

The Global **NEW LIGHT** of MYANMAR

Myanmar's honey exports surpass US\$1M in 9 months

Myanmar's honey exports primarily target China, Japan, South Korea, and Thailand.



Beekeepers managing beehives at the farm. Myanmar's honey production is estimated at over 4,000 metric tonnes annually.

MYANMAR exported over 1,100 metric tonnes of honey valued at US\$1.704 million in the past nine months (from April to December) of the current financial year 2024-2025, according to the Apiculture Division under the Livestock Breeding and Veterinary Department.

Myanmar's honey mostly went to China, Japan, South Korea and Thailand. Myanmar delivered over 2,200 metric tonnes of honey to foreign trade partners in the last FY 2023-2024 (April-March), the

Apiculture Division's data showed.

Sagaing and Mandalay regions are the leading producers of Myanmar's honey. Myanmar's beekeeping businesses are also found in Yangon, Bago and Magway regions, Kachin, Kayah, Kayin and Shan states. Myanmar produces sesame honey, jujube honey, Niger honey, sunflower honey, lychee honey and flower honey.

Myanmar's honey production is estimated at over 4,000 metric tonnes annually. Sixty per cent went to foreign markets while the remaining was designated for

domestic consumption. Honey is utilized as a traditional medicine in the country.

There are some State-owned beekeeping stations with 6,200 beehives in 31 townships and over 950 private beekeeping businesses operating with nearly 200,000 beehives.

Moreover, two million acres of crops yearly contribute to bee pollination every year. The beekeeping businesses near the crop fields contribute to the successful yield of the crop as well as quality honey production. — NN/KK

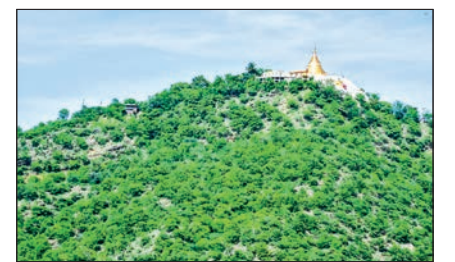
OPINION

Address the impacts of air pollution on people

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17th Floral Fantasia 2024 extended to 19 Jan

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Inwa seeks new preserved destinations amidst existing tourist attractions

Kengphawng Hot Spring draws crowds during cold season

KENGPHAWNG Hot Spring, also known as Myashweyi Hot Spring in Kengtung Township, Shan State (East), has become a popular destination this cold season. Nestled near Kengphawng Creek along the Kengtung-Taunggyi Road, the natural hot spring resort offers an idyllic retreat.

Officials and locals have arranged convenient bathing facilities, while residents serve delicious local food at the resort. Visitors delight in boiling eggs and corn in the hot spring, and enjoying their culinary creations on the lush grass nearby. — Aung Zin Myint (IPRD)/KTZH



This photo reveals visitors enjoying the Kengphawng Hot Spring and the surrounding pleasant environment.

NATIONAL

Quality Seeds and Techniques: The Backbone of Agriculture

BASICALLY, thriving agriculture requires quality seeds, fertile soil, natural and inorganic fertilizers, an adequate volume of agricultural water, and proper farming techniques.

(Excerpt from the speech given by Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at the meeting with the Magway Region government and district-level departmental officials on 24 May 2024 to talk about regional development)



National Objectives for 78th Anniversary of Union Day 2025

1. To strive for the perpetual development of the Union through the Union spirit, patriotic values, a sublime state of mind and a genuine nationalist spirit.
2. To encourage collaborative efforts among all ethnic nationals to pursue dialogue for durable peace and to end armed conflicts.
3. To collectively advance cooperation amongst all national people, the government, and Tatmadaw to ensure stability and the rule of law.
4. To enhance collaborative efforts to ensure nationwide stability and tranquillity, enabling the successful conduct of multiparty general elections.
5. To promote balanced development across all regions and states, as well as enhance health, education and job opportunities for ethnic nationals.

Gold Market Rate as of 13 January 2025

THE price of one tical (16.329325 grammes) of gold with density of 19.25 grammes per cubic centimetre and above is K5,400,000, as established by the Mineral (Gold) Reference Price Determination Committee.

Tuyin Hill designated as protected public forest

THE Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation has officially designated a 1,905-acre area in NyaungU Township, NyaungU District, Mandalay Region, as the “Tuyin Hill Protected Public Forest.” This designation was made under Notification 3/2025, effective from 2 January 2025 (4th Waxing of Pyatho, 1386 ME) under Section 6 (e) of the 2018 Forest Law.

This protected area aims to mitigate rising temperatures and prevent extreme heat and drought in the tropical Bagan-NyaungU region. It will contribute to balanced and pleasant weather conditions, environmental preservation, soil enrichment, and erosion prevention. It will also help shield the area from natural

disasters and ensure the continuous supply of forest products like firewood, bamboo and timber for local agricultural use. The designation also supports the conservation of tropical forests.

The establishment of the Tuyin Hill Protected Public Forest will help conserve native tree species such as teak, Indian elm, Thanaka, star-flower, catechu, tamarind, and Dahat. Locals will benefit from sustainable access to forest products. The reserve will also provide more shaded and resting areas for visitors to Tuyin Hill Pagoda. It will then preserve habitats for wildlife species such as deer, civets, wildcats and rabbits, and protect biodiversity. This initiative will combat desertification,



An aerial view of the Tuyin Hill Protected Public Forest and Pagoda.

improve soil quality, conserve groundwater and enhance forest coverage, leading to better climate conditions. — Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation

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

NATIONAL

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)

Microfinance Business Supervisory Committee holds 1/2025 meeting

DEPUTY Prime Minister Union Minister for Planning and Finance U Win Shein, who is also Chairman of the Microfinance Business Supervisory Committee, presided over the 1/2025 committee meeting in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

First, the Union minister said there are 174 microfinance institutions in regions and states, which have been operating their business activities in 2,300 wards and 27,006 villages in 263 townships, with 3.228 million members and K2,011.077 million

granted loans until January 2025.

The microfinance institutions should follow the law, rules and regulations, procedures and directives in offering financial services.

Moreover, the companies granted loans to MSMEs in addition to the agricultural sector for the State economic development, and the committee also works with the Central Bank of Myanmar in allowing corporate insurance representatives of microfinance institutions and using digital financial services



Deputy Prime Minister MoPF Union Minister U Win Shein chairs the first meeting of the Microfinance Business Supervisory Committee yesterday.

to collect the loans and grant loans to the borrowers' accounts.

The collaboration of microfinance institutions in addition to the local banks is needed to grant loans for the MSMEs development. All should follow the rules and regulations of the Central

Bank of Myanmar in using digital financial services. The licensed microfinance institutions also need to follow the enacted law, procedures and directives without fail.

Then, the attendees coordinated the discussion.

The meeting permitted three local companies for microfinance services, four companies for capital increases, three corporate life insurance representatives and three companies for expansion of the industry. — MNA/KTZH



Ministry of Health

53rd Myanmar Health Research Congress

20 to 24 January 2025

Department of Medical Research (Head Office)

No 5, Ziwaka Street, Dagon Township, Yangon

53rd Myanmar Health Research Congress to be held in Yangon

THE 53rd Myanmar Health Research Congress themed "Moving Forward to a Healthy Lifestyle and Addressing Health Risk Behaviours" will be organized at the Medical Research Department (head office) at No 5, Ziwaka Street, Dagon Township in Yangon on 20-24 January.

The congress will feature 27 basic research papers, 19 applied research papers, eight health system research papers and 43 research posters.

The local and foreign researchers will join the event, which will be accompanied by four educational seminars and one talk show. — MNA/KTZH

Kengtung innovator creates stove with charcoal burning like gas

A charcoal stove that burns like a gas fire without using gas invented in his own design is attracting many people and being sold in Kengtung Township, Shan State (East), according to U Sai Noon, a producer of the Soe Lin Recycled-fuel and Various Stoves Industry.

The advantages of the stove include the use of charcoal fragments as fuel, which can save money, and its flexible source with a power bank or battery when there is no power. At a medium level of a gas stove, one kilogramme of broken charcoal can burn for about two hours.

"Now, I have made another innovation of a new stove that converts broken charcoal into gas. There are three steps to

light the stove. Step 1: Put the broken charcoal in the pot and cover it. Step 2: Light the fire with a tissue or paper and blow it with a fan. Step 3: Wait two minutes and ignite the stove. If there is no electricity, you can use a power bank, battery, or solar power to turn the fan on. Switching off the fan will turn off the stove," he said.

The stove is currently being produced and sold primarily because there are many orders from nearby areas as well as Myingyan, Magway, and Ayeyawady Region. The stove can be for either residential or commercial uses at restaurants, and it does not emit any odour or cause any hazard concern, he added. — MT/ZN

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NATIONAL

17th Floral Fantasia 2024 extended to 19 Jan

THE 17th Floral Fantasia 2024, commemorating the 100th anniversary of the National Kandawgyi Garden, was inaugurated on 14 December 2024 in the National Kandawgyi Garden, the landmark of PyinOoLwin, Mandalay Region.

During the flower festival days, the site is crowded with large numbers of visitors, and the festival period is extended to 19 January 2025 for the local and foreign visitors to enjoy the festival and peaceful situation of PyinOoLwin.

PyinOoLwin is famous among Myanmar tourist destinations as it offers fine weather, picturesque natural mountains and landscapes, local foods, the hospitality of locals and various kinds of flowers. Moreover, the Cherry that blooms once a year can be seen in the whole town in the cold season and is also



Photos showcase crowds gathering at the 17th Floral Fantasia 2024 in PyinOoLwin's National Kandawgyi Garden.

called Cherry City. The cherry blossoms start December-January, and the flowers are still in the tree until February and March. This year, the cherry blossoms are delayed, according to the locals. During the flow-

er festival period, PyinOoLwin in addition to the National Kandawgyi Garden and famous pagodas sees large crowds of local and foreign visitors this year.

The 17th Flower Festival features eight zones displaying

local and foreign flower species and resident flora, over 200,000 flowers of 20-25 types of seasonal flower species, 15-20 types of resident flower species, entertainment programmes, fairs and local product shops.

Large crowds of visitors flock to 17th Floral Fantasia 2024, commemorating the 100th anniversary of the National Kandawgyi Garden, Pwe Kauk waterfall resort and other famous sites in PyinOoLwin. — MNA/KTZH

Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 7:00 pm Monday 13 January 2025)

BAY INFERENCE: Weather is generally fair over the North Bay of Bengal, partly cloudy to cloudy over the South Andaman Sea and South Bay of Bengal and a few cloud over the North Andaman Sea and elsewhere over the Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL NOON OF 14 JANUARY 2025: Light rain are likely to be isolated in Upper Sagaing Region and Kachin State. Degree of certainty is 60 per cent. Weather will be partly cloudy in Yangon, Ayeyawady, and Taninthayi Regions and Kayin, Chin, Mon, and Shan States and generally fair in the remaining Regions and States.

