

The Global **NEW LIGHT** of MYANMAR



The Thai delegation headed by Air Chief Marshal Alongkorn Vannarot pays a courtesy call on Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services, in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

Tatmadaw (Air), Royal Thai Air Force forge stronger cooperation, marking significant progress

Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing hosts the Thai Air Chief Marshal for discussions on enhancing friendly relations.

Chairman of the State Administration Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing received a delegation led by Air Chief Marshal Alongkorn Vannarot of the Royal Thai Air Force who attended the 20th ASEAN Air Chiefs Conference (20th AACC) hosted by Myanmar, at the parlour of Zeyathiri Beikman in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

They cordially discussed the enhancement of friendly ties between the two armed forces of both countries, the progress of cooperation between them, continuous cooperation between the Myanmar Tatmadaw (Air) and the Royal Thai Air Force, yearly holding the High-level Committee Meeting between Myanmar and Thai armed forces and the Myanmar-Thailand Border Committee meeting, promotion of friendly

relations between the two countries, and exchange of goodwill visits.

The meeting was also attended by Lt-Gen Ye Win Oo of the Office of the Commander-in-Chief (Army), Commander-in-Chief (Air) General Tun Aung and senior military officers. The Thai Air Chief Marshal was accompanied by senior air force officers from the Royal Thai Air Force and the Thai Military Attaché to Myanmar. — MNA/TTA

MoLA collaborates with Russia to promote legal knowledge dissemination

Union Minister for Legal Affairs and Union Attorney-General Dr Thida Oo strengthened legal collaboration with Russia at the 8th Eastern Economic Forum held in Vladivostok in Russia from 10 to 13 September while engaging in significant discussions with Russian counterparts.

The Ministry of Legal Affairs (MoLA) revealed plans for joint activities aimed at disseminating legal knowledge and addressing various legal matters between Myanmar and Russia.

... the need for amendments to the legal framework to accommodate the evolving landscape, particularly in areas such as the digital economy, judicial services, electronic commerce, provision of transnational legal services, and conducting online virtual meetings on a local scale.

One of the key highlights of the discussions was the commitment to jointly address issues such as terrorism, money laundering, extradition, and criminal matters. These collaborative efforts are in line with the memorandum of cooperation in legal matters between the two countries.

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NATIONAL

Myanmar, Thai air chiefs emphasize technology exchanges



Commander-in-Chief (Air) General Tun Aung alongside Royal Thai Air Chief Marshal Alongkorn Vannarot inspects the Guard of Honour yesterday in Nay Pyi Taw.

COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF (Air) General Tun Aung warmly welcomed Air Chief Marshal Alongkorn Vannarot of Royal Thai Air Force who attended the 20th ASEAN Air Chiefs Conference (20th AACC) with the Guard of Honour at Bayintnaung Villa in Nay Pyi Taw

yesterday morning.

They held a meeting at Bayintnaung Villa where they discussed the exchange of goodwill visits, sending of trainees, further improvement of friendly relations between the two air forces, conducting rescue and relief measures in

natural disasters, exchange of technologies, and Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief-HADR measures.

General Tun Aung hosted a working lunch with the Thai Air Chief Marshal at Jasmine Hotel in Nay Pyi Taw. — MNA/TTA

Republic of the Union of Myanmar Union Election Commission Announcement No 42/2023

1st Waxing of Tawthalin 1385 ME
15 September 2023

Allowing National Politics New Vigour Party to be registered as political party

AS of 15 September 2023, National Politics New Vigour Party with its headquarters located at No 119, Room No 302, 1st Cherry Street, December Housing, Dagon Myothit (South) Township, Yangon Region, has been allowed to register under Section 9 of the Political Parties Registration Law. The registration number of the National Politics New Vigour Party is 37.

Sd/ Thein Soe
Chairman
Union Election Commission

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UN environment

"Montreal Protocol: Fixing the Ozone Layer and Reducing Climate Change"

"ရာသီဥတုပြောင်းလဲမှုလျှော့ချရေး အိုဇွန်လွှာထိန်းသိမ်းကာကွယ်ရေး"

၉၅% အိုဇွန်လွှာထိန်းသိမ်းရေးအတွက် ၉၅% ကို အပြုအမတ် ရုပ်သိမ်းနိုင်ခဲ့ခြင်း

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MoLA collaborates with Russia to...

