

The Global **NEW LIGHT** of MYANMAR



State Administration Council Chairman Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Thadoe Maha Thray Sithu Thadoe Thiri Thudhamma Min Aung Hlaing inspects the parade columns at yesterday's Armed Forces Day event in Nay Pyi Taw.

SAC Chairman Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Thadoe Maha Thray Sithu Thadoe Thiri Thudhamma Min Aung Hlaing delivers speech at 79th Anniversary of Armed Forces Day parade

CHAIRMAN of the State Administration Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Thadoe Maha Thray Sithu Thadoe Thiri Thudhamma Min Aung Hlaing delivered an address at the 79th Anniversary of Armed Forces Day parade at Nay Pyi Taw Parade Ground yes-

terday evening. On the agenda, the Anawrahta Column, led by column commander Brig-Gen San Yu Naing; Kyansittha Column, led by Brig-Gen Zaw Myint Oo; Bayintnaung Column, led by Commodore Tin Maung Than; Aung Zeya Column, led by Brig-Gen Ye Yint Win; Hsinbyushin Column, led by Brig-Gen Myo

Min Tun; Bandoola Column, led by Brig-Gen Zaw Hein Kyaing; Aung San Column, led by Police Brig-Gen Zaw Lin Tun; and all columns led by Parade Commander Maj-Gen Thein Zaw marched into the parade ground.

On their marching route, they were garlanded by the Senior General's wife, Daw Kyu Kyu

Hla, the Vice-Senior General's wife, Daw Than Than Nwe, wife of the Chief of the General Staff (Army, Navy and Air), wife of the Commander-in-Chief (Navy), wife of the Commander-in-Chief (Air) and wives of senior military officers. Along their route, they were also garlanded by Tattamadaw members, families, MPF

members, artistes and people.

The ceremony was also attended by Deputy Minister for Defence of the Russian Federation Colonel General Alexander Vasilyevich Fomin and party, Chief of the General Staff (Army, Navy and Air) General Thiri Pyanchi Maung Maung Aye,

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6 forex licences revoked, 4 suspended for six months

NATIONAL

SAC Chairman Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General ...

FROM PAGE-1

Commander-in-Chief (Navy) Vice-Admiral Zeya Kyaw Htin, Commander-in-Chief (Air) General Zeya Kyaw Htin Tun Aung, the SAC Secretary, the SAC Joint Secretary, council members, Union-level officials, senior military officers from the Office of the Commander-in-Chief, families of Thirty Comrades, State dignitaries, military attachés of foreign missions, representatives from NCA signatory ethnic armed organizations, chairmen and officials from political parties, families of Aung San Thuriya title award winners and relatives, Tatmadaw members and families of Thiha Thura, Thura and military gallantry title and certificate winners, officials from various associations, artistes in



Parade columns march onto Nay Pyi Taw Parade Ground for the 79th Armed Forces Day Anniversary yesterday.

the TV play in honour of the Armed Forces Day, winners in the contests, well-wishers, offi-



Daw Kyu Kyu Hla, wife of the Senior General, presents garlands to a Tatmadaw member from the parade columns.

cial and local and foreign media.

The Senior General took salute of Tatmadaw members and MPF members from parade columns and inspected the parade columns. They all saluted the State flag and fallen Tatmadaw members and recited four oaths.

The Senior General delivered an address. (The full text of the address is reported on page 4.)

Then, Tatmadaw members and MPF members from parade columns led by Parade Commander Maj-Gen Thein Zaw saluted the Senior General and left the parade ground.

When the parade columns marched past the Senior General, MTX-1A and PT-6 aeroplanes installed with 79 logo formation illumination in honour of the 79th Anniversary of Armed Forces Day, two H-125 helicopters with trail formation, Bell-206 helicopters with trail formation, two Eurocopters with trail formation, two H-125 helicopters with

Echelon formation, two Bell-206 helicopters with echelon formation, a Beech 1900D freighter flying along 295-degree route from eastern 45 degrees from the view deck, two Su-30 SME fourth-generation multipurpose heavy fighters with echelon formation twice, a MiG-29 multipurpose fighter launching flares from the straightening point of the view desk showed demonstration to salute the Senior General.

The Senior General cordially greeted the distinguished guests and left the parade ground. Then, the parade of the 79th Anniversary of Armed Forces Day successfully concluded.

Bronze statues of three emperors who established the first, second and third Myanmar empires and the torch and emblems of the 79th Anniversary of Armed Forces Day can be seen in the Nay Pyi Taw parade ground where the 79th Anniversary of Armed Forces Day parade was held. Moreover, flags of the Bur-

ma Independence Army, Burma Defence Army, Tatmadaw (Army, Navy and Air), directorates of the Office of the Commander-in-Chief (Army), and colourful flags of military commands and divisions are being hoisted. The archway of the parade ground is decorated with LED strip lights in colours representing the parade columns. The banner bearing Welcome to the Parade columns, the State flag and the flags of Tatmadaw (Army, Navy and Air) are decorated with lighting effects.

Additionally, as a gesture of honouring the 79th Anniversary of Armed Forces Day, posters depicting the movements of soldiers from the Tatmadaw (Army, Navy and Air) to ensure sharpening of patriotism are erected along Yangon-Mandalay Highway and Pinlaung junction. Moreover, the mottos of Tatmadaw are hung in Myanmar and English along the route to the parade ground. — MNA/TTA



Ethnic representatives attend yesterday's event.



Foreign military attachés among distinguished guests at yesterday's event.

NATIONAL

SAC Chairman, senior military officers pay tribute at Memorial to Fallen Heroes in Nay Pyi Taw

IN commemoration of the 79th Armed Forces Day, a ceremony was held at the Memorial to the Fallen Heroes in Nay Pyi Taw. State Administration Council Chairman Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Thadoe Maha Thray Sithu Thadoe Thiri Thudhamma Min Aung Hlaing attended and laid flower baskets in tribute.

The event saw the participation of State Administration Council Vice-Chairman Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Thiri Pyan Chi Maha Tharay Sithu Soe Win, Chief of the General Staff (Army, Navy and Air) General Thiri Pyan Chi Sithu Maung Maung Aye, Commander-in-Chief (Navy) Vice-Admiral Zeya Kyaw Htin Zwe Win Myint, Commander-in-Chief (Air) General Zeya Kyaw Htin Sithu Tun



The Senior General and high-ranking officers pay tribute with salutes to fallen Tatmadaw members in Nay Pyi Taw.

Aung, retired military officers, high-ranking military officers from the Office of the Commander-in-Chief. After paying their respects inside the Beikman, they signed the visitors' book and viewed round the facility. — MNA/TS

Tatmadaw families led by Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and wife pay respect to retired senior military officers who attended 79th Anniversary of Armed Forces Day ceremony



SAC Chairman C-in-C of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, his wife, and high-ranking officers pay obeisance to retired senior military officers yesterday.

FAMILIES of Tatmadaw (Army, Navy and Air) paid respect to retired senior military officers who attended the 79th Anniversary of Armed Forces Day parade at Zeyathiri Beikman in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

Led by Chairman of the State Administration Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General

Min Aung Hlaing and his wife Daw Kyu Kyu Hla, SAC Vice-Chairman Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Soe Win and his wife Daw Than Than Nwe, Chief of the General Staff (Army, Navy and Air) General Maung Maung Aye and wife, senior military officers from the Office of the Commander-in-Chief (Army, Navy and

Air) paid respects to 16 retired senior military officers and ten wives.

On the occasion, the Senior General said that those senior military officers were their parents and teachers. Tatmadaw has been safeguarding the State from the danger of disintegration in successive eras. At present, Tatmadaw is serving the State responsibilities under the

Constitution (2008). Some EAOs are committing terror acts because of ethnic and political affairs. Tatmadaw is emphasizing non-disintegration of national unity and non-disintegration of the Union under the law. The People's Military Service Law and the Reserve Forces Law were enacted due to the current situation of the nation in order to build a durably stable and

peaceful Union. He expressed his gratitude to those retired senior military officers for their attendance at the Armed Forces Day ceremonies. It is a fine tradition of Tatmadaw to pay respects to seniors.

The Senior General and wife, as well as senior military officers and their wives, on behalf of families of the Tatmadaw (Army, Navy and Air), paid homage to retired senior military officers in line with Myanmar traditions.

On behalf of retired senior military officers, General Thein Sein, Colonel Nyunt Swe and Lt-Gen Aung Htwe made best wishes for Tatmadaw families led by the Senior General, wife and party to enjoy physical and mental well-being.

The Senior General and wife, the Vice-Senior General and wife and senior military officers and their wives presented gifts to the retired senior military officers in person.

The Senior General and wife cordially greeted retired senior military officers and their wives who attended the ceremony. — MNA/TTA

NATIONAL

Senior General: National Defence and Security Council to facilitate transition to democratically elected government

THE following is a full-text speech delivered by Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Thadoe Maha Thray Sithu Thadoe Thiri Thudhama Min Aung Hlaing at the 79th Armed Forces Day Parade yesterday.

