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Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and his wife Daw Kyu Kyu Hla present donations to Chairman of the State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee Agga Maha Pandita Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Thanlyin Minkyauing Sayadaw Bhaddanta Candima Bhivamsa in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

## SAC Chairman Premier Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, his wife Daw Kyu Kyu Hla offer day meals to religious title recipient Sayadaws, nuns

**C**hairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and his wife Daw Kyu Kyu Hla yesterday morning offered day meals to members of the Sangha who will receive religious titles for 2024 at Agga Dipati Sasana Beikman in the precinct of Maravijaya Buddha Park in Nay Pyi Taw.

Before offering meals, the Senior General donated alms and offerings to the Maravijaya Naungdawgyi Buddha image in the Beikman building.

The Senior General and his wife

donated offertories to Chairman of the State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee Agga Maha Pandita Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Thanlyin Minkyauing Sayadaw Bhaddanta Candima Bhivamsa, SAC Vice-Chairman Deputy Prime Minister Vice-Senior General Soe Win and his wife Daw Than Than Nwe to Secretary of the SSMNC Mandalay's Masoeyein Taikthit Maha Patron Sayadaw Dhamma Thameikdi Monastery Sayadaw Agga Maha Pandita Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Maha Dhammakathika Bahujana Hitadhara

Bhaddanta Vasettha Bhivamsa, the SAC Secretary and wife, the SAC Joint Secretary and wife, and council members and their wives to the religious title recipient Sayadaws.

The wife of the Senior General also offered alms to religious title-recipient nuns.

After the ceremony, the Senior General, his wife and party offered day meals to 108 title recipient Sayadaws and two nuns at home and from abroad led by the Chairman Sayadaw and the Secretary Sayadaw. — MNA/TTA

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# NATIONAL

## Objectives of 79<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Armed Forces Day 2024

- (A) To safeguard the State with the sacrifice of life by upholding Our Three Main National Causes: Non-disintegration of the Union, Non-disintegration of national solidarity and perpetuation of sovereignty as the national policy of Tatmadaw;
- (B) To actively participate in implementing the processes of two national visions of the State: the prosperity of the country and food security by Tatmadaw members together with the government and ethnic people in their respective sectors;
- (C) To steadfastly implement enhancement of three capabilities in accord with the work process of Tatmadaw, such as study, practise and obey in building a modern patriotic Tatmadaw with powerful strength and sharpening prowess;
- (D) To provide necessary assistance to hold a free and fair multiparty democratic general election by Tatmadaw to ensure peace and stability, solidarity and development, which are actual needs of the State and to emerge a Union based on democratic and federal systems.

## Myanmar condemns Moscow terror attack, extends condolences

THE Republic of the Union of Myanmar strongly condemns the terrorist attack at the Crocus City Hall Complex, northwest of Moscow, on 22 March 2024, that killed and injured dozens of innocent people. Myanmar constantly adheres to the position of condemning terrorism and violent extremism in all its forms and manifestations. Terrorism is the use of international violence which undermines the security and stability of the countries. The Republic of the Union of Myanmar extends condolences to the government, the People of the Russian Federation and the bereaved families of the victims.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
Nay Pyi Taw  
Dated, 23 March 2024

## Myanmar woman presents 'A Tale of Lost Tail & Other Short Stories' in English



The book launching event for "A Tale of Lost Tail & Other Short Stories" in progress at Central Hotel in Yangon yesterday. **PHOTO: KANU**

THE book launch for "A Tale of Lost Tail & Other Short Stories", written by author A W Khin Myat Phone, was organized at Central Hotel in Yangon yesterday.

The event was attended by Myanmar Writers' Association (Central) Secretary

U Nyunt Tin (Maung Nyein Thu-Gyopingauk) and executive members, the South Okkalapa Township Writers' Association Chairperson and executive members, experts, writers, publishers and in-

vites.

"The newly released book targets both young adults and the elderly, especially those who learn English, want to read English stories, and are interested in stories that are appropriate to Myanmar culture.

"I released "The Red Flower and Others Short Story" in 2019 when I was 16, and now "A Tale of Lost Tail & Other Short Stories" when I am 21. The book includes 11 chapters covering supernatural events, unusual things, fantasy-thriller and adventures, and so mostly the young people will enjoy it," she said.

The book is available at the Arther Academy publishing house in Botahtaung Township. — Nyein Thu (MNA)/KTZH

## Appointment of Cuban Ambassador agreed on

THE Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has agreed to the proposed appointment of Mr Pedro Pablo San Jorge Rodriguez as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Cuba to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

Mr Pedro Pablo San Jorge Rodriguez was born on 29 June 1961 in Havana, Cuba. He holds a Bachelor's Degree in International Economic Relations from Raul Roa Garcia Higher Institute of International Relations.

He served as an Economic Counsellor at the Embassy of Cuba in the Republic of Chile from 1995 to 1997 and at the Embassies of Cuba in Belgium, Luxembourg, and European Institutions from 2006 to 2010, respectively. From 2014 to 2018, he served as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Cuba to the Republic of Bulgaria and Non-resident Ambassador to the Republic of North Macedonia and the Republic of Albania. — MNA

## Garment factories required to issue recommendation letters for Thingyan travel

THE Myanmar Garment Manufacturers Association has instructed factory owners to provide travel recommendation letters, if necessary, for workers who would return to their natives during Thingyan.

With a recommendation format, MGMA has given this instruction to help workers not have difficulty on their journey

home during Thingyan.

"We've known that MGMA gave this instruction to CMP garment factory owners to provide recommendation letters for those who want to return to their natives without having difficulty on their journey. MGMA has provided a recommendation format," said a factory owner.

During the Thingyan hol-

idays, the majority of workers and the public usually return to their parents in their hometowns and go back to their work after Thingyan.

"Not only a CSC card, a recommendation from ward administration or police is also reportedly required for travelling. Now, factories provide recommendations, so it is fine for workers. We



Garment workers departing the factory after a day's work in Hlinethaya Industrial Zone.

follow the law and also welcome that factories would provide recommendation letters for us," said

Ma Yu Yu Zaw, a garment factory worker from Hlinethaya Industrial Zone. — MT/ZS

# NATIONAL

## SAC Member DPM MoTC UM addresses 64<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of World Meteorological Day

STATE Administration Council Member Deputy Prime Minister Union Minister for Transport and Communications General Mya Tun Oo attended the 64<sup>th</sup> World Meteorological Day event at Transport and Communications Ministry in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday, along with deputy ministers and high-ranking officials from relevant ministries.

The Union minister emphasized that this year's WMD theme, "At the frontline of climate action", underscores the critical importance of addressing climate change. Extreme weather events have inflicted widespread damage globally, disproportionately affecting developing nations and island countries.

He also mentioned that 2023 was the hottest year in 174 years and that 2024 could be



State Administration Council Member Deputy Prime Minister Union Minister for Transport and Communications General Mya Tun Oo delivers a speech at the 64<sup>th</sup> World Meteorological Day event in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.



even hotter, quoting the statistics of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO). This rise in temperature has accelerated the melting of glaciers, contributing to the expansion of ocean surfaces.

He urged for collaboration between governments and cit-

izens to mitigate the impacts of abnormal climate change and its dire consequences. Additionally, he shared the Department of Meteorology and Hydrology's efforts in utilizing technical advancements and fostering cooperation with partner countries to improve

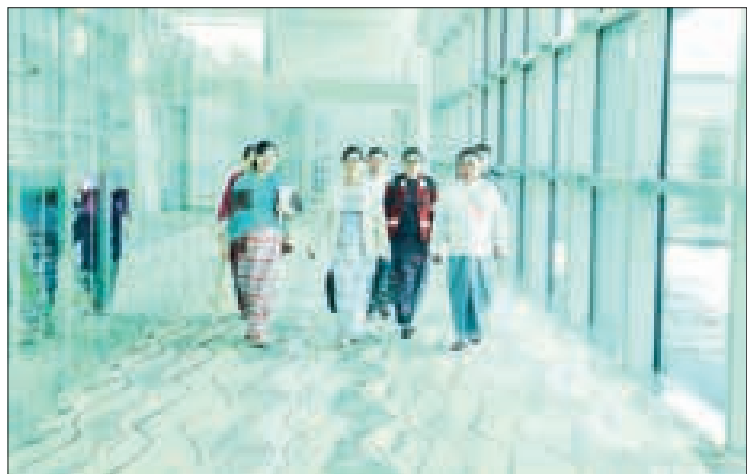
forecasting capabilities.

After his remarks, attendees viewed a message video from WMO Secretary-General Professor Celeste Saulo and a clip addressing climate change. Subsequently, the Union Minister presented awards to the first, second, and third winners

in the climate change essay competition.

