

# The Global **NEW LIGHT** of **MYANMAR**

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Monday, 18 November 2024

## Bagan thrives during Tazaungdine festivities despite reduced crowds

**O**N the full moon of Tazaungmone, the Bagan Ancient Cultural Zone bustled with pilgrims and tourists, creating a vibrant scene reminiscent of the Thadingyut Festival. Although fewer visitors travelled to Bagan from other parts of Myanmar due to competing attractions like the Taunggyi hot-air balloon festival, Bagan remained lively, welcoming both pilgrims and tourists.

The secretary from the board of trustees from the Htilominlo Pagoda observed that while the Tazaungdine celebrations were busy, they did not match the crowds of Thadingyut. Approximately 10,000 visitors explored Bagan's eminent pagodas this year, slightly down from the 15,000 recorded last year. Foreign tourists, including families with children, have

started arriving in November, drawn by Myanmar's renowned landmarks and warm hospitality.

Bagan continues to be one of Myanmar's most popular tourist destinations, attracting domestic and international visitors and playing a crucial role in supporting the local economy. Festivals like Tazaungdine significantly boost local businesses, especially souvenir shops, traditional craft vendors, and horse-cart services. Around 70 per cent of visitors engage in activities such as traditional painting and purchasing keepsakes, which particularly appeal to younger travellers.

Following Tazaungdine, other prominent festivals, such as the Shwezigon Pagoda Festival and the Ananda Temple Festival, are expected to draw both local and distant travellers to the region. — Nyein Thu (MNA)/KZL



This image captures domestic travellers visiting the Bagan Ancient Cultural Heritage Zone. **PHOTO: KANU**

THE people of Myanmar have been playing Chinlone, or cane ball, as a traditional physical activity since ancient times, continuing to this day. While the exact origin of Chinlone in Myanmar is unknown, a silver Chinlone was excavated from the Bawbawgyi Pagoda in the ancient Pyu city of Sri Ksetra, where it was built and revered by King Duttabaung. This suggests that Chinlone would have been played since ancient times.

A historical account also mentions

## Playing Chinlone: A signature sport of Myanmar

that during the reign of King Bagan, who ascended the throne in 1208 ME, a sculptor from Thailand created a Chinlone carved from ivory, which the king became very fond of. The king then instructed the sculptor to create Chinlones made of hand-woven

rattan and asked the courtiers to play by kicking them with their feet. At that time, they played only in circles, and the act of playing in circles was believed to help bring one's mind together. As a result, a slogan for playing Chinlone emerged: "Compromise, Consensus, and Equality".

There are two ways to play Chinlone: single-player and team. In single-player play, the player uses various parts of his body to control the Chinlone. The player may even use one to six Chinlones at the same time.

In team play, four to five people play the same Chinlone together in a circle, with the goal of controlling the cane ball using various parts of the body and movement, so that it doesn't fall to the ground.

The traditional way of playing Chinlone now involves not only the feet but also other body parts, including the knees, shoulders, head, back, and elbows, attracting the attention of overseas enthusiasts. — Zayar Htet (Minbu)/TH



A Myanmar's Chinlone team is pictured competing in Magway Region. **PHOTO: ZEYAR HTET(MINBU)**

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Myanmar diplomat participates in China-ASEAN Book Fair in Nanning

### NATIONAL PAGE 7



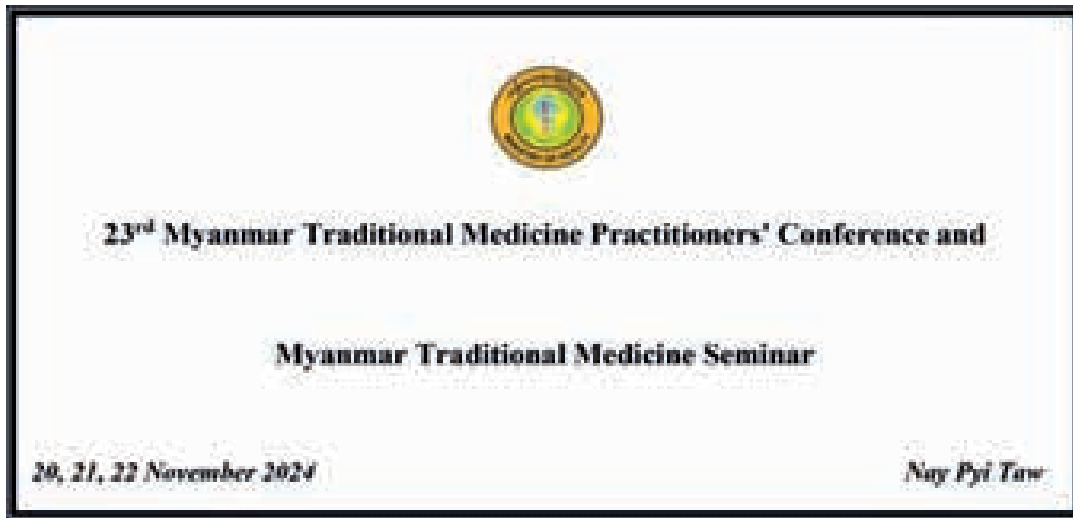
Inwa receives more tourists during Tazaungdine than Thadingyut

# NATIONAL

## Nation's Development Relies on Contributions from Intellectuals and Experts

IN line with the saying, "The strength of the nation lies within," the country's development efforts depend on the contributions of intellectuals and experts in the arts and sciences.

*(Excerpt from the speech given by Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at the ceremony of presenting awards to outstanding students who passed the matriculation examination 2024 with distinctions in all subjects on 22 July 2024)*



## Theme for 104<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of National Victory Day 2024

Let's unite all nationalities for Union peace

10<sup>th</sup> Waning of Tazaungmone 1386 ME  
25 November 2024

## Weather

### Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 7:00 pm Sunday 17 November 2024)

**BAY INFERENCE:** Weather is a few cloud over the North Bay and Central Bay and partly cloudy over the Andaman Sea elsewhere over the Bay of Bengal.

**STATE OF THE SEA:** Sea will be slight to moderate in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about 3-6 feet off and along Myanmar Coasts.

**FORECAST VALID UNTIL NOON OF THE 18 NOVEMBER 2024:** Rain will be scattered in Taninthayi Region and Kayin and Mon states and isolated in Bago and Yangon regions and Southern Shan and Kayah states. Degree of certainty is 80%. Weather will be generally fair in Lower Sagaing, Mandalay and Magway regions and Rakhine State and partly cloudy in the remaining regions and states.

**OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS:** Likelihood of isolated to scattered rain in Nay Pyi Taw, Mandalay, Bago, Yangon, Ayeyawady and Taninthayi regions and Shan, Kayah, Kayin and Mon states.

**THE CONDITION OF CUMULONIMBUS CLOUD:** The cumulonimbus clouds are developing in Taninthayi Region and Kayin and Mon states. The area along the cumulonimbus clouds movement, the weather phenomena such as strong winds accompanied with rain, thunder, lightning and hail may occur and therefore it is recommended to be aware in advance these phenomena.

**FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 18 NOVEMBER 2024:** Partly cloudy.

**FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 18 NOVEMBER 2024:** Partly cloudy and likelihood of isolated light rain. Degree of certainty is 60%.

**FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 18 NOVEMBER 2024:** Generally fair weather. — DMH

## Yangon Mayor departs for Kunming, Yunnan to attend CIFCC

A Myanmar delegation led by Yangon Region Development Affairs Minister Chairman of Yangon City Development Committee Yangon

Mayor U Bo Htay departed for China from Yangon by air on 16 November to attend the 2024 China International Friendship Cities Confer-

ence in Kunming, Yunnan Province, the People's Republic of China to be held on 17-20 November 2024. — MNA/KZL

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# NATIONAL

## Residents Urged to Prioritize Public Safety Amid Armed Terrorist Threats

ARMED terrorists have been launching attacks by using residential homes and administrative buildings in towns and villages as cover, where they have forcibly settled. They aim to shield themselves from Tatmadaw counterattacks while also persuading temporarily displaced persons to return to their native areas and recruiting new members. That enables terrorists to use civilians as human shields. Tatmadaw is committed to safeguarding the sovereignty of the State and will respond to these threats based on intelligence and prevailing conditions. Therefore, residents in areas where terrorists have taken control must prioritize their safety and protect themselves from being exploited by these groups.

