including bars, necklaces and lucky beads. "Buying gold jewellery for the Spring Festival is my family tradition," said a mother surnamed Zou. "I bought my son a necklace with elements of both dragon and gourd, hoping to bring him good luck and for-

tunes in the Year of the Dragon," she added. Meanwhile, in Beijing Guohua Jewellery store a salesman said that their newly released dragon-themed zodiac gold bars had already sold out, with replenishment of stocks underway.

In the Xi'an Tumen branch of China Minsheng Bank, sales of gold bars increased by 50 per cent in January 2024 compared with the monthly average of the second half of 2023. "Gold bars are selling like hotcakes," a staffer told Xinhua. — Xinhua



Customers shop for gold accessories at Haikou International Duty Free City in Haikou, Hainan province, on 28 October. **PHOTO: LUO YUNFEI/CHINA NEWS SERVICE/CHINA DAILY**



Sweden plans to join the US-initiated Operation Prosperity Guardian and the EU-led Operation Aspides.

PHOTO: CC BY 2.0 / OFFICIAL US NAVY PAGE / SPUTNIK

Sweden mulls participation in Red Sea naval operations

THE Swedish government is considering participating in two naval operations in the Red Sea, Minister for Foreign Affairs Tobias Billstrom said Thursday. Sweden plans to join the US-initiated Operation Prosperity Guardian and the EU-led Operation Aspides, Billstrom told Swedish Television after a meeting with the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Committee on Defence.

Emphasizing that the operations Sweden wants to partake

in are defensive and "not about attacking any ground targets", Billstrom said the main task is to protect commercial ships from the Houthi militia attacks.

The Houthis have launched over 40 attacks since the breakout of the Israel-Hamas conflict last year. They said that they only attacked those Israel-linked or Israel-bound ships to show solidarity with the Palestinians and to press Israel to stop its military actions in Gaza. — Xinhua



CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
M.V ISEACO GENESIS VOY.NO. (216N/S)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V ISEACO GENESIS VOY.NO. (216N/S)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **10-2-2024** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **AWPT** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claim's Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.

Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:
M/S NEW GOLDEN SEA LINES

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
M.V THERESA GRACE VOY.NO. (11/23)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V THERESA GRACE VOY.NO. (11/23)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **11-2-2024** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **WILMAR** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claim's Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.

Phone No: **2301928**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:
M/S RAFFLES SHIPPING INTERNATIONAL PTE LTD

MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY HOLIDAY NOTICE

AS the wharves, warehouses and chellan Offices of Yangon Port will be closed on the **12th FEBRUARY 2024 (UNION DAY)**, Loading, Unloading and delivery for Goods will be received on Payment as Holiday Fees.

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A woman walks past a logo of the SoftBank Group in Tokyo on 12 May 2021. **PHOTO: AFP**

SoftBank Group posts 458.72 bln yen net loss in April-Dec

SoftBank Group Corp reported a net loss of 458.72 billion yen (\$3.1 billion) for the nine months ended December, attributing the loss to ongoing challenges in its investment business.

SFTBANK Group Corp said Thursday it posted a net loss of 458.72 billion yen (\$3.1 billion) for the nine months ended December, as it still struggles with its investment business.

The net loss decreased from 912.51 billion yen in the same period last year as better-performing stock markets boosted the value of its investment portfolio. Sales rose 2.6 per

cent to 5 trillion yen, but the Japanese company did not provide a full-year earnings forecast. The investment giant continues to grapple with substantial losses incurred

over the past two years. During this period, it saw a significant decline in the value of its investments in tech start-ups, coinciding with the rise in interest rates globally. — Kyodo

ROLLING UPDATES

WORLD

World's biggest flying lab comes to Asia on air pollution mission

Maria Antonia Loyzaga, from the Philippines Department of Environment and Natural Resources, stressed the importance of combining air, space, and ground data for public health, industrial compliance, and ecosystem preservation.

NASA has kicked off a series of marathon flights in Asia with the world's biggest flying laboratory, in an ambitious mission to improve the models that help to forecast and fight air pollution.

Millions of deaths each year are linked to air pollution, and improving the ability to identify its sources and behaviour can lead to more accurate warning systems for the public.

Starting this week in the Philippines, the US agency's DC-8 is flying for up to eight hours at a time — sometimes just 15 metres (50 feet) from the ground — to swoop up air parti-

cles for study.

"We can provide direct measurements of how much pollution is coming from different sources. And that's one of the primary inputs to the air quality forecasting models," NASA's Barry Lefer told reporters Thursday at Clark International Airport, around 80 kilometres (50 miles) north of Manila.

Air quality forecasting relies on readings from ground stations as well as satellites, but both methods are limited in their ability to see how pollutants are spread in the air, according to experts. — AFP



Readings gathered aboard NASA's specially outfitted DC-8 will help scientists determine how pollutants are spread in the air. **PHOTO: AFP**

Putin on NATO opening doors to Ukraine in 2008: 'We did not agree on that'

Russian President Vladimir Putin expressed his disagreement with the West's decision to allow NATO membership for Ukraine in 2008 during an interview with US journalist Tucker Carlson.