In the afternoon, staff members of the Ministry of Transport and Communications and the Ministry of Education discussed 15 research papers on meteorology, hydrology and seismology. — MNA/NT

## Myanmar delegation leaves for Laos to attend 31<sup>st</sup> ASCC Council Meeting



The Myanmar delegation led by Deputy Minister Daw Nu Mra Zan departs for the Lao People's Democratic Republic to attend the 31<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the ASCC Council yesterday.

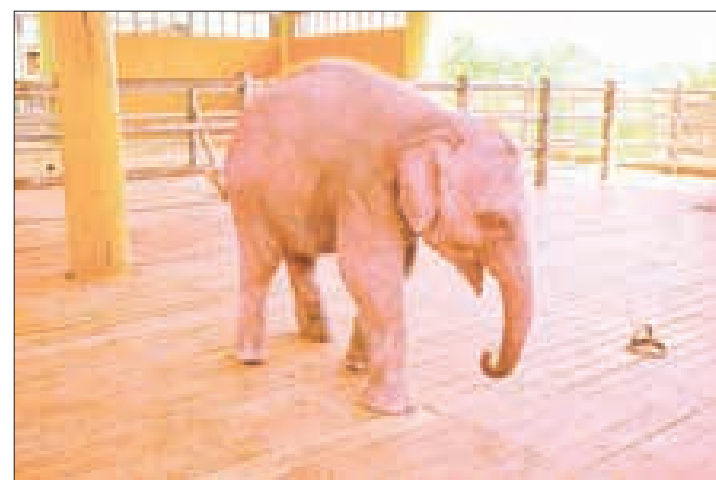
THE Myanmar delegation led by Deputy Minister for Religious Affairs and Culture Daw Nu Mra Zan yesterday left for the Lao People's Democratic Republic to attend the 31<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC) Council, which is held from 23 to 26 March at Luang Prabang in Lao PDR.

The delegation was seen off by officials from the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture. On 21 March, a delegation led by the director-general of the Department of Historical Research and National Library left for Lao PDR to attend the High-Ranking Officials Meeting. — MNA/MKKS

## Baby white elephant thrives in happy, healthy bond with mother mammal

A 33-year-old female elephant called Zar Nan Hla kept by the Myanmar Timber Enterprise in Taungup Township of Rakhine State gave birth to one white male elephant at 6:30 am on 23 July 2022. When it was born, the baby elephant was two feet and five inches in height, three feet and one inch in girth and weighed 180 pounds.

The white elephant's name is Rattha Nandaka. It has pearl-coloured eyes, a plantain branch-shaped back, white hair, a distinctive tail with a tuft of hair at its end, auspicious plot signs on the skin, reddish-brown or pinkish skin, five claws on the front legs, four claws on the back legs and big ears. Therefore, these features conform with seven out of eight character-



Rattha Nandaka, the 20-month-old baby white elephant, thrives joyfully.

istics of a typical white elephant.

At one year and eight months old, the baby white elephant is four feet and one inch in height, six feet and seven inches in circumference and weighs about 1,243 pounds. According

to the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation, he stays healthy and happy with his mother elephant under the peace human and elephant interaction training. — MNA/KZL

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# NATIONAL

## Confiscations of illegal items: Timbers, fuel oil, foodstuffs, industrial materials and vehicles

DURING inspections on 20 March, the combined teams under the Customs Department impounded 23 kinds of goods worth K62,045,954, including 480 bottles of Bickford's juice that were submitted to abandon by a company from a container at the Ywathagyi Dry Port and 17 kinds of goods valued at K209,923,350 including 280 Freedom Craft solar batteries and 3,930 kilogrammes of Xingfa aluminium profiles that were different from the Import Declaration (ID) from four containers at the Myanmar Industrial Port. This enforcement was carried out under Customs procedures.

On 21 March, the combined teams supervised by the Kayin State Illegal Trade Eradication Special Task Force nabbed a



Confiscated Freedom Craft solar batteries and Xingfa aluminium profiles at the Myanmar Industrial Port.

Hyundai minibus (approximately K25 million) heading to Yangon from Myawady, carrying six kinds of goods worth K3.725 million, including 34 sets of Lap-

top (used), without official documents at the Thanlwin bridge combined checkpoint (Tayotehla side). The action was taken under Customs procedures.



Additionally, on the same day, the combined on-duty teams confiscated a total of 0.169 tonne of illegal teak and 0.454 tonne of illegal hardwoods in

Patheingyi and Myanaung districts. The action was taken under the Forest Law.

During inspections on 21 and 22 March, an unregistered New Star 125 motorbike (approximately K300,000) was seized in Kalay Township and 950 gallons of illegal diesel (unpremium), 38 gallons of fuel (refined) and 26 empty barrels worth K5.090 million at the Nyaungbingyi jetty in Monywa township. The action was taken under the Export and Import Law and the Petroleum and Petroleum Products Law.

The Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee reported that 11 arrests were made on three consecutive days from 20 to 22 March, with an estimated value of K306,821,669. — MNA/MKKS

### Counter-argument to false information

#### DVB accused of spreading false claims on Kyaiklat Immigration

THE malicious media outlet DVB broadcasted fake news alleging that the immigration office of Kyaiklat Township, Pyapon District, Ayeyawady Region, demands K50,000 for CSC card application and household registration forms.

According to the township immigration office, around 50 persons apply for CSC and household registration forms daily.

A villager from Maithalin Village also said, "It has been my second visit to this office to apply for my CSC. The



The screenshot validates misinformation.

staff did not request any payment, and I did not have to pay any fees. The only expenses I incurred were transportation, as I travelled here from the village, as well as food and other necessities such as fees for photo-taking, blood tests, and document photocopying. I did not have to make any payments at the office".

Likewise, a local from Yonedaung Village-tract said, "It has been many times that I come to this office to make CSCs for my family. I did not have to pay money to the staff".

Officer U Tun Swe of the Kyaiklat Township immigration department reported, "Our office processes citizenship scrutiny cards and household registration forms within one day. The public is not required to pay any fees for this expedited service. We distributed pamphlets and made announcements via loudspeakers, informing the

public that they must personally come to the office to complete these tasks".

The officer continued to share knowledge with the public at the office from time to time. No money has to pay for the CSC and household registration forms. Since our office is providing services to the public, we prioritize the public interests.

Thus, DVB Digital News reportedly fabricated news stories on 20 March that the Kyaiklat immigration office is taking money from the public, which is a piece of false news. — MNA/TMT

#### Khit Thit spreads misinformation about military conscription in Naga area

THE subversive media outlet Khit Thit spread false news claiming that individuals with epilepsy, mental disorders, and those with only one eye are being enlisted for military service in the Naga Self-Administered Zone, including Nanyun, Lahe, and Leshi Townships in the Sagaing Region.

Khit Thit is spreading fake news intentionally to mislead the public, disturbing the duties of the officials of the relevant Committees for Summoning People's

Military Servants. Provisions outlined in Chapter 6 of the People's Military Service Law state exemptions from military service for individuals with permanent disabilities and identify those who are deemed permanently unfit to serve in the military by the medical inspection board.

Therefore, malicious media deliberately circulates fake news on social networks to instil fear among the public and misunderstand the relevant officials. — MNA/TKO

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# NATIONAL

## Myanmar chairs 72<sup>nd</sup> Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI) Task Force meeting

ACCORDING to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA), U Aung Myo Myint, permanent representative of Myanmar to ASEAN, chaired the 72<sup>nd</sup> Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI) Task Force meeting, which was held on 23 March.

The talk discussed signs of progress of implementations of IAI Work Plan IV (2021-2025), and ongoing projects of the Work Plan III implementations were discussed. The IAI Task Force members approved 16 new projects involved in the ongoing project of Work Plan IV that will be assisted by Singapore, Germany, Australia, China, Japan and India. In addition, the talk also discussed matters related to involving the national coordinators from Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar



The photo captures the 72<sup>nd</sup> Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI) Task Force meeting in Jakarta, Indonesia.

and Viet Nam in output monitoring works for the IAI Work Plan IV and the aid provided by the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA) for developing strategies framework for Priority Economic Deliverable (PED) of Laos this year.

Permanent representatives for the ASEAN Integration work group, personnel of the IAI and NDG Divisions from the ASEAN Secretariat, representatives of the ASEAN permanent committee, and ERIA attended the meeting online.

It has been more than two decades since the IAI was developed to narrow the development gap between ASEAN countries. The IAI plays a crucial role in building the ASEAN community.

— ASH/TMT



A group documentary photo of the meeting attendees.

## Myanmar joins ASEAN-Moscow Committee Meeting 2024 in Moscow

ACCORDING to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA), Myanmar attended the ASEAN-Moscow Committee Meeting 2024 held in Moscow, the Russian Federation.

Myanmar Ambassador to the Russian Federation U Thit Lin Ohn attended the first ASEAN-Moscow Committee meeting 2024 on 20 March at Chekhov Hall, Metropol Hotel, Moscow of the Russian Federation.

ASEAN-Moscow Committee members, ambassadors, charges d' affaires ai, and representatives from ASEAN member countries attended the meeting, and they exchanged views on the committee's plans to be implemented in 2024.