*(Excerpt from guidance given by Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing to Shan State cabinet members and state-level departmental officials on 3 September 2024)*

## Kachin State CM provides flood relief and oversees Injan Creek sluice gate construction

IN response to record-breaking water levels caused by heavy rainfall upstream of the Ayeyawady River on 31 June and 1 July 2024, flood-affected communities in Kachin State have continued to receive relief aid. On the morning of 16 November, Kachin State Chief Minister U Khet Htein Nan led a relief distribution ceremony in Naungechein village-tract, Waingmaw Township, for the remaining flood-affected households.

During the ceremony, the Chief Minister reaffirmed the government's commitment to ensuring comprehensive support for all affected residents. He encouraged villagers to report any unmet needs, assuring them that no household would be overlooked.

Relief supplies were subse-



Kachin State Chief Minister U Khet Htein Nan provides rice and relief aid to a flood-affected person in Waingmaw Township, Kachin State on 16 November 2024. **PHOTO: KACHIN STATE IPRD**

quently provided to 283 households, comprising 1,366 individuals in Waingmaw Township.

Each household received rice and a relief kit with 16 essential items, supplied by the Ministry

of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement.

The Chief Minister also in-

spected flood prevention construction sites in Myitkyina, including the Injan Creek area, accompanied by state ministers and departmental officials. He instructed the officials to clear the creek's surroundings in preparation for building a sluice gate capable of withstanding extreme water levels.

Additionally, the Chief Minister visited the Injan Creek sandbank to discuss its potential development into a public park. He reviewed plans for constructing embankments and dams to prevent possible flooding and instructed officials to dismantle unauthorized structures in the area. The public will be informed about these projects, including plans to cultivate crops on the sandbank. — Kachin State IPRD/TRKM

## Tazaungdine Festival, Market Fair at People's Square conclude with festive performances

THE Tazaungdine Festival and Market Fair at Yangon's People's Square came to a close on 16 November, offering a vibrant blend of traditional ethnic dances and DJ performances for visitors' enjoyment.

On the final day, artistes from the film, music and theatrical industries, including well-known singers and DJs, performed entertainments starting from 9 am, attracting a large number of audiences, particularly young people, who joined in the singing and dancing.

Families, individuals, and couples took the opportunity to

capture cherished memories at scenic festival spots, including the illuminated water fountain, animal statues, and multi-coloured lights decorating the grounds. In the evening, the festival's final performances featured music, traditional dances, and a lantern release, creating a celebratory and joyful atmosphere.

Yangon Region Chief Minister U Soe Thein and regional ministers attended the event. To ensure convenience for attendees, transport arrangements were organized for their journey home. — San Kyaw Oo (IPRD)/KZL



Colourful ethnic dance and DJ performances mark the closing of Yangon's Tazaungdine festival. **PHOTO: SAN KYAW OO (IPRD)**

# NATIONAL

## Tazaungdine hot-air balloon festival in Taunggyi: A vibrant celebration of tradition and joy

THE 2024 Tazaungdine Hot-Air Balloon Festival is being held at Awaray Balloon Field in Taunggyi, under the supervision of the Shan State government. Running from 11 to 17 November, the event features a variety of activities, including daytime and nighttime hot-air balloon competitions, lantern processions, traditional Mathoe robe-weaving contests, trade promotion events, and musical performances. As of 17 November, the celebrations continued into their seventh day.

Visitors to the festival have shared their impressions of the lively event. Ma Aye Chan Moe, a local from Taunggyi Township, described her excitement: "I came to enjoy the hot-air balloon festival. During the day, you can see decorative balloons, and at night, there are grand nighttime balloons, including the stunning Diamond Earrings-shaped balloons. The daytime balloons were crafted

into various shapes, such as two-legged or four-legged animals, and they were incredibly intricate and captivating. Watching them brought immense joy. The festival also was bustling market stalls, adding to the vibrant atmosphere".

A male visitor shared his experience, saying: "The daytime balloons soaring into the sky were breathtaking. I saw balloons shaped as single figures, pairs, or even groups of three, designed as two-legged or four-legged creatures. Although some balloons caught fire during launching, the lively atmosphere and the audience's excitement were unforgettable".

Between 11 and 16 November, the festival saw 271 hot-air balloons launched as part of the competitions. These included 19 'Seinnaban' Diamond Earrings-shaped balloons, 22 grand nighttime balloons, and 174 decorative daytime balloons. The remaining 42 balloons —



Festival-goers cheer as hot-air balloons ascends during the sixth-day of Taunggyi Tazaungdine at Awaray Balloon Field in Taunggyi yesterday. **PHOTOS: SHAN STATE IPRD**

three 'Seinnaban' balloons, four grand nighttime balloons, and 35 daytime decorative balloons — were launched before the festival concludes on 17 November. — Shan State IPRD/TMT

## Bagan Plastic Campaign prioritizes plastic cleanup activities



Local people collect plastics and other debris in Bagan Ancient Cultural Zone during a campaign on 16 November 2024. **PHOTO: DIPALINN**

WITHIN the Bagan Ancient Cultural Zone, weekly plastic cleanup activities are being carried out by the Bagan Plastic Campaign as part of efforts to maintain a plastic-free environment. At 7:00 am on 16 November, a plastic waste collection drive was conducted starting from Sakura Traffic Point.

In NyaungU Township, Mandalay Region, within the Bagan Ancient Cultural Zone, efforts to achieve a plastic-free environment were undertaken by the Bagan Plastic Campaign Group in collaboration with staff from the Department of Archaeology and National Museum (Bagan Branch). Participants included municipal staff, personnel from the District Environmental Conservation Department, employees from hotels, motels, and guesthouses in NyaungU Township, staff from Balloons providers, members of the Tour Guides Association, members of the Restaurant Owners' Association, and staff from the Hotelier Association (Bagan Zone).

The cleanup activity involved collecting plastic waste, such as discarded bottles and other debris, along both left and right sides of the road to Bagan Myothit from Sakura Junction to Sein Nyet Nyima Pagoda. — Dipa Linn/TMT

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# NATIONAL

## Illegal goods worth K547.04 million seized in nationwide crackdown in two days

UNDER the supervision of the Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee, legal action continues to be taken against illicit trade across the country.

On 14 November, the combined teams impounded consumer goods worth K54.39 million without official documents from nine containers at the Asia World Port Terminal container checkpoint, consumers goods worth K23.88 million from a passenger at the Yangon International Airport, and a Hino truck worth K30 million carrying consumer goods and

materials and foodstuffs worth K6.5 million at Nyaungkhashay X-ray check point, and a Dong Feng tractor worth K70 million carrying auto parts valued at K9.3 million without official documents near Shwe Thanlwin Tollgate in Phayagyi. In Toungoo District, the teams seized illegal timber weighing 1.303 tonnes worth K886,176. The action was taken under the Forest Law and Customs procedures.

Similarly, the combined teams from Sagaing Region seized 35 barrels of petrol and 50 barrels of diesel (estimated



Photos show confiscated illegal consumer goods, fuel oil and timbers in regions and states.



industrial materials valued at K12.8 million without official documents at the dry port in Ywathagyi. The action was conducted under the Customs procedures.

Similarly, on 15 November, the combined teams from Bago Region seized a Toyota Hiace and Kia Bango worth K40 million carrying industrial

worth K19.85 million) at the Yadanabon bridge combined checkpoint in Sagaing Township on 16 November. The action was conducted under the Petroleum and Petroleum Products Law.

On 16 November, a team led by the Customs Department conducted inspections at Yangon International Airport.

Industrial materials worth an estimated K2.61 million were seized from a passenger's luggage, and legal proceedings are underway in accordance with customs regulations.

On 17 November, combined teams under the management of the Bago Region Illegal Trade Eradication Task Force inspected the Nawade

Bridge toll gate in Padaung Township. A Nissan diesel truck valued at K250 million was seized, carrying 3,200 gallons of illegal crude oil worth K24.18 million. Legal action was taken under the Petroleum and Petroleum Products Law.

Additionally, 1.612 tonnes of illegal teak and 8.709 tonnes

of hardwood, with an estimated value of K2.62 million, were confiscated in Bago, Nyaung-U, and Pyaw Districts.

From 14 to 17 November, a total of 19 cases were reported, with illegal goods worth K547.047 million confiscated, according to the Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee. — MNA/TKO

## Myanmar national died on the spot after jumping off 19<sup>th</sup> floor in Malaysia

A Myanmar citizen who was trying to return to Myanmar died after jumping from the 19<sup>th</sup> floor of a building in Malaysia, according to the Lovely Heart Parahita Blood Donor Group (Kuala Lumpur-Malaysia).