STATE OF THE SEA: Sea will be moderate

in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about 5-8 feet off and along Myanmar Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Likelihood of slight decrease of night temperatures in Upper Sagaing Region and Kachin, and Chin States.

FORECAST FOR NAYPYITAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 14 JANUARY 2025: Generally fair weather.

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 14 JANUARY 2025: Generally fair weather.

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 14 JANUARY 2025: Generally fair weather. — DMH

COVID-19 report, 13 January 2025

NEW TESTS

3,365

NEW CASE

NIL

CASUALTIES

NIL

Myanmar National Centre for Diseases Control
Department of Public Health

KBZ ensures mobile wallet security with network operators and CBM

KBZPAY stated that it constantly focuses on ensuring mobile wallet security, in collaboration with mobile network operators and the Central Bank of Myanmar.

In a statement, CBM says “mobile money is being stolen by hacking third-party service providers through mobile network operators linked with banks and mobile money services.”

KBZPay said the investigation process is found to affect only device change and there are 31 cases relating to device change. At present, device change has been stopped for a while and system main-



A glimpse of the KBZPay logo.

tenance has been underway but the device change will be available again on 7 January 2025.

KBZPay has begun providing advance payments as of 30 December 2024 to prevent 31 customers from losing their money during the period of the investigation, it said. — MT/ZS

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NATIONAL

Inwa seeks new preserved destinations amidst existing tourist attractions

WITH the significant increase in tourist arrivals to Inwa, other attractions in the city should be preserved and developed to attract more tourists, said Bo Shate (Ratanapura), a researcher and writer from Inwa.

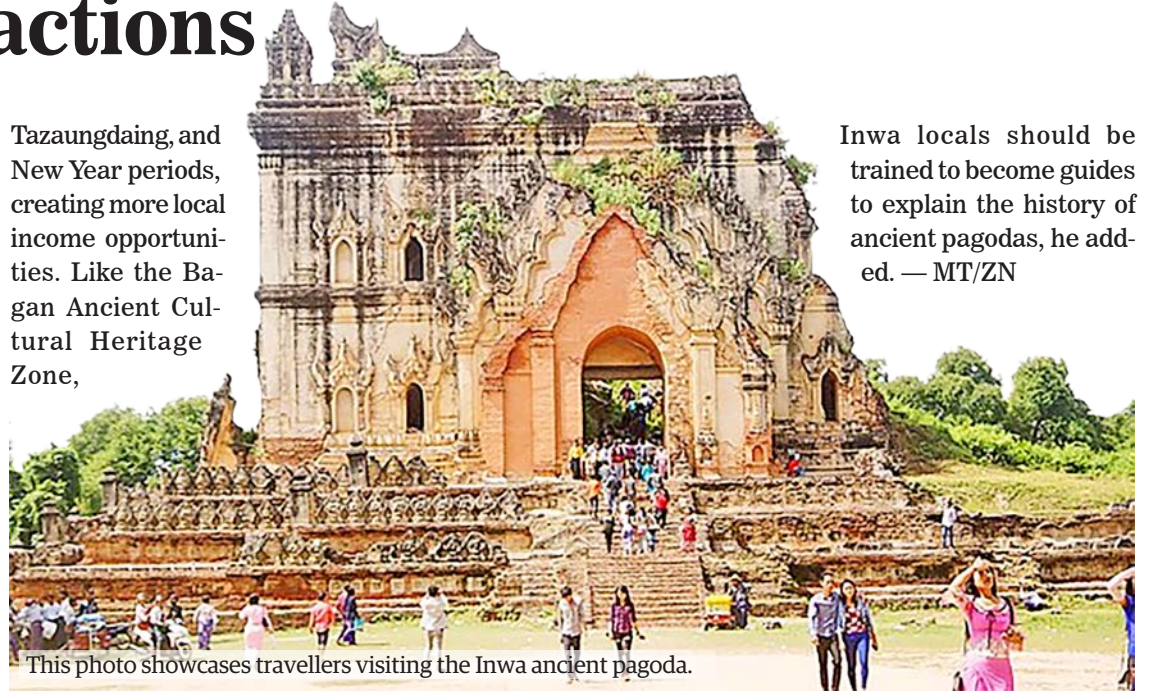
Besides domestic tourists, many foreign tourists arrived in Inwa, unlike last year, according to locals. Currently, major tourist destinations include Bagaya Monastery, Mei Nu Brick Monastery, Ratanagiri Pagoda, Daw Gyan Pagoda, Wingaba Myintmo Taung Pagodas and Inwa Fort.

He suggested that roads should be built and ancient sites should be restored to attract more tourists.

“We have seen many foreigners visiting this year. Currently, they are Bagaya Monastery, Mei Nu Brick Monastery, Ratanagiri Pagoda, Daw Gyan Pagoda, Wingaba Myintmo Taung Pagodas and Inwa Fort. In addition, other places should be restored in original forms and developed to attract more tourists,” he said.

Inwa was busy with visitors during the Thadingyut,

Tazaungdaing, and New Year periods, creating more local income opportunities. Like the Bagan Ancient Cultural Heritage Zone,



This photo showcases travellers visiting the Inwa ancient pagoda.

Inwa locals should be trained to become guides to explain the history of ancient pagodas, he added. — MT/ZN

K650M worth of stimulant tablets en route from Shan to Yangon seized

STIMULANT tablets valued at K650 million which will be transported from Shan State (South) to Yangon, were seized, as reported by the Myanmar Police Force.

A combined team, including members of the Anti-Drug Police Force, conducted a search of a Toyota Mark II, travelling from Taunggyi to Aungban, driven by Han Lin Kyaw accompanied by Ma Yoon Thiri Kyaw at 5:30 pm on 4 January and seized 400,000 stimulant tablets.

According to the investigation, the police force seized 300,000 stimulant tablets from a Honda CRV, heading to Yangon from Taunggyi, driven by Zaw

Zaw Aung (aka) Htet Aung accompanied by Than Htun and Kyaw Win (aka) Bali near Kyweltatson village in Thazi Township at 11 am on 5 January.

Offenders admitted Sai Htun Hla in Loilem Township bought the seized drugs from Sai Ba Maung (aka) Ko Ba (aka) Sai Yoon in Kunhing Township supervised by Sai Lah (aka) Ko Sai in Namsang Township and transported to Taunggyi Township for selling 400,000 stimulant tablets to Han Lin Kyaw and Ma Yoon Thiri Kyaw.

Afterwards, 300,000 stimulant tablets were transported from Taunggyi to Yangon by Zaw Zaw Aung (aka) Htet Aung, Than Htun and Kyaw Win (aka) Bali.

The combined team including security forces along with PNO local transformed militia arrested Sai Htun Hla in Hopong Township, Aung Kyaw Htay (aka) Ko Htay and Sai Wai Aung in Thingangyun Township and U Oo Thant Zaw in Tamway Township.

Legal proceedings were conducted against the offenders, and an ongoing investigation is underway to apprehend others involved in the case. — MNA/MKKS



Offenders are seen alongside seized drugs and vehicle.

Man arrested after bank robbery in Mandalay

THE security forces conducted an investigation following an armed robbery at KBZ Bank (No 37th branch) in Maha Nwezin ward of Mahaangmyay township of Mandalay Region on 11 January.

According to the investigation, an unidentified man arrived at the bank pretending to withdraw money, and threatening the bank staff holding a gun in his hand and instructing him to put the money into his bag. When he got out of the bank, the bank staff and people arrested him together, and he shot a gun. The deputy bank manager of the bank got a gunshot wound. The offender Aung Pyae Phyo (aka) Yaung Ni from Amarapura was arrested with one homemade pistol and five 9mm bullets.

Police seized two homemade

guns, 18 gingalis and one T-shirt at his parents' house in Hman Tan ward of Amarapura on the same day, and 18 9mm bullets and one motorcycle at the house he rented in the same ward.

The offender confessed that he attended the PDF terrorist training in Saigaing township together with his friend Ko Naing Oo (aka) Ko Oo (aka) Laung Char (under investigation) in June 2021. He bought the guns and magazines from Ko Naing Oo (aka) Ko Oo (aka) Laung Char, supported financial assistance to PDF terrorist groups many times, and robbed the bank to provide the PDF terrorist groups.

Steps are being taken to take action against him, and further investigations were underway.

— MNA/KTZH



An arrestee, related items and motorbike used in the robbery.

Counter-argument to false information

Fake news: Security forces blaze Ohpyinme village near Shwesettaw

SUBVERSIVE media are fabricating phoney news to the public, accusing security forces of setting fire to 36 houses of residents in Ohpyinme village near Shwesettaw in Minbu Township, Magway Region,

on 11 January.

According to an on-ground report, the truth is the malicious media are hiding the terror actions of the terrorists such as attacking towns and villages with heavy weapons

and burning the villages of the citizens. They also aim to cause misunderstandings between the local people and the security forces with the fake news on social media platforms. — MNA/MKKS

NATIONAL

Bago nods US\$5.651M investment in Jan, creating 1,000 jobs



The first Bago Region Investment Committee Meeting in progress.

IN January, Bago Region approved an investment of US\$5.651 million to increase foreign investment, creating job opportunities for 1,000 local workers, according to the Bago Region Government.

This investment increase in foreign investment within the region was approved during the Bago Region Investment Committee's 1/2025 Meeting. The approval allowed Cobes Industries (BII) Company Limited to expand its production to include 23 types of surgical and healthcare-related equipment.

Additionally, during the same meeting, other decisions were made

in line with laws and procedures. These included changes in shares and amendments to the import item codes for foreign-invested companies.

Between 1 February 2021 and 11 January 2025, the total investment in Bago Region from both foreign and domestic investors reached \$209.022 million, creating 13,091 job opportunities.

The Bago Region Investment Committee continues to approve new domestic and foreign investment projects every month in compliance with laws and regulations to create additional employment opportunities in the region. — ASH/KNN

Japanese used goods selling well in markets



Japan's used consumer products that are currently selling well in the market.

ACCORDING to second-hand market sources, Japanese-used consumer goods are sold well at the market in Myawady Township.

"Various consumer goods are mostly used. For example, golf clubs, fishing rods, used clothes, children's items, scissors, knives, matches, cabinets, pots, etc. All except refrigerators and TVs are included. Electrical appliances and consumer goods are different. Consumer goods are selling well," said Ko Wai Yan, a Japanese-used goods trader in Myawady Township.

Second-hand goods have a specific user base including those who cannot afford the new items, so these goods called container items as they come in bulk are selling well.