ASEAN member state ambassadors and representatives who attended the meeting joined lunch at the Lao Embassy. — ASH/TKO

## Bago to celebrate 1385 ME Thingyan Festival on grand scale

U Aye Maung Kyi, secretary of the Bago region government, stated that preparations are underway for celebrating the 1385 ME Thingyan festival on a grand scale with performances and water-playing pavilions in Bago region.

Walking Thingyan, recreation places, and charity meal pavilions for the public will be organized peacefully for the Thingyan festival.

U Aye Maung Kyi reported, "We are managing to be able to celebrate the coming Thingyan festival in Bago region happily and peacefully. The central Thingyan pavilions will be built in Bago and Pyay townships, where performances will be



Thingyan dance troupes seen performing at the Bago Central Pavilion in 2023.

presented. We mainly focus on organizing traditional walking festivals safely, and there will

also be charity meal pandals for participating people". — ASH/TRKM

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



The photo shows activities of the 2,605<sup>th</sup> Buddha Pujaniya Festival at Shwemawdaw Pagoda in Bago.

## Bago Shwemawdaw to host 2,606<sup>th</sup> Buddha Pujaniya festival

THE Buddha Pujaniya festival will kick off at the Shwemawdaw Pagoda in Bago Township from 18 to 27 April, with a large number of pilgrims, according to Shwemawdaw Pagoda Board of Trustees.

Individuals interested in selling goods or providing various games for children can contact the pagoda board of trustees.

The festival will feature good deeds programmes, selling goods, and fun activ-

ities with a large number of visitors, including an offering ceremony of rice and other offerings to Sayadaws.

The previous 2,605<sup>th</sup> Buddha Pujaniya Festival was held from 30 March to 8 April for 10 days. — TWA/MKKS

## PyinOoLwin's Thiri Yadana market shops to be closed over unpaid fees

FAILURE to pay the monthly fees for the 443 shops at PyinOoLwin's Thiri Yadana Market will result in their closure; therefore, fees must be paid as of 1 April, according to the PyinOoLwin Township Development Committee.

The PyinOoLwin Township Development Committee announced that notices were placed in newspapers regarding the issue of non-payment of the monthly shop fee for the 443 shops on 1 and 2 July 2019, 3 November 2023, and 23 January 2024, respectively.

Shop owners are required to settle any outstanding shop fees with the PyinOoLwin Township Development Committee office by 1 April of this year. Failure to com-



The front view of the Thiri Yadana Market in PyinOoLwin.

ply will result in inspections and subsequent action taken against the non-paying shops. According to Clause 21 of the health, cleanliness, safety, and governance rules, these shops will be deemed ownerless, and

measures may be taken, including the confiscation of the shop.

The PyinOoLwin Township Development Committee has reportedly notified this for the last time. — TWA/KZL

## NEWS In BRIEF

### Plans underway to enact National Water Law

STATE Administration Council Chair Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing unveiled efforts to develop a National Water Law at the World Water Day event held at MICC II in Nay Pyi Taw on 22 March. This legislation aims to incorporate best practices in water management from across the globe. Additionally, a dedicated team is tasked with establishing a comprehensive water resource data bank.

### Myanmar welcomes 40,000+ foreign visitors in two months

IN the first two months of 2024, the country received over 40,000 foreign travellers, according to the Yangon Region Directorate of Hotels and Tourism. It indicates an increase of 4,000 visitors compared to the same period last year. Most visitors were from Thailand, China and Viet Nam.

### Ten new investments approved, creating 2,800+ jobs

THE Yangon Region Investment Committee approved ten new businesses that can create 2,843 job opportunities on 22 March. They are one local investment in the hotel sector, three local investments, four foreign investments and two joint ventures in the industrial sector. Their capital is K8 billion and US\$9 million.

### Myanmar sends 10,000 workers to Thailand monthly

THAILAND remains the top destination for Myanmar migrant workers, with nearly 10,000 workers being sent there each month. The Department of Labour announced that over 160,000 workers went to Thailand through foreign employment agencies between April 2023 and February 2024. Despite over 500 licensed agencies, nearly half are inactive in sending workers abroad. However, migrant worker outflow in the last two months surpasses last year's figures for the same period.

### Myanmar aims to meet agri-export target to China

THE Domestic Trade Branch said it would boost agricultural produce to meet the export target to China in the coming financial year 2024-25. Myanmar Trade Promotion Organization Director-General Daw Naw Muta Ka Paw encouraged the attendees at the organization's in-person and virtual meeting on 22 March to cooperate with relevant officials to improve and streamline exports and to get agricultural produce listed in the General Administration of Customs of the People's Republic of China (GACC). — Htun Htun/NT

## Yangon market witnesses decline in Pakokku potato prices

YANGON'S potato market is bustling with potato supplies from the Shan, Sinphyukyun and Pakokku areas. Of them, Pakokku potato fetched the highest prices. Then, the prices drastically fell, said Ko Thein Myint, a potato seller from Yetama Street in the Bayintnaung Depot area.

The wholesale price of Pakokku potato hit K2,300 per viss on 13 March, whereas the Shan potato price reached K1,800 per viss. The Pakokku potato price plummeted to K1,900 on 21 March.

It further dropped to K1,500 per viss on 22 March, daily trade figures of the depots showed.

The potato prices stood

at K2,000-K2,400 per viss on 1 March, K1,850-K2,100 on 8 March and K1,200-K1,550 on 22 March in the Pakokku market, respectively.

Meanwhile, Sinphyukyun potato was worth only K1,100-K1,350 per viss on 22 March. Similarly, the prices of potatoes from Heho, Shan State, were K1,200-K1,450 per viss depending on size.

Sellers are taking care of the potato storage amid the scorching weather. Some Pakokku potatoes are sold at K1,100-K1,200 per viss, according to a housewife Daw Khine Khine, who told The Global New Light of Myanmar (GNLM).

The figures reflected a de-



A female worker seen sorting potatoes produced from Aungban, Shan State.

crease of K600-K900 per viss in March.

Yangon market did not see

inflows of Chinese potatoes in mid-March 2024.

A housewife is happy with

the price decline to save some food costs while meat and fish

prices are inflating. — NN/EM

## Kyat weakens against US dollar, exceeds K3,700

KYAT depreciated to K3,730 against the US dollar on 23 March at the over-the-counter market.

The Central Bank of Myanmar (CBM) intervened in the currency market by selling the dollars into the financial market to curb the dollar gains in the forex market. CBM injected five million yuan and 50 million Thai baht on 22 March, five million dollars on 15 March, 50 million Thai baht on 11 March and seven million yuan and 12 million Thai baht on 5 March for exporters on online trading platforms.

The CBM pumped \$10 million and 200 million Thai baht on 4 March, totalling \$15 million, 12 million yuan and 312 million Thai baht in March so far.

CBM also sold \$77.38 million and 850 million Thai baht in February and \$68.33 million, 313.5 million Thai baht and 4.2 million yuan in January 2024. CBM is working together with law enforcement agencies to inspect and prosecute those involved in forex market manipulation, as per its notification released on 15 March. The reference exchange rate set by CBM is K2,100 against a US dollar.

CBM allowed the authorized dealers (private banks) to



Greenbacks seen at one of money changers in Yangon.

operate online forex trading freely as per the market rate depending on supply and demand, starting from 5 December.

Additionally, the outward remittance procedures must adhere to the rules and regulations specified by the Foreign Exchange Supervisory Committee. The dollar gained to around K4,000 on 19 August 2023.

Under Section 9 of the Foreign Exchange Management Law, only those entities holding foreign exchange dealer licences are allowed to deal in foreign currency and traveller's cheques. Those holding foreign currencies without valid licences and permits will face legal actions under the law, according to the CBM's notification

released on 21 August 2023.

Notification 7/2014 dated 30 September 2014 and issued by the Central Bank of Myanmar affirmingly stated that under stanza 15 of the Foreign Exchange Management Law, domestic residents are allowed to keep US\$10,000 in a maximum or equivalent amount of foreign currencies for six months. Foreign currencies that have been unused for over six months have to be exchanged in local currency at the market rate through authorized dealers or deposited into a bank account.

Those illegally holding foreign currencies are to face legal actions under the Foreign Exchange Management Law, the CBM warned again. — NN/EM

## ARCCI welcomes Indonesian investors to agriculture, livestock sectors

AYEYAWADY Region Chambers of Commerce and Industry (ARCCI) invited Indonesian businesspersons to invest in agriculture and livestock businesses, including the production and export of rice, fish and shrimp.

ARCCI officials met Mr Arvinanto Soeriaatmadja, Commercial Attache of Indonesia, at the Pathein Industrial Project meeting hall in Pathein, Ayeyawady Region, on 22 March.

At the meeting, the Commercial Attaché expressed willingness to import rice from Myanmar to meet the growing demand from Indonesia and build bridges between Myanmar businesspersons and Indonesian companies with a common interest in joining hands in rice and other businesses.