The deceased's elder sister said the victim Ko Nay Lin Naing, 34 years old, who lived

in 5<sup>th</sup> ward, East Hlinethaya Township, Yangon Region, was a person with mental health problems.

As there were cases among Myanmar migrants of visiting hospitals only after having serious health issues, and suffering a mental illness after drinking too much alcohol

and over-gaming, people with poor health are advised to the clinic as soon as possible, the group said.

The parahita group helped bring the dead body together with the friends of the bereaved family to the funeral at the Puchong cemetery in Malaysia. — MT/ZN

### Daily newspapers available online

FOR those who would like to read the Myanmar Alinn, the Kyemon and The Global New Light of Myanmar, published daily by the Ministry of Information, please visit [www.moi.gov.mm/mal](http://www.moi.gov.mm/mal), [www.moi.gov.mm/km](http://www.moi.gov.mm/km), [www.moi.gov.mm/nlm](http://www.moi.gov.mm/nlm) and [www.gnlm.com.mm/e-paper](http://www.gnlm.com.mm/e-paper).



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# NATIONAL

## Kyaiktiyo draws above 30,000 pilgrims during two days of Tazaungdine Festival

MORE than 30,000 pilgrims from across the nation and overseas tourists flocked to the Kyaiktiyo Pagoda in Mon State on 14 and 15 November, with visitors from Thailand and Vietnam constituting the largest groups of foreign devotees, according to a member of the board of trustees.

“The Kyaiktiyo Pagoda Festival begins on the full moon of Thadingyut. Pilgrims from across the country come daily to pay homage to the pagoda. On 14 November, the pagoda witnessed 14,000 pilgrims, and on 15 November, the full moon of Tazaungmone,



A signboard guides pilgrims to Kyaiktiyo Pagoda in Mon State during the Tazaungdine Festival.

more than 16,000 pilgrims visited. A Mathoe robe-weaving competition, featuring four

looms in the pagoda’s platform, also attracted more visitors. On weekends, about 400 pil-

grims visit the pagoda,” said a member of the pagoda board of trustees.

Pilgrims from across the country have been coming daily to pay homage to the Kyaiktiyo Pagoda since November, with approximately 30 buses providing transport up and down the hill.

Additionally, hotels, lodges, guesthouses, public rest houses, and restaurants are available to accommodate the pilgrims.

The Buddha Pujaniya Festival at the Kyaiktiyo Pagoda is held annually from the full moon of Thadingyut to the full moon of Kason, while the pagoda remains open to the public year-round. — ASH/TH

## Myanmar diplomat participates in China-ASEAN Book Fair in Nanning



Booths and books displayed at the event.

ACCORDING to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Daw Khaing Nyein Su, a Counsellor from Myanmar’s Consulate-General in Nanning, China, participated in the opening of the China-ASEAN

Book Fair alongside ASEAN representatives.

The event is being held at the Nanning International Convention Centre from 16 to 19 November. The fair features a diverse range of

exhibits, including collections from publishing houses, university bookstores, and educational departments. Stalls showcase works from printing and publishing houses, digital publications in the education sector, themed displays of award-winning books, and books translated and published by ASEAN countries. Additionally, international and ASEAN-imported books are also on display.

A highlight of the event was the signing of a “Framework for International Cooperation and Publication”, aimed at promoting the translation and publication of Chinese books. The programme also includes literary talks and interactive games designed to engage younger audiences. — ASH/TMT

## New drama series ‘Myat Hnar Phone Chit Thu’ now airing on MRTV-4

THE television series ‘Myat Hnar Phone Chit Thu’ began streaming on MRTV-4 on 14 November, according to senior supporting actress Aye Thida.

Based on a novel and script written by Aye Moh Moh Aung, the series was directed by Kyaw Min Thein under the Forever Group film production banner. “The series consists of 16 episodes and is an entertaining drama to watch. Please give us your support,” actress Aye Thida shared. The cast includes MRTV-4 artistes Kyaw Su, Aung Paing, Wai Yan Lin, Nyein Chan, Sett Yoon Twel Tar, Hsu Htet Htet Kyaw, and Eaint Chit Chit, as well as senior actors Htoo Thar, Min Thu, Aye Thida, Hla Myo Thinzar Nwe, and Gwan Pone Gyi.



Photo of artistes who feature in ‘Myat Hnar Phone Chit Thu’ TV series.

The drama is scheduled to air every weeknight from Monday to Friday starting from 7:00 pm on MRTV-4. — ASH/TRKM

## Ni Ni Khin Zaw to perform one-woman show at THOR on 21 November

RENOWNED vocalist Ni Ni Khin Zaw will hold a one-woman show at The Heart of Rangoon — THOR in Mingala Taungnyunt Township, Yangon, on the evening of 21 No-

vember.

“The night will be filled with songs my fans love,” Ni Ni Khin Zaw shared.

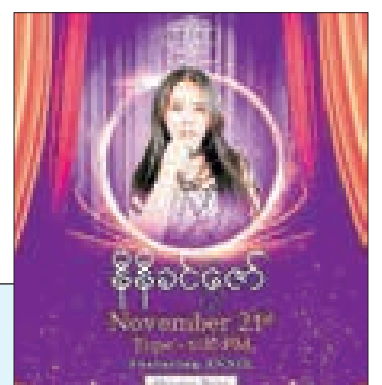
“I’ve selected tracks from my recently released album.

The Oxygen Band will accompany me, delivering their best performance.

I look forward to seeing everyone at ‘The Heart of Rangoon — THOR’.

The event is set to begin at 6:30 pm. — ASH/TKO

A poster of Ni Ni Khin Zaw’s one-woman show.



# NATIONAL

## Inwa receives more tourists during Tazaungdine than Thadingyut

THE number of tourists visiting Inwa during Tazaungdine has increased significantly compared to Thadingyut period and continues to be crowded, according to Bo Shake (Yadanapura), a historical researcher and writer.

Tourist arrivals in Inwa started on 14 November during Tazaungdine, and on 15 November, it became much crowded until 16 November.

“Tazaungdine is the period crowded with domestic tourists. Compared to Thadingyut, it is more crowded. Thadingyut was

an example. As it is peaceful now, there are even more people. It was crowded from 14 to 16 November,” he said.

People especially visit Mei Nu Brick Monastery, Bagaya, elephant moat fort, Myintmotaung Pagoda cluster and Layhtetgyi pagoda. Compared to last year, there has been a significant increase in the number of tourists visiting Inwa, and he welcomed it as the large number of visitors helps the livelihood of locals.

There is a significant increase in tourist arrivals on religious holidays in Inwa, and it is



Visitors to Inwa were seen.

expected to be crowded during the coming New Years period as well, he added.

Major destinations of domestic tourists during Tazaungdine include Bagan-NyaungU,

Popa, Chaungtha, Ngwehsaung, Nay Pyi Taw, Mandalay and Bago. — MT/ZN

## Number of commercial growers of all-season grafted Gangaw increases



An old grafted Gangaw is seen blooming.

THE number of commercial growers of the all-season grafted Gangaw (*Mesua ferrea*) flower is rising, according to the nursery market.

With many orders for these grafted Gangaw plants from cultivators as well as hotels, gardeners and decorators, it is among the flowers that sell well.

“Grafted Gangaw plants bloom one batch after another. There are many people who grow it commercially. There are also people who grow it for decoration at home. Its price is good. People sell three flowers for K 1,000. The market demand for Gangaw flower is high. Hotels buy a lot of flowers.

A hotel at Ngapali in Thandwe orders a lot.

Sales are good,” said Ma Htar Htar Naing, a nursery garden trader in Kyaukpadaung Township.

The Gangaw planted from seeds and nursery takes years to grow and blooms only in its own season, so people prefer to grow grafted Gangaw plants.

“The grafted Gangaw planted in the ground blooms while being short. It blooms one batch after another for all seasons. Grafting can be repeated. Seed growing takes years. So, people prefer to grow grafted Gangaw plants,” she added.

All-season grafted Gangaw plants are grown commercially in Bagan-NyaungU. Some 20-25 flowers can bloom at each plant in the first batch, but as the plant ages, depending on the weather, the plants can bear many number of flowers, she explained. — Thit Taw/ZN



Grafted Gangaw saplings seen at the nursery.