"Container goods have their markets. All items have demand. They are cheap because they are used. Those who can't afford to spend a lot of money use them. Some people just like Japanese domestic products," he explained.

In December, people shifted to buying high-quality used bags. Since they can be used by all classes for a longer time than new ones, customers even had to wait for the arrival of these containers.

After the emergence of online shopping on phones, people have been buying second-hand items in the expanded market widely for about five years, and the demand for these used bags has increased due to the increasing number of users. — Thit Taw/ZN

UNICEF Myanmar to offer monthly finance to children with disabilities

UNICEF Myanmar will reportedly deliver monthly finance of K42,000 to children with disabilities aged 2 to 18 across the country. Eligible children must be certified as having severe or profound disabilities.

The fund will be directly allocated to eligible beneficiaries every two months via Wave Money. The fund will be limited to a maximum of three children with disabilities per household currently living together.

The funds are intended to be used for essential needs, including nutrition, healthcare, personal hygiene, assistive devices/technologies, accessibility improvements,



This photo shows children with disabilities being supported by UNICEF.

rehabilitation, and education. Beneficiaries are encouraged to use the funds effectively for these purposes.

Guardians of children with confirmed severe or profound disabilities can contact UNICEF Myanmar directly to

enrol in the programme. They must provide their name, the name of the eligible child, and the phone number for transferring the funds. Those who do not meet the eligibility criteria will not receive financial support. — ASH/MKKS

RTAD records 17,600 EV registrations by Dec 2024

ROAD Transport Administration Department (RTAD) stated that 17,600 various types of electric vehicles have been registered as of 27 December 2024, including 6,191 EV.

There are 6,166 private EVs, three public electric buses, 22 electric light trucks, 10,861 two-wheel electric vehicles and 548 three-wheel electric vehicles registered with the

RTAD so far.

Companies are no longer to store the private-use Electric Vehicle with a higher level than the standard grading of the National-level Leading Committee on Development of Electric Vehicles in the bonded warehouse from 1 February 2025, the Customs Department said.

Import permits for Electric vehicles were granted in late 2022. At present, among over 50 branded EVs imported by about 80 companies, Toyota, BYD and MG EVs are pretty popular in the domestic automobile market. — ASH/KK



This image showcases electric vehicles imported into the domestic auto market.

Notification 1/2025

CONTINUED FROM YESTERDAY

Aggamaha Kammathanacariya title

1. Bhaddanta Kosalañana, ShwedaungU Ledi Meditation Centre, Kanchaung Village-tract, Yinmabin Township, Sagaing Region
2. Dr Bhaddanta Indobhasa Bhivamsa, Kamahtan Monastery, Myoma Ward 1, Nyaunglebin, Bago Region
3. Bhaddanta Silacara, Kyaikdeyon Monastery, Pyinhtaung Village, Thayet Township, Magway Region
4. Bhaddanta Dhammasami, Theingu Meditation Centre, Thirimingala Ward, Kyaukpadaung, Mandalay Region
5. Bhaddanta Kaccayana, Sabeiyon Mogok Meditation Centre, Manaung Monastery, Pyigy Myethman Ward, Chanayethazan Township, Mandalay Region
6. Bhaddanta Kumuda, Shwethitsa Tawya, Pha-uk Tawya Buddhist Sasana Yeiktha Branch, Inkan Village, Hmawby Township, Yangon Region
7. Dr Bhaddanta Hsekinda, International Theravada Buddhist Missionary University, Ward 5, Mayangon Township, Yangon Region
8. Dr Bhaddanta Nandavamsa, Zanitarama Mogok Yeiktha, Seinshwegon Village, Hmawby Township, Yangon Region
9. Bhaddanta Vannita, Dhammathukha Tawya Vipassana Dhamma Yeiktha Monastery, Loilon Village, Kengtung Township, Shan State
10. Bhaddanta Vicittasara, Hanthawady Kamahtan Monastery, Myakantha Ward, Myaungmya, Ayeyawady Region

Maha Kammathanacariya title

1. Bhaddanta Sundara, Wuntha Rekkhita Mogok Yeiktha, Balatson Monastery, Atwin Shanchaung Village, Myeik Township, Taninthayi Region
2. Bhaddanta Sobhana, Thidamyaing Tawya Htawara Yeiktha Monastery, Hmoksay Village-tract, Pyay Township, Bago Region
3. Bhaddanta Tejobhasa, Theikdilaba Mogok Vipassana Monastery, Kayinsu Ward, Thayawady, Bago Region
4. Bhaddanta Nayaka, Aungdawmu Tawya Dhamma Yeiktha Monastery, Myohla, Yedashe Township, Bago Region
5. Bhaddanta Dhammapiya, East Ngahsint Monastery, Shweoh 2 Ward, Taungdwingyi, Magway Region
6. Bhaddanta Dhammasara, Mogok Meditation Branch 295, Danok Monastery, Danok Model Village, Dala Township, Yangon Region
7. Bhaddanta Vicitta, Shwedhamma Yeiknye in Mogok Vipassana Dhamma Yeiktha Monastery, Paungkunyana Ward, Mingaladon Township, Yangon Region
8. Bhaddanta Jagariya, Shwechan Dhamma Yeiktha Monastery, Ward 13, Dagon Myothit (East) Township, Yangon Region
9. Bhaddanta Sobhana, Dhamma Aungsi Sasana Yeiktha, 19/48 Ward, Shwepyitha Township, Yangon Region
10. Dr Bhaddanta Tejadhamma, Myitta Mandaing Monastery, Ward 140, Dagon Myothit (South) Township, Yangon Region
11. Bhaddanta Vimala, Aungmaggin Dhamma Yeiktha Monastery, Hteingon Village, Pantanaw Township, Ayeyawady Region

Kammathanacariya title

1. Bhaddanta Tejananda, Mingala Tawya Mahasi Yeiktha Monastery, Mingalagon Village, Kya-in Seikkyi Township, Kayin State
2. Bhaddanta Dhammadhaja, Thitsatagun Mogok Yeiktha Monastery, Ward 2, Kanbalu, Sagaing Region
3. Bhaddanta Gandamacara, Yadanamyaing Yeiktha Monastery, Ngwepale Ward, Myeik, Taninthayi Region
4. Bhaddanta Candima, Yanaungmyin Tawya (Mayor) Monastery, Dekkhnasiri Township, Nay Pyi Taw
5. Bhaddanta Vimala, Pyidawaye Dhamma Yeiktha Monastery, Thayetchin Paukkon Village, Paungde Township, Bago Region
6. Bhaddanta Therananda, Dhammalamin Mogok Yeiktha Monastery, Kyakhatwayon Village, Nattalin Township, Bago Region
7. Bhaddanta Sasana, Htupayon Mogok Vipassana Dhamma Yeiktha Monastery, Maungtaing Ward 2, Taungdwingyi, Magway Region
8. Bhaddanta Punña, Mogok Vipassana Dhamma Yeiktha Monastery, Shwedaung Taikthit Monastery, Industrial Zone, Yenangyoung, Magway Region
9. Dr Bhaddanta Vijjobhasalankara Bhivamsa, Paunglaunglay YwaU Monastery, Paunglaunglay Village, Kyaukse Township, Mandalay Region
10. Bhaddanta Candavara, Nyaunglunt Dhamma Yeiktha Monastery, Htonbo Tawya-ataik, Paukchaung Ward, Meiktila, Mandalay Region
11. Bhaddanta Visarada, Aungtheikdi Monastery, Shwepyi Yannaing Ward, Pyawbwe, Mandalay Region
12. Bhaddanta Tissa, Withokdayon Monastery, Thayagon Ward, Theinzayat, Kyaikto Township, Mon State
13. Bhaddanta Khantivara, Weluwun Sasana Yeiktha Monastery, Thabeikkon Village, Hlegu Township, Yangon Region
14. Dr Bhaddanta Visittha, Yadanamyaing Monastery, Insein Ywama Pariyatti Buddhist Learning Centre Branch, Ward 13, Dagon Myothit (East) Township, Yangon Region
15. Bhaddanta Hitesaka, Zabuyitshwesin Mogok Vipassana Dhamma Yeiktha Monastery, Ward 2, Hmawby Township, Yangon Region
16. Bhaddanta Sundara, Thahaponnyakari Mogok Yeiktha Monastery, Ward 130, Dagon Myothit (East) Township, Yangon Region
17. Bhaddanta Pañnavamsa, Sasana Aunglan Mogok Vipassana Dhamma Yeiktha Monastery, Ward 8, Kayan Township, Yangon Region
18. Bhaddanta Dhammananda, Ledimu Yeiktha Monastery, Ward 10, Mawlamyinegyun, Ayeyawady Region
19. Bhaddanta Vilasa, Dhammayanthi Yeiktha Monastery, Kyapyan Village, Maubin

- Township, Ayeyawady Region
20. Dr Bhaddanta Nandamala, Yekyikon Monastery, Ngapha Village, Hinthada Township, Ayeyawady Region
21. Bhaddanta Ghosita, LeikUgon Mogok Meditation Centre, Ward 18, Pyapon, Ayeyawady Region

Aggamaha Thirithudhamma Manijotadhara title

1. U Kyaw Zeya, No PSHM (3), Special One-acre Land Plot, Razathingaha Road, Mingaladipa Ward, Pobbathiri Township, Nay Pyi Taw
2. U Baran Mai, No 162, corner of 22nd and 82nd streets, West Pyigy Kyetthayay Ward, Aungmyaythazan Township, Mandalay Region
3. U Kyaw Pe, No 11, Manawhari Street, West Pyay Ward, Dagon Township, Yangon Region

Thirithudhamma Manijotadhara title

1. U Myint Soe Tun, No 68, Hlaingmyintmo 2nd Street, Ward 10, Hline Township, Yangon Region

Thirithudhamma Theingi title

1. Daw Wah Wah Hlaing, No R-31935, Athawady 6th Street, Dekkhnathiri Ward, Dekkhnathiri Township, Nay Pyi Taw
2. Daw Mu Mu San, No 829/830, Bogvoke Street, Hsandaw Ward, Pyay, Bago Region
3. Daw Myint Myint Yi, No 32, corner of 115th and Yangon-Mandalay Highway, Chanmyathaya Ward, Pyigyidagun Township, Mandalay Region
4. Daw Aye Myint (a) Lim Pou Kin, No 1301, Tower-A, Pearl Condominium, Kaba Aye Pagoda Road, Saya San Ward, Bahan Township, Yangon Region
5. Daw Hla Win, No 21-D, Thukhawady Road, Ward 6, Yankin Township, Yangon Region
6. Daw Chaw Su Myat, No 44, Saya San Road, Saya San North-West Ward, Bahan Township, Yangon Region