Comrades,

Today commemorates the 79th Anniversary of the Armed Forces Day of our Tatmadaw, a symbol born out of Myanmar's independence struggle, the nation-building needs and aspirations of its people. Moreover, this day holds immense historical significance, marking the successful initiation of the anti-fascist movement by our Tatmadaw in collaboration with indigenous people on 27 March 1945, demonstrating a profound sense of nationalism.

Comrades,

Believing that regaining lost Independence required armed revolution, General Aung San led the Thirty Comrades to Japan to learn modern military tactics. With Japan's assistance, they repelled English imperialists. Subsequently, Tatmadaw, in unity with the people, defended against fascist Japan due to its oppressive governance and attitudes, beginning on 27 March 1945. It was Tatmadaw's effort, hand in hand with the people, to gain Independence, and it also is Tatmadaw positioning itself ahead of the populace to prevent the loss of the nation's sovereignty and Independence. Due to the legacy of the Divide and Rule policy imposed by British imperialists, the mass remnants of World War II weapons in a war-torn country, and diverse political ideologies, numerous armed insurgent groups, colloquially referred to as "**Multicoloured Insurgents**," emerged across the nation following the underground retreat of the Burma Communist Party (BCP) in March 1948. Despite this, our Tatmadaw diligently safeguarded the integrity of the Union from disintegration through extensive nationwide operations.

Comrades,

Our Tatmadaw, with sacrificial commitment and regarding itself as bearing a national duty related to sovereignty, not only combated internal multi-coloured insurgents but also deterred and suppressed foreign aggressions, such as the Kuomintang's intrusions in Shan State and the Mujahidin insurrection in Rakhine State. Moreover, Tatmadaw steadfastly positioned itself at the forefront in safeguarding the nation during critical moments of threat, including the chaotic administrative



The Senior General delivers the speech at the 79th Armed Forces Day Parade.

upheaval during the 1988 uprising and the attempt to seize the State power through forcible means in 2020. Hence, I would like to earnestly emphasize that, always prioritizing the interests of the State and the people. Likewise those of our endeavours since Independence struggle to defend against any detrimental acts to Our Three Main National Causes, Tatmadaw shall continue to pursue the same stance in the future.

Comrades,

Although our country adopted a Parliamentary Democracy system upon Independence, the deterioration of national unity due to political issues, foreign incitements, constitutional deficiencies, armed conflicts, and dissents within political parties formed the Revolutionary Council and the Burma Socialist Programme Party to formulate state-building through a Socialist economic system from 1962 to 1988. Nevertheless, the country's economy experienced a decline due to various impositions and sanctions from internal and external elements, natural disasters, management shortcomings, and armed conflicts, followed by the occurrence of uprisings in 1988. As the country teetered on the brink of weakened national solidarity and faced the imminent danger of losing sovereignty, our Tatmadaw assumed State responsibility in September 1988. Following the assumption of state responsibility,

our Tatmadaw not only prioritized the establishment of a multiparty democracy system in accordance with the aspirations of the people but also drafted a constitution deemed indispensable for formulating a democratic system and the Constitution was ratified through a nationwide referendum in 2008. Afterwards, a free and fair multiparty democracy General Election was held in November 2010, facilitating a smooth and peaceful transition to democracy.

Comrades,

Despite variations in organizational structures, strengths, and objectives among international armies, the common goal is to safeguard the nation. Similarly, constitutions may differ among countries, but each Constitution is ratified based on long-term national interests and prevailing conditions. Constitutions, typically drafted based on the origins, historical backgrounds, ethnicity, religion, politics, economy, and other factors of each country, cannot be judged as to which country's Constitution is as right or wrong, as the primary consideration is the national interests of the respective nation.

In the 2008 Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, the inclusion of the clause outlining Tatmadaw's role is aimed at correcting and preventing weaknesses experienced in the past in advance. I would like to emphasize that the ratified paragraphs

outlining Tatmadaw's role in the Constitution are not for the benefit of Tatmadaw but with anticipation for the good of the country.

Comrades,

While scrutinizing the voting list of the 2020 election, it is evident to all comrades that the multiparty democratic General Election was conducted disorderly and marred by excessive electoral fraud, and such actions have tarnished the reputation of our nation. While verifying the list of 38.27 million eligible voters issued by the Union Election Commission for the 2020 General Election, firm evidence was unveiled that 11.3 million ballots were found to be ineligible, amounting to 29.54 per cent of voting fraud. The General Election is not only a national duty directly tied to the reputation of the country but also a process of selecting leaders who will shape the future trajectory of the nation. It is crucial to earn the trust of the people through the implementation of a free and fair multiparty democracy system, thereby shaping a decent political history. Therefore, Tatmadaw temporarily assumed the State's responsibility in line with the Constitution on 1 February 2021 to prevent the NLD government from usurping the State authority through illegitimate means.

Comrades,

Since the pre-Independence period, the history of our country's political landscape has been characterized by unpredictability and complexity, echoing the sentiment of intransigent behaviours: "**Intricate patterns of politics are similar to the nature's outcome of an egg or a cloud**". Even after Independence, a stable political system has been elusive due to diverse ideologies and perspectives, resulting in the implementation of various political systems. It can be observed that along with the unstable political system and internal ethnic armed conflicts, the development of the country has lagged behind compared to other nations. Hence, to bolster the growth and resilience of the present democratic trajectory, the State Administration Council is currently pursuing two political visions: "**To strengthen a disciplined and authentic multiparty democratic system; To foster a Union founded upon democratic and federal systems**" and the two national visions of the State: "**the prosperity of the nation and food security**". In other words, these visions represent the nation's ambitions that must be relentlessly

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pursued. To achieve these ambitions, reflecting the absolute reality of the country, the Five-Point Roadmap and the Nine Objectives have been tailored and implemented. In doing so, I would like to urge Tatmadaw personnel to fulfil any assigned roles with a thorough understanding of these roadmaps and objectives.

Comrades,

Upon completion of the procedural measures of the state of emergency, the State Administration Council shall transfer the responsibilities of the State to the National Defence and Security Council. Consequently, in accordance with the Constitution, the National Defence and Security Council must convene a free and fair multiparty democracy General Election and continue to facilitate the procedure to delegate State power to a democratically elected government. To assist the implementation measures, the State Administration Council is overseeing the verification process of voter lists for the General Election, and plans are underway to introduce a Mixed-Member Proportional (MMP) electoral system, which combines the First Past the Post system (FPTP) and Proportional Representation (PR) allowing for increased representation for various ethnic groups, regions, and respective societal interests in the parliament. Additionally, security measures are being expedited to ensure that voters can cast their ballots freely, without any perception of injustice such as intimidation, coercion, undue influence and group-based bullying. While efforts are underway to conduct an election successfully, certain Ethnic Armed Organizations (EAOs) and terrorist groups, so-called People's Defence Forces (PDFs), are deliberately engaging in disruptive actions to sabotage and delay the election process. Thus, our Tatmadaw assumes a leading role in ensuring the establishment of a multiparty democracy system in line with the desires of the people, and it is imperative for our Tatmadaw to steadfastly position itself at the forefront, strengthening the foundations of the multiparty democracy system and ensuring the successful conduct of the General Election.

Comrades,

In accordance with the procedural measures outlined in the Constitution for a state of emergency, our Tatmadaw's assumption of State responsibility on 1 February 2021 has faced numerous instances of political exploitation. During that period, elected representatives were dispatched to their respective places in order to address the prevailing political situation through legal channels. However, individuals who no longer had the legitimacy to stand as elected representatives formed

an unlawful committee known as the Committee Representing Pyidaungsu Hluttaw (CRPH) on 5 February 2021. Subsequently, they established an illegitimate government under the name of the National Unity Government (NUG) on 16 April of the same year. Following that, the so-called People's Defence Force (PDF) was formed while instigating their supporters to undertake armed violence. As the candidates from their respective parliaments are primarily tasked with legislation, they must possess a better understanding of and adherence to the law compared to the rest of the citizens. It is necessary to take into consideration their trustworthiness and commitment to democracy, especially as they resort to terrorism instead of utilizing legal avenues to address issues. Since then, there have been frequent occurrences of not only bombing attacks, arson attacks on villages, looting, extortion, and attacks on security posts across the country but also innocent civilians being murdered under false accusations of being informants or 'tattletales'. The most egregious offences include coercion against government employees, predominantly male and female teachers and education service personnel, instances of random killings and the use of individuals as human shields during arrests. Their primary objective is to lower the education level of youths and indoctrinate them into terrorism, blurring their ability to distinguish between right and wrong. Hence, it is imperative to take timely preventive measures to thwart terrorist acts, which are universally condemned by societies and countries worldwide, including our own. In such doing, Tatmadaw must go hand in hand with the people. I would like to impart that the international community should not condone the terrorist activities of extremist groups such as CRPH, NUG, PDF, and NLD, and the condemnation of deliberate acts of violence targeting the educational sector is necessary.