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The talks also included considerations for a project that involves sending scholars from the Ministry of Legal Affairs to the Far Eastern Federal University (FEFU) of the Russian Federation, in coordination with the Prosecutor-General's Office of the Russian Federation. Additionally, both sides explored opportunities for legal research collaboration and the implementation of electronic evidence filing in criminal and civil cases.
Furthermore, the discussion delved into the status of the cooperation project aimed at spreading legal knowledge throughout 2024-2025. There were also substantial talks regarding the exchange of laws between Myanmar and Russia concerning mutual assistance in combatting terrorism, anti-money laundering, extradition, and criminal matters.
Union Minister Dr Thida Oo played a prominent role as a panellist speaker during the conference titled "Protect-

ed Business as a Basis of Sustainable Economic Development" at the 8th Eastern Economic Forum. She highlighted the importance of adapting legal frameworks to align with changing economic policies and advancements in technology worldwide. She emphasized the need for amendments to the legal framework to accommodate the evolving landscape, particularly in areas such as the digital economy, judicial services, electronic commerce, provision of transnational legal services, and conducting online virtual meetings on a local scale.
In addition, the Union minister shared insights on online dispute resolution and the development of a robust legal framework to overcome unilateral foreign economic sanctions.
This collaborative effort between Myanmar and Russia signifies a commitment to strengthening legal ties and promoting the exchange of legal knowledge and expertise on an international level. — ASH/CT

MNA unveils new cargo plane in grand welcoming ceremony

A ceremony to welcome the Boeing 737-400 cargo aircraft from the state-owned Myanmar National Airlines, was held at Yangon International Airport yesterday. The cargo plane (Aircraft No 9M-POS and Flight No 3G087) departed from Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, and arrived at Yangon International Airport at 2 pm.
The plane will be able to carry up to 18 tonnes in tonnage, and it will also be able to transport cautious goods that cannot be carried on a regular flight.

Based in Yangon, it has planned to run trips to cities in the People's Republic of China, Kuala Lumpur of Malaysia, Singapore, Hong Kong and India.
As a commemoration of the 75th Diamond Jubilee of Myanmar National Airlines, Boeing 737-400 (Aircraft No 9M-POS and Flight No 3G087) cargo aircraft has been brought to Yangon, and with this aircraft, Myanmar National Airlines will be able to expand its cargo flights. — MNA/KZL



NATIONAL

THE Myanmar delegation led by State Administration Council Member and Deputy Prime Minister Union Minister for Transport and Communications General Mya Tun Oo has returned to Yangon after participating in the 8th Eastern Economic Forum held in the Russian Federation from 10 to 13 September.

During the forum, the Union minister actively engaged in various panel discussions, including “The Logistics of Change”, where he explored topics like “New Logistics in the Far East: The ‘White Swan’ of the Russian Economy” and “Eurasian Agroexpress: New Opportunities for Trade in the Asia-Pacific Region” on 11 September. On 12 September, he participated in the discussion titled “Rail Logistics in a New Age: Realities, Challenges, and Opportunities.”

Similarly, Union Minister for Investment and Foreign Economic Relations Dr Kan Zaw joined as a panellist in the “Russia-ASEAN Business Dialogue” on 11 September. During the session on “International Cooperation in a Changed World”, he discussed the “SCO and EAEU Climate Agenda: Moving Towards Common Goals” and “Greater Eurasia: Drivers for the Formation of an Alternative International Monetary and Financial System.”

Union Minister for Industry Dr Charlie Than, who participated in the Programme of the International Scientific and Practical Conference, discussed “Colonialism in the East and Its Impact on the Modern World” on 10 September. Union Minister for Hotels and Tourism Dr



State Administration Council Member and Deputy Prime Minister Union Minister for Transport and Communications General Mya Tun Oo (3R) participates in the Eighth Eastern Economic Forum in the Russian Federation.

Myanmar delegation returns from 8th Eastern Economic Forum

Thet Thet Khine contributed to the dialogue on “The Far East over the Past Decade: What has been a Success and What Remains to be Done?” under the topic of “Inbound Tourism: Challenges and Opportunities in a New Reality” on 11 September.

The Myanmar delegation held key meetings with Russian officials during their visit. They met Adviser to the President of the Russian Federation and Chairman of the Managing Committee of Roscongress Foundation Mr Anton Kobayakov to discuss ongoing and future work plans between the two countries on 10 September. Additionally, they met Minister of Economic Development of the

Russian Federation Mr Maxim Reshetnikov on 12 September to discuss the fourth meeting of the Russia-Myanmar Inter-Governmental Commission on Trade and Economic Cooperation, bilateral trade progress, and cooperation roadmaps.