## Dried Yacon tea leaves get popular this year

DRIED yacon tea leaves have gained popularity this year and there is likelihood that the sale will increase.

Previously, dried yacon tea leaf was used in Shan State and it is produced from yacon leaves which becomes widespread popularity on the internet this year.

“Yacon also produces dried tea leaves. So it is expected that it will get a lot of attention and widespread consumption. Yacon gets popularity online and the sale becomes increased. So there is likelihood that dried yacon leaves will also be well-



known. Now we've started trading it,” said Ma Sandi Tayar who sells dried yacon leaves.

It smells good and medicinal.

“Yacon roots are dug after picking leaves first and yacon tea leaves are made from its dried leaves. Its taste doesn't differ from ordinary tea leaves but medicinal and has scent,” she said.

Dried yacon tea leaves reduce blood sugar and cholesterol and good for diabetes. — Thit Taw/ZS



Yacon leaves and dried yacon leaves.

# OPINION

## Analyze information on varieties of media

**I**NFORMATION technology is experiencing unprecedented growth, allowing people worldwide to access global information from their homes quickly as part of the globalization process. The rapid flow of information enhances communication technology, contributing to economic, social, and other sectors, and supports the development of electronic commerce.

Information technology generally refers to the processes of sharing information, calculating, and storing data. It is fundamentally based on computer science and communication technology. In practice, information technology includes all technologies related to computer science and communication. As such, the developing world is under the control of information technology and computer science as part of its daily routine.

As digital media platforms thrive, print media is steadily declining. The number of internet users is increasing globally, making social media

essential to close the digital technology gap to advance global information technology. However, misinformation can have severe social impacts. Internet platforms and social media are not solely responsible for inaccuracies; instead, users should critically evaluate information from various sources, especially on social media. Internet users must approach media content thoughtfully, considering and analyzing it carefully before accepting or sharing it.

it is reliable. Social media, in particular, often contains incomplete or fake news and even intentionally misleading stories. Some details may align with genuine news, but personal interests, biases, unverified claims, and mixed or incorrect data influence much content. Therefore, internet users must be cautious and critically evaluate the information they encounter to determine its accuracy and applicability. This careful approach is essential to avoid being misled by false or biased content online.

It is essential to close the digital technology gap to advance global information technology. However, misinformation can have severe social impacts. Internet platforms and social media are not solely responsible for inaccuracies; instead, users should critically evaluate information from various sources, especially on social media. Internet users must approach media content thoughtfully, considering and analyzing it carefully before accepting or sharing it.

**O**NE of the remarkable achievements of the first Asian Buddhist Summit was the successful organization of the two parallel forums, each offering an array of insightful perspectives. The arrangements of these forums allowed for a rich convergence of ideas, with one focusing on the foundational teachings of the Buddha and their modern-day applications, while the other explored the ways in which Buddhist principles can contribute to sustainable development, social harmony, and international cooperation.

There were several presentations that offered unique alternatives, perspectives, and some 'out of the box' approaches, looking at philosophical knowledge as a means for application and practical usage for the betterment of society. Seminars and Conferences, hitherto, had been mainly concerned with the religious aspects and its associated discourse. This Summit threw up many innovative ideas emanating from the ancient philosophy and science of Dhamma.

The First Asian Buddhist Summit was organized by the Ministry of Culture and the International Buddhist Confederation (IBC), themed 'Role of Buddha Dhamma in strengthening Asia'. It saw participation from 32 countries with over 160 international participants. Members of the Mahasangha, patriarchs of various monastic traditions, monks, nuns, members of the diplomatic community, professors of Buddhist studies, experts and scholars, and around 700 participants engaged enthusiastically with the topic.

Professor Ceon Ramon from the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering at the University of Washington, the USA, drew a comparison between the duration of Mental Cognition from Neuroscience and the Buddhist Perspectives of meditation in their Clinical Applications. Reflecting on the nature of arousal and cessation of thought (the Dhyana-moment), measurements showed that these time frames are what meditators inferred centuries ago without a clock. This can be useful in the treatment of mental disorders based on Buddhist practices of paramitas and meditation combined with neurofeedback and visualization techniques.

A unique contribution of Buddhist practice was introduced in



Buddhist Monks attend the first Asian Buddhist Summit, organised by the Ministry of Culture, GOI, in collaboration with the International Buddhist Confederation (IBC), in New Delhi.

# First Asian Buddhist Summit throws up innovative ideas

By Vichitra Sharma

Mongolian prisons by Mr Shirendev Dorlig, Director of the Vipassana Research Center in Mongolia. After some initial hiccups, Vipassana meditation courses are giving very good results even in prisons with hardened criminals.

In his presentation, Mr Dorlig stated that he insisted on certain working conditions from the prison authorities before initiating the courses. This included training of the prison officials in vipassana practice, a strictly regimented menu that was in line with the practice and tradition, and a daily 'group sittings' for the inmates at the end of the day to get a realistic assessment of the success rate.

Many presentations highlighted the vast areas in Central Asia, East Turkestan and the Russian Autonomous Republics of Kalmykia, Buryatia and Tuva that Buddhism had impacted, such as its influence in architecture, worshipping practices and the philosophical way of life, traces of which were evident archaeologically as well in ancient texts still available.

Dr Jagbir Singh from the Department of History, Dyal Singh Evening College, University of Delhi, spoke about the Buddhist Influences on the Evolution of Chinese Architecture. He traced its development from the Han Dy-

nasty to the present day.

In the 1st century, the Han emperor Ming constructed the white horse monastery in honour of the first two Indian monks who went from India to China - Kashyap Matanga and Dharmaratna.

This was the birth of Chinese Buddhist architecture.

This form of architecture was subsequently woven into pure Chinese architecture, resulting in a unique architectural heritage that reflects the spiritual and aesthetic values of Buddhism.

Professor Dr Shobha Rani Dash, Head of the Department of Buddhist Studies at the Otani University, Kyoto, Japan, mentioned the Hindu deities worshipped in Japanese Buddhism. She explained the pantheon of Hindu deities who were introduced to Japan with Buddhism as the Devas of the Buddhist pantheon. Gradually, many of them have been assimilated with the Japanese native cult of Shintoism as well. She made a special mention of the goddess Saraswati, who is known as Benzaiten in Japan and is revered by the locals.

Dr Yalcin Kayali, Associate Professor of Eastern Languages and Literatures at Ankara University, Turkiye, brought out the less-known fact about the presence of Buddhism in the Uighur

Turkish cultural world. This study focused on the Buddhist text known in Sanskrit as the Suvānabhāsa Sūtra, which was transferred from the Chinese translation of the Dharmakshema to the Uyghur-Turkish Buddhist heritage area and named Altun Yaruq (Golden Light Sūtra).

Dating back to the 4th century, its Chinese translations and those into Japanese and other European languages are thought to have contributed to incorporating ancient Buddhist doctrine into the world's cultural heritage.

Similarly, Dr Baatr U Kitinov, a Research Fellow from the Institute of Oriental Studies, Russian Academy, mentioned how Buddhism had spread to eastern Turkistan and the role of the Uyghurs in sustaining Buddhism for long periods. He mentioned that Buddhism is still being practised by certain smaller population groups in east Turkestan, who are expanding in number.

Venerable Dr Polgolle Kusalahamma, HoD, Pali and Buddhist Studies, SIBA Campus from Sri Lanka, explained the role of neurological research on Buddhist meditation to identify the utility of mindfulness practices to overcome physical infirmity and other sufferings, especially nega-

tive forces in emotions that create mental unrest, unhappiness, fear, and frustration etc.

He explained in detail how Buddhism studies the nature of the mind and examines the rational description of the mind, guiding the followers to develop wholesome mental behaviours and healing mental afflictions.

Venerable Dr Ugyen Tshering, a lecturer at the International Buddhist Studies College (IBSC) of Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University in Bhutan, spoke about the famous concept of Gross National Happiness (GNH) and how the Buddhist philosophy and principles underpin the concept of GNH, influencing Bhutan's policies and societal values. It was Buddhism that played a significant role in enabling Bhutan to attain a high degree of GNH and explained how others could emulate the model.

Venerable Nguyen Ngoc Anh, a Vietnamese PhD Scholar at the University of Colombo, Sri Lanka, explained the challenges that Buddhism faced in Vietnam during different periods, such as feudalism, colonialism and modernization.