Comrades,

It is evident that some ethnic armed organizations and terrorist groups are intensifying intimidation tactics and recruitment efforts, often at gunpoint, and they are actively fomenting societal hatred as a top priority on their agenda. With a heterogeneous society, the formation of armed groups based on ethnicity and engaging in armed activities could undermine peace, ultimately harming the unity of the country. Against this backdrop, it is disheartening to witness youths becoming scapegoats of insurgents, misled by false narratives propagated through media sabotage. The ethnic armed terrorists operate from remote and inaccessible areas, where they earn income from

various activities such as poppy cultivation, opium and narcotic drug trafficking, smuggling of the State's own natural resources, and involvement in gambling and casino enterprises, using these illicit gains to procure arms and ammunition, produce weapons, and expand their recruitment efforts. As the next phase, their behaviour in successive periods has shown that these armed groups are merely providing various reasons and excuses to showcase ethnic affairs as a means to undermine the State through armed insurgency. It can be said that they are hazardous organizations as they originated from illicit acts such as drug production and distribution, dealing and smuggling of natural resources. Hence, I would like to inform each of you not to make either direct or indirect contact with them. Incidents occurring in northern Shan State, Kachin State, Rakhine State, and other regions provide proof that the actions of certain ethnic armed groups and foreign-supported subversive organizations prioritize their own interests over those of Myanmar and its citizens, thus destroying the path towards forming a Union based on democratic values and federalism. Such actions could be labelled as foolish deeds since their use of force has resulted in the loss of interest among the local population and restricted students' access to education despite the availability of democratic means. Hence, Tatmadaw, Myanmar Police Force, and members of the security forces, including the people's militia, must effectively carry out their duties in accordance with the law and collaborate closely with the populace to restore peace and stability in areas experiencing unrest. Those who risk themselves for the sake of state peace and stability will also be duly honoured.

Comrades,

Ensuring the peace and stability of the State and the development of a People's Militia Strategy necessitate the implementation of military conscription, which inherently aligns with the law and is more systematic compared to the formation of People's Militia and local defence forces. In accord with our nation's geopolitical significance and the global context, the adoption of a military conscription system has become a prerequisite; thus, a military conscription law was enacted on 10 February of this year. The core intent of the system is to safeguard Our Main National Causes as a national duty. Furthermore, with the increasing number of veterans who have dutifully completed their defence duties, along with their reports and requests expressing consent to re-enlist and serve the country in any sector with patriotic spirit, the spirit to protect race and religion, and the desire to

safeguard Our Main National Causes, the Reserve Military Force Law was endorsed on 13 February. The implementation of the Reserve Military Force Law may not necessarily enlist all veterans, but instead, only those deemed eligible will be assigned. I would like to say the adoption and implementation of these two laws would increase the defence strength to a certain extent. Afterwards, necessary measures will be taken step by step to ensure state peace, stability, and the prevalence of law and order.

Comrades,

In regard to peace processes, our Tatmadaw will maintain a firm stance in alignment with the Nationwide Cease-fire Agreement (NCA). The NCA is not an agreement reached hastily; it has undergone over 5,000 negotiations and meetings since its inception. Based on the agreed points, any stipulations requiring amendments will be democratically discussed following the constitutional amendment procedure. With the inception of the NCA, Tatmadaw has released and implemented Six Peace Principles. The Six Peace Principles not only align with the essence of the NCA but also stem from the "Knowledge" gained through continuous peace efforts over successive periods, and they represent the "reality" that must be pursued to strengthen ongoing peacebuilding efforts. I would like to emphasize that our country adheres to the principles of peaceful coexistence for global peace and maintains friendly relations with other nations while simultaneously prioritizing domestic peacebuilding efforts.

Comrades,

Some powerful nations are intervening in the internal affairs of smaller nations through various means, seeking to manipulate them according to their own interests. It is important to recognize that such actions resemble a form of neo-colonialism. Given our country's geographical location, it is evident that neo-colonialists are providing aid and support, often disguised in various forms, to governments and organizations that align with their interests, and they attempt to weaken and disintegrate organizations that do not comply with their imperatives and prioritize national interests. Hence, as personnel serving in defence and security roles for the nation, it is essential for all of you to maintain cohesion within your unit, and unity among different units is also crucial. The leaders of respective units and corps are required to have the ability to consolidate internal solid cohesion. Only then can cohesion within the unit be cemented, enabling the dutiful execution of impending commands and duties.

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Senior General: National Defence and Security Council to facilitate transition to democratically elected government

FROM PAGE-5 Comrades,

With the rapid developments in information technology and communication networks in the current age, there is an increasing misuse of social media. Opposing individuals and organizations are exploiting social media to target Tatmadaw, attempting to degrade its political reputation, falsify public opinion, and incite subversion. Hence, all citizens, including our Tatmadaw members, need to be critical and vigilant regarding unreliable media sources. National defence duties can be performed to the fullest extent only when unity between Tatmadaw and the people is solidified. Therefore, I urge you to prioritize fostering unity

with the people. As Tatmadaw members, adhering to the military code of conduct, engaging in organizational activities in the public domain, and providing public welfare services in respective regions must be done with genuine intent and goodwill.

Comrades,

The current conflicts worldwide demonstrate that threats involving nuclear and conventional weapons in the past have now merged with information warfare, powerful nations are forming alliances to intimidate weaker ones, and small nations are being used as proxies in attempts to contain neighbouring states. Therefore, I encourage you to follow Tatmadaw's work process of

“Study, Practise, Comply” to transform into a technologically advanced modern armed force.

Comrades,

While eliminating internal destructive elements disguised as proponents of democracy and countering externally sponsored terrorist groups, I would like to conclude by urging you to comply with the objectives set forth for the 79th Armed Forces Day, which include:

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;

To actively participate in implement-

ing 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;

To steadfastly implement enhancement of three capabilities in accord with the work process of Tatmadaw, such as study, practise and comply in building a modern patriotic Tatmadaw with powerful strength and sharpening prowess;

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.

SAC Vice-Chairman Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Soe Win and wife pay respect to Independence Mawgun Award winners who will attend 79th Anniversary of Armed Forces Day Parade

VICE-CHAIRMAN of the State Administration Council Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Soe Win and his wife Daw Than Than Nwe paid respect to two Independence Mawgun Award second-class winners and two Independence Mawgun Award third-class winners, totalling four who will attend the 79th Anniversary of Armed Forces Day parade by hosting a tea party at the hall of Bayintnaung Villa in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

The Vice-Senior General and wife, the Chief of the General Staff (Army, Navy and Air) and wife, and senior military officers from the Office of the Commander-in-Chief asked about health conditions of those

award winners in individuals and presented fortified edible bird's nests and cash assistance.

The Vice-Senior General and his wife joined the tea party together with the Independence Mawgun award recipients.

On the occasion, Independence Mawgun Award third-class-winner U Maung Maung, aged 101; Independence Mawgun Award second-class winner U Kyaw Sein, 100; Independence Mawgun Award third-class winner U Aye Thein, 96; and Independence Mawgun Award second-class winner U Ba Chaw, 96, expressed their good health conditions and recounted their experiences in fighting against Fascist Japan with patriotic and national spirits. — MNA/TTA



The Vice-Senior General Soe Win presents fortified edible bird's nests and cash assistance to one of the Independence Mawgun Award recipients.

Global NEW LIGHT of MYANMAR

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Printed and published at the Global New Light of Myanmar Printing Factory at No.150, Nga Htat Kyee Pagoda Road, Bahan Township, Yangon, by the Global New Light of Myanmar Daily under Printing Permit No. 00510 and Publishing Permit No. 00629.
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Due to limitation of space we are only able to publish "Letter to the Editor" that do not exceed 500 words. Should you submit a text longer than 500 words please be aware that your letter will be edited.

INTERVIEW

Russian Deputy Defence Minister, military attachés visit Maravijaya Buddha Image

A delegation led by Deputy Minister of Defense of the Russian Federation, Colonel General Alexander Vasilyevich Fomin, as well as foreign military attachés and officials, visited the Buddha Park in Dekkhinathiri Township, Nay Pyi Taw, yesterday.

The pagoda board of trustees and experts who participated in the construction and preservation of the Buddha image showed video recordings of the measures taken to erect it successfully. They offered the Buddha statue to the delegation led by Deputy Minister of Defence of the Russian Federation, Colonel General Alexander Vasilyevich Fomin, military attachés and officials from foreign military attaché offices.

Afterwards, the visitors paid homage to the Maravijaya Buddha Image, visited the Agga Dhipadhi Sasanna Beikman and marble inscription pagodas, Thudhamma shrines, Musleindha Lake and other religious buildings. The delegation led by Colonel General Alexander Vasilyevich Fomin, Deputy Minister of Defence of the Russian Federation, who visited the Maravijaya Buddha Image yesterday, expressed the following: -



Colonel General Alexander Fomin

Interview of visitors to Maravijaya Buddha Image

1. Colonel General Alexander Fomin, Deputy Minister of Defence of the Russian Federation

First, let me express my deep affection for Myanmar. My history with Myanmar dates back to 2005, and I have many friends here. I have closely collaborated with many military and civil leaders, including the Head of State, to develop this beautiful nation.

The place where I stand right now is Maravijaya Buddha Park, which, I believe, was an enormous project. Building a Buddha Park of this grandeur is a tremendous achievement.

Only benevolent leaders are able to complete a spectacular Buddha image.

The people of Myanmar are also pious and devoted to this project, hence its eventual success. I would like to commend Myanmar and its people for their accomplishment in conserving cultural heritage and the Maravijaya Buddha Image.