Further discussions with First Deputy CEO Mr Sergey Pavlov of JSC Russian Railways focused on railway infrastructure, collaboration projects at locomotive and coach plants in Myanmar, educational opportunities in Russian universities, technical and financial assistance to Myanmar’s railway sector, and investments in dry port construction.

The delegation also ex-

plored economic cooperation between Russia and ASEAN countries and promoted Myanmar-Russia bilateral trade and investment during talks with Mr Ivan Viktorovich Polyakov, Chairman of the Russia-ASEAN Business Council.

On 12 September, Myanmar delegates attended the Main Forum-Plenary Session of the 8th Eastern Economic Forum.

In addition to these engagements, the delegation met the Governor of Ikut to discuss development-related matters, tourism, and economic cooperation. They also discussed potential sea route trade and bilateral cooperation in the tourism industry with the Governor

of Primorsky region on 13 September.

The delegation’s agenda also included meetings with officials from Aquarius Technology Ltd and Far Eastern Federal University (FEFU) to discuss digital-related matters, cybersecurity, an MoU between the Ministry of Health and FEFU, and the establishment of an FEFU office in Nay Pyi Taw.

As part of their visit, the delegation visited the Commercial Port of Vladivostok to study port operations and management.

During this visit, the Governor of the Central Bank of Myanmar and the Vice-Governor of the Russian Central Bank signed an agreement on bank account opening. Additionally, the Union Minister for Hotels and Tourism and the Russian Minister for Economic Development signed an MoU on tourism cooperation. — MNA/KTZH



YCDC Chair Mayor U Bo Htay inspects the water diverting process at Inya Lake.

Heavy rainfall in Yangon causes significant rise in water levels of Inya Lake, Kantawgyi Lake

A lot of rain in the Yangon Region in September brought the water levels in Inya and Kantawgyi lakes up beyond the set level, as par the Yangon City Development Committee (YCDC). According to measurements taken on 15 September, the water level in Inya Lake has risen above the set water level of 48 feet, and that of Kantawgyi Lake has also risen above the set water level of 38 feet.

It is also said that arrangements are being made to close water control gates to prevent

flooding in the townships adjacent to these lakes and release the excess water only when the rain stops.

YCDC Chairman Mayor U Bo Htay and members reportedly checked the process of diverting water from the lakes through the water control gates and spillways.

The excess water from Inya Lake will flow into Ngamoeyeik Creek and water from Kantawgyi Lake into Pazundaung Creek through specified drainages. — ASH/TC/CT

NATIONAL

Panlon of Hopan District electrified through 10.5 kV power cable

A 10.5 kV power cable was launched yesterday to electrify Panlon of Hopan District in Wa Self-Administered Division.

People from Panlon have a chance to consume electricity the whole day at present with the hope of seeing better socioeconomic development although they spent the period from 1995 with part-time electrification from the diesel generator, said State Administration Council Member U Yan Kyaw on the occasion.

At the ceremony held at Panlon BEHS, Chairman of Wa Self-Administered Division U Nyi Nap explained the installation of a 2.2-mile-long power cable in Panlon.

The SAC member viewed round the site for the construction of the No 1 water collecting well in the 2023-24 financial year, the Panlon Saopha Palace, People's Hospitals in Panlon and Hopan, and the animal feedstuff factory of Khine Phyo Wai Co Ltd in Hopan Township.

At the meeting with local authorities, people and businesspersons from all strata in Hopan, SAC members U Yan Kyaw and U Shwe Kyein discussed the development



process of the region. They then viewed the new Thanlwin Bridge (Kunlong) in Kunlong and the construction of 482-foot-long Namtein Bridge on Namhu-Hopan-Mongmao road.

Yesterday, SAC member Dr Hmu Thang met depart-

mental officials, town elders and social association members at Chin State General Administration Department in Haka.

At the meeting, he made a speech, urging all to cooperate with the government in the restoration of peace and sta-

bility in order to successfully hold a free and fair multiparty democratic general election. The SAC member and officials presented quality seeds of crops and pearl fertilizer to local farmers.

The same day, SAC member Daw Dwe Bu met with de-

partmental officials, residents and relevant associations in Tanai. At the meeting, she urged locals to emphasize the development of MSME businesses and try hard to ensure local food security.

Residents reported on the requirement for development of agriculture and livestock and regional development.

After presenting 142 citizenship scrutiny cards to students from BEHS No 1, she visited the pig farm with K 70 million assistance from State Economic Promotion Fund in the 5th-mile area of Tanai. On arrival at Myitkyina, she provided foodstuffs to the rector, staff and departmental personnel at Myitkyina University.