Additionally, Indonesian businesspersons have been cordially invited to join the expo that will be held in June at the Embassy of Indonesia to Myanmar.

Additionally, the officials of the ARCCI rediscussed matters on the technology and capital requirements in rice and livestock businesses, inviting Indonesian companies to invest in contract farming and direct export of rice and pulses from Ayeyawady Region to Indonesia and other export opportunities.

The head of the Myanmar Trade Promotion Organization (Ayeyawady Region) addressed the need to make direct contact with Indonesian exporters and buyers via email regarding the digital e-commerce platform. — NN/KK

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# OPINION

## Monitor weather forecasts in daily routine

THE 2024 World Meteorology Day, themed "At the Frontline of Climate Action," aims to urgently address climate change and its repercussions in alignment with Sustainable Development Goal 13. Meteorology is integral to the daily lives of people across various societies, especially in business operations across sectors that heavily rely on meteorological insights for decision-making.

The Department of Meteorology and Hydrology, operating under the Ministry of Transport and Communications, provides daily forecasts nationwide, catering to the needs of diverse sectors such as agriculture, livestock, transportation, and fisheries. These forecasts not only assist in business decisions but also find application in various work processes, significant events, and ceremonies, aiding individuals in overcoming daily challenges.

In addition to routine weather monitoring, individuals must also remain vigilant regarding phenomena like El Niño and unforeseen weather fluctuations. The efforts of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) community are indispensable in addressing climate action and Sustainable Development Goals, encompassing vital societal aspects like hunger and poverty reduction, healthcare improvement, water and energy accessibility, biodiversity conservation, and climate resilience in communities.

Weather and climate predictions significantly contribute to enhancing food production and progressing towards the objective of zero hunger. Integration of epidemiological and climate data facilitates understanding and management of climate-sensitive diseases.

Furthermore, early-warning systems for extreme weather events play a crucial role in poverty alleviation by enabling proactive preparedness and minimizing the impact of adverse weather conditions.

It is imperative to enhance public awareness regarding the broader applications of weather forecasts, including climate change implications, global warming, temperature variations, erratic precipitation, and their correlation with phenomena like El Niño. By leveraging meteorological insights and fostering public understanding, societies can better adapt to evolving environmental conditions and work towards a sustainable future. In fact, everybody does not have a chance to deny the treatment of climatic conditions over all living beings across the world.

Weather forecasts extend beyond mere convenience; they are indispensable tools in addressing the challenges posed by climate change. Through effective utilization of meteorological information and heightened awareness, societies can mitigate the impacts of climate change and advance towards a more resilient and sustainable future.

It is necessary to raise public awareness to broaden the scope of knowledge about weather forecasts. Moreover, people have to apply predictions on climate change, global warming, high day temperatures, untimely rain and strong winds based on impacts of El Niño, and other significantly unusual situations.

## Longer genes are associated with ageing

Research suggests that aging may be primarily caused by long genes becoming less active over time.

WHAT causes our bodies to age? Four complementary research, including one from Northwestern Medicine, reached the same conclusion, long genes.

In a recent study, the scientists describe their results and how they contribute to existing information about ageing.

"Long genes that become less active with age may be the central cause of ageing in our bodies," said co-corresponding author Thomas Stoeger, assistant professor of medicine in pulmonary and critical care at Northwestern University Feinberg

School of Medicine and a member of the Potocsnak Longevity Institute. "Our finding advances the field by identifying a single phenomenon that connects most existing knowledge about ageing and makes this underlying phenomenon measurable."

The paper, which highlighted the shared findings of four international research groups, was published in Trends in Genetics on 21 March. The groups are the first to conclude that most aspects of biological ageing relate to gene length.

Conditions known to accelerate ageing decrease the activity

of long genes. This includes oxidative stress and UV irradiation. Conditions known to slow aging increase the activity of long genes such as caloric restriction. Also, genes that are very short or very long encode for cellular processes known to change in aging such as the formation of cellular energy, protein synthesis and transmission of neural signals.

"The regulation of genes is one of the most central processes of life, and our four studies explain why the activity of long genes in particular change in ageing," Stoeger said. "In addition to ageing, we show that the same

finding occurs in patients with Alzheimer's disease, an age-associated disease. Our findings help us rethink the causes of neurodegenerative diseases such as Alzheimer's disease. Because genes with neural function are unusually long, we hypothesize that the decreased activity of long gene cells fails to produce sufficient biomaterials to properly maintain neural function." The trigger of ageing is a physical phenomenon related to the length of the genes and not to the specific genes involved or the function of those genes, the scientists report. **SOURCE: ANI**

## A Grain of Rice

By Chit Ko Pe



It takes hard work and a lengthy time indeed, seeding in the ground at the paddy field, to produce rice for consumers' needs.

The thought of no waste comes across my mind, on a grain of rice fallen and left behind, to be salvaged and picked up in no time.



### ဆန်တစ်စုံ

ချစ်ကိုဖေ

မြေကြီးမှသည်

ပျိုးချပင်သန်၊ စပါးနှံနှင့်

စားဆန်အသင့်၊ ထုပ်ပိုးဆင့်ကာ

စွမ်းမြှင့်လုပ်အား၊ အချိန်များပေါ်

တွေးပွားအမြင်၊ အာရုံစင်တော့

ဖိတ်စဉ်ကျရွှေ၊ ဆန်တစ်စုံကို

ခုဆို လက်ရောက် ငါလှမ်းကောက် ။

## In the Wide Sky

By Tin Moe  
Translated by Myint Zan

the moon and the clouds do not meet in an alley

Poet Tin Moe (19 November 1933-22 January 2007) composed this short poem in the year 1959. The poem is reproduced in Tin Moe Kabya Paung Choke ('Collection of Tin Moe's Poems') published by Seikku Cho Cho Press in July 2013.

### ကောင်းကင်ကျယ်မှာ



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ဆုံရအောင်လည်း  
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တင်မိုး  
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Book Title	- Phyant Htwet Twaygyin Hnint Ahchar Sardanmyar
Writer	- Ko Tar
Publishing House	- Tagaung
Publication Date	- February 2024 (3 <sup>rd</sup> Edition)
Price	- K6,000

### Phyant Htwet Twaygyin Hnint Ahchar Sardanmyar

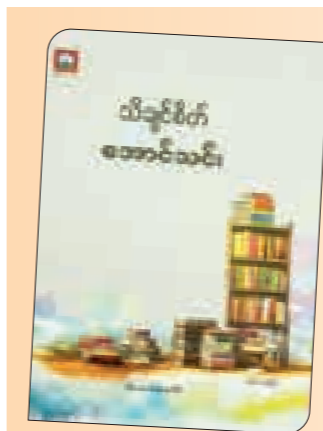
THIS book is a collection of articles and essays written by Ko Tar, who has his writings focused on philosophy. There are 14 essays and articles in toto. According to the writer, people are influenced by the dominant ideas. He advised the readers to identify what ideas are dominating them and to exert effort to let them escape from their domination. Additionally, Ko Tar advised the readers to abandon the traditional ways of thinking and to approach the problems, issues or matters from a different perspective, for as long as a person is approaching a matter from the conventional ways of thinking, he may not arrive at a correct conclusion. The writer wants his readers to adopt a lateral thinking approach as well as a reverse thinking approach.

In his foreword to this book under review, Saya Paragu said that with the passage of time, the old thoughts are dead and gone, only to be replaced with new, modern thoughts and that people, therefore, should not be reluctant to change because change is not something to resist; it is but to welcome warmly. He also supports the idea of lateral thinking and reverse thinking presented by Ko Tar.

The writer of this book has provided very good examples. He asked the readers as to who manages the traffic. To this seemingly simple question, people would say it is the traffic police who will manage the vehicles on the roads. This kind of response has arisen out of the traditional thinking. People think so because they see the police monitoring and controlling the cars, giving directions to the men behind the wheel either to stop or to go. In the same vein, people would think that traffic lights control vehicles. With the drivers being given instructions via the green, yellow and red lights as to go or stop, people tend to think that the traffic lights are controlling or managing the vehicles. In fact, it is the vehicles that manage the traffic police and the traffic lights, as well as the zebra crossings, whether they are yellow or white or crocodile. Imagine who manages whom. Where there are a lot of vehicles, there are many traffic police officers. Where there are junctions or intersections, there are the traffic lights. Where there are a lot

of pedestrians to cross the roads, there are zebra crossings with yellow stripes. Where there are fewer cars and more pedestrians, there are white zebra crossings at which the vehicles have to give priority to the pedestrians. On the highways on which the vehicles far outnumber the pedestrians, there are crocodile crossings. If the very, very long lines of cars on the highways do not stop for the people to cross, they will not be able to cross the roads at all. Such being the case, it must be the vehicles that assign the traffic police and that place the traffic lights. And it must be the pedestrians who manage the pedestrian crossings and/or the pedestrian overpasses. This way of thinking is called reverse thinking.