Thihathudhamma Manijotadhara title

1. U Gaday Kyaw, A-454, Myamyitta Road, Htantabin VIP Ward, Dekkhnathiri Township, Nay Pyi Taw
2. U Aung Say Thaw, No 901, Crystal Tower, Kyuntaw Road, Ward 7, Kamayut Township, Yangon Region
3. U Myo Win Nyunt, Bogvoke Aung San Street, Yeiktha Ward, Hlegu Township, Yangon Region
4. U Tin Hlaing, No 5/8, Bogvoke San Road, Macaokham Ward, Tachilek, Shan State

Thihathudhamma Theingi title

1. Daw Khin Win Mar, No 42, Kunpunchon Road, Kyanigan Ward, Shwedaung, Bago Region
2. Daw Zargyi Win, No R-3/55, 63rd street, between 37th by 38th streets, Mahamyaing Block 2, Mahaaungmyay Township, Mandalay Region
3. Daw Ei Ei Htwe, No 110, Kyaikkhami Road, Rakhinegon Ward, Mawlamyine, Mon State
4. Daw Myint Myint Than (a) Daw Boke Sone, No 10/B, Thirimingala Road, Aungchantha Ward, Sangyoung Township, Yangon Region
5. Daw Phyu Phyu Lwin, No B-107, Oak Street, West Shwegondine Ward, Bahan Township, Yangon Region
6. Daw Thanda San (a) Daw Thanda Sann, No 5/71, Aungteza Street, Konmyint Yeiktha, Ward 6, Mayangon Township, Yangon Region

Thudhamma Manijotadhara title

1. U Aung Lin Naing, No 12, Lanmadaw, Myinbat Ward, Pyawbwe, Mandalay Region
2. U Tin Aung Moe, No 7, Sangha Tekkatho Street, Ward 8, Mayangon Township, Yangon Region
3. U Zaw Moe Aung (a) Magu Than, No 259, Padauk Street, Peinnegon Ward, Insein Township, Yangon Region
4. Dr Than Tun Oo, No 45, 14th Street, Mingaladonzay Ward, Mingaladon Township, Yangon Region
5. U Chan Kyaw Kyaw Paing, No 111, Ngahtetgyi Pagoda Road, South Ngahtetgyi Ward, Bahan Township, Yangon Region

Thudhamma Theingi title

1. Daw Mya Tin, No 3/460, Mebaungkyaung Road, Ward 3, Hpa-an, Kayin State
2. Daw Than Than Htay (a) Daw Khin Tar, No 1, Tamadan Street, Ward 4, Minbu, Magway Region
3. Daw May Thein, 80th Street between 9th by 10th streets, Thayezy Ward, West Amarahtani Ward, Aungmyethazan Township, Mandalay Region
4. Daw Win Kyi, Phyauxeikkon Thanyaykyo Ward, Natyaygan Village, Amarapura Township, Mandalay Region
5. Daw Kyi Kyi Myint, No 43/E, 22nd street between 89th by 90th streets, Minte Ekin Ward, Aungmyaythazan Township, Mandalay Region
6. Daw Nilar Khin, TaTa-12, No 73, 63rd B Street, 125th by 126th streets, F Ward, Pyigyidagun Township, Mandalay Region
7. Daw Wai Wai Hnin, No 25-A, Hsaingtan Ward, 26th street, 88th by 89th streets, East Thiri Haymar Ward, Chanayethazan Township, Mandalay Region
8. Daw Win Win Htay, No 854, 104th Street, 78th by 82nd Streets, South Chanmyathazi Ward, Chanmyathazi Township, Mandalay Region
9. Daw Wah Wah Htein, 78th street between 29th by 30th streets, Kinsanamahi Ward, Chanayethazan Township, Mandalay Region
10. Daw Than Than Kyi, No 135 (A-3), Thanlwin Street, Ward 10, Kamayut Township, Yangon Region
11. Daw Khin Pyae Pyae Phyo, No 72, Bogvoke Aung San Street, Ward 10, Pazundaung Township, Yangon Region
12. Daw Cho Lei Yin Win, No 140, Bo Ba Htoo Street, Myakantha Ward, Myaungmya, Ayeyawady Region

Sd/Min Aung Hlaing
Senior General
Chairman
State Administration Council

OPINION

Address the impacts of air pollution on people

AIR pollution is one of the most severe environmental threats to human health, as all living beings depend on air for survival. It not only harms human health but also degrades the atmosphere of the natural environment, disrupts the socioeconomic stability of the people, and impedes a country's development process.

A United Nations survey conducted in 2021 found that approximately 8.1 million people worldwide die prematurely each year due to exposure to polluted air. This includes over 700,000 children under the age of five, affected by both indoor and outdoor air pollution. It is crucial for everyone to recognize that air pollution has become a silent killer in society.

Generally, the World Health Organization monitors the number of cities with polluted air. As air pollution issues worsen in Myanmar's neighbouring India, people living in degraded environments experience problems and disorders

affecting their respiratory tracts, eyes, throats, and other organs. Consequently, authorities advise people to wear masks when going outside and urge older individuals and children to stay indoors.

Air pollution is driven by excessive use of fossil fuels, rapid urban development, rising temperatures as a consequence of climate change, and the impacts of forest fires. Moreover, setting fire to crop residues in the farmlands during the cold season emits smoke into the atmosphere. In addition, spoiling at landfills and heaps of garbage can disturb environmental conservation without benefiting society due to unhealthy bad smells.

Medical specialists stated that air pollution could contribute to 15 per cent of deaths among people infected with COVID-19. In addition, scientific surveys revealed that vehicle and industrial emissions could reduce global life expectancy by an average of two years. Researchers also disclosed that 27 per cent of pandemic-related deaths in East Asia might be attributed to the adverse effects of poor air quality. Similarly, 19 per cent of COVID-19 deaths in Europe and 17 per cent in North America were linked to air pollution.

Preventing air pollution, particularly smoke, requires action from relevant authorities and individuals to protect public health and reduce loss of life. Controlling air pollution is a vital climate change mitigation measure that also supports a nation's development. By minimizing the use of fossil fuels globally, individuals can contribute to creating a healthier world and safeguarding lives from the dangers of air pollution. Collective efforts are essential to achieve sustainable environmental and societal well-being.

■■■

IN the warm summer of 2023, a joyful and radiant Ivy Jacobsen stood at the end of the aisle, ready to take one of the most significant steps of her life. It was a beautiful day in Chelan, Washington, with the sun shining down on a perfect outdoor wedding venue. Ivy, her blonde hair styled in a loose bun, looked stunning in a simple yet elegant white gown, featuring a subtle ruffle at the back. On this day, she was ready to marry her love, Tristen Jurgensen, a sheriff's deputy who, like Ivy, was 28 years old. As Tristen stood at the altar, dressed in a tailored blue-grey suit, he could hardly hold back the tears as he saw his bride approaching.

More than 300 guests gathered to witness the couple's special day, framed by the natural beauty of the Rocky Mountains and tall pine trees. The green grass beneath Ivy's feet and the blue sky above, speckled with soft white clouds, made the scene feel like something out of a fairy tale. But this moment of happiness and peace was hard-earned for Ivy, who had endured a deeply traumatic childhood. Beneath her joyful smile was a history of unimaginable pain and survival.

From a young age, Ivy had been abused by her father, living in constant fear for herself, her mother, and her younger siblings. Despite the abuse, she found strength in a supportive network of people who helped her through her darkest times. Looking back, Ivy knew that the love and support she received were key to her healing and survival. This network consisted of friends, mentors, coaches, and family members, most of whom had played significant roles in her life. It was for this reason that Ivy

wanted to do something unique at her wedding to honour them. Instead of having just one person give her away, she invited all 15 of the most influential men in her life to escort her down the aisle.

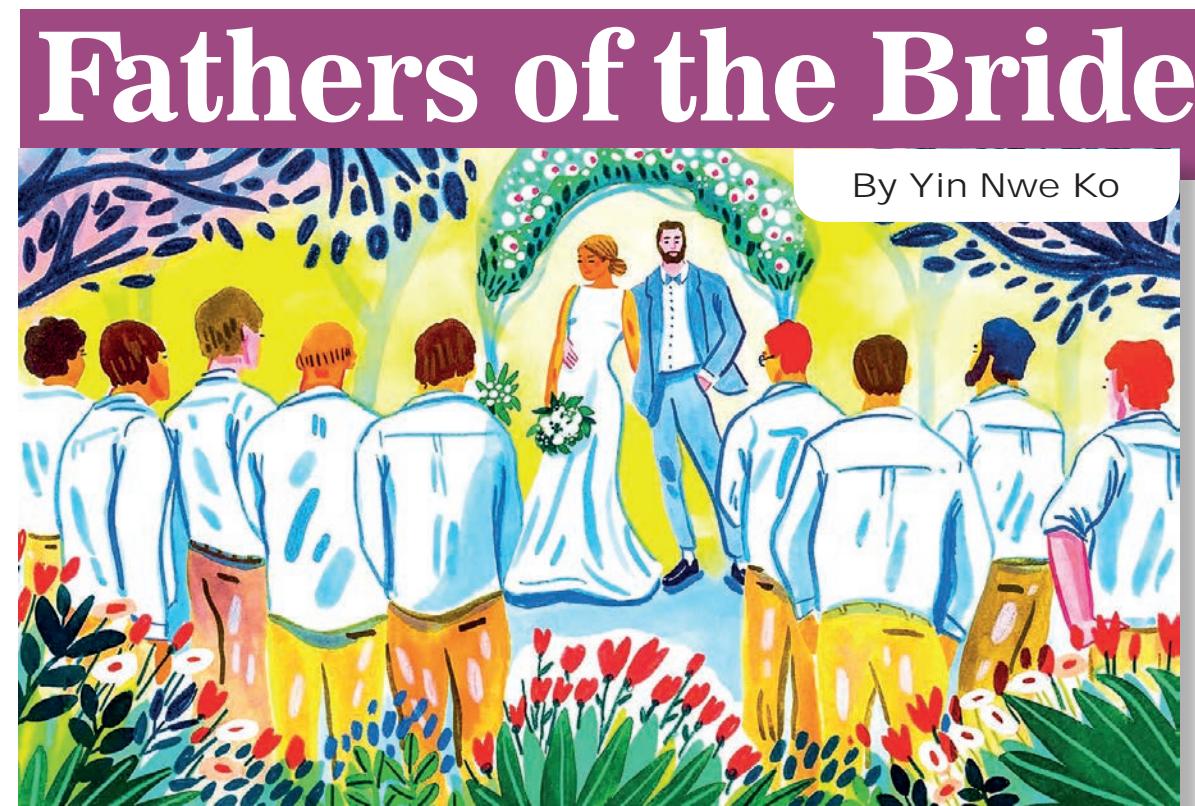
These men, who had become father figures to Ivy in various ways, came from all over to be part of this special occasion. They had each supported her at different points in her life, and while they weren't all related to her by blood, they had two things in common: they loved Ivy, and they had been there for her when she needed them most.