2. Lama Bair Tsympilov, the abbot of Chita Datsan (Moscow Buddhist Community)

I would like to express gratitude to everyone responsible for facilitating this trip so that our delegation can pay homage to the Maravijaya Buddha Image.

I felt truly honoured to have the opportunity to pay respect to such a marvellous Buddha park.

I thank everyone on behalf of all the followers of Buddhism living in the Russian Federation.

The Buddha image is the tallest marble Buddha statue in the world.

The spectacle of the Buddha Park is almost magnetic, attracting every believer around the world. Devout Buddhists will have the opportunity to practise Dhamma while visiting Buddha Park.

I am proud of the citizens of Myanmar for successfully completing this Buddha image.



Lama Bair Tsympilov

3. Mr Pavel Gusev, chairman of the Russian Defence Ministry's Public Council

Every nationality expresses its culture spectacularly. The ability to modify culture showcases the greatness of its people.

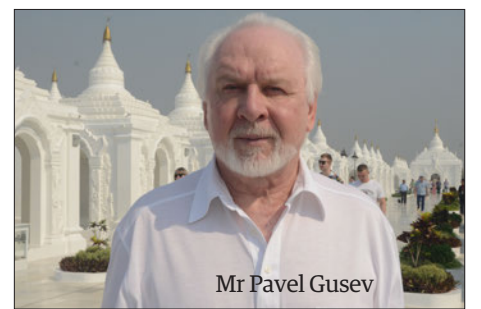
The Maravijaya Buddha Park is the icon of Myanmar people's greatness since it is a manifestation of Myanmar's cultural heritage. It also shows the development of a nation.

You cannot judge a nation's development just by its modern cities.

The capacity to construct a religious edifice of such magnitude also reflects a country's development.

We witness significant growth in the country under the leadership of a benevolent State leader who prioritizes the advancement of religious and cultural heritage.

I wish peace and prosperity for Myanmar. — MNA/KZL/NT



Mr Pavel Gusev

Ngwehsaung attracts domestic, foreign tourists on Armed Forces Day



The photo shows visitors enjoying fun at the Ngwehsaung Beach in Pathein District of Ayeyawady Region on 27 March 2024. PHOTO: NGWEHSAUNG IPRD

NGWEHSAUNG, situated in Pathein District, Ayeyawady Region, saw a surge of domestic travellers from across Myanmar and foreign tourists gathering to unwind on 27 March, Armed Forces Day.

Renowned for its extensive coastline, pristine beaches, and good hos-

pitality services offered by hotels and guesthouses, Ngwehsaung Beach has long been a magnet for holidaymakers.

Reports indicated that Ngwehsaung Township experienced a significant influx of visitors yesterday, with tourists flocking to popular spots such as Mwaykyun Beach, Latekyun Beach, Nyaikkyun Beach, Sinmakyun Beach, Kyunhlarshay Beach, Lover Island, Phayathonsu, and Moemakha Elephant Camp.

U Thein Zaw, administrator of Ngwehsaung, highlighted the collaborative efforts between Ngwehsaung Police Station, township-level departments, and beach security teams to ensure that guests can enjoy the beautiful beach without any worries. Additionally, measures are taken to regulate beach vendors systematically to prevent traffic congestion. — Ngwehsaung IPRD/TKO

OPINION

Ensure food security and poverty alleviation

GLOBAL leaders embraced a transformative vision in 2015 when they collectively adopted 17 sustainable development goals (SDGs) aimed at improving the lives of people worldwide, particularly in developing and underdeveloped nations. These goals, slated to endure until 2030, sought to address pressing issues such as poverty alleviation and food security.

However, a recent report, drawing on evaluations from international societies affiliated with the United Nations, reveals a significant disparity between the ongoing implementation of SDGs in all countries and the intended missions set by global leaders for the years leading up to 2030. The report emphasizes the inherent challenges in fully accomplishing the goals within the specified timeframe, suggesting a potential achievement of only around 20 per cent.

Despite progress in tackling issues of poverty, starvation, and inequality, the report underscores the complexity of achieving all SDGs by 2030. Goal No 2, dedicated to eradicating hunger, particularly presents a formidable challenge, with the report acknowledging the difficulty in completely resolving global starvation issues due to persistent armed conflicts worldwide.

Hence, both governmental and private sectors must strike a delicate balance while prioritizing poverty alleviation for the general public. Collaborative efforts are essential for steering nations toward sustainable development liberating individuals from the shackles of poverty and hunger. Stakeholders from diverse realms must critically assess their respective nations' current situations and collectively determine effective strategies to lead people toward lives characterized by food security and poverty alleviation. Hence, all stakeholders have to review the actual situation of the nation and seek the best way how to take the people to a life of food security and poverty alleviation.

However, the unforeseen challenges posed by the pandemic and climate change have led to deviations and losses in numerous development projects across various countries. These disruptions have sowed doubts about the feasibility of achieving the SDGs by 2030.

Hence, both governmental and private sectors must strike a delicate balance while prioritizing poverty alleviation for the general public. Collaborative efforts are essential for steering nations toward sustainable development liberating individuals from the shackles of poverty and hunger. Stakeholders from diverse realms must critically assess their respective nations' current situations and collectively determine effective strategies to lead people toward lives characterized by food security and poverty alleviation. Hence, all stakeholders have to review the actual situation of the nation and seek the best way how to take the people to a life of food security and poverty alleviation.

“YOU'RE beautiful. Yes, yes, you are. You're beautiful, aren't you?" The words are spoken in a singsong, accompanied by head nods and the broadest of smiles.

It's a recording of a mother's first words to her newborn baby. She is holding the tiny little boy on her lap, looking intently down into his face, her own expression wide with wonder. The baby is staring up at her, his eyes rolling a bit as they are still not under his control. It is a picture of the first forming of the bonds that make us human: mother and child.

The word we use to describe these links is peculiarly apt: bond. Both a joining together and, in the plural, sometimes a constriction and constraint. The bonds that join us to parents, spouses, family, friends, colleagues, and the wider society set us in contexts that give our lives shape, substance, and wider meaning. There is evidence that even at the very earliest stage in life, when a baby is less than a day old, it will preferentially look at a human face rather than a similar-sized object but without the normal layout of eyes, nose, and mouth. A baby is predisposed to look at faces, searching among those clustering around it for the signs that mark out its mother. Among those signs is the 'baby language' new mothers adopt with their infant: the content tends to feature repeated words and phrases, but even more important is its unusual tonal quality, a singsong rhythm that sets it apart from ordinary human communication as 'baby talk'.

The pioneering work in the study of human affections and bonds was done by the British psychologist John Bowlby (1907-1990). Working with children orphaned during World War II, Bowlby realized they mourned their lost parents and that this sense of loss was enduring and caused them considerable difficulties. Well, naturally, you might say. It wouldn't take a Freud to work that out. But the problem was, according to the prevailing psychological theories of the time (the decade or two after the end of World War II), children bonded emotionally to their parents because the parents supplied the food and

shelter that satisfied the child's 'primary drive' for sustenance and shelter. The emotional bond was secondary to this primary drive. So, according to theory, these orphaned children should have formed emotional bonds with the people who now supplied them with food and shelter: foster parents, orphanage caretakers, and so on. But they did not. They carried the original loss with them, and despite the general kindness of the people taking care of them and their satisfying primary drive for food and shelter, the children did not form anything like the same emotional bonds with their new caregivers as they had enjoyed with their parents.

Bowlby's genius was that he was able to remove the blinkers placed over his eyes by his training and look at what he was seeing in the children and adolescents he was treating. To formulate his work, Bowlby made use of the studies by Harry Harlow with baby rhesus monkeys. Harlow raised the baby monkeys with two artificial mothers: a wire 'mother' who provided milk and a terry-cloth 'mother' who

gave no sustenance but could be cuddled. The little baby rhesus monkeys preferred the terry-cloth 'mother', only visiting the wire 'mother' to feed. When coupled with Konrad Lorenz's work on imprinting in animals such as ducks, Bowlby had the elements for a new and revolu-

dependency and helplessness of human babies and children. Babies and children exhibit particular attachment behaviours: proximity/contact maintenance and separation protest. In other words, babies and young children try to stay close to their parents and cry when they are

BRIDGES OF Love

By Min Zan

tionary theory of attachment.

Bowlby argued that the attachment between children and parents in human beings was specific to us as a species and resulted from the unusual

separated from them. By keeping in contact with a parent who provides protection (other work cited by Bowlby showed that babies and children formed attachments to figures who provided

security but did not necessarily provide them with food: that is, fathers), a baby is ensuring its own survival.

In evolutionary terms, the only protection a human infant

could find was from its parents: other species might leave an infant in safety in a den or leave it camouflaged by its own markings, but none of these options are available for a human baby. Safety lies in the arms of mum or dad. Thus, natural selection ensured that human babies would exhibit a suite of behaviours to maintain contact with their parents and to prevent separation from them: think of a baby's protests when it is handed off to a visiting relative to attempt to coo over and how often the baby has to be handed back to its mother before it will settle. This safety and security-seeking behaviour continues as babies grow into children. As Bowlby drily remarked, a child is like a missile when trying to make contact with an attachment figure: it won't stop until it hits the target.