Although reverse thinking and lateral thinking seem to be modern, they have already existed since the days of Gotama Buddha. According to one of his findings, known as Paticeasamuppada, people die because they are born. If they are not born, they will not get old, suffer from illnesses and ultimately die. This idea is deduced by reverse thinking. Buddha Gotama first thought of the effect and then found out the cause. Then, he only turned to the causes that led to the impact. This book is strongly recommended to the readers.



Book Title	- Thi Gyin Seik
Writer	- Aung Thin
Publishing House	- Zun Pwint
Publication Date	- February 2024 (2 <sup>nd</sup> Edition)
Price	- K6,000

### Thi Gyin Zeik

THIS book under review is a collection of 13 articles written by Sayagyi Aung Thin. This is the second edition, and Zun Pwint published both impressions. Amongst the 13 articles, only one is the new writing. In contrast, three were already published in the magazine under the name 'Thint Bawa', and the remaining nine were published in the Beauty Max Magazine. These articles were published in 2004-2005. The Chief Editor of the magazine Beauty Max was no other person than Saya Nwe Oo Hlaing. A good relationship between the editor and the writer can contribute a part to the development of the literary world.

Sayagyi Aung Thin seemed to have been quite satisfied with his articles published in the Beauty Max. His pleasure is reflected in his foreword to this book. He wrote, "I have contributed articles to the Beauty Magazine. But I can't remember how many articles I have contributed to them. They have also shown their willingness to publish my articles in the form of books. But they seem to have been busy, not mentioning their willingness again. At that time, the Publishing House named Zun Pwint offered to publish my articles. And so, I have agreed to their offer. I also gave them a new article to include in the

book. This article is titled Sayagyi U Ba Maung Part II." He added that he met Sayagyi U Ba Maung when he was in Standard Ten, that was his English Teacher, that he was lucky enough to have a chance to learn the English language from him and that it was a big reward for a curious, young student to learn from a teacher who could quench his curiosity and thirst for knowledge. Additionally, he said that he had met many good teachers besides this English teacher and that his good ideas and excellent composition skills can be attributed to these great teachers. The article titled

"Two Pretty Girls" is about two girls who have been leading a difficult life. Although they have had to struggle hard, they have not chosen the wrong way of livelihood. The writer met the two girls on board a bus. One girl buys and sells the old newspapers, magazines, bottles, etc. She is a hawker with a cart roaming about the wards, whereas another girl is an Indo-Myanmar hybrid selling seasonal food. Despite being the roadside vendor and hawker, they are never disappointed with their harsh life. In the face of rain and scorching sun, they do not mind wanting an umbrella or sun cream. They have never complained of the bad weather. In fact, they have weathered many summers and torrential rains. Sayagyi Aung Thin has heaped praise on the two girls who will never give up. When compared to the pickpockets Sayagyi met on the board the bus, where he met the two girls, they are worthy of praise. The male pickpockets are in good health and are strong enough to do the hard work. But they do not earn a good livelihood. Compared to these good-for-nothing fellows, the two girls are really worth raising.

# ARTICLE BOOKRACK

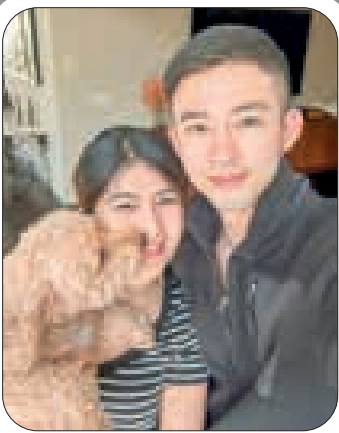


# NATIONAL Entertainment



### U Win Nyein (writer, editor-in-chief)

REGARDING the interviewing session of journalists, U Win Nyein said on the Talk Show of Mercury Variety that the interviewers should have the expertise and sound knowledge of about 60 per cent of their target interviewees. As they do not know much about them, they ask superficial questions and cover news referencing one answer raised by just one microphone. If so, the news will be surface-level facts lacking news value.

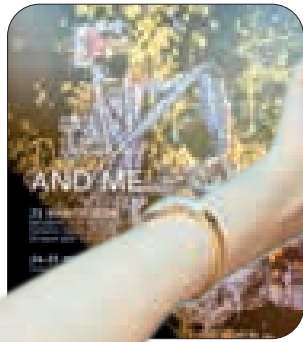


### Aung Min Khant

ACTOR Aung Min Khant told his fans that he really tried to take two different characters in the Ku Htone Mae Chit Chin series and wished the women would not find such aggressive Khat Mam in the real world. The actor married his longtime partner.

### Artist Ni Po Oo

ARTIST Ni Po Oo will organize his 5<sup>th</sup> solo exhibition, "Dancer and Me", at Goethe Institute compound Myanmar Art Centre Art Gallery for three days from 23 to 25 March in Yangon. The opening ceremony will feature Myanmar traditional puppet, harp and xylophone performances in addition to Myanmar traditional snacks.



## Actor Pyay Ti Oo's new movie to be screened on 29 March

THE romantic comedy movie "Gyin Htae Tae Yaukpha" will be premiered on 29 March across the nation.

Aung Thiri Production produced it. Nay Soe Thaw adapted the novel of Min Taw Win into the script, and director Academy Ko Zaw (Aryoneoo) directed it.

"It is a comedy and romantic one. It is about funny things that the people got deceived by brothers-in-law and a couple at the beach," said Nyi Htut Khaung.

The casts are Academy Kyaw Ye Aung, Academy Pyay Ti Oo, Academy Kyaw Kyaw Bo, Academy Shwe Hmone Yati, Academy Tekkatho Gwan Bon, Khin Hlaing, Nyi Htut Khaung, Hay Marn Mann Win, K-Nyi, Nyein Chan, Zar Chi Lwin and others. — ASH/KTZH

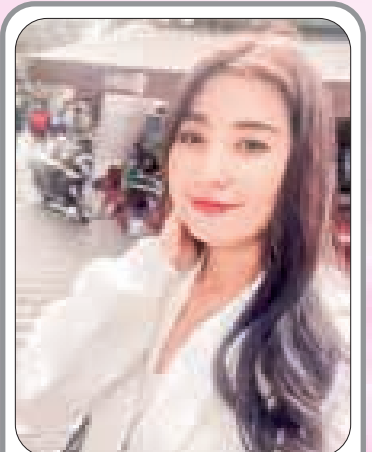
### May Tin Maung San Win

MAY TIN MAUNG SAN WIN, who got physical and mental traumas after an accident, informed her fans that she is making an MV. The song "Di Bawa Di Hmya", made with Aye Chan Maung, is about the struggling life of a divorced single mother, and that is partially based on her real life. She composed that song and made the script for the MV.



### Chue Lay

ACTRESS Chue Lay talked about her starting point in entering the fine arts field. She made a post on her Facebook page on 22 March urging the audience to think cautiously while making decisions and find the real things without any dignity, as real happiness can create a natural, simple environment.



### Po Po

SINGER Po Po visited Viet Nam and made a short video, "Vietnam Vlog-Po Po around in the world", for her fans. She also released photos of her holding a singing event in collaboration with singer Aung La. — Htun Htun/KTZH

# Celebrity Brief

# NATIONAL

## Myanmar workers prepare for Malaysia move after visa deadline announcement

AFTER the Malaysian government announced that foreign workers who had been granted calling visas would be recruited in Malaysia by 31 May, many Myanmar workers were eager to go there. Therefore, young people need to be cautious about fraud, said an official from Myanmar Overseas Employment Agencies Federation (MOEAF).

Businesses in Malaysia have to finalize the submission of calling visas before 31 March for foreign workers who have already received KSM Approvals, which still have terms. Malaysian businesses would recruit foreign workers who received calling visas from the immigration department by 31 May into Malaysia, said the announcement.



A general view of the Myanmar Overseas Employment Agencies Federation office.

Therefore, agencies in Myanmar have worked to send workers as quickly as possible by negotiating with businesses.

“Malaysia has announced that the calling visa submission must be done by 31 March, and those who would receive calling visa have to leave by 31 May. Malaysia will close the submission after the deadline. That’s why many people have come to submit. Those who have been already granted approval have called interviews promptly. However, some don’t want to recruit because they don’t have vacancies, and there are some who work on recruiting as quickly as possible because they can’t hire workers anymore. But there are more companies which do recruiting. At present, there are a lot of people going to Malaysia. Agencies are also working on recruiting as speedily as possible by negotiating with Malaysian bosses. The recruitment will be stopped completely after the deadline, so our young people need to be aware of fraud,” said the official.

When Malaysia’s recruitment plan is halted, there is the possibility of an increase in preparation for going to work in South Korea and Thailand, he added.