At the wedding, these 15 men, dressed in matching khaki pants and crisp white shirts, lined the aisle, ready to guide Ivy toward the altar. Among them were her high school English teacher and golf coach, who had allowed Ivy to find solace in his classroom during difficult times. Also present were six of her former basketball coaches, who had seen her grow from a shy fourth-grader learning to dribble into a confident high school varsity player. Several relatives were there too, including her younger brother, her future brother-in-law, and her maternal uncle, as well as other "uncles" who were family friends that Ivy considered part of her extended family. Standing proudly among them was a police officer who had inspired Ivy to escape her abusive home.

As Ivy took her steps down the aisle, she paused every few moments to take the hands of two new fatherly figures, exchanging tearful smiles and heartfelt glances. When the officiant finally asked, "Who gives this woman to be married to this man?" a collective chorus of deep voices responded, "We

do." It was a powerful moment that symbolized the strength of the bonds Ivy had formed with the men who had stepped in to protect, mentor, and love her.

Ivy's journey to this beautiful wedding day was anything but easy. She was in the sixth grade when the abuse from her father began. He manipulated and controlled nearly every aspect of her life, from what she wore to who she could talk to. At home, he was violent towards her mother and younger siblings, creating an environment of constant fear. Although Ivy excelled in school and sports, the reality behind closed doors was grim. Her father kept a tight grip on her life, even going as far as to prevent her from accessing the internet or having a cell phone. He prohibited her from wearing clothes he deemed too "girly" and would often accompany her on shopping trips to ensure she bought only what he approved. Most of all, he instilled a deep mistrust of others, especially law enforcement, warning her that "bad things would happen to Dad" if she ever told anyone about the abuse. Despite the fear, Ivy managed to form a close connection with a school resource officer named Officer White. She met him while working as a student assistant in the main office of her middle school, where Officer White's office was located nearby. Their relationship started casually, with small chats about school and sports, and a friendly competition to see who could hang the most holiday decorations in the school halls. It was one of the few sources of fun in Ivy's otherwise painful childhood. Though Ivy never confided in Officer White about what was



Fathers of the Bride

By Yin Nwe Ko

happening at home, his presence gave her a sense of safety she had never experienced before. Still, the fear of her father finding out kept her from revealing the truth.

Everything changed when Ivy was a sophomore in high school. Her best friend, noticing that something was deeply wrong, confronted her and asked if she was okay. Though Ivy was terrified to answer, she knew she couldn't continue living in fear. She confided in her friend, who then told her parents. The next day, a detective came to Ivy's school to talk to her, asking her to share what was happening at home. Ivy was hesitant, remembering her father's warnings never to trust the police. But her positive experiences with Officer White gave her the courage to speak up. She told the detective everything. Soon after, Ivy's father was arrested by none other than

Officer White. Although life improved after her father was taken into custody, the road to recovery was long and difficult. Financial struggles followed the arrest, and Ivy's family needed a safe place to stay after her father was released on bail. One of Ivy's uncles stepped in, providing not only shelter but also emotional support. He attended her basketball games, paid for her participation in sports, and even bought her dresses for school dances. Other father figures in her life also showed up, offering their love and encouragement.

As Ivy faced three gruelling court trials against her father, these men continued to support her. Her basketball coaches sat in the courtroom, flashing reassuring smiles and offering nods of encouragement as Ivy testified about the worst moments of her life. Their presence gave her the strength to

continue, even when the first two trials resulted in hung juries. In the third trial, in the summer of 2013, Ivy's father was finally convicted and sentenced to nearly 16 years in prison. Throughout it all, Ivy's "uncles" and mentors remained by her side, never wavering in their commitment to help her heal.

After her father's conviction, Ivy began to rebuild her life. She got her driver's license, a cell phone, and the freedom to explore who she was without fear. She ditched her father's restrictive clothing choices and embraced her style, wearing fitted jeans and vibrant tops, experimenting with makeup, and enjoying typical teenage experiences. She also became determined to help other victims of abuse. At her high school graduation in 2014, Ivy shared her story publicly for the first time in front of 6,000 people. The response



PHOTO CREDIT: READER'S DIGEST

was overwhelmingly positive, and she soon began volunteering as a spokesperson for Dawson Place Child Advocacy Center, the nonprofit that had helped her during her legal battles.

After graduation, Ivy stayed in touch with Officer White and began to pursue a career in law enforcement. Encouraged by her mentor, James, a juvenile corrections officer, Ivy enrolled in the police academy. Today, she works as a school resource officer for the East Wenatchee Police Department, offering the same support and protection to students that Officer White had once given her.

On her wedding day, surrounded by the 15 men who had helped her through the darkest times of her life, Ivy was no longer the scared little girl her father had tried to control. She had become a strong, independent woman, ready to start a new chapter with Tristen by her side. As the soft melody of Calum Scott's "You Are the Reason" played, Ivy and Tristen's love story came full circle — a testament to the power of resilience, love, and the unwavering support of those who care.

Reference: *Reader's Digest*
October, 2024

Research discovers new skeletal tissue with potential for regeneration: Study

AN international research team has discovered a new type of skeletal tissue that offers great potential for advancing regenerative medicine and tissue engineering.

An international research team led by the University of California, Irvine has discovered a new type of skeletal tissue that offers great potential for advancing regenerative medicine and tissue engineering.

Most cartilage relies on an external extracellular matrix for strength, but 'lipocartilage', which is found in

the ears, nose and throat of mammals, is uniquely packed with fat-filled cells called 'lipochondrocytes'.

It provides super-stable internal support which enables the strength of tissue. It makes to remain soft and springy — similar to bubbled packaging material.

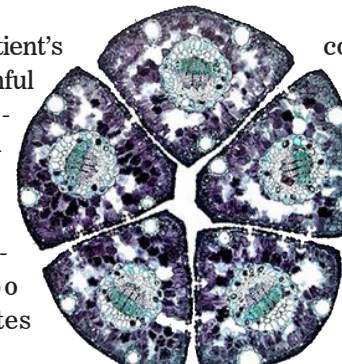
The study, published in the journal *Science*, describes how lipocartilage cells create and maintain their own lipid reservoirs while remaining constant in size. Unlike ordinary adipocyte fat cells, lipochondrocytes never

shrink or expand in response to food availability.

"Lipocartilage's resilience and stability provide a compliant, elastic quality that's perfect for flexible body parts such as earlobes or the tip of the nose, opening exciting possibilities in regenerative medicine and tissue engineering, particularly for facial defects or injuries," said corresponding author Maksim Plikus, UC Irvine professor of developmental and cell biology.

"Currently, cartilage reconstruction often requires harvesting tissue

from the patient's rib — a painful and invasive procedure. In the future, patient-specific lipochondrocytes



This tissue is packed with fat-filled cells known as lipochondrocytes, which provide super-stable internal support, making the tissue soft and springy. PHOTO: ANI

could be derived from stem cells, purified and used to manufacture living cartilage tailored to individual needs. With the help of 3D printing, these engineered tissues could be shaped to fit precisely, offering new solutions for treating birth defects, trauma and various cartilage diseases."

Dr Franz Leydig first recognized lipochondrocytes in 1854, when he noted the presence of fat droplets

in the cartilage of rat ears, a finding that was largely forgotten until now.

Now with modern biochemical tools and advanced imaging methods, UC Irvine researchers comprehensively characterised lipo cartilage's molecular biology, metabolism and structural role in skeletal tissues.

In their research, they also uncovered the genetic process that suppresses the activity of enzymes that break down fats and reduce the absorption of new fat molecules.

When stripped of its lipids, the

lipocartilage becomes stiff and brittle, highlighting the importance of its fat-filled cells in maintaining the tissue's combination of durability and flexibility.

In addition, the team noted that in some mammals, such as bats, lipochondrocytes assemble into intricate shapes, like parallel ridges in their oversized ears, which may enhance hearing acuity by modulating sound waves.

SOURCE: ANI

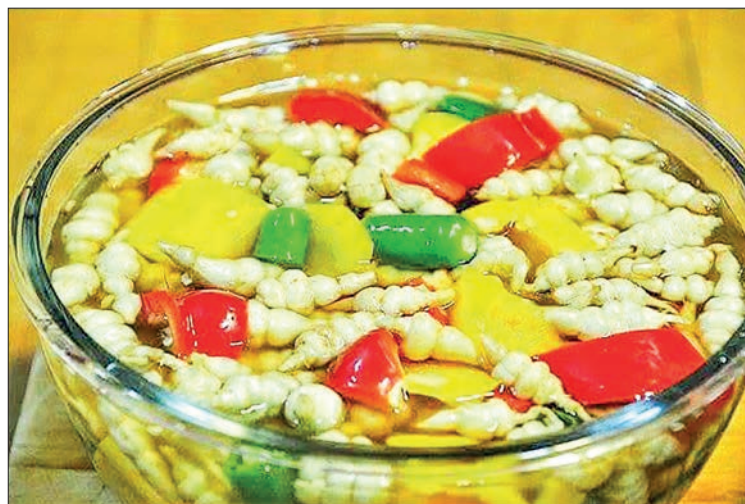
NATIONAL BUSINESS

Chinese artichokes in high demand

THE Chinese artichoke, a seasonal vegetable produced from Heho, has been sold well. It is the harvesting season of Chinese artichokes after the lima bean season and the trade has increased despite its high price, with nationwide orders, according to beans traders from Aungban Township.

“The Chinese artichoke sea-

son has started now, after lima bean season. Some cook it with lima bean, some make it pickled and some use it in fried vermicelli or noodle. It is a root vegetable and dug from the earth. The price has been high as it is the beginning of the season but the trade has increased too. It is mainly grown in Heho. Orders have been placed nationwide in-



Images depict Chinese artichokes available at the Aungban bean market.

cluding Yangon,” said an owner of beans trading in Aungban Township.

Chinese artichoke is a root

vegetable and can be eaten fried, pickled, cooked or steamed. It is delicious either cooked or raw and it tastes like water chestnut

if it is eaten raw in salad and can be used like potato if it is steamed, sauté, soup or steamed recipes. — Thit Taw/ZS

3rd Sourcex India welcomes Myanmar buyers, companies



This image showcases a poster and an invite for the third Sourcex India.

ACCORDING to the Myanmar Trade Promotion Organization, the third edition of Sourcex India is scheduled to take place on 26-28 March 2025 at Yash Bhoomi Expo Centre, New Delhi, and invited Myanmar companies and buyers, Myanmar Trade Promotion Organization.