However, engaged Buddhism had a profound impact on Vietnamese society, as the philosophy of liberation (Moksha), peace and happiness (Nibbana) held Vietnamese society firmly together as the country went through several conflicts. Introduced in Vietnam in the 2nd century AD, Buddhism forms the essence of Vietnamese society.

Mr Ruslan Kazkenov from Kazakhstan mentioned that even though Kazakhstan was not a Buddhist country, there was a strong fondness for Buddhism and Buddhist philosophy in the country, especially since Buddhism has several similarities or commonalities with Tengrianism. Moreover, Buddhism has influenced art, architecture and cultural traditions of the region (Central Asia), including elements of Buddhist art and historical monuments. He suggested hosting the next Asian Buddhist Summit in Kazakhstan.

In the same spirit, scholars from Tajikistan and Uzbekistan mentioned how the people of these countries were becoming increasingly aware of their Buddhist heritage, which the locals accepted in the early years of its spread in the region. They emphasized that there was significant scope for the excavation of Buddhist sites that yet remain unexplored in these two countries. The representatives expressed keenness to engage Indian experts on excavation and also academicians who could help string the essence of Buddha's teachings and their application in this part of the world.

# ARTICLE

## Keeping Up with Gen Zs

By UAC

**B**RB, lmfao, awol, lol, asap, aka, wip are all behind us now. If you still do not know what all of these mean, you are probably living in the 20th century, old man! Fret not. I am here to leapfrog you right into the circles of Gen Zs with a few key acronyms so that you fit right in with the youngsters. Here it comes, just five to make your life easy:

**Vibes:** you probably have heard of this word. It refers to the atmosphere surrounding a person, a group or an event. Good vibes when you are going to or having fun and vice versa.

**Rizz:** this refers to your charisma. 'You got rizz' means you have good charisma.

**Delulu:** this is the Gen Z word for being delusional. It can be used both as a noun and an adjective.

**Cheugy:** This word is quite unique, and most people are unaware of it. Cheugy (pronounced as choo-gee) means you are outdated in terms of fashion or aesthetics, or you are trying too hard to be fashionable.

**Fomo:** this is NOT four more years of presidency! But it stands for 'fear of missing out'. Equivalent to 'Kiasu' as spoken in Singapore.

### 'Brat' is the Word of the Year

Brat, redefined by singer Charli XCX and embraced by Kamala Harris' supporters, was declared Collins Dictionary's Word of the Year 2024. "Brat" was the name of the popular 32 years old UK singer's (real name: Charlotte Emma Aitchison) hit sixth album, and the word has now come to represent a "confident, independent, and hedonistic attitude", said Collins, rather than simply a term for a badly-behaved child.

"Inspired by the Charli XCX album, 'brat' has become one of the most talked about words of 2024," said the UK-based dictionary. "More than a hugely successful album, 'brat' is a cultural phenomenon that has resonated with people globally, and 'brat summer' established itself as an aesthetic and a way of life," it added. Meanwhile, the Oxford Dictionary's Word of the Year is still being anxiously awaited. "Rizz" - Gen Z slang for "style, charm or attractiveness", or "the ability to attract a romantic or sexual partner" - has been named as Oxford's 2023 Word of the Year, beating out contenders like situationship, prompt, de-influencing and (yes) Swiftie. Rizz is also taken as the shorter version of charisma.



Rizz (Oxford): Selected as Oxford Dictionary's 2023 Word of the Year, referring to someone's charm or ability to attract others, especially romantically. PHOTO: ILLUSTRATION: CANVA



# SCI/ENVIRON WORLD

## Climate finance can be hard sell, says aide to banks and PMs

TRILLIONS of dollars are needed to make poorer nations more resilient to climate change, and studies have estimated that every \$1 invested today will save at least \$4 in future.

So why is it so hard to raise this money, and what are some

of the innovative ways of going about it?

Developing countries will require \$1 trillion annually by 2030 to reduce carbon emissions and adapt to climate change, according to UN experts.

Funding could come from governments, global institu-

tions like the World Bank, or the private sector; but some projects, such as solar farms and wind turbines, attract more investment due to returns on energy sales. However, long-term adaptation projects like defensive sea walls are less appealing to investors, requiring significant public funding.

To bridge the gap, innovative solutions, like taxes on polluting industries, are necessary, but translating climate science into finance is essential for effective global action.

— AFP

*Developing countries will need \$1 trillion annually by 2030 to reduce carbon emissions and adapt to climate change, according to UN experts.*



Taxes on polluting industries could help bridge the funding gap and generate necessary resources for climate resilience. **PHOTO: PEXELS**

## Super Typhoon Man-yi batters Philippines' most populous island

SUPER Typhoon Man-yi slammed into the Philippines' most populous island on Sunday, with the national weather service warning of flooding, landslides and huge waves as the storm sweeps across the archipelago nation.

Man-yi was still packing maximum sustained winds of 185 kilometres per hour (115 miles per hour) after making its first landfall late Saturday on lightly populated Catanduanes island.

More than 1.2 million people fled their homes ahead of Man-yi as the weather forecaster warned of a "life-threatening" impact from the powerful storm, which follows an unusual streak of violent weather.

Man-yi uprooted trees, brought down power lines and smashed flimsy houses to pieces after hitting Catanduanes in the typhoon-prone Bicol region.

No deaths have been reported, but there was "extensive" damage to structures on Catanduanes, civil defence chief Ariel Nepomuceno said.

Man-yi remained a super typhoon as it hit heavily populated Luzon — the country's economic engine — forecasters said, warning of a "potentially dangerous" situation in Aurora province. — AFP

## Trump taps fracking magnate and climate skeptic as energy chief



People hold signs that read "American Oil from American Soil" at a Trump rally. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

US President-elect Donald Trump nominated fracking magnate and climate change skeptic Chris Wright as energy secretary on Saturday, tasking him with "cutting red tape" which the new administration hopes will drive investment in fossil fuels. "As Secretary of Energy, Chris will be a key leader, driving innovation, cutting red tape, and ushering in a new 'Golden Age of American Prosperity and Global Peace,'" Trump said in a statement.

Wright is a founder of Liberty Energy, which serves the

energy companies that have massively increased US fossil fuel production in recent years by extracting oil and gas from shale fields in a process known as "fracking."

"My dedication to bettering human lives remains steadfast, with a focus on making American energy more affordable, reliable, and secure," Wright said on X after Trump's announcement.

"Energy is the lifeblood that makes everything in life possible... I am looking forward to getting to work". — AFP

## Fifth of dengue cases due to climate change: researchers



Dengue, which is sometimes fatal, is transmitted via the bites of infected mosquitoes. **PHOTO: PIXABAY**

CLIMATE change is responsible for nearly a fifth of the record number of dengue cases worldwide this year, US researchers said on

Saturday, seeking to shine a light on how rising temperatures help spread disease.

Researchers have been working to swiftly demonstrate how human-driven climate change directly contributes to individual extreme weather events such as the hurricanes, fires, droughts and floods that have battered the world this year.

But linking how global warming affects health — such as driving outbreaks or spreading disease — remains a new field.

Rising temperatures are expanding the range of dengue, a climate-sensitive disease transmitted by mosquitoes. A study estimates that 19 per cent of current dengue cases are linked to climate change.

In the next 25 years, areas in Latin America and Asia could see a 200 per cent rise in cases due to warming, affecting over 257 million people. — AFP

# WORLD

## Vienna turns up Christmas glitter to lift shopping gloom

*Vienna boosts Christmas lights to support struggling retailers amid economic downturn.*

VIENNA will splash the cash on lighting up its famed Christmas markets to bring festive cheer to struggling retailers.

Chandeliers, glittering stars and sparkling red globes are among the designs illuminating 31 Viennese streets since Friday, with the capital boosting spending on its end-of-year light displays as Austria's economy flounders. "It's just beautiful. It makes the city a bit more beautiful as a whole," Kateryna Baranovska, a 23-year-old student, told AFP.

As local businesses struggle with rising costs, Vienna's economic chamber is covering 75 per cent of the city's Christmas lighting expenses this year, total-

ing about 700,000 euros.

This shift comes as Austria's economy faces challenges, especially due to its reliance on neighboring Germany. Dieter Steup, a representative from the chamber, emphasized the importance of festive lighting for retail, as it enhances the shopping experience during the crucial pre-Christmas period.