While infants become attached to their parents or caregivers, the quality of that attachment varies depending on how secure the child is about whether his or her parents will be available and respond when needed. A baby and child who grows up confident that their parents will be there when they need them and do what is needed will, not surprisingly, tend to grow up secure in other areas of life and character, although the jury remains undecided on just how widely spread this influence is through aspects of lat-

er life and character. But while the parents set the foundations and the ground floor of what we will become, it is in interacting with our peers, as children, adolescents, and adults, that the superstructure of our lives is formed. Going back to that study with infant monkeys raised with wire and terry cloth 'mothers', it is perhaps not surprising that, when introduced into the company of other monkeys after this upbringing, they proved woefully inadequate in their social relations, either abnormally fearful or aggressive. Among the females, those who did manage to mate and produce young successfully proved to be poor mothers, forgetful, and inattentive to their babies.

Human children learn a great deal by imitation and play when interacting with their fellows and typically go through three stages: solitary play, mutually aware playing, and socially interactive playing. While all three types of play persist through childhood, there is normally a shift towards a greater proportion of socially interactive playing as a child gets older. Rough-and-tumble play among boys first serves to teach boys limits and then, in adolescence, helps to create and maintain social hierarchies among peers.

In adults, the search for new bonds begins with a view toward love, marriage, partnership, and,

from the evolutionary point of view, reproduction. The pair bond between spouses is both social and sexual: a bond that is stronger psychologically, behaviorally, and sexually than other bonds. Such powerful bonding occurs in conjunction with some of the most powerful neurotransmitters in the brain firing off in abundance: oxytocin, dopamine, corticosterone, and vasopressin are among the cocktail of chemicals that produce that heady, breathy, heart-stopping sense of being in love. In this, it contrasts powerfully with the other significantly different relationships that form adult life: the relatively weak bonds of acquaintanceship.

While the strong bonds of spousal and parent-child relationships act to cement the family unit and its wider kin group, acquaintanceships allow the people engaging with them to gain access to very different sources of information and social networks. Social studies have shown that people with strong social bonds tend to share many social features and have broadly similar expectations and ideas. However, acquaintances, from work colleagues through to informal social contacts in contexts as different as sports clubs and church groups, provide access to a much wider range of social and cultural information and ideas and are therefore important in providing avenues towards improving the social and economic status of the individual and his or her strongly bonded kin.

Human beings are social animals. Raised in isolation, children will not even learn language, let alone social skills. Although some among us might seek out solitude, we are all born of the flesh of relationships and form our first and foundational attachments with the people who raise us. The old adage, first proposed by Aristotle, proves largely true: "Give me a child until he is seven, and I will show you the man." The corollary of that, in the bleak Biblical verse, is that the iniquity of the parents will play out in their children, even to the third or fourth generation. Numerous studies suggest that this is all too accurate.

Reference: *Understanding Relationships* Feb 2024



Strong social bonds profoundly impact both individual and societal well-being.

NATIONAL

MoEP, MoST Union Ministers meet Rosatom DG in Russia



Union Minister U Nyan Tun and Union Minister Dr Myo Thein Kyaw meet Director-General Mr Alexey Likhachev of Rosatom to discuss matters regarding wind, hydropower, and thermal power plants in Myanmar.

UNION Minister U Nyan Tun of the Ministry of Electric Power joined the XIII International Forum ATOMEXPO 2024 in Sochi, Russia. He engaged in discussions on 'SMR Opportunities and Challenges' during the plenary session.

Later, the Myanmar delegation, led by Union Minister U Nyan Tun and Union Minister Dr Myo Thein Kyaw, along with Myanmar Ambassador U Thit Lin Ohn, met Director-General Mr Alexey Likhachev of Rosatom to discuss matters

regarding wind, hydropower, and thermal power plants in Myanmar.

The Union ministers also participated in the plenary meeting on "Nuclear Infrastructure: nuclear project drivers". — MNA/TS

MoSWRR Union Minister receives UNOCHA Head



Head of the UNOCHA in Myanmar Mr Sajjad Mohammad Sajid calls on Union Minister Dr Soe Win yesterday.

UNION Minister for Social Welfare, Relief, and Resettlement Dr Soe Win received the Head of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) in Myanmar, Mr Sajjad Mohammad Sajid, yesterday in Nay Pyi Taw.

They openly exchanged views on humanitarian assistance activities that the UNOCHA and the ministry cooperate with, as well as the work done to finalize the signing of a new Letter of Agreement (LoA) between the UNOCHA and the ministry. — MNA/KZL

Myanmar delegation attends 2nd day of XIII International Forum ATOMEXPO 2024

MYANMAR delegation led by Union Minister for Science and Technology Dr Myo Thein Kyaw, accompanied by Myanmar Ambassador to Russian Federation U Thit Lin Ohn, attended the second day of XIII International Forum ATOMEXPO 2024 in Sochi, Russian Federation, on 26 March.

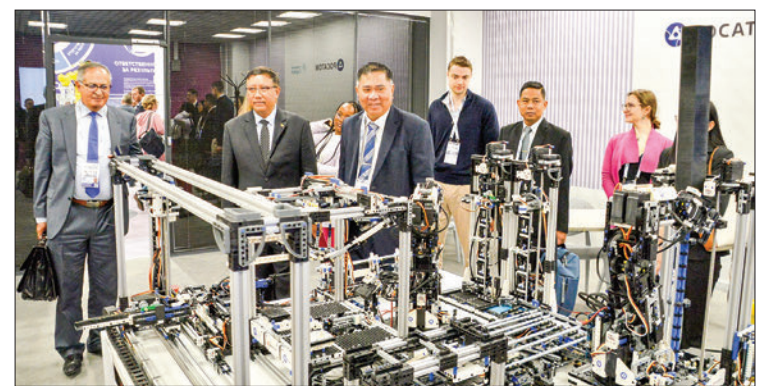
The Union minister and party attended the roundtable talk on Advanced Training for Generation IV NPP Personnel: Driver for Sustainable Development on the same morning.

Then, they visited Proryv's Sirius Robotics Training and Experimental Centre and observed the high-quality robots, multirole and transport robots and equipment designed for unmanned production, with interchangeable modules that machines can service. At noon, the Union minister joined the discussion on the topic of nuclear infrastructure: Drivers of Nuclear Projects at Sirius Park of Science and Art as a special guest.

In his discussion, the Union minister highlighted the critical role of nuclear energy as an es-

essential root resource for promising, clean and sustainable energy in shaping the future, peaceful use of nuclear power that can ensure the promotion of socioeconomic life for the public, long-term commitments for safe and sustainable atomic programmes, supports of agency to develop nuclear infrastructure in Myanmar; cooperation with the Federal Environmental, Industrial and Nuclear Supervision Service, and active participation of Myanmar in ASEANOM.

On 25 March, the Union minister received the Russia 24 media and gave an interview regarding the use of nuclear technology that is not harmful to the environment in implementing the net zero emission programme, peaceful use of nuclear energy that can ensure the promotion of socioeconomic life for the public by following procedures, rules and regulations of IAEA to ensure peaceful use of atomic energy between Myanmar and Russia and nuclear infrastructure development measures of the country. — MNA/KTZH



Union Minister Dr Myo Thein Kyaw observes high-quality robots displayed at Proryv's Sirius Robotics Training and Experimental Centre.

Indo-Myanmar Friendship Association holds Holi 2024 in New Delhi

THE Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) reported that the Holi 2024 festival took place in New Delhi, India, on 25 March, organized by the Indo-Myanmar Friendship Association.

Holi 2024 aimed to foster cultural exchange and strengthen mutual friendship and understanding within the Myanmar-Indian community.

During the Holi 2024 event, staff from the Myanmar embassy and Myanmar families partici-

pated in traditional Myanmar dances, while Indian dancers entertained with their traditional dances and music. Traditional cuisine from both Myanmar and India was also offered. Additionally, guests had the opportunity to partake in the vibrant tradition of splashing colourful powder, which is characteristic of the Indian festival.

Attendees included staff and families from the Myanmar Embassy and the office of the Myan-



The photo shows a scene of the Holi 2024 Festival in New Delhi organized by the Indo-Myanmar Friendship Association.

mar military attaché, Myanmar citizens and students residing in

India, as well as representatives from various countries such as

the Brunei Ambassador, Thai Ambassador, Nepalese Ambassador, Sri Lanka Ambassador, Kazakhstan Ambassador, and Kenya Ambassador in New Delhi. Moreover, representatives from ASEAN countries and partner nations, along with religious leaders from Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, and Jainism, entrepreneurs, and members of the Indo-Myanmar Friendship Association, were present at the event. — ASH/ TMT

NATIONAL

Fisheries Federation urges fish farmers to secure reserve ponds amid El Niño threat

THE Myanmar Fisheries Federation has advised fish farmers to maintain reserve ponds for water exchange. This recommendation aims to safeguard fish farming operations from potential impacts caused by the moderate El Niño forecast for this month.