It is a premier marketplace for Indian suppliers of branded food and non-food fast-moving consumer goods

(FMCG) and services to go global, has the potential to be franchised overseas, and bridge between international buyers and leading Indian suppliers. Over 200 reputed Indian brands will be showcased.

Goods related to goods and beverages, health and beauty, FMCG and FMCD, apparel and garments, textiles, toys and children's products, sports and fitness, station-

ery and office suppliers and e-commerce, education and skill training, entertainment, food services and QSR, leisure and travel, professional services and logistics services will be featured at the event.

Each individual per foreign company that is hosted will get reimbursed economy class air tickets. Two-night hotel stay in New Delhi and transportation from the airport to the hotel, business matching and access to the expo will be covered as well.

Foreign buyers need to register by 30 January 2025 through www.surveyhero.com/s/3rdSourceX and the evaluation committee will confirm whether they are selected to attend or not via email. Myanmar companies can enquire about more information through the Myanmar Trade Promotion Organization at 067 408622 and email event.td.myantrade@gmail.com. — NN/KK

YGN palm oil wholesale ref rate stable for 4 weeks

THE wholesale reference rate of palm oil for the Yangon market remained unchanged at K7,280 per viss for the week ending 19 January. The price has remained stable for four consecutive weeks, according to the Supervisory Committee on Edible Oil Import and Distribution.

The Supervisory Committee on Edible Oil Import and Distribution under the Ministry of Commerce has been closely observing the FOB prices in Malaysia and Indonesia, adding transport costs, tariffs and banking services to decide the wholesale market reference rate for edible oil weekly. Despite the reference price, the market price is way too high.

The committee notified that any person who is involved in price gouging and oil storage to attempt market manipulation will

face legal action under the Essential Goods and Services Law.

The department is working together with the Myanmar Oil Dealers' Association and the cooking oil importing companies to offer affordable rates of imported palm oil for consumers.

The complaints for overcharging can be lodged over hotline 1535 of the call centre of the Consumers Affairs Department or sent to the Facebook page of the department and the region and state departments concerned.

The domestic consumption of palm oil is estimated at one million tonnes per year. The local palm oil production is just about 400,000 tonnes. About 700,000 tonnes of palm oil are yearly imported through Malaysia and Indonesia to meet domestic demands. — NN/KK

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Restoration work on millennium-old brick tower in Cambodia's Angkor Park completed

ARCHAEOLOGISTS of Cambodia's APSARA National Authority (ANA) have completed the restoration of Tower 15 at Phnom Bakheng temple in the Angkor Archaeological Park in northwest Siem Reap province, said an ANA's news release on Monday.

The ruined brick tower, located south of the ancient Phnom Bakheng temple, is more than 1,000 years old.

Chhun Ratana, a technical officer from the ANA Department of Conservation of Monuments and Preventive Archaeology, said that before the restoration, Tower 15 had suf-

fered significant damage, with its roof and walls nearly collapsing due to age and natural elements.

She said during the six-month restoration work, the team undertook extensive repairs to reinforce the walls, ceiling, and floor, while also reorganizing the platform to ensure the tower's stability for centuries to come.

"The restoration team is now focused on cleaning the site and removing renovation materials to prepare for the temple's reopening to visitors," Ratana said.

"Additionally, plans are underway to initiate a new project aimed at restoring Tower 14, which is situated



This undated photo shows staff members working at the restoration site of Tower 15 at Phnom Bakheng temple in Siem Reap province, Cambodia. Archaeologists of Cambodia's APSARA National Authority (ANA) have completed the restoration of Tower 15 at Phnom Bakheng temple in the Angkor Archaeological Park in northwest Siem Reap province, said an ANA's news release on Monday. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

adjacent to Tower 15," she added.

Phnom Bakheng temple is home to 44 brick towers, and thus far, a portion of the site has undergone structural repairs by the ANA in collaboration with the World Monuments Fund, according to the news release.

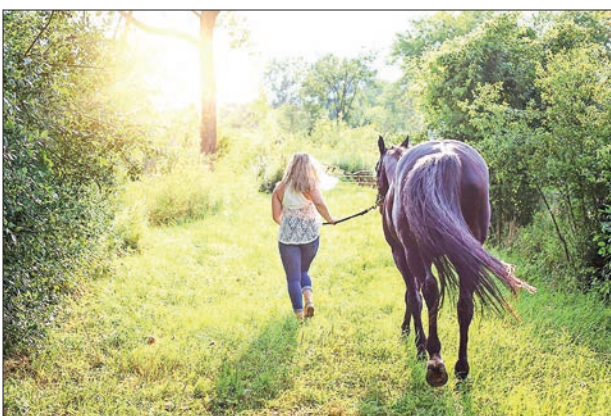
Built in the late ninth century, Phnom Bakheng temple is one of the major temples in the 401-square-kilometre Angkor Archaeological Park, which was inscribed on the World Heritage List of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization in 1992. — Xinhua

Scramble to shelter animals from Los Angeles wildfires

AS wildfires ravaged Los Angeles, Janell Gruss, manager of a stable with 25 horses, faced the daunting task of evacuating the animals while battling 100-mile-an-hour winds and dense smoke. Despite the peril, Gruss persevered, fearing at one point she might not make it out alive. "You hear about the person that goes in to get the last horse and doesn't come out," she recalled.

More than 150,000

people have been forced to flee their homes, and the wildfires have claimed at least 16 lives. The Los Angeles Equestrian Centre, now home to hundreds of animals, has been overwhelmed by the influx of displaced animals. Director Jennie Nevin described the first night as chaotic, with people arriving from all directions, bringing donkeys, pigs, and ponies along with their horses. — AFP



Hundreds of animals that have been made homeless by the Los Angeles fires have found a temporary home at the Los Angeles Equestrian Centre. **PHOTO: PIXABAY**

Researchers reveal link between physical activity and longevity, ageing

Researchers found moderate physical activity boosts longevity by 56 per cent, compared to low activity, based on a study of 20,924 Chinese participants.

CHINESE researchers have recently uncovered the links between physical activity, sedentary behaviour, and their impacts on longevity and age acceleration, supporting the advice to "sit less and move more" for healthy longevity.

Researchers from Sun Yat-sen University selected 20,924 Chinese participants aged 50 or above from the Guangzhou Biobank Cohort Study and gathered data on their physical activity and sedentary behaviour through questionnaires.

Upon analyzing the relationships between physical activity and longevity, they discovered that moderate physical activity, compared to low levels, is associated with a higher likelihood of longevity, with a 56 per cent



An athlete takes part in the cross-country skiing race in the Changchun Jingyuetan International Vasaloppet Ski Festival in Changchun, capital of northeast China's Jilin Province, 4 January 2025. **PHOTO: YAN LINYUN/XINHUA**

increased chance.

Specifically, the frequency, duration and intensity of moderate physical activity are positively correlated with the probability of longevity. In contrast, vigorous physical activity does not yield the same ben-

efits and, in some cases, shows an inverse relationship.

When examining the connection between physical activity and accelerated aging, the researchers found that a higher frequency of moderate physical activity is

linked to a reduced risk of accelerated ageing by more than five years. Conversely, a longer duration of vigorous physical activity is associated with an increased risk of accelerated aging by more than five years. — Xinhua

ECON WORLD

US economy faces multiple policy risks from Trump's proposals: JP Morgan expert

THE US economy faces risks from President-elect Donald Trump's policy proposals on trade, immigration, tax and fiscal spending, as well as regulation, said a top expert of JP Morgan.

The US economy probably would grow by around two per cent in 2025, lower than that in the previous two years, said Joyce Chang, chair of JP Morgan Global Research, on Sunday at a show organized by the US National Retail Federation (NRF).

Speaking at NRF 2025: Retail's Big Show, Chang said the United States could lose about 100,000 payrolls each month if the country has lower immigration, and lower immigration flows also mean lower productiv-



Traders work on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE) on 10 January 2025 in New York City. **PHOTO: SPENCER PLATT/GETTY IMAGES/AFP**

ity and less consumer spending. The trajectory of US fiscal

spending is unsustainable and US treasury yield is going to stay

elevated, said Chang.

"We have treasury (yield) trading in a completely different range of four per cent to five per cent," Chang added.

She noted the US treasury market could face a test like what happened in August 2023 when treasury yields ticked up and the US dollar gained.

Moreover, Trump's tariff proposals on Mexico, Canada and China would lift US inflation by one percentage point and reduce US economic growth by 0.7 percentage points, according to Chang.

If the United States imposes a 10-per-cent universal tariff, it would add about US\$1,250 of costs to an average US house-

hold, added Chang.

A lot of people think the tariff proposals are used to gain negotiation leverage, "but it raises the level of uncertainty", she said.

Consumer discretionary bears the most substantial headwinds related to tariff and immigration policies with toys, consumer electronics and home furnishings at the top of a list demonstrated by Chang.

With the tariffs now being talked about to be expanded to other parts of the world, "the whole issue of how do you diversify your supply chain is gonna be much more of a question mark going forward," said Chang. — Xinhua

BRIEF: ECON

Uzbekistan exports US\$70.3 mln worth of cherries in Jan-Nov 2024

UZBEKISTAN exported cherries worth US\$70.3 million from January to November 2024, local media reported on Monday, citing the country's statistics agency.

As reported, around 32,200 tonnes of cherries were exported during this period.

According to the data, the main buyer of Uzbek cherries during the period was Russia, which accounted for 25,425 tonnes. Kazakhstan ranked second with a volume of 3,521 tonnes, while Kyrgyzstan took the third place with 2,755 tonnes. China ranked sixth in this regard with 91 tonnes. — Xinhua

Pakistan's weekly inflation increases 1.9% with mixed trends in essential commodities

THE weekly inflation measured by the Sensitive Price Indicator (SPI) in Pakistan witnessed an increase of 1.9 per cent on a year-on-year basis, according to a report by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS).

The PBS report on its website on Sunday showed that the SPI was calculated to measure the price movement of important commodities, and it comprised 51 essential items collected from 50 markets in 17 cities across the country.

The PBS data revealed that the prices of potatoes, pulse gram, powdered milk, beef, garlic, vegetable oil, shirting, gas charges and firewood rose during the week ended on 9 January 2025, compared to the corresponding period last year.

On the other hand, prices of onions, wheat flour, chili powder, electricity charges, diesel, petrol, and bread dropped during the same period.

The statistics showed that the SPI dropped slightly by 0.65 per cent on a week-on-week basis, with a main drop observed in the prices of tomatoes, potatoes, eggs, onions, pulse grams, rice, and liquified petroleum gas. — Xinhua

RCEP, FTAs key to attracting FDI to Cambodia in 2024: official

THE Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) and its bilateral free trade agreements (FTAs) with China, South Korea, and the United Arab Emirates are key factors to attracting foreign direct investment to the kingdom, a Cambodia official has said.