To minimize environmental impact, Vienna uses energy-efficient LED lights powered by renewable sources. Despite increased energy costs, the city's Christmas lights continue to create a cherished ambiance, with 64 per cent of Austrians praising them in a recent survey. — AFP



People are seen with Christmas lights in the city centre of Vienna, Austria on 15 November 2024. **PHOTO: JOE KLAMAR / AFP**

## Jake Paul transformed from YouTuber to controversial combat sports figure



Jake Paul, shown reacting after knocking out Andre August, announced a partnership deal with USA Boxing to boost attention for fighters as they prepare for the 2024 Paris Olympics. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

JAKE Paul, the 27-year-old YouTuber, content creator, and entrepreneur, has transformed himself into a formidable figure

in the world of combat sports. Known for his controversial online antics and viral content, Paul first gained fame in 2013 on

the now-defunct Vine platform, before expanding to YouTube, where his channel became infamous for pranks and stunts.

He later ventured into television with Disney Channel's *Bizaardvark*, but his growing media presence and controversial behavior led to his departure in 2017. In 2018, Paul turned to boxing, following in the footsteps of his older brother Logan, who had previously fought KSI in a pay-per-view match.

Despite skepticism from the traditional boxing world, Jake's first fight on the undercard of his brother's match against Deji Olatunji attracted 1.3 million pay-per-view buys, drawing the attention of promoters. — AFP

## Japan researchers to see if skin vibration boosts mental health

A team of researchers, including from Japan, will begin a clinical study later this month to study whether transmitting vibration to the skin through a facial mask device can improve one's mental health.

Researchers from Nagoya University and London Trusted Therapy, an education and re-

search company aim to eventually establish a drug-free, noninvasive approach to mental health care.

Their joint clinical study at a medical institution in London will involve around 30 people suffering from such conditions as ADHD, PTSD and depression. — Kyodo

### NEWS IN BRIEF

#### Denmark's Victoria Kjaer Theilvig crowned Miss Universe 2024

VICTORIA Kjaer Theilvig was crowned Miss Universe on Saturday, the first contestant from Denmark to achieve the honor.

The 21-year-old dancer, entrepreneur, and animal rights activist beat out more than 120 contestants in the pageant's 73<sup>rd</sup> edition held in Mexico City.

First runner-up was Chidimma Adetshina, a law student representing Nigeria, followed by Maria Fernanda Beltran of Mexico, Suchata Chuangsri of Thailand, and Ileana Marquez of Venezuela.

Marquez, 28, had earlier made history as the first mother to be crowned Miss Venezuela.

After the 2023 competition included married, plus-sized and transgender contestants, this year's featured women older than 28 — the cutoff in previous pageants.

Among them was Beatrice Njoya of Malta, who at 40 became the oldest woman to reach the grand finale.

Adetshina was formerly a Miss South Africa finalist before she was hounded over a nationality row which forced her to represent Nigeria. — AFP

#### Dutch police use hologram to try and decode sex worker's murder

IN Amsterdam's red-light district, a hologram of Bernadett "Betty" Szabo, a sex worker murdered in 2009, aims to solve her brutal killing and raise awareness about violence against sex workers.

The hologram, displayed in a canal-side window, shows Betty in revealing clothes, tapping the glass and fogging it with her breath as the word "HELP" appears.

Police hope it will trigger memories and encourage tips, with a €30,000 reward for information. Despite a large-scale investigation, the case went cold until new clues prompted a reopening. — AFP

# ECONOMY WORLD

## Xi says Chancay Port to consolidate Peru's position as gateway that connects land and sea, Asia and Latin America



Chancay port is the latest addition to a vast collection of railways, highways and other infrastructure projects built under China's massive Belt and Road Initiative. **PHOTO: AFP**

*Xi Jinping highlights Chancay Port's role in connecting Asia, Latin America, and boosting Peru's economy.*

THE Chancay Port will strongly consolidate Peru's position as a gateway that connects land and sea, Asia and Latin America, said Chinese President Xi Jinping on Thursday.

Xi made the remarks when attending the opening ceremony of the Chancay Port via video link with his Peruvian counterpart Dina Boluarte.

The Chancay Port is not only a good deep-water port, but also the first smart port and green port in South America, which, when completed, will also bring Peru huge rev-

enues and create a large number of jobs, Xi said.

In his talks with Boluarte on Thursday, Xi said that China is ready to work with Peru to build a new land-sea corridor between China and Latin America with Chancay Port as a starting point.

The corridor, to connect the Inca Trail with the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Maritime Silk Road, will open up a road of common prosperity and happiness for Peru and other Latin American and Caribbean countries, Xi said. — Xinhua

## Fitch upgrades Argentina debt rating amid economic pain

CREDIT ratings agency Fitch upgraded Argentina's sovereign debt rating to "CCC" from "CC" on Friday, citing improved ability to meet upcoming foreign debt payments and successful economic reforms under President Javier Milei.

Fitch said the upgrade, which maintains the country in junk status, reflects growing confidence in Argentina's financial stability, bolstered by significant dollar inflows from a tax amnesty programme that has already brought over \$20

billion into the economy.

The government of self-described "anarcho-capitalist" Milei has applied a drastic austerity programme aimed at erasing the budget deficit and taming the high inflation that has plagued Argentina for years.

Yet Milei has maintained popular support despite implementing the tough economic adjustments, including cuts in energy and transport subsidies and thousands of public sector jobs. — AFP



The dream of easy money in crisis-hit Argentina is leading to Ponzi schemes. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

## Germany's healthcare sector hit by skilled labour shortages

GERMANY'S healthcare sector faces the most severe skilled labour shortages among all industries, according to a study released Saturday by the Competence Centre for Securing a Skilled Workforce at the German Economic Institute.

Approximately 47,400 positions in the healthcare sector could not be filled with suitably qualified candidates between July 2023 and June 2024, it said.

According to the report, the shortage is particularly acute in physiotherapy, with nearly 11,600 vacant roles. Dental assistants and healthcare and nursing staff are also in high demand, with shortfalls of over 7,340 and nearly 7,100 positions,



Germany's healthcare sector faces severe skilled labour shortages, with 47,400 unfilled positions. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

respectively. The healthcare sector has consistently ranked as the most affected by labour shortages in recent years. "An aging population leads to an

increasing need for healthcare services. This increases the burden on the existing skilled workers," the study's authors noted. — Xinhua

## Uzbekistan continues gas accounting, control to ensure stable supply

UZBEKISTAN will "resolutely" continue gas accounting and control in industries to ensure a stable supply and reduce losses, Uzbek President Shavkat Mirziyoyev said.

At a meeting on energy supply Friday, Mirziyoyev emphasized the need to reduce and optimize costs, accelerate reforms in the gas

sector, and expand exploration efforts by engaging leading foreign companies, according to the president's press service.

Though gas losses have decreased due to "the modernization of industries" and improved energy efficiency, "there is still a lot of work ahead", the press service said. — Xinhua

# China's request for International Organization of Vine and Wine membership accepted

*China's membership in the International Organization of Vine and Wine (OIV) strengthens its global wine influence.*

THE International Organization of Vine and Wine (OIV) on Friday announced on its website that China's application for membership had been formally accepted, which means that China will play a more important role in setting international standards for wine production and consumption.

The application was submitted by China's Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs on 14 May, initiating the statutory 6-month consultation period which has now been successfully concluded.

Acceptance of the application must be ratified by Chinese authorities within one year, during which time China will be en-

titled to participate fully in the work of the OIV, according to the statement on its website.

The OIV, founded in November 1924, thus welcomes its first new member following its centenary celebration.

China is ranked third globally in terms of planted vineyard surface area, while it is also the 8<sup>th</sup> largest consumer of wine and the top producer of table grapes in the world.

The addition of China takes the total number of OIV member countries to 51 and extends the representativity of the organization to 85 per cent of the total world planted vineyard surface area. —Xinhua



A farmer harvests grapes in a vineyard at the eastern foot of Helan Mountain in northwest China's Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, 19 September 2024. **PHOTO: FENG KAIHUA/XINHUA**

## Foreign tourists showing appetite for Japan's art of food replicas



Participants make food replicas of lettuce at a workshop held in Tokyo's Asakusa on 24 September 2024. **PHOTO: KYODO**

AT a workshop in Tokyo, a dozen or so tourists watched as green and white wax was poured into warm water. As the liquid turned into a sheet, they were then asked to slowly pull it up and roll it, gasping at its transformation into a lettuce.