Despite support from the US and some Eastern and Central European nations, the move faced strong opposition from longstanding American allies Germany and France. **PHOTO: PIX FOR VISUAL PURPOSE/ ARMEND NIMANI/AFP**

RUSSIAN President Vladimir Putin in an interview with US journalist Tucker Carlson said he had not agreed with

the West's move to have NATO open its doors to Ukraine in 2008. "Ultimately, in 2008, at the summit in Bucharest, they

declared that the doors for Ukraine and Georgia to join NATO were open...This is not how we agreed," Putin said in the interview that aired on Thursday.

At the 2008 summit, while the accession of Ukraine to the military bloc was backed by the US and several eastern and central European nations, the initiative was strongly opposed by longtime American allies Germany and France.

The downvoting by both nations was recalled early on during Russia's special military operation, with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky name-checking former German Chancellor Angela Merkel and former French President Nicolas Sarkozy. — SPUTNIK

Hostage situation on Swiss train ends with suspect killed

A hostage situation on a train in the west of Switzerland on Thursday night ended with the suspect killed in a police raid and the hostages safely freed, authorities said.

The hostage-taker was armed with an axe and a knife, and was speaking Farsi and English, Vaud canton police

spokesman Jean-Christophe Sauterel said at a press briefing.

"At this stage of the investigation, the motives of the perpetrator are not known," he said. The hostage-taker's identity, he added, was still not officially confirmed, and checks were being carried out.

The man was shot dead by a police officer after allegedly rushing at him with the axe.

A total of 15 hostages were taken — 14 passengers and the conductor — with the ordeal dragging on for nearly four hours, from around 6:35 pm to 10:30 pm (1735 GMT to 2130 GMT). — AFP



Swiss police officers stand next to a train, where passengers travelling from Yverdon to Sainte-Croix were earlier held hostage, in Essert-Sous-Champvent, western Switzerland on 8 February 2024. **PHOTO: AFP**

TOP NEWS

At least 300,000 at risk from lack of food in north and central Gaza: UN

HUNDREDS of thousands of people's lives are at risk in north and central Gaza because of a lack of food, the UN agency for Palestinian refugees warned on Thursday.

UNRWA commissioner-general Philippe Lazzarini said the last time the agency was allowed to deliver supplies to the area was more than two weeks ago on 23 January.

Other agencies providing humanitarian aid also reported blocks on getting relief into the Palestinian territory, which has been bombarded by Israel since Hamas's deadly attack on 7 October.

"Since the beginning of the year, half of our aid missions requests to the north were denied," Lazzarini wrote on X, formerly Twitter. "The UN has identified deep pockets of starvation and hunger in northern Gaza where people are believed to be on the verge of famine. — AFP

SPORTS

Min Naing, Kyaw Thet Oo champion in senior pro and professional golfer events

MIN Naing and Kyaw Thet Oo (Okkala Golf Academy & Tee off Apparel) claimed champions in the senior professional golfer event and the professional golfers' event of the MGF President Cup Golf Tournament yesterday.

Burmese Golf Myanmar Managing Director U Kyaw Ko Ko Chit gave the best amateur player award to Min Sit Thway, who scored 295 strokes.

In the senior pro event, Kyaw Moe (Green Joy Pro Shop) secured the second prize, whereas Soe Kyaw Naing (TaylorMade) won the third with 221 strokes. Myanmar Golf Federation Vice President U Hla Myint Shwe presented a champion trophy to first-prize winner Min Naing, who scored two-under-par 214 strokes in the third round.

Central Executive Committee Member U Thant Zin pre-

sented the championship trophy to Kyaw Thet Oo (Okkala Golf Academy & Tee off Apparel) with 23-under-par 265 strokes in the fourth round, followed by second-prize winner Yar Zar (MGG) with 10-under-par 278 strokes and third-prize winner Thein Naing Soe (HAN Golf Academy) with seven-under-par 281 strokes respectively.

Vice-Mayor of Yangon City Development Committee U Nyi Nyi presented a cheque as a cash award to Min Naing in the senior professional event, while MGF President U Ko Ko Aye gave the MGF President Cup and a cheque as a cash award to Kyaw Thet Oo in the professional event. The golf tournament, which took place at Ngwethawda City Golf Resort in Mingaladon Township of Yangon, was participated by 75 golfers. — Aung Myint (IPRD)/TTA



Victorious golfers in senior professional and professional golf events seen with championship trophies.

Qatar captain says reaching Asian Cup final proved critics wrong



QATAR captain Hassan Al-Haydos said the Asian Cup hosts and defending champions have proved their critics wrong by reaching Saturday's final against Jordan.

Tintin Marquez was parachuted in to replace Carlos Queiroz as coach just a month before the tournament, sparking criticism in some quarters.

But the Spaniard's impact has been immediate, leading Qatar to their second consecutive final.

Haydos said his team's "professional mentality" has

allowed them to take it in their stride and he shot back at those who had written them off.