In March, the Malaysian government stopped issuing KSM Approval for the recruitment of foreign workers by factories, workshops, and companies. Concerning it, agencies that send Myanmar workers to Malaysia specifically may stop their operations, according to an overseas employment agency owner. — MT/ZS

## High price for Gounkhar, key betel quid ingredient

GOUNKHAR (*Leptadenia reticulata*), a medicinal plant and an ingredient of betel quid, is getting higher prices, according to interviews with betel quid and accessory shops.

“The price has jumped a lot. It became about K 5,000. Its retail price is K 7,000-8,000. It has skyrocketed during this month. As far as I know, there are not as many root harvesters as there used to be. Since these people didn’t go to the jungle to harvest the roots, the gounkhar price shot up. It is expected to rise further in the coming months,” said a gounkhar trader from Yamethin township.

Another reason for the rising price is that with the arrival of summer, gounkhar roots perish quickly due to heat and dryness, the betel accessory shops said.

“Gounkhar price has risen. It is getting a high price. When



Pieces of Medicinal gounkhar roots.

our old stock is finished, we can’t sell at this price. Since the weather is hot, some gounkhar roots wither or rot so that the price will go up. One reason is that it is easily perishable,” said a betel and accessory dealer from Htantabin township.

Gounkhar from central and upper Myanmar, which regularly sells well in Myanmar, was exported to South

Korea last year.

Gounkhar is commonly used as one of the primary ingredients in many herbal formulations for the treatment and prevention of high blood pressure, coronary heart disease, osteoporosis, Alzheimer’s disease, tumours and cancer in the lungs and gastrointestinal tract. — Thit Taw/ZN

## Popularity soars for marketable paintings, art market flourishes



An art exhibition with great sales at Anawrahta art gallery.

SOME people are enthusiastic about art, and the art market is fine, according to galleries.

“Paintings are being sold a lot. The sale is worth nearly millions of kyat a month. The public attention in art has also escalated, which is helpful to artists and galleries too,” said an official from Anawrahta art gallery.

Many people love art in the country, and the art market has been good. And artworks by famous local artists have been sold pretty well to those who collect paintings and those who give presents.

“Paintings are being sold. This is the time the sale of paintings gets high. All kinds of paintings have good sales,” said an official from 3 Colours

art gallery. In Myanmar, there are loads of famous artists’ artworks which are modernized and classic. Some people want to use these artworks for decoration in their houses and offices, so the sale is not likely to decline.

“There are painting lovers in all eras. They will always be forever. No matter how advanced technologies become advanced, paintings drawn by human beings will not deplete. Now paintings are being sold, and it can be said that the sale is good. We don’t know about overseas buyers, but the market is fine inside the country. Myanmar’s famous artists’ artwork has gained popularity in other countries,” said a painting collector. — Thit Taw/ZS

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# ECONOMY WORLD

## China sees robust increase in new foreign-invested firms

SOME 7,160 new foreign-invested firms were set up across China during the first two months of this year, marking a 34.9-per-cent increase year on year, data from the Ministry of Commerce showed on Friday.

“The robust growth of 34.9 per cent is the highest in nearly five years, showing that multinationals are still optimistic about the development opportunities of the Chinese market,” said an official with the ministry.

Foreign direct investment (FDI) in the Chinese mainland in actual use stood at 215.09 billion yuan (about 30.29 billion US dollars) during the period, down 19.9 per cent year on year.

“Despite a decline in FDI in the first two months, it is still the third-highest level in nearly a decade,” the official said. FDI in the high-tech manufacturing sector jumped 10.1 per cent year on year to 28.27 billion yuan in the two months. — Xinhua

*Despite a 19.9-per-cent decline in foreign direct investment (FDI) in actual use, which amounted to 215.09 billion yuan, the third-highest level in nearly a decade, multinationals remain optimistic about the Chinese market’s development opportunities.*



This aerial panoramic photo taken on 6 September 2023 shows a view of the Lingang new area of the China (Shanghai) Pilot Free Trade Zone in east China’s Shanghai. **PHOTO: FANG ZHE/XINHUA**

## EU tariffs on Russian grains to impact world food security

THE European Commission’s plans to impose tariffs on agricultural produces from Russia and Belarus will impact global food security, Russian Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Maria Zakharova said Friday.

“They will only aggravate the food situation in the world, which has already been brought to the point of absurdity by the West,” Zakharova said on her social media channel.

Earlier at the EU leaders’ summit in Brussels, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said the commission has begun preparations to introduce tariffs on imported cereals and other agricultural products from Russia and Belarus. — Xinhua

## ‘Light on the horizon’: German business morale improves

*The improvement suggests potential recovery for Europe’s top economy, which has faced challenges including surging inflation and an industrial slowdown.*

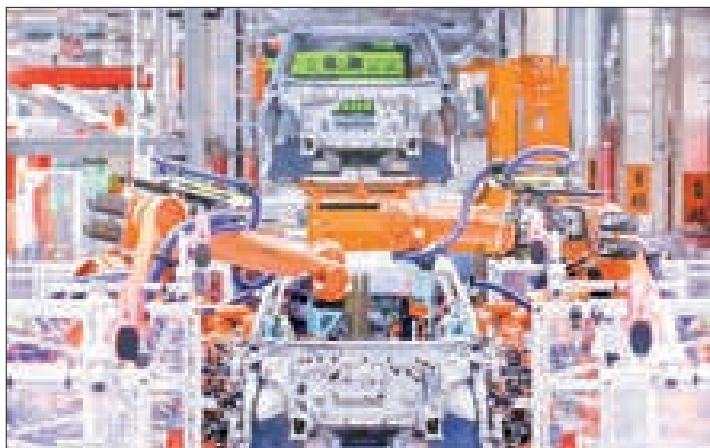
GERMAN business morale rose more strongly than expected in March, a key survey showed Friday, raising hope there is

“light on the horizon” for Europe’s crisis-hit top economy.

The Ifo institute’s closely watched confidence barometer,

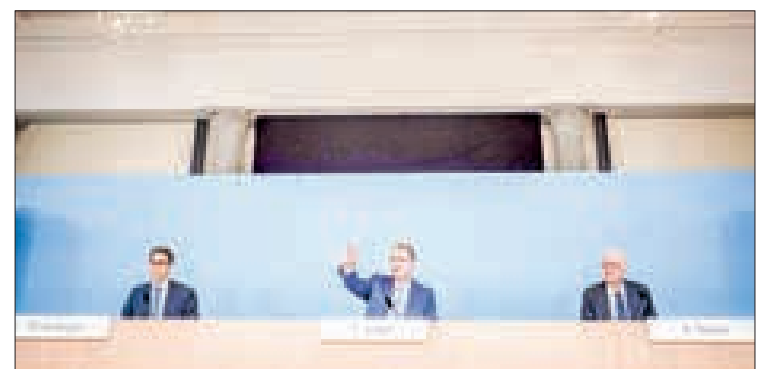
based on a survey of around 9,000 companies, rose to 87.8 points, from 85.7 in February.

Analysts surveyed by financial data firm FactSet had forecast a reading of 86. The improvement will bring hope that the eurozone’s traditional growth engine is starting to recover after being battered by surging inflation, higher interest rates and an industrial slowdown. “Sentiment in German companies has improved noticeably,” Ifo president Clemens Fuest said. “The German economy glimpses light on the horizon.” The business climate reading rose across all sectors surveyed by Ifo in March — manufacturing, services, trade and construction. — AFP



The improvement will bring hope that the eurozone’s traditional growth engine is starting to recover after being battered by surging inflation, higher interest rates and an industrial slowdown. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

## Switzerland kickstarts rate cuts for major central banks



Chairman of Swiss National Bank (SNB BNS) Thomas Jordan (C) gestures next to Vice Chairman Martin Schlegel (L) and board member Antoine Martin (R) during a press conference of the Swiss Central Bank on monetary policy assessment, in Zurich on 21 March 2024. **PHOTO: FABRICE COFFRINI / AFP**

IN a surprising move, the Swiss National Bank announced a rate cut, the first among major central banks, signalling progress in its inflation fight, while other global counterparts hold or signal future changes in their own monetary policies. The Swiss National Bank on Thursday became the first major central bank to cut interest rates after a sustained period of hikes designed to com-

bat soaring inflation, with all eyes on when the US Federal Reserve will follow suit. The SNB cut its rate by a quarter point to 1.5 per cent following a Swiss tightening policy begun in June 2022.

In a busy week for central banks, the Federal Reserve on Wednesday held US interest rates steady, but left open the door to three interest rate cuts before the end of the year. — AFP

## Stock listing offers windfall for Trump as bond deadline looms

*This move could potentially yield Trump around \$3 billion, though access to the funds might be delayed due to legal proceedings.*

SHAREHOLDERS approved a merger Friday to list Donald Trump's social media venture on the US stock market, providing a potential financial lifeline to the former president as he faces possible seizure of his properties.