The Department of Meteorology and Hydrology, in collaboration with the federation, has announced irregular rainfall patterns, increased daytime temperatures, and the likelihood of drought induced by the El Niño phenomenon. This advance notice enables proprietors to make necessary preparations.

Fish farmers are advised to conduct daily checks of water quality and pond conditions at 6 am each morning. Additionally, it is recommended to maintain



A fish farm in Yangon Region.

reserves for storing fresh water, avoid using feed that may contaminate the water, and consider reducing fish population in ponds where water exchange is challenging. Furthermore, transferring fish between ponds should be avoided during hot days.

If fish are observed swimming with their heads up or attempting to come ashore, it indicates low oxygen levels. In such cases, farmers should irrigate with new water, release some water from the pond, utilize water propellers or paddle boats on the surface to increase oxygen levels.

Additionally, farmers are recommended to avoid overfeeding to prevent from contaminating the water from left-over feed and to minimize the introduction of excess nutrients.

Myanmar hosts over 460,000 acres of freshwater fish, shrimp, and crab farms, with fish farms constituting the largest portion. Specifically, crab farming covers more than 2,000 acres of land. — TWA/NT

FDA warns of unregistered drugs in market

THE Food and Drug Administration (FDA), which regularly inspects drugs in the pharmaceutical market for quality, issued a notification on 26 March to inform the public about the sale of unregistered medicines in the market.

The FDA issued a notification to inform the public about the differences between registered medicines and illegal ones, highlighting the discovery of drugs, including some commonly used ones on the market, that lack quality, effectiveness, or safety guarantees.

When the FDA inspected seven cosmetics that were distributed locally in 2023, they found the products contained prohibited chemicals that can cause skin irritation, swelling, rash, numbness, muscle cramps, fatigue, headaches, dizziness, and depression. Moreover, prolonged exposure can also lead to kidney failure and other chronic diseases. Therefore, the FDA warns the public of these unsafe cosmetics on 26 March.

The warning also informs cosmetic importing companies, distributors, wholesalers, and retailers to practice industrial ethics by refraining from distributing unregistered cosmetics declared unsafe for use. The relevant authorities will take legal action against them under Section 3, Chapter 3 (D) of the Public Health Law for non-compliance. — TWA/TH

Long chilli prices plunge to K5,000 per viss

THE prices of various strains of long chillies in the Yangon market drastically dropped to K5,000 per viss in the last week of March, according to the data from commodity depots on 22 and 23 March.

New long chillies from the delta area such as Wakema, Einme and Pantanaw Townships as well as from all parts of the country have flocked to Yangon chilli market this month, but the export through border checkpoints was low due to poor transport and some other conditions. Due to the abundant chilli supply, cold storage facilities are fully stocked, leaving insufficient space for cold storage facilities at Bayintnaung depot, according to a chilli

seller on Seinpan Street from Bayintnaung Brokerage. On 22 March, the prices for Panye and Hmyani long chilli were between K5,000 and K6,500 per viss, and on 23 March, the prices were between K5,000 and K6,000 per viss.

On 24 February, Salin Panye long chilli was priced at K10,000 per viss, Myanaung long chilli at K8,700, Vietnamese long chilli K9,000 and bell peppers from the Sinbyukyun area K14,500 respectively. In mid-March, the prices of Panye long chilli plunged to K7,000-K7,200, while the prices of Myanaung long chilli declined to K6,300-K6,400.

Just as the price of long chillies has

fallen, Moehtaung chilli fetched only K7,000 per viss, while a viss of bell peppers from the Sinbyukyun area was around K10,000 on 23 March. At the beginning of March, the price of Moehtaung chili pepper was K9,000 per viss and the bell peppers from the Sinbyukyun area only K12,500. In the same period of March 2023, the price of a viss of long chilli peppers was as high as K10,500 to K11,000.

In 2024, warehouse operators expect a price plunge of the long chilli, as their prices are around K5,000 per viss when new long chilli from the delta region starts flowing into the wholesale market while cold storage facilities are full of stocks. — TWA/TH

Weekly market update of dry groceries at Bayintnaung Wholesale Centre

FOR a week from 20 to 26 March 2024, the price of sugar surged at the Bayintnaung wholesale market, whereas the prices of chilli pepper, onion and chickpea declined. The palm oil reference price has remained unchanged for the two weeks.

Potato

Shan potatoes were priced at K1,400-K1,600 per viss on 26 March. Potatoes from the Pakokku area fetched a high of K1,800 per viss.

Onion

The Bayintnaung Wholesale market saw the supply of 180,000 visses of onions on 26 March 2024. The wholesale prices stood at K1,700-K3,100 per viss on 26 March 2024, depending on the

quality, size and producing areas (Seikphyu and Monywa) that day.

The Pakokku market had an inflow of 53,000 visses of new monsoon onions on 26 March. The highest price was K1,750-K1,950 per viss there.

Palm oil

For a week from 25 to 31 March 2024, the wholesale reference price of Yangon Region was set at K5,250 per viss like that of last week.

Chilli pepper

The wholesale prices of chilli peppers were registered at K5,500-K8,300 per viss for long chilli pepper and Moehtaung variety on 26 March. The prices of bell peppers were K9,000-K10,500 per viss that day.



A dry grocery retail outlet.

Garlic

The prices of Kyukok garlic hit K10,300-K10,500 per viss while the garlic from Aungban, Shan State, fetched K5,500-K6,500 per viss depending on varieties and

qualities.

Rice

The prices hit K86,000-K90,000 per sack of non-premium new monsoon rice and K100,000 per sack of Pawkywe variety on

26 March. Meanwhile, the new premium quality Pawsan rice was worth K125,000-K160,000 per sack depending on the producing areas (Ayeyawady, Pyapon, Myaungmya, Shwebo). Glutinous rice prices hit K85,000-K95,000 per viss.

Pulses

The prices of various pulses stood at K2,923,000 per tonne of black grams (Fair Average Quality/RC), K3,152,000 per tonne of black grams (Special Quality/RC), K3,667,000 per tonne of pigeon peas (red grams) RC, K3,830 per viss of green grams (Shwewah) and K5,425-K5,700 per viss of chickpeas in Yangon's wholesale markets on 26 March 2024. — TWA/KK

NATIONAL BUSINESS

Kyat depreciates to K3,800 against US dollar

KYAT weakened to K3,800 against the US dollar on 26 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 control the dollar gains in the foreign exchange 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.

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 has been working together with law enforcement agencies to inspect and prosecute those involved in forex market manipulation, as per its notification re-



File photo shows a person at a money-changer counter counting US dollar notes.

leased on 15 March.

The reference exchange rate set by the CBM is K2,100 against a US dollar.

CBM allowed the authorized dealers (private banks) to 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 kyat-US dollar exchange rate reached approximately K4,000 on 19 Au-

gust 2023.

Under Section 9 of the Foreign Exchange Management Law, only those entities holding foreign exchange dealer licences are allowed to deal in foreign currencies 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, 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 at a maximum or equivalent amount of foreign currencies for six months if those foreign currencies that have been unused for over six months have to be exchanged in local currency at the market price through the authorized dealers or deposited into bank accounts.

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

6 forex licences revoked, 4 suspended for six months

THE Central Bank of Myanmar revoked the licences of six money changers and suspended those of four money changers for six months on 26 March as they failed to comply with the rules, guidelines and directives issued by the CBM.

CBM cancelled licences of Best Yuan Money Changer Company, Currency Hub Company, Globextra Company, My Gold Myanmar Company, Sym Chem Company and Win Yadana Gems & Jewellery Company starting from 26 March 2024 for non-compliance.

Similarly, Farmer Phoyarzar Auto Mobile Services Company, PAAMAA Company, Source Strategy Consultant & Development Company and Wu Fu Company were suspended for up to six months from 26 March 2024.

CBM notified revocation of 14 money changer licences and suspension of 11 this month for non-compliance with the CBM's rules and directives.

CBM vowed to conduct surprise inspections at money changers in order to stabilize foreign exchange rates in line with the stipulations of the existing laws, the CBM announced on 11 March.



The photo depicts Yangon's branch of the Central Bank of Myanmar.

CBM initiated an online trading market in which exporters/importers and private banks are engaged, with a view to developing the FX market. Additionally, the authorized money changers sell the foreign currency as petty cash to those going abroad, according to the CBM's notification.

Moreover, the surprise visits are being undertaken at money changers to ensure they abide by the directive

issued by the Foreign Exchange Management Law.

A combined team led by the Monitoring and Steering Committee on Gold and Currency Market, comprising competent authorities from the CBM, Yangon City Development Committee, the Department of General Administration and law enforcement agencies, has been conducting the surprise inspections. — NN/EM

High supply of new peanuts brings down prices

WITH new peanuts flooding the market, the prices plunged in Mandalay's wholesale commodity centre.

The prevailing prices stand at K6,400-K7,300 per viss in the domestic market, depending on varieties. The prices touched a high of K7,550-K11,000 per viss on the back of strong foreign and domestic demand on 18 August 2023.