"These regional and bilateral FTAs are magnets for foreign investors to Cambodia," Ministry of Commerce's Secretary of State

and Spokesperson Penn Sovicheat told Xinhua. "New investment will bring new capital, technologies and employment opportunities for our people."

According to a report from the Council for the Development of Cambodia (CDC) released on Monday, the country's foreign investments last year came from China, Vietnam, Singapore, the Cayman Islands, Malaysia, Japan, the United States,

Thailand, Samoa, India, South Korea, Canada, Seychelles, the United Kingdom, Myanmar, Australia, Senegal, Russia and the Netherlands.

A total of 414 investment projects were approved last year, focusing mainly on agriculture and agro-industry sectors, infrastructure, manufacturing, and tourism, the report said, adding that those projects were expected to generate nearly 320,000 jobs. — Xinhua



An aerial drone photo taken on 11 September 2024 shows a view of the Sihanoukville Autonomous Port (PAS) in Sihanoukville, Cambodia. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

Last tourist information centre in Paris closes

THE last physical tourist information centre in Paris has closed, with officials saying Monday they will boost digital services to meet visitor demand for online information.

“Changes in visitor habits and the specific features of a city like Paris have led us to revise our network of local tourism information,” the Paris Tourist Office operator said in a statement.

The last centre, set up

near the Eiffel Tower for last year’s Summer Olympics, was shut on Sunday.

The temporary structure had replaced an older tourism office at city hall “but was never very popular”, Le Parisien newspaper reported.

The Paris Tourist Office said it would set up 50 information points at newsstands, post offices and hotels across the city by 2026.

There will also be a call centre for “personalized

tips”, staffed every day, that can be reached by phone, mail or instant messenger, it said.

“To welcome visitors properly, respect them and give personalised advice remains an absolute priority to maintain the reputation and attractiveness of this destination,” the office said.

This meant “more flexibility”, “an immediate response to needs” and “a human presence where it really counts”. — AFP



(FILES) A window cleaner wipes the glass door of the Paris’ tourist office, showing its logo and buildings reflection on 20 October 2016 in Paris. On 12 January 2025, the Paris tourism office closed its last physical location, evolving to a digital platform. **PHOTO: AFP**



(FILES) This illustration photo shows the Apple app store logo reflected from an iPhone onto the back of an iMac in Los Angeles, 26 August 2021. **PHOTO: AFP**

Billion-pound lawsuit against Apple over App Store opens in UK

DID US tech giant Apple abuse the dominant position of its app store in the UK? A trial opening Monday in which plaintiffs want more than one billion pounds is set to answer that question.

The complaint, filed in May 2021, accuses Apple of breaching European and UK competition laws by “its exclusion of any other app stores from iOS devices” like iPhones and iPads.

It claims that some 20 million Apple users may have been overcharged by the company “due to its ban on rival app store platforms”.

The complainants says a “30 per cent surcharge” that the company “imposes” on apps purchased through Apple’s App Store comes at “expense of ordinary consum-

ers”.

The case, which Apple has called “meritless”, has been brought by Kings College London academic Rachael Kent and the law firm Hausfeld & Co.

The trial is set to last seven weeks at the Competition Appeal Tribunal in London.

At the heart are accusations that Apple used the App Store to exclude competitors, forcing users to use its system and boosting profits in the process.

“The 30 per cent surcharge relates to most of the applications that you’re going to be using when you’re downloading and making in-app purchases on the App Store,” Kent told AFP, citing dating platform Tinder as an example. — AFP

Prolonged political standoff shadows South Korea’s economy

THE current political uncertainty in South Korea over President Yoon Suk-yeol’s impeachment has shadowed the country’s economy, as analysts worry that the standoff will be prolonged and damage investors’ confidence.

International credit rating agency Moody’s Ratings said the impact of political instability on the South Korean economy so far appears to be limited, but prolonged situations that disrupt economic activity could negatively impact credit, according to local media reports.

Prolonged political

fallout could weigh on the government’s ability to effectively pass important legislation, including the budget, domestic demand and economic growth, and lower investors’ preference for South Korean assets, putting a strain on financial markets, the YTN reported, citing Moody’s.

“The martial law and political instability over the impeachment of the president are eroding South Korea’s international credibility. While the indicators themselves have not yet reached a worrisome level, if external per-

ceptions of South Korea’s economy become fixed in a negative light, this alone could exacerbate the situation,” said the Chosun Daily in an editorial.

If the sovereign credit rating is downgraded, both the real economy and the financial sector will be impacted, as the government, state-owned enterprises, and corporations will have to bear higher borrowing costs when seeking loans from abroad, said South Korean newspaper Hankyoreh, adding the current situation over Yoon has plunged South Korea’s sovereign

credit rating, which has remained at its highest level over the past decade, into a precarious crisis.

Data showed that after the impeachment of Prime Minister Han Duck-soo, who had been serving as acting president following President Yoon’s impeachment, the exchange rate of South Korean won slid to 1,487 against US\$1, the lowest in more than 15 years for the first time. The market expected there would be a chance of a further depreciation of the won if the uncertainty continued. — Xinhua

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V WISDOM VOY.NO. (005N)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V WISDOM VOY.NO. (005N)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **14-1-2025** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **AWPT** where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S K. NAVIGATE CO., LTD

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V BBC MARS VOY.NO. (2401)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V BBC MARS VOY.NO. (2401)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **14-1-2025** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **IBTT** where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: **2301928**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S BEN LINE AGENCIES (S'PORE) PTE LTD

ROLLING UPDATES

WORLD

India opens giant Hindu festival for 400 million pilgrims

VAST crowds of Hindu pilgrims in India bathed in sacred waters as the Kumbh Mela festival opened on Monday, with organisers expecting 400 million people — the world's largest gathering of humanity — to assemble over six weeks.

The millennia-old Kumbh Mela, a show of religious piety and ritual bathing — and a logistical challenge of staggering proportions — is held at the site where the Ganges, Yamuna and mythical Saraswati rivers meet.

“I feel great joy,” said Surmila Devi, 45, after bathing just before dawn. “For me, it's like bathing in nectar.”

Businesswoman Reena

Rai's voice quivered with excitement as she spoke about the “religious reasons” that

brought her to join the sprawling tents, packed along the river banks in the north Indi-

an city of Prayagraj in Uttar Pradesh state.

“As a Hindu, this is an

unmissable occasion,” said the 38-year-old, who travelled around 1,000 kilometres (620 miles) from Madhya Pradesh state to take part in the festival, which runs until 26 February.

Saffron-robed monks and naked, ash-smearing ascetics, many of whom had walked for weeks to reach the site, roamed the crowds offering blessings. The massive congregation is also an occasion for India's Hindu nationalist government to burnish its credentials.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi called it a “divine occasion” that brings together “countless people in a sacred confluence of faith, devotion and culture”. — AFP



This aerial handout photograph taken and released by India's Uttar Pradesh State Information Department on 13 January 2025 shows Hindu pilgrims taking a holy dip in the sacred waters of Sangam, the confluence of Ganges, Yamuna and mythical Saraswati rivers, during the Maha Kumbh Mela festival in Prayagraj. **PHOTO: INDIA'S UTTAR PRADESH STATE INFORMATION DEPARTMENT / AFP**

BRIEF: WORLD

Oil spillage causes brief traffic disruption at Singapore-Malaysia land crossing

AN oil spillage temporarily disrupted traffic at the Woodlands Checkpoint, a major border crossing between Singapore and Malaysia, on Monday morning, according to Singapore's Immigration and Checkpoints Authority (ICA).

The incident occurred along the Johor-Singapore Causeway heading towards the checkpoint, blocking two out of the three lanes, the ICA reported on Facebook, advising travellers to expect delays.

By 10:58 am, the ICA confirmed that the oil spillage had been cleared, and all lanes were reopened to traffic.

At 12:38 pm, the ICA reported that the tailback of traffic departing from Malaysia had subsided.

Approximately 300,000 people cross the causeway daily by vehicle, train, or on foot, according to local news outlet CNA. — Xinhua

4 killed, 5 injured in landslide in western Indonesia

FOUR people were killed in the Indonesian city of Batam, located in the Riau Islands province, after a landslide struck a housing complex early on Monday. The disaster also injured five others and destroyed five houses, according to the province's disaster mitigation agency.

Hendrija, the agency's head of the rehabilitation and reconstruction division, told local media that heavy rains had been falling in the Riau Islands since the previous Friday and were expected to continue until Saturday. He later urged the public to remain vigilant and alert for potential further hydrometeorological disasters.

“We plan to implement roadblocks to the housing complex as part of the emergency response. We don't want more victims,” he said.

Indonesia frequently experiences hydrometeorological disasters during the rainy season. Last November, the country's Meteorology, Climatology and Geophysics Agency warned that the country is currently entering the rainy season, with rainfall intensity expected to increase by between 20 and 40 per cent due to a weak La Nina, which typically brings wetter conditions. — Xinhua

Death toll from Los Angeles fires rises, with dangerous winds incoming

FIREFIGHTERS were battling massive wildfires Monday that have ravaged Los Angeles and killed at least 24 people, with officials warning of incoming dangerous winds that could whip up the blazes further.

The fires ripped through the United States' second-largest city for the seventh day, reducing whole communities to scorched rubble and leaving thousands without homes.

Massive firefighting efforts have staunched the spread of the Palisades Fire, which was looming towards upscale Brentwood and the densely populated San Fernando Valley.

But conditions are set to dramatically worsen, with “extreme fire behaviour and life threatening conditions” over the coming days.

Winds up to 70 miles (110 kilometres) per hour mean a “particularly dangerous situation” will be declared from early Tuesday, said National Weather Service meteorologist Rose Schoenfeld.

Those gusts could fan flames and whip up embers from existing burn zones into new areas, firefighters warned.

Los Angeles County Fire Department chief Anthony

Marrone said his department had received resources including dozens of new water trucks and firefighters from far afield and was primed to face the renewed threat.

Asked whether hydrants could run dry again, as they did during the initial outbreak of fires last week, Mayor Karen Bass replied: “I believe the city is prepared.”

There was frustration for evacuees who were told they would not be returning home until at least Thursday when winds subside.

Some have queued for hours in the hope of getting back to homes they fled to pick

up medication or a change of clothes.

Search for bodies

But Sheriff Robert Luna said escorts into those areas were being suspended Sunday because of the winds and dangerous conditions among the wreckage, as well as the need to retrieve victims' bodies.

Teams with cadaver dogs were carrying out grid searches with the grim expectation that the confirmed death toll would rise.