Hands-on lessons in the art of creating food replicas

have caught on with foreign visitors keen to learn more about a distinctive Japanese craft that has evolved for over 100 years. An exhibit of food replicas has even been held in London this year.

The lessons were offered by Iwasaki Group, which is believed to have been the first to commercialize the production

of food replicas in 1932.

Food replicas, originating in Japan in the 1910s-1920s, were initially used in restaurant displays but have evolved into training tools for farmers and souvenirs.

As Western culture spread, replicas helped introduce foreign dishes to Japanese consumers. —Kyodo

## US airline says plane apparently hit by gunfire on Dallas runway

SOUTHWEST Airlines said one of its planes was apparently hit by gunfire while preparing for takeoff at an airport in the US city of Dallas on Friday.

The plane "taxied safely back to the terminal at Dallas Love Field after a bullet apparently struck the right side of the aircraft just under the flight deck", the airline said in a statement.

The incident happened as the crew was preparing for take-

off, it said. No one was injured and the plane has been removed from service, the airline added.

The incident happened at around 8:30 pm Friday (0230 GMT Saturday), with the flight headed from Dallas, Texas to Indianapolis, Indiana.

The Federal Aviation Administration said the Southwest Airlines flight was taxiing for takeoff when it was "reportedly struck by gunfire near the cockpit". —AFP

## Japan to strengthen measures against illegal part-time jobs

THE Japanese government was mulling over enhanced crime prevention measures against "dark part-time jobs", a growing social issue, local media reported Sunday.

New measures could include subsidies for high-security residential installations and financial support for community groups conducting patrols.

The government will also seek to strengthen cyber patrols to monitor and address online recruitment of illegal activities, collaborate with job sites and social media platforms to remove illegal recruitment posts based on requests from investigative authorities, according to the public broadcaster NHK. The move will be finalized in the coming week, aiming to ensure public safety and address the rising concern over illegal part-time job-related crimes. —Xinhua

# ROLLING UPDATES

## WORLD



Fiji's Coral Coast is a popular tourism destination, known for its stunning beaches, vibrant coral reefs, and luxury resorts. **PHOTO:REEF EXPLORER FIJI/AFP/FILE**

## Pacific leaders intensify efforts to improve regional connectivity

PACIFIC leaders are intensifying efforts to link tourism and aviation, aiming to boost economic growth and advance sustainable development goals.

Christopher Crocker, chief executive officer of the Pacific Tourism Organization, said their Strategic Plan for 2025-2029 aims to align tourism growth with the environmental priorities of the 2050 Blue Pacific strategy, Fiji Broadcasting Corporation reported on Saturday.

Crocker said the strategic plan emphasizes the well-being of Pacific communities and seeks

to amplify their voice on global issues.

Consultations are underway with governments, private sector stakeholders and key partners to shape a responsible tourism strategy, which will focus on six areas, including sustainable development management, capacity building, and workforce training, he said. Fijian Deputy Prime Minister and Chair of the Pacific Tourism Council of Ministers Viliame Gavoka said connectivity between Pacific Island countries remains a significant challenge. — Xinhua

### NEWS IN BRIEF

#### India conducts successful flight trial of long-range hypersonic missile

THE Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO) successfully conducted a flight trial of its long-range hypersonic missile on 16 November 2024, from Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Island, off-the-coast of Odisha. This hypersonic missile is designed to carry various payloads for ranges greater than 1500 km for all the Services of the Indian Armed Forces. The missile was tracked by various range systems, deployed in multiple domains. The flight data obtained from down-range ship stations confirmed the successful terminal manoeuvres and impact with a high degree of accuracy.

This missile has been indigenously developed by the laboratories of Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Missile Complex, Hyderabad along with various other DRDO laboratories and Industry Partners. — ANI

#### '1 Billion Pitches' competition attracts 500 entries from 40 countries

THE 1 Billion Followers Summit, the first and world's largest event of its kind, announced that its "1 Billion Pitches" competition has attracted 500 submissions from 40 countries.

Projects addressed in these submissions focused mainly on education, advanced technology and innovation, women empowerment, community development, literature, entrepreneurship, healthcare, social media and creative content.

The competition attracted 250 registered startups as well as content creators with groundbreaking ideas, for a chance to pitch their projects live at the Summit's 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, organised by the New Media Academy from 11 to 13 January 2025 under the theme 'Content for Good' The 1B Pitches, which saw over 10,000 visitors to its webpage, offers a unique platform for startups and content creators with groundbreaking ideas, connecting them with leading investors and industry players. Participants have the chance to secure support and funding for their ventures. — ANI

## Russia restricts uranium exports to the US after Biden's ban

THE Biden administration enacted legislation banning supplies of "unirradiated, low-enriched uranium that is produced in the Russian Federation or by a Russian entity" earlier in the year, turning a deaf ear to concerns voiced by US nuclear operators and nuclear fuel market participants.

The Russian government has imposed temporary restrictions on the export of enriched uranium to the United States. Companies can still export uranium to the US under one-off licences issued by the Federal Service for Technical and Export Control.

This was a tit-for-tat move after the Biden administration signed a law banning Russian uranium imports until 2040,



Containers with uranium at a port in St Petersburg, Russia. **PHOTO:SPUTNIK**

with exceptions allowed until 2028, despite warnings that the move could backfire on the American economy. Russia is the world's largest supplier of enriched uranium. It accounts for about 44 per cent of the global capacity to separate the uranium isotopes needed in

nuclear reactors. Its share of the enriched uranium market boasts an estimated export value of \$2.7 billion.

Russia's measure may generate potential supply risks to utilities operating American reactors. — SPUTNIK

## China to host 2026 APEC summit, championing Asia-Pacific cooperation

WHEN China first hosted the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit in 2001, the nation stood at a crossroads, poised to join the World Trade Organization.

It was a moment of transformation that signaled China's readiness to step fully into the global economic arena.

By the time China hosted APEC again in 2014, the story was markedly different.

The country had become an economic powerhouse, with its deeper integration into the world economy fueling a decade of breathtaking growth.

Now, China is set to play host again with a significant mission: to unite Asia-Pacific countries to champion open economic and trade cooperation while rejecting protectionist and confrontational trade tactics. — Xinhua

# SPORTS

## Myanmar Women's Futsal Team defeated in AFF Championship

MYANMAR women's futsal team faced a defeat in their second match of the 2024 AFF Women's Futsal Championship, held in the Philippines on 17 November.

Vietnam beat Myanmar with a score of 5-2, while Thailand triumphed over the hosts, the Philippines, with a dominant 7-0. Despite Myanmar's strong start, leading 2-1 at halftime, their limited international experience showed, leading to a four-goal concession in the second half.

After the second day, Thailand led the group with six points from two wins, followed by Vietnam with three points. Myanmar and the Philippines each hold one point from two matches, while Indonesia is yet to score. The third day continues today with Vietnam facing



Myanmar versus Vietnam in an intense futsal matchup. PHOTO: MFF

Indonesia at 2:30 pm Myanmar Standard Time, followed by Myanmar taking on Thailand at 5:30 pm MST. — Ko Nye Lay/KZL

## Tennis: Japan loses to Italy in Billie Jean King Cup q'finals

JAPAN lost to Italy 2-1 in the Billie Jean King Cup women's team tennis quarter-finals Saturday in Malaga, Spain.

After Ena Shibahara won her 2-hour, 44-minute opening singles match for Japan, world No 4 Jasmine Paolini defeated 56<sup>th</sup>-ranked Moyuka Uchijima 6-3, 6-4 and returned to the court for a doubles win by the same score.



Japan's Ena Shibahara returns a shot to Italy's Elisabetta Cocciaretto during the opening match of their Billie Jean King Cup quarterfinal tie in Malaga, Spain, on 16 November 2024. PHOTO: KYODO

After being down 5-1 in the second set against Paolini and Sara Errani, Shuko Aoyama and Eri Hozumi kept Japan's semifinal hopes alive by winning three straight games but came up short in the end at Martin Carpena Arena.

Italy was last year's Billie Jean King Cup runner-up to Canada. Japan had come into the 12-team finals for the first time under the current tournament format that was introduced in 2020.

"I couldn't win points at crucial moments," Uchijima said. "I didn't play that bad. I think I gave her a good fight. This experience of playing one of the world's top players will definitely help my career."