"A month before the tournament, no one thought we would reach the final and no one thought we would deliver performances like this," he said on Friday.

"But working with the coach, I think the team was able to reach this level because of the efforts of the players and the unity in the team".

Qatar won their first Asian Cup title in 2019 and now surprise packages Jordan are all that

stand in their way of another.

Marquez's side booked their place in the final with a hard-fought 3-2 semi-final win over Iran, with striker Almoez Ali hitting an 82nd-minute winner.

Marquez has used all 26 players in his squad — including all three goalkeepers — and he said that "every player has contributed" to their run to the final.

"Some have played more than others but they have all had a role to play," said the coach. — AFP

'Born of suffering': Jordan's Asian Cup heroics mask deeper issues

JORDAN'S run to Saturday's Asian Cup final is all the more remarkable for the decrepit state of football infrastructure at home and the financial struggles of domestic teams and players.

Hussein Ammouta's side are into the final for the first time in their history and will face hosts and reigning champions Qatar.

Before now, Jordan's best Asian Cup was the quarter-finals in 2004 and 2011. The team ranked 87 in the world by FIFA has never been to a World Cup.

There are hopes that no matter what happens on Saturday in Doha, Jordan's Asian Cup could be a turning point for the sport in the football-mad country of 11 million people.

But their achievements mask deep-rooted problems at home, with a lack of money in domestic football the biggest obstacle.

Jordan's top division, the Pro League, is professional but wages can be so low that players are forced to take up second jobs



Jordan's players celebrate after defeating South Korea. PHOTO: AFP

in security or government offices in the capital Amman.

Sixteen of the Asian Cup squad play in Jordan's domestic league, with others in Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, Iraq, Malaysia and Qatar. Mousa Al-Tamari is the only one playing in Europe, at Montpellier.

Underlining the lack of money in Jordanian football, the financial reward for the league champions is just 60,000 dinars (\$85,000). — AFP

Putin on NATO opening doors to Ukraine in 2008: 'We did not agree on that'

PAGE-14



WORLD

THE YEAR OF THE DRAGON

Singaporean PM encourages couples to have more children in Chinese New Year message

SINGAPOREAN Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong encouraged local couples to give birth to more children in the Year of the Dragon while delivering the Chinese New Year message on Friday.

Noting that many Chinese families consider a child born in the Year of the Dragon to be especially auspicious, Lee said it is a good time for young couples to add a "little dragon" to their families.

"I hope my encouragement prompts more couples to try for a baby, although I know that the decision is very personal," the prime minister told the public.

"We will build a 'Singapore Made For Families' and continue supporting your marriage and parenthood aspirations," Lee stressed, noting that the government-paid paternity leave has been doubled from two to four weeks on a voluntary basis.

"Couples will decide whether to have children for their own reasons. I am confident they will find parenthood a deeply rewarding and fulfilling journey," Lee said. — Xinhua



PM at the inauguration of India Energy Week 2024, in Goa on 6 February 2024. **PHOTO: PIB.GOV.IN**

India playing global role in advancing energy transition: US India Business Council

THE US-India Business Council (USIBC) led a high-powered business delegation to the second edition of India Energy Week 2024 in Goa and appreciated India's 'global role' in advancing energy transition for the world.

The USIBC delegation led by Ambassador Atul Keshap held a meeting with Union Petroleum Minister Hardeep Singh Puri, Advisor to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Tarun Kapoor, and Director of Energy Markets and Security at the International Energy Agency, Keisuke Sadamori.

The delegation attended the opening ceremony, where PM Modi shared with the

During the opening ceremony, PM Modi emphasized India's projected doubling of energy demand by 2045 and the anticipated increased role of natural gas in the country's energy mix.

delegates that India's energy demand is expected to double by 2045 and the expected enhanced role of natural gas from six per cent to 15 per cent in India's energy mix.

"In addition to being a critical leader of

India's energy transformation and security, Hardeep Singh Puri's championing of the India Energy Week highlights the 'global role' India is playing in advancing energy transition for the world", USIBC said in a statement. — ANI



A general view of the liquefied natural gas (LNG) tanker, Golar Tundra, a floating storage and regasification unit, in the port of Piombino, Tuscany, Italy. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

Qatar understands escalation in Gaza to make LNG supplies more expensive

This escalation in Gaza could complicate and raise the cost of delivering Qatari LNG to consumers, particularly in Europe, which receives around 15 per cent of the emirate's gas exports. Additionally, it could result in increased prices for imported goods in the local market.

QATAR understands that the escalation of the conflict in the Gaza Strip will increase the cost of the deliveries of liquefied natural gas (LNG) and imported goods to the local market, and therefore is making efforts to prevent it, Russian Ambassador to Doha Dmitry Dogadkin said in an interview with Sputnik.

As one of the largest suppliers of LNG to the world market, Qatar has a strong interest in security in the Middle East region, in particular in the security of global supply chains in the Red Sea, primarily off the coast of Yemen — in the Bab el-Mandeb Strait and the Gulf of Aden, the diplomat said. — SPUTNIK