Myanmar has been exporting oil seeds (sesame seeds and peanuts) to foreign countries. In April 2022, Indonesia, the world's leading palm oil exporter and a primary oil supplier to Myanmar, imposed an export ban on cooking oil to address domestic shortages. Consequently, Myanmar's Trade Department under the Ministry of Commerce temporarily halted the exports of oil crops (peanut and sesame) from 9 May 2022 to achieve oil self-sufficiency. Exports of Myanmar's edible oil crops resumed when the world's top palm oil exporters returned to normal operations, according to a notification dated 5 July 2022 from the Trade Department.

The country exported over 16,300 kilogrammes worth US\$23.01 million to foreign markets through seaborne and border trade channels over the past 11 and half months of the current financial year 2023-2024 beginning 1 April. — NN/EM

BYD's 7 millionth NEV rolls off production line

THE seven millionth new energy vehicle (NEV) produced by BYD, China's leading NEV manufacturer, rolled off the production line on Monday in Jinan, east China's Shandong Province.

The car was the Denza N7 model, and BYD has since become the world's first automaker to reach such a large NEV production output scale, the company said.

BYD's sales of pure electric passenger cars surpassed those

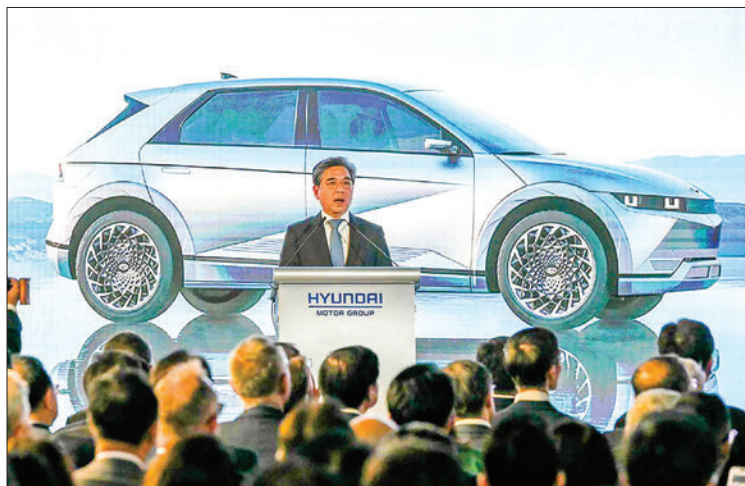
of Tesla in the fourth quarter of 2023, ranking first globally for the first time. BYD also reported annual NEV sales of more than 3.02 million units last year, maintaining its lead in the global NEV market.

BYD has sold NEVs to 78 countries and regions around the world and built overseas factories in countries including Brazil, Hungary and Thailand, according to the company. — Xinhua



An aerial drone photo taken on 12 March 2024 shows the BYD battery factory in Manaus, capital of Amazonas state, Brazil. **PHOTO: WANG TIANCONG/XINHUA**

Hyundai to invest more than \$50 bln in South Korea in major EV push



Chang Jae-hoon, president and chief executive officer of Hyundai Motor, speaks at the opening of Hyundai Motor Group's first smart urban mobility hub in Singapore on Tuesday, 21 November 2023 **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

HYUNDAI on Wednesday revealed plans to invest more than \$50 billion in South Korea by 2026, with a huge chunk dedicated to boosting the development and production of electric

vehicles.

Along with its affiliate Kia, Hyundai is the world's third-largest automaker by sales, but the South Korean giant lags in the EV sector behind Elon Musk's

Tesla and Chinese firm BYD.

Hyundai is keen to break into the global EV top three, saying last year that it was aiming to boost electric car production to more than 3.6 million units by 2030.

With the 68 trillion won (\$50.5 billion) investment announced Wednesday, Hyundai Motor Group said it wants to "secure future growth engines in an uncertain business environment through constant change and innovation".

"The automotive sector, including future mobility projects, accounts for... 63 per cent of the Group's total investment," it added. Under the plan, Hyundai will create 80,000 jobs in South Korea and build three new EV factories, with the aim of increasing annual EV production in the country to 1.51 million units by 2030. — AFP

Yen hits 34-year low, equity markets mixed ahead of key US data

THE yen plunged Wednesday to a 34-year low against the dollar after a top Bank of Japan official indicated it would press ahead with a loose monetary policy, even after this month hiking interest rates for the first time since the global financial crisis.

The fall raised speculation that authorities would step into markets to support the currency after officials warned in recent days against speculation.

The yen dropped to 151.97 to the dollar — the lowest point since 1990 — before strengthening slightly.

Earlier in the day, Bank of Japan board member Naoki Tamura said officials would not embark on a speedy pro-

gramme of monetary tightening as they try to nurture an economic recovery while keeping a lid on inflation.

"The handling of monetary policy is extremely important from here on for slow but steady progress in normalization to fold back the extraordinarily large-scale monetary easing," he said, according to Bloomberg News.

Finance Minister Shunichi Suzuki said the government was watching the situation closely.

"We're monitoring market movements with a high sense of urgency. We will take resolute action against excessive moves, without ruling out any options," he told reporters. — AFP

French IT group Atos reports 3.4 bln euro net loss

DEBT-RIDDEN French IT group Atos Tuesday reported a net loss of 3.4 billion euros in 2023 due to asset writedowns and said it was aiming for a debt restructuring by July.

Atos has to repay or refinance 3.65 billion euros (\$4 billion)

of loans and bonds maturing by the end of 2025. Chief executive officer Paul Saleh said Atos was "in discussions with our financial creditors with a view to reaching a refinancing plan by July within the framework of an amicable conciliation procedure".

"Our operating margin has improved year over year, reflecting the execution of our cost improvement plans, while our cash flow was impacted by workforce optimisation, separation costs and lower working capital actions," he said. — AFP



Over the past two years the yen has sharply weakened. **PHOTO: RICHARD A. BROOKS/AFP**

ROLLING UPDATES WORLD

Baltimore bridge response shifts to recovery of six missing

Authorities in Baltimore are shifting their focus to expanding recovery efforts following a tragic incident where a cargo ship collided with a major bridge, resulting in its collapse and leaving six individuals presumed dead.

AUTHORITIES in Baltimore were set to focus on expanding recovery efforts Wednesday after a cargo ship slammed into a major bridge, causing it to collapse and leaving six people presumed dead.

All six were members of a construction crew repairing potholes on the Francis Scott Key Bridge in the US East Coast city when the structure was sent careening into the Patapsco River at around 1:30 am (0530 GMT).

A desperate search in near-freezing conditions man-

aged to pull two people from the choppy waters, but after nearly 16 hours, officials said they had given up hope of rescuing the others.

"At this point we do not believe that we're going to find any of these individuals still alive," US Coast Guard Rear Admiral Shannon Gilreath told reporters as night fell on Tuesday.

He added that responders were transitioning "to a different phase".

Speaking at the same press conference, Maryland Secretary of State Police Roland But-

ler said the focus would shift to a "recovery operation" by Wednesday morning.

"We're hoping to put divers in the water and begin a more detailed search to do our very best to recover those six missing people," he said.

After the search effort was called off, Mayor Brandon Scott emphasized the need to help families of the victims "get the closure they deserve".

"My heart is with those families tonight and in the days ahead," he said in a statement. — AFP



Footage of the collision showed packed container ship the Dali slamming into one of the bridge's supports, causing the 47-year-old structure to collapse. **PHOTO: AFP**



Illustrative: An Etihad Airways plane lands at Israel's Ben Gurion Airport near Tel Aviv on 20 October 2020. **PHOTO: JACK GUEZ / AFP / FILE**

Israel expects huge jump in international travellers in April

The surge in traffic is attributed to the upcoming Passover holiday and the imminent resumption of services by several international airlines to Israel.

ISRAEL'S Ministry of Transportation expects that more than 1.2 million passengers will pass through Ben Gurion Airport in the month of April.

The high rate of traffic, in spite of the ongoing war in Gaza, is anticipated due to the upcoming Passover holiday and more international airlines that are expected to soon resume service to Israel.

Numerous people from around the world will visit Israel during the holiday and many Israelis will travel abroad.

About 60,000 passengers a day are expected to pass through

Israel during the Passover holiday on international flights.

The peak day in Israel is expected to be 21 April the eve of the holiday. However, due to the security situation, the volume of passengers during the Passover holiday this year is expected to be about 40 per cent lower compared to the corresponding period last year, said the ministry.

The leading destinations for Israelis in Pesach 2024 will be Greece and Cyprus, with approximately 60 aircraft travelling between the countries per day and approximately 1,840 total flights during the month of April. — ANI

Australian Outback town introduces curfew as crime soars

AUSTRALIA'S Outback capital Alice Springs introduced a two-week curfew for those under 18 on Wednesday, as authorities in the troubled community grappled with a recent surge in unrest.

The town of 25,000, which sits in the middle of Australia, has long struggled with crime and social difficulties, fanned in part by tensions between the Aboriginal and white communities and problems with alcohol consumption. Recently it has been particular-

ly on edge since the death of a teenager, who passed away when the allegedly stolen car he was in crashed two weeks ago.