Former world No 1 Naomi Osaka was unable to play for Japan in the finals because of injury. In the first match of the Japan-Italy tie, Shibahara came from a set down to beat Elisabetta Cocciaretto 3-6, 6-4, 6-4. — Kyodo

## Torch relay for China's 12<sup>th</sup> National Traditional Games of Ethnic Minorities completes

THE torch relay for the 12<sup>th</sup> National Traditional Games of Ethnic Minorities of the People's Republic of China took place on Sunday in Sanya, Hainan Province, with 107 torchbearers from various walks of life participating in diverse ways.

The starting ceremony for the torch relay was held at Haihong Square in Sanya Bay, marking the beginning of this event. Sanya Bay is a distinct resort and tourism area on Hainan Island and one of China's earliest coastal tourism hubs.



The 107 torchbearers included exceptional people from diverse fields, such as craftsmen, police, athletes, teachers, and entrepreneurs. PHOTO: XINHUA/FILE

The torch relay elegantly traveled alongside the scenic sea views, covering 3.8 kilo-

tioned into a 4.5-kilometre aerial segment starting at Haiyue Square, followed by a 5.4-kilometre maritime segment from the Sanya Yacht Tourism Center to the Half Mountain Peninsula Yacht Harbor.

Among the 107 torchbearers were outstanding individuals from various industries across the country, as well as many grassroots workers, including craftsmen, police officers, athletes, media professionals, rural teachers, entrepreneurs, and coaches. — Xinhua

## Netherlands into Nations League quarter-finals as Germany hit record seven

NETHERLANDS outclassed Hungary with a 4-0 victory in their winner-takes-all Nations League encounter on Saturday while record-setting Germany hammered Bosnia and Herzegovina 7-0.

Netherlands and Hungary went into the match tied on five points each and with the winner set to join Germany in ensuring their progress from Group A3 to the quarter-finals.

First-half penalties by Wout Weghorst and Cody Gakpo sent the

Oranje on their way, before Denzel Dumfries and Teun Koopmeiners made the game safe in the second period.

"There are always things we can improve upon," Dutch captain Virgil van Dijk told SBS6. "But in the end, we deserved to win."

The match at the Johan Cruyff Arena was briefly interrupted in the seventh minute following a medical emergency on the Hungarian bench.

The referee stopped play for

some 10 minutes while Hungary's assistant coach Adam Szalai received treatment, shielded from view by huddled players and staff members, as well as a large white sheet.

Szalai, 36, was stretchered off to applause from spectators and players alike, the Hungarian FA later released a statement saying he was "conscious" and in a "stable condition" at an Amsterdam hospital. — AFP



Wout Weghorst's penalty sent Netherlands on their way to a 4-0 win against Hungary. PHOTO: ANP/AFP



## Xi meets Biden in Lima

*Xi acknowledged the ups and downs in China-US relations over the past four years but emphasized stable dialogue and cooperation under their leadership.*

CHINESE President Xi Jinping on Saturday met with US President Joe Biden on the sidelines of the 31<sup>st</sup> APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting in Lima, Peru.

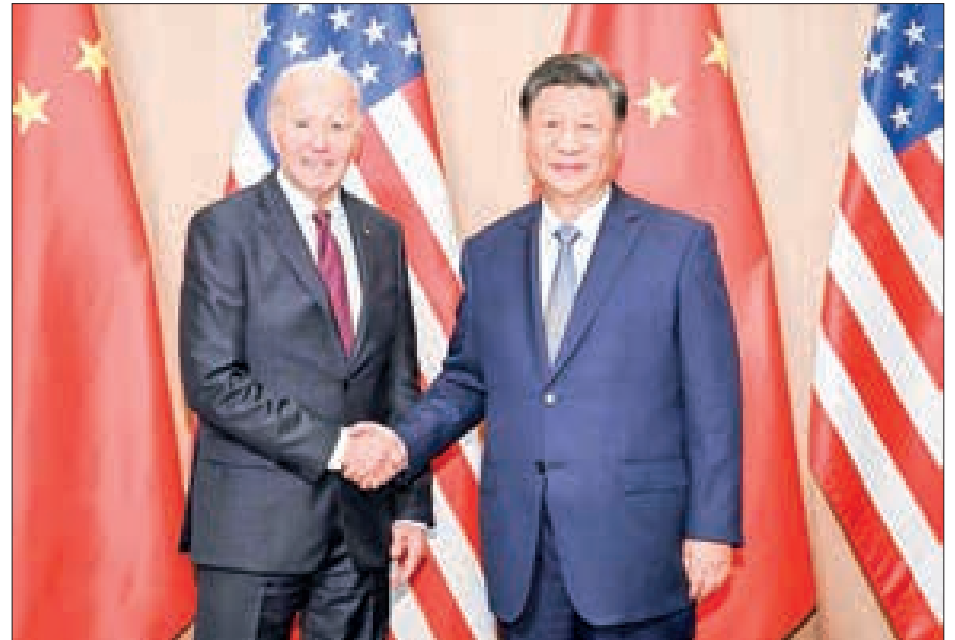
Noting that he was pleased to meet with Biden again, Xi said China-US relations over the past four years have gone through ups and downs, but under the joint stewardship of the two presidents, the two sides have also been engaged in fruitful dialogue and cooperation and their relationship has remained stable on the whole.

Xi said that the trajectory of China-US relations has proved the validity of these experiences and inspirations

from the past 45 years of diplomatic ties.

When the two countries treat each other as partner and friend, seek common ground while shelving differences and help each other succeed, their relationship would make considerable progress. But if they take each other as rival or adversary, pursue vicious competition and seek to hurt each other, they would roil the relationship or even set it back, he added.

Xi Jinping emphasized the importance of cooperation over competition to address global challenges, advocating for mutual benefits rather than decoupling or supply-chain disruptions. He



Chinese President Xi Jinping meets with US President Joe Biden in Lima, Peru, 16 November 2024. **PHOTO: LIXUEREN/XINHUA**

stressed that the China-US relationship is crucial for global stability, urging both nations to prioritize peace, respect, and

shared development while safeguarding sovereignty and interests. — Xinhua

## Cambodia's water festival attracts over 6.2 mln visitors

CAMBODIA'S three-day traditional Water Festival attracted more than 6.2 million spectators, the Ministry of Tourism said on Sunday.

Celebrated from Thursday to Saturday, the festival was one of the most joyful festivals in the Southeast Asian country. On the occasion, people from across the country flocked to the capital's riverfront to enjoy boat races, the festival's centerpiece.

The festival received an estimated 6.2 million local visitors and 52,498 foreign tourists during the three-day

festival, the ministry said.

Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Manet said on Sunday that the Water Festival was conducted smoothly and joyfully while preserving the kingdom's unique tradition and culture, delighting both domestic and foreign tourists.

"This success was made possible thanks to the contributions from all relevant working groups, especially all kinds of security forces who had dedicated their time and physical energy to security, safety

and public order for all festival guests," he said in a text posted on social media.

A total of 348 boats with about 22,000 oarsmen took part in the annual regatta, which saw the participants racing their boats along a 1.7-km stretch of the Tonle Sap River.

The festival is to honor the strength of the powerful Khmer marine forces during the ancient Khmer Empire in the late 11<sup>th</sup> century, and also mark the end of annual rainy season and the unique reversal flow of the Tonle Sap River that connects the Tonle Sap Lake with the Mekong River. —Xinhua

*Cambodia's Water Festival attracted 6.2 million spectators, celebrating tradition and culture.*



A total of 348 boats with about 22,000 oarsmen took part in the annual regatta, which saw the participants racing their boats along a 1.7-km stretch of the Tonle Sap River. **PHOTO: SOVANNARA/XINHUA**

### CANCELLATION OF FLIGHTS

#### Jordan's tourism income declines amid regional conflict

JORDAN'S tourism revenue for the first 10 months of this year reached US\$6.1 billion, down 4.4 per cent from the same period last year, the state-owned Al Mamlaka TV reported Sunday.

This decline is attributed to a 6.6-per cent drop in the number of tourists, according to official figures.

"The main reason for the decline in tourism is the cancellation of many flights by European airlines to Jordan due to the war in Gaza and Lebanon," Ilham Saeed, an economic news editor and analyst, told Xinhua.

The regional conditions forced airlines to cancel flights, leading to significant cancellations by tourist groups from Europe, he said.

"It is essential to diversify tourism markets and attract tourists from other countries such as China and major East Asian markets as an alternative," Saeed said, adding that Jordan is safe and stable and the country needs to reach out to new markets. — Xinhua