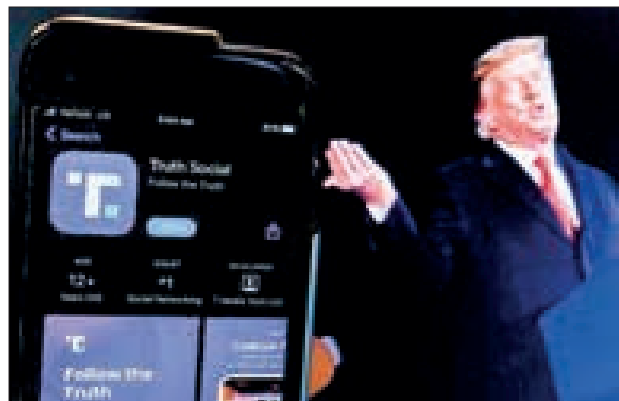
After many previous delays, investors voted to approve the merger of Digital World Acquisition and Trump Media & Technology Group (TMTG) — owner of the Truth Social platform, company officials said on a webcast of the vote.

The action could potentially provide Trump some \$3 billion, as he

faces a \$454 million court payment for his New York fraud case, although he may not be able to access the funds for several months.

The ex-president, who is running once-again for the White House, started Truth Social after he was booted from Facebook and Twitter in January 2021.

The social media sites took the unprecedented step of banning a sitting president after a mob of Trump's supporters attacked the US Capitol, following Trump's repeated calls for his 2020 election loss to Joe Biden to be overturned. — AFP



The ex-president, who is running once-again for the White House, started Truth Social after he was booted from Facebook and Twitter in January 2021. **PHOTO: AFP**

## Zara owner Inditex workers protest after record profits

WORKERS at Inditex's Zara and other big name stores protested outside the company shops across Spain on Friday to demand better benefits after the world's biggest fashion retailer reported record profits and raised shareholder payouts.

Blowing whistles and waving union flags, around 100 people demon-

strated outside the flagship Bershka store on Madrid's main avenue, the Gran Via, according to an AFP reporter at the scene.

"It seems very unfair to us because Inditex has had a huge profit. So we want it to redistribute that," said Juan Becerra, a 44-year-old worker at an Oysho store in the Spanish capital. — AFP



Approximately 100 people gathered outside the flagship Bershka store on Madrid's Gran Via, blowing whistles and waving union flags in demonstration. **PHOTO: AFP**

## Fitch upgrades UK credit rating outlook to 'stable'

*Fitch stated that economic policy risks in the UK have eased since its previous "negative" outlook in October 2022, under former Conservative Prime Minister Liz Truss.*

FITCH upgraded its credit rating for UK government debt from "negative" to "stable" Friday, citing easing economic policy risks, while reaffirming the country's AA-rating.

The US ratings agency's decision will likely be well-received by British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, whose Conservatives badly trail the main opposition Labour party in polls ahead of local elections in May.

Fitch said in a statement that economic policy risks had eased in the United Kingdom since it issued its "negative" outlook in October 2022, during the brief premiership of former Conservative



Fitch upgraded its outlook from "negative" to "stable". **PHOTO: AFP**

prime minister Liz Truss.

The Truss government's disastrous tax-slashing mini-budget sparked economic and political turmoil and led

to her departure from the top job in British politics after just 49 days in office.

"We expect general government debt/GDP to be broadly stable from

end-2025," Fitch said, adding it expects the UK's government deficit to fall from 5.8 per cent of GDP last year to 3.7 per cent in 2025. — AFP

## Viet Nam confirms recall of nearly 6,000 VinFast electric cars

VIETNAM'S leading electric car manufacturer VinFast has recalled almost 6,000 vehicles after a fault in their indicator system was discovered, the government has confirmed, in

a fresh blow to the firm.

The communist state's first homegrown auto maker is hoping to compete with electric vehicle (EV) giants such as Tesla, and is trying to crack the global market.

But VinFast has struggled to convince international drivers its EVs are reliable and high-quality, and earlier this year reported a \$2 billion loss for 2023 after missing sales targets.

A total of 5,912 VinFast VF5 Plus will be recalled to replace a combination switch, according to the Vietnam Register, which is under the Ministry of Transport. — AFP

### CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

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# ROLLING UPDATES

## WORLD

## Foreign delegates attend Lumbini Conclave on Global Peace for Prosperity

*The event aimed to promote Lumbini as a destination, attract investment to Nepal, and foster global unity.*



Lumbini is the place in Nepal where lord Gautam Buddha was born. **PHOTO FOR REPRESENTATION/ IAMNETRA/WIKIMEDIA COMMONS**

DOZENS of foreign delegates stationed in India and Nepal attended the 'Lumbini Conclave on Global Peace for Prosperity', which was held on 21-22 March in Lumbini, Nepal.

The conclave was organized to promote the destination of Lumbini, increase investment in Nepal and enhance global fraternity. Discussions and presentations on investment opportunities in Nepal and tourism potential have been the major highlights and successes of the event.

"We had an important segment on business this (Friday) morning, that was the pre-investment summit. We shared many more things there — the National Investment Board and Nepal Tourism Board made the presentation and I also spoke on

behalf of the Nepal government to invite FDI (Foreign Direct Investment) in Nepal to ensure a convenient atmosphere, which is necessary for it," Narayan Kaji Shrestha, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Nepal, told ANI as he stood in front of Maya Devi Temple.

"Also, we are in informal interaction with the ambassadors here, representatives from different missions, exchanging views on ways to strengthen the bilateral relations and open more avenues of bilateral cooperation. It comes ahead of the Investment Summit scheduled for next month and we have invited government representatives, government companies and private investors to come and invest in Nepal in different sectors," he added. — ANI

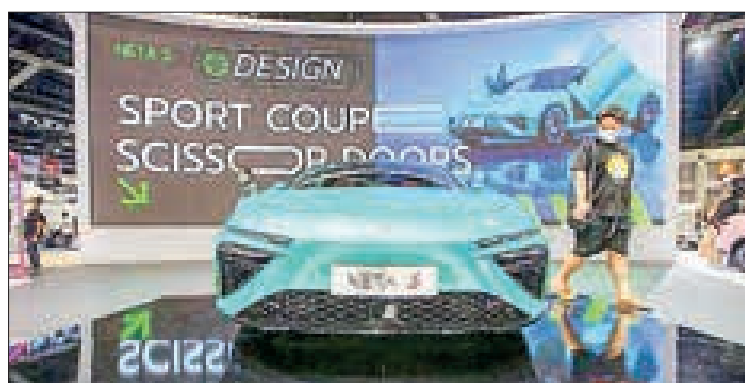
## China-Thailand cooperation on electric taxis transforming Thai largest airport

AT Bangkok's Suvarnabhumi Airport, amidst the hustle and bustle of international travel, a batch of sleek, white electric taxis are painting the runway with a touch of modernity. These vehicles, produced by a leading Chinese automaker, have swiftly become an emblem of eco-friendly transport at Thailand's busiest airport.

Suvarnabhumi Airport stands as the gateway to Thailand, welcoming over 50 million travellers annually. Recognizing the need for sustainable travel

options, Airports of Thailand (AOT) has joined forces with China's GAC Aion to introduce electric taxi services since January this year. The initiative aims not only to enhance the passenger experience but also to propel the airport towards a greener future.

Bangkok taxi driver Suchat, 58, has been in the taxi industry for eight years. While he owns seven combustion engine taxis, his recent acquisition of a GAC Aion electric taxi marks a significant shift in his journey. — Xinhua



A visitor looks at a NETA S produced by Chinese electric carmaker Hozon Auto during the 44<sup>th</sup> Bangkok International Motor Show in Bangkok, Thailand, 22 March 2023. **PHOTO: WANG TENG**

## India-funded Bhutan hospital showcases strong Delhi-Thimphu partnership



Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the Gyaltsuen Jetsun Pema Wangchuk Mother and Child Hospital in Bhutan, highlighting the robust healthcare partnership between the two countries.

**PHOTO: ANI**

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday inaugurated the Gyaltsuen Jetsun Pema Wangchuk Mother and Child

Hospital in Bhutan indicating the shining example of a strong partnership between the two countries in healthcare.

The newly constructed hospital would add value to the quality of mother and child health services in Bhutan, the Ministry of External Affairs said in a statement. Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Tshering Tobgay his Bhutanese counterpart inaugurated the state-of-the-art hospital, built with the assistance of the Government of India in Thimphu.

The Indian government has supported the development of the 150-bedded hospital in two phases. — ANI

## Iraqi PM to visit Washington for troop talks

PRESIDENT Joe Biden will welcome Iraq's prime minister on 15 April for talks on the US troop presence, the White House announced Friday, as tensions subside following US clashes with pro-Iran

militias. It will mark the first trip to Washington by Prime Minister Mohamed Shia al-Sudani, who took office in October 2022.