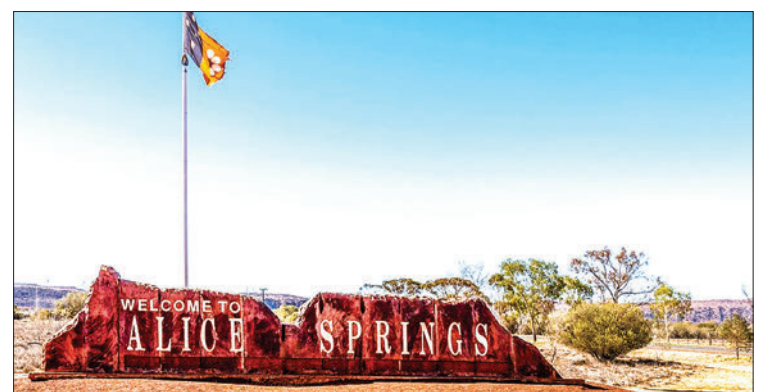
A funeral was held for the teenager on Tuesday, with violence flaring afterwards that authorities pinned on family disputes.

"Young people involved in that ceremony took it upon themselves to go to the Todd Tavern where some other family members were that they didn't share

a harmonious relationship with, and then started attacking the premises with rocks and bricks," Northern Territory Police Commissioner Michael Murphy said.

Police said up to 150 people were involved in the pub attack, a separate brawl and other incidents on Tuesday.

The new curfew will apply to those under 18 years old in the city centre from 6 pm to 6 am for two weeks starting Wednesday night. — AFP



Police said up to 150 people were involved in the pub attack, a separate brawl and other incidents on Tuesday. **PHOTO: PIX FOR VISUAL PURPOSE/AMNESTY.ORG**

SPORTS

Djokovic splits from Ivanisevic with bitter sweet message

NOVAK Djokovic and Goran Ivanisevic are to go their separate ways, the tennis world number one announced on Wednesday, ending a five-year association which yielded 12 Grand Slams.

Djokovic brought Croatia's 2001 Wimbledon champion on board as a member of the coaching team ahead of the grass court Grand Slam in 2019 and although the Serbian admitted their "on-court chemistry had its ups and downs", it also resulted in huge

success.

However, Djokovic has had by his high standards a poor start to the year, losing to eventual champion Jannik Sinner of Italy in the Australian Open semi-finals.

The 36-year-old Serbian then lost to Sinner's unheralded compatriot Luca Nardi in the third round at Indian Wells, prompting him to withdraw from the Miami tournament for what he claimed were scheduling reasons. — AFP



Novak Djokovic and Goran Ivanisevic had their ups and downs but the world tennis number one won 12 Grand Slams titles with him on his coaching team. **PHOTO: AFP**

Istanbul to host 2027 European Games: mayor

TÜRKIYE'S financial and cultural hub, Istanbul, will host the 2027 European Games, Ekrem Imamoglu, mayor of the city, announced on Wednesday.

Speaking at a press conference in Istanbul, Imamoglu expressed gratitude to the European Olympic Committee (EOC) for promptly reaching its decision.

The mayor mentioned that despite Istanbul's five-time candidacy for the Olympic Games, the city has yet to host a multi-sport event. "We've dedicated considerable effort to achieving this important milestone," he added. Imamoglu emphasized the necessity of robust coordination and unity for such a significant event and expressed his belief that by working together, Istanbul can surpass all



Istanbul is Türkiye's financial and cultural hub. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

Imamoglu expressed gratitude to the European Olympic Committee (EOC) for the swift decision, noting that despite Istanbul's multiple bids for the Olympic Games, it has not yet hosted a multi-sport event.

previous records with the 2027 European Games.

The European Games are prestigious international sports competitions featuring athletes

from across the European continent. Organized every four years by the EOC, the events showcase top-tier athletic talent. — Xinhua

Bayern's Kane back but Neuer doubtful for Dortmund match

Bayern Munich striker Harry Kane re-joined team training on Wednesday after recovering from an ankle injury sustained during a match against Darmstadt.

BAYERN Munich striker Harry Kane returned to team training on Wednesday while captain Manuel Neuer remains doubtful ahead of Saturday's home clash with Borussia Dortmund.

Bayern released a statement saying Kane "was able to take part in team training again", having returned to individual training on Monday.

Neuer, who turned 38 on Wednesday, tore a muscle fibre

on duty with Germany, missing both of his country's friendlies.

Kane injured his ankle after colliding with the goal post in Bayern's 5-2 win over Darmstadt.

The England captain missed England's friendlies against Brazil and Belgium as a result of the injury.

The 30-year-old striker has a history of ankle problems but last missed a match due to injury back in April 2021 with previous



Bayern Munich captain and goalkeeper Manuel Neuer (left) and forward Harry Kane missed international matches in March through injury. **PHOTO: AFP**

club Tottenham.

Bayern said Neuer "completed an individual training session" on Wednesday.

Aleksandar Pavlovic, who

was called up to the Germany squad for the first time in March but missed both matches due to tonsillitis, also trained individually. — AFP

Germany one of UEFA Euro 2024 favourites, says Matthaeus

ENTHUSIASTIC fan chants filled the Frankfurt arena as a determined team pushed its way to success, impressing pundits. The German national team seems rejuvenated after a remarkable transformation.

"We see and feel something that wasn't there before," remarked Real star Toni Kroos, the driving force behind the 2014 World Champions, upon his return after an absence of over two years.

"The team went through dark times and many months of drought, but we managed to build up faith and confidence in these two games and our training sessions," the midfielder stated. — Xinhua



LGBTQ MARRIAGE EQUALITY

Thai parliament passes same-sex marriage bill

THAILAND'S parliament passed a same-sex marriage bill Wednesday, paving the way for the kingdom to become the first South-east Asian nation to recognize LGBTQ marriage equality.

The bill passed by 399 to 10 votes in the lower house, although it must still be approved by the Senate before it is endorsed by the king, and then published in the Royal Gazette.

On the news, one representative brought a huge rainbow flag into the chamber.

"Today society has proved to us that they care about LGBT rights," Tunyawaj Kamolwongwat, a member of the progressive Move Forward Party which has pushed for LGBTQ+ rights, told AFP.

"Now we finally we will have same rights as others."

And while the kingdom enjoys a welcoming reputation for the international LGBTQ+ community, Thai activists have struggled for decades against conservative attitudes and values.

The proposal changes references to "men", "women", "husbands" and "wives" in the marriage law to gender-neutral terms.

It also means LGBTQ+ couples will be able to enjoy inheritance and adoption rights in the kingdom for the first time. — AFP



An aerial drone photo taken on 9 March 2024 shows a view of the Boao Forum for Asia (BFA) Convention Centre and a BFA hotel in Boao, south China's Hainan Province. **PHOTO: PU XIAOXU/XINHUA**

Asia remains attractive destination for global investment

Asian economies displayed robust investment resilience in 2022, with foreign direct investment (FDI) inflows reaching \$809.4 billion, representing a 6.76 per cent increase over the previous year and comprising 62 per cent of global FDI.

ASIA remains a dynamic and attractive destination for global investment, said attendees at a sideline forum of the Boao Forum for Asia (BFA), which convenes its 2024 annual conference in Boao, a resort town in southern China's Hainan Province.

According to the forum's Asian Economic Outlook and Integration Progress flagship report, Asian economies demonstrated strong resilience in investment activities in 2022. For-

foreign direct investment (FDI) flows into Asia-Pacific economies amounted to US\$809.4 billion, growing by 6.76 per cent over the previous year and accounting for 62 per cent of international FDI inflows.

Asia has been a significant beneficiary of FDI, said Shamshad Akhtar, Federal Minister for Finance, Revenue and Economic Affairs of Pakistan, while noting the role of FDI in Asia's development at the sub-forum with a theme of

"Investing the Future of Asia".

It is important to recognize that Asia, particularly emerging markets, is now on its own development momentum. Asia have become the world's manufacturing and trade hub supported by foreign capital and investments, she noted.

In 2022, Asian economies attracted a total of US\$8.8 trillion in portfolio investment, and China's stock of portfolio investment surpassed US\$1 trillion for the first time, said the report. — Xinhua

Panama opens new cruise ship terminal at mouth of canal



Panama City's new cruise ship terminal was built by a Chinese-led consortium with an investment of more than \$200 million. **PHOTO: MARTIN BERNETTI / AFP**

PANAMA on Tuesday inaugurated a new cruise ship terminal at the mouth of the drought-hit Panama Canal, hoping to attract more tourists to the Central American nation.

The facility in Panama City was built by a consortium led by China Harbour Engineering Company with an investment of more than \$200 million, according to President Laurentino Cortizo.

"The cruise terminal will generate new tourist routes...

attracting more visitors to our country," Cortizo said at an opening ceremony.

The terminal, which will be able to receive two cruise ships at a time, is the first on Panama's Pacific coast.

Another operates in the Caribbean city of Colon.

Panama received nearly 320,000 visitors on cruise ships in 2023, double the previous year, according to Denise Guillen of the Panama Tourism Authority.

"The growth is exponential," she said.

The opening comes as authorities confront record-low water levels that have limited the number of ships able to transit through the Panama Canal, which usually handles about six percent of global maritime trade.

Canal administrator Ricourte Vasquez said last week he hoped that traffic would return to normal by next February. — AFP