Several more arrests of looters were made, including one burglar who had dressed as a firefighter to steal from homes. — AFP



A firefighting airplane drops retardant to prevent the wildfire from spreading further on the hills of Mandeville Canyon in Los Angeles, California, the United States, on 11 January 2025. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

SPORTS

Myanmar to host Group D matches of Asian Cup women's futsal qualifiers

THE Group D of 2025 Asian Cup women's futsal qualifiers to be hosted by Myanmar will take place two matches per day, starting from 15 January 2025, at the MFF Futsal Court of Thuwunna Youth Training Centre in Yangon.

Myanmar falls in Group D together with Vietnam, Chinese Taipei and Macao in the qualifiers. The group's matches will be held on 15, 17 and 19 January. According to the fixtures, Chinese Taipei will meet Macao at 2:30 pm and Myanmar will take on Vietnam at 5 pm on 15 January. Vietnam will play against Macao at 2:30 pm and Myanmar will compete with Chinese Taipei at 5

pm on 17 January. Likewise, Chinese Taipei will face Vietnam at 2:30 pm and Myanmar will meet Macao at 5 pm on 19 January.

The qualifiers comprise two groups of five teams each and two more groups of four teams each. Two top teams from each group and the best third-placed team among all teams will be qualified. The group matches from five-team groups started on 11 January. But, the group matches of four-team groups will kick off on 15 January. Myanmar's selected women's futsal team will compete in the qualifiers for the first time. — Ko Nyi Lay/TTA



Players of the selected women's futsal team under a training session.

Djokovic joins Alcaraz, Sinner in Melbourne round two but Kyrgios out



Serbia's Novak Djokovic celebrates a point against USA's Nishesh Basavareddy after their men's singles match on day two of the Australian Open tennis tournament in Melbourne on 13 January 2025. PHOTO: AFP

NOVAK Djokovic survived a scare in his quest for tennis history before joining Carlos Alcaraz and defending champion Jannik Sinner in the second round of the Australian Open on Monday.

But home favourite Nick Kyrgios will not join them as the combustible Australian failed to clear the first hurdle, swearing and in pain.

In the women's draw, Iga Swiatek and Coco Gauff powered through with minimum fuss as they seek to dethrone

two-time defending champion Aryna Sabalenka.

On a blockbuster second day in Melbourne, Djokovic lost the first set to 107th-ranked American Nishesh Basavareddy in the prime-time evening match on Rod Laver Arena.

But the Serbian great, hoping to roll back the years and win an 11th Australian Open and record 25th Grand Slam singles title, recovered to pull through 4-6, 6-3, 6-4, 6-2.

Djokovic was animated at the end and struggled to raise

a smile.

Italian world number one Sinner was playing under a cloud after twice testing positive for traces of a steroid in March.

He denies wrongdoing and was cleared by tennis authorities, but the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) appealed and is seeking to ban him for up to two years.

Sinner was warmly welcomed on Rod Laver Arena before defeating Chile's Nicolas Jarry 7-6 (7/2), 7-6 (7/5), 6-1.

"I was curious to see how it was. You never know what's happening," he said about the reception.

"I was happy about the crowd," said Sinner, who has not tasted defeat since losing to Alcaraz in the Beijing final in October.

Alcaraz, a four-time Grand Slam champion but never a winner in Melbourne, had a couple of hairy moments before seeing off the challenge of Kazakhstan's Alexander Shevchenko, 6-1, 7-5, 6-1.

"This is a tournament I really want to win one day, hopefully this year," said the 21-year-old Spaniard. — AFP

10-man Manchester United keeps nerve to knock Arsenal out of FA Cup

MANCHESTER United played with 10 men for over an hour before knocking Arsenal out of the third round of the FA Cup following a penalty shootout at the Emirates Stadium on Sunday.

The result is a huge morale boost for coach Ruben Amorim and his side, but is another blow for Arsenal, who lost the first leg of their Carabao Cup semifinal 2-0 at home to Newcastle United earlier in the week.

Arsenal had chances, but some poor finishing, especially from Kai Havertz, ended up being very costly for Mikel Arteta's

side.

Manchester United looked very solid and took the lead in the 52nd minute when Bruno Fernandes finished from Alejandro Garnacho's cross.

Things got complicated for United in the 61st minute when Diogo Dalot dived in on Mikel Merino and was sent off for a second yellow card, to leave the visitors with 10 men, and things got worse just two minutes later when Gabriel Magalhaes scored after goalkeeper Altay Bayindir failed to punch a cross clear. — Xinhua



Manchester United's Dutch striker (11) Joshua Zirkzee celebrates with Manchester United's Turkish goalkeeper (01) Altay Bayindir after scoring his penalty in a penalty shoot out during the English FA Cup third round football match between Arsenal and Manchester United at the Emirates Stadium in London on 12 January 2025. PHOTO: AFP



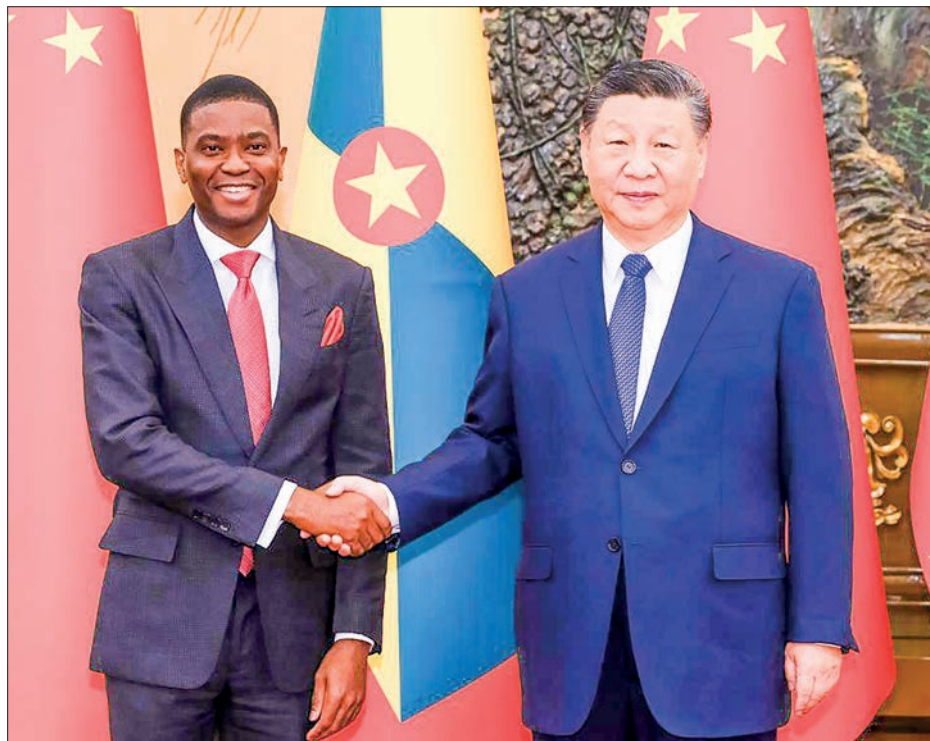
Xi meets Grenadian PM, calls for advancing bilateral ties

CHINESE President Xi Jinping said Monday that China is willing to provide assistance for Grenada's economic and social development within the framework of South-South cooperation.

The two countries should foster new highlights of cooperation in fields such as new energy, green and low-carbon development, and digital economy, Xi said in Beijing when he met with Prime Minister of Grenada Dickon Mitchell, who is paying an official visit to China.

Mitchell first extended sincere sympathies and condolences to the Chinese government and people over the recent deadly earthquake in Dingri County in southwest China's Xizang Autonomous Region.

Xi expressed his appreciation for that. Noting that the earthquake occurred in a high-altitude area, Xi said China has completed rescue and temporary resettlement work in the shortest possible time and will carry out reconstruction work as quickly as possible.



Chinese President Xi Jinping meets with Prime Minister of Grenada Dickon Mitchell, who is on an official visit to China, at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, capital of China, 13 January 2025. PHOTO: XINHUA

"The Chinese government is confident and capable of achieving success in earthquake relief," Xi said.

Xi noted that in recent years, China-Grenada relations have developed steadily, with the two sides treating each other with mutual respect and equality, consolidating political mutual trust, achieving fruitful results in practical cooperation in various fields, and deepening the friendship between the two peoples. China is willing to work with Grenada to enhance the synergy of development strategies and push for more outcomes of bilateral cooperation to better benefit the two peoples, he added.

China supports Grenada in independently exploring a development path suited to its national conditions, and stands ready to strengthen exchanges of governance experience with Grenada, Xi said.

He said China also supports Grenada in enhancing its capacity in climate change response and disaster prevention and mitigation, and will continue to raise international awareness of small island countries' concerns over climate change and their demands.

China advocates an equal and orderly multi-polar world and a universally beneficial and inclusive economic globalization, and is ready to work with Grenada to implement the Global Development Initiative, the Global Security Initiative and the Global Civilization Initiative to promote the building of a community with a shared future for humanity, Xi said.— Xinhua

Progress reported in Qatar talks on Gaza ceasefire, hostage deal: Israeli official

NEGOTIATORS have made "substantial progress" in talks in Qatar on a Gaza ceasefire and hostage release deal, though no agreement has been achieved yet, an Israeli official said

Monday.

The talks in Doha aim to end the more than 15 months of deadly war between Israel and Hamas. The Israeli delegation, led by Mossad chief David

Barnea and Shin Bet domestic security agency head Ronen Bar, arrived in Doha on Saturday for discussions with US President-elect Donald Trump's Middle East envoy, Steve Witkoff and Qatari Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al Thani. "It seems the direction is positive," the official said on condition of anonymity, adding that Israel had made "concessions" in pursuit of an agreement and was awaiting Hamas' response.

Should both sides agree, the details of the deal could be finalized "within days," the official said. Meanwhile, an Israeli government official denied media reports according to which Qatar has submitted "a final" draft agreement to both Israel and Hamas, Israel's state-owned Kan TV news reported.— Xinhua



Palestinians are seen at the site of a destroyed house after an Israeli bombardment, in Deir al-Balah, central Gaza Strip, on 8 January 2025. PHOTO: XINHUA

Japan tsunami advisory after 6.8 magnitude quake

A 6.8-magnitude earthquake struck southwestern Japan late on Monday, the US Geological Survey said, prompting authorities to issue a tsunami advisory.

The Japan Meteorological Agency (JMA) issued the advisory for tsunami waves of up to one metre (three feet) after the quake off Miyazaki prefecture in the Kyushu region around 21:19 pm (1219 GMT).

The USGS revised its estimate down from 6.9, adding that "there is no tsunami threat from this earthquake".

The JMA nevertheless urged the public to stay away from coastal waters.

"Tsunami can strike repeatedly. Please do not enter the sea or go near coastal areas," the agency said on X.— AFP