Sudani in the past has called for an exit of US forces, redeployed

nearly 10 years ago as part of a campaign to defeat the Islamic State extremist group, better known as ISIS, which had seized vast swathes of Iraq and Syria. — AFP

# SPORTS

## YRG team crown championship title of Myanmar Futsal League II

THE final week of the Myanmar Football Federation Futsal League II was held at the Futsal Indoor Stadium in Yangon yesterday, and the YRG team became the champion after beating the Maryar team 6-1.

In the final Week-22 match, the Sun Far team beat Noka United 8-1, while the Shwepyitha team crushed the Black Cross team 4-1, and the M-Million team defeated the Golden Yoma team 3-1.

Meanwhile, TG United trounced KKY 5-1, and SGF smashed Seven FC 3-1. YRG edged the Maryar team 6-1 to secure the championship title.

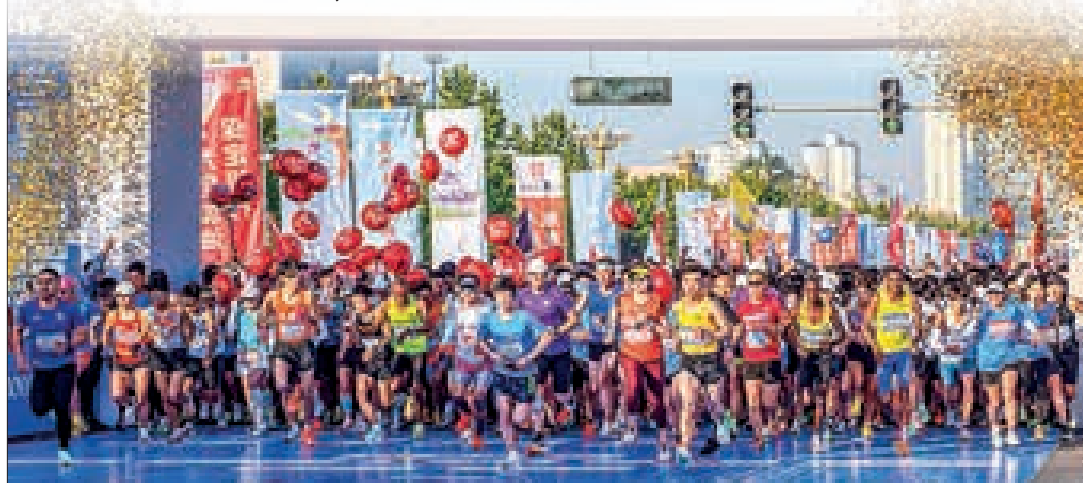
After the matches, YRG won the tourney with 52 points in total, while SGF followed the winning team with just one point difference. Both teams have been upgraded to the Myanmar Futsal League I. An awarding ceremony was held after the matches, and the YRG FC garnered K3 million



The winners from the YRG Futsal FC are seen with victory smiles. PHOTO: MFF

plus a championship trophy as a first-runner-up medals plus a 1.5 second-runner-up team, TG United plus K1 million. — Ko Nyi Lay/KZL

## Over 2.5 million Chinese run marathons, half-marathons in 2023



Runners take part in a half-marathon in Baoding, North China's Hebei province, on 22 October 2023. PHOTO: LUO DAQING/CHINADAILY/FILE

This data, disclosed during a CAA meeting in Wuxi, Jiangsu Province prior to the Wuxi Marathon, indicated a significant increase from previous years.

AT least 2.5 million people in China had completed a full marathon or half marathon event by the end of 2023, according to the Chinese Athletics Association (CAA).

The data was released at a CAA meeting held in Wuxi, Jiangsu Province prior to this year's Wuxi Marathon.

Data showed that since 2016, at least 2.5 million people in China had completed a mar-

athon or half marathon event by the end of 2023, including 641,700 in a full marathon and 1,859,000 in a half marathon, an increase of 142,700 and 507,500 respectively from 2022.

In 2023, 699 road running events with a minimum of 800 participants were held across China, engaging a total number of 6,051,900 participants. More than 100 events were held each in April and November.

Meanwhile, professional and amateur runners have made rapid progress in 2023. He Jie and Yang Shaohui lowered the national men's marathon record twice - at the 2023 Wuxi Marathon and 2023 Fukuoka International Marathon respectively, beating the previous record set by Ren Longyun back in 2007. Meanwhile, 11,897 athletes broke the three-hour barrier. — Xinhua

## England captain Kane to miss Brazil clash

ENGLAND captain Harry Kane will miss Saturday's friendly against Brazil and is "extremely doubtful" to face Belgium next week.

Kane suffered an ankle injury playing for Bayern Munich in their 5-2 win over Darmstadt last weekend and will not be risked for the meeting with Brazil at Wembley.

The former Tottenham striker also faces the possibility of missing Tuesday's friendly against Belgium at Wembley

That will be the final match before England boss Gareth Southgate names his Euro 2024 squad, although Kane has no worries about his place on the flight to Germany in June.

Ajax midfielder Jordan Henderson and Chelsea forward Cole Palmer remain with the England squad, but they are also sidelined by injuries for

the sold-out clash against the Selecao. Arsenal forward Bukayo Saka withdrew from Southgate's squad due to injury on Thursday.

"Tomorrow no Harry Kane, no Jordan Henderson, no Cole Palmer," England boss Southgate said.

"I would say Cole and Henderson have a better chance of Belgium than Harry. He'd be extremely doubtful for that".

Kane's absence is a blow but Ollie Watkins and Ivan Toney now have a chance to stake their claim for the role as Euro understudy to England's record goal-scorer. — AFP



England captain Harry Kane will miss the friendly against Brazil. PHOTO: AFP

## Curacao floating market reborn after Venezuela border reopened

For four generations, the Cordero family travelled regularly from Venezuela to the island of Curacao to sell their fruit and vegetables at the picturesque “floating” market of Willemstad.

Their source of income was abruptly taken away when Caracas shuttered its maritime and air border with Curacao in 2019 in a diplomatic dispute. Reopened last year, the market is slowly coming back to life, and

the Corderos’ hopes with it.

“The reopening was very good news for everyone, for Venezuelans and Curacaoans, as it is a source of revenue for everyone,” said 32-year-old Rene Cordero, whose father, grandfather and great-grandfather all sold goods at the market.

His dad, Ramon, first travelled to the autonomous Dutch Caribbean island of Curacao when he was 16, with his father. Caracas halted air and sea

travel to Curacao amid an international spat following the 2018 re-election of President Nicolas Maduro in elections widely denounced as neither free nor fair.

Curacao at the time received food and medicine sent by the United States as “humanitarian aid” requested by opposition leader Juan Guaido, then recognized as Venezuela’s de facto leader by the White House in a failed bid to displace Maduro. — AFP



Last year, Curacao with its turquoise waters welcomed more than 500,000 visitors, according to the tourist office of the island of 150,000 inhabitants. **PHOTO: AFP**



A calligrapher from Viet Nam writes at Temple of Literature and Imperial Academy in Hanoi, Viet Nam, 4 February 2024. **PHOTO: HU JIALI/XINHUA**

## Viet Nam forecast to transition to aged society by 2038

*Experts suggest that population ageing should be seen as an opportunity for sustainable development by actively involving the elderly in various aspects due to their experience, knowledge, skills, and financial resources.*

VIET Nam is forecast to transition from an ageing society to an aged society by 2038, according to the Ministry of Health.

By this year, the country will have more than 21 million elderly, accounting for nearly 20 per cent of total population, Vietnam News Agency reported Thursday.

The number of people aged 60 and more accounted for 11.9 per cent of total population in 2019. By 2050, the figure is forecast to rise to over 25 per cent. The ministry said it would take Viet Nam over 20 years to transition from an aging society to an aged society while other developed countries need more time — around one century. The ministry cited experts as saying that aging population in Viet Nam led to labour shortage. The industrial and service sectors will struggle to locate enough human resources, potentially lowering labour productivity, competitiveness, and negatively impacting economic growth. — Xinhua

## The unexplained: Giant Swedish archive logs paranormal phenomena

*The AFU is considered the world’s largest library of paranormal phenomena, with 4.2 kilometres (2.6 miles) of underground shelves.*

NEWSPAPER CLIPPINGS, books and first-hand accounts of people who said they visited other planets are catalogued in a giant Swedish archive on paranormal phenomena, attracting the curious and researchers from around the world.

The Archives for the Unexplained



A giant Swedish archive on paranormal phenomena attracts curious individuals and researchers from around the world. **PHOTO: AFP**

(AFU) claims to be the world’s biggest library of paranormal phenomena, with 4.2 kilometres (2.6 miles) of shelves running underground.

Clas Svahn, 65, and Anders Liljegren, 73, who run the archive located in the southeastern town of Norrkoping, say they are neither superstitious nor believers, but rather “curious investigators of the unknown”.

The AFU — the name of both the library and the association that has collected documentation for more than 50 years — is mainly comprised of books, but also more original documents, such as first-hand accounts of paranormal activity recorded on tape and photos of ghosts. — AFP