At the same time, SAC member Dr Ba Shwe inspected development undertakings in Maungtaw, Buthidaung and Rathedaung townships of Rakhine State yesterday afternoon.

He viewed round a fish farm in Maungtaw Township, a broiler farm, monsoon paddy plantations in Buthidaung Township, and thriving monsoon paddy farms in Rathedaung Township. — MNA/IPRD/TTA

MoC Union Minister observes China-Viet Nam border trade, China-ASEAN Fruit Trading Centre



Union Minister U Aung Naing Oo poses for the group documentary photo on the China-Viet Nam border.

A Myanmar delegation, headed by Union Minister for Commerce U Aung Naing Oo conducted an inspection of trade activities

at the China-Viet Nam border town of Pingxiang and visited the China-ASEAN Fruit Trading Centre in Nanning, the People's

Republic of China's Guangxi Autonomous Region yesterday.

The delegation's first stop was at the Friendship Checkpoint in Pingxiang, where they closely examined the processes involved in border trade.

It is one of the nine renowned border stations in China, strategically located at the intersection of the Hunan-Guangxi Railway and China's national highways, connecting to the Vietnamese highway network.

Subsequently, the Union minister and the delegation proceeded to the Fuqiang Trade Terminal in Pingxiang, where they observed goods inspection procedures. The Fuqiang Trade Terminal is situated in the southwestern part of Pingxiang, sharing a border with Van Lang prefecture in

Tinh Lang Son state, Viet Nam.

Continuing their journey, the Myanmar delegation visited the China-ASEAN Fruit Trade Centre in Pingxiang. They gained insights into the importation of fruits from Viet Nam and Thailand to China. The centre facilitates the mutual import and export of fruits between ASEAN countries and China. Fruits imported from ASEAN nations are transferred, loaded into containers, and then distributed to major Chinese cities.

Similarly, agricultural produce and fruits from China find their way to ASEAN countries. Key exports include jackfruit, dragon fruit, bananas, watermelons, muskmelons, durian, and mangosteen from ASEAN countries, while fruits, beans, and pulses are shipped from

China to ASEAN nations.

In the afternoon, the delegation, led by the Union minister, visited the Shuikou border trading post in Pingxiang. The Shuikou border trade station is located 184 kilometres from Viet Nam, connecting with Longzhou Prefecture.

Concluding their visit, the Union minister and the delegation explored the Nahua Private Border Trade Zone.

Pingxiang plays a pivotal role as one of the primary border terminal ports for transporting fruits by land from ASEAN countries, including Viet Nam, into China. It holds immense potential for collaboration with Myanmar's fruit export sector, promising new opportunities for trade and economic cooperation. — MNA/TS

NATIONAL

67th anniversary of Myanmar-Philippines diplomatic relations marked with press show of Myanmar film series

THE press show of a Myanmar film “My Dear Heart” jointly directed by Myanmar and the Philippines commemorating the 67th anniversary of Myanmar-Philippines diplomatic relations was held at Wyndham Grand Yangon Hotel yesterday.

It was attended by Union Minister for Information U Maung Maung Ohn, Yangon Region Advocate-General U Htay Aung, Charge d’Affaires Mr Enrique Voltaire Pingol of the Philippine Embassy to Myanmar, officials of the film and movie industry, artistes and invitees.

A video clip marking the 67th anniversary of Myanmar-Philippines diplomatic relations was played and the video message of the Charge d’Affaires of the Philippine Embassy to Myanmar was screened.



Union Minister U Maung Maung Ohn and dignitaries watch the Myanmar film series at the celebration yesterday in Yangon.

The intention of the film was then highlighted, and film producer Ma Khun Mai Aung remarked.

Charge d’Affaires Mr Enrique Voltaire Pingol presented flower bouquets to artistes of the film.

Some iconic plot of the film

was also screened and film director Ei Ei Khine expressed words of thanks. Later, the Union minister cordially met officials of the film and movie industry and artistes at the event.

The year 2023 marks the 67th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Myanmar and the

Philippines. Therefore, Forever Group Holding Ltd, which is a joint venture of MRTV of the Ministry of Information, bought the “My Dear Heart” series broadcast on the ABS-CBN channel of the Philippines and arranged to make a new one with Myanmar artistes with the setting of

hospitals.

It is about Metta (loving-kindness) between two persons and was created by film director Ei Ei Khine. There will be 78 episodes and it will be broadcast on MRTV-4 from Monday to Friday at 7 pm beginning 19 September 2023. — MNA/KTZH

2023 International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer celebrated in Nay Pyi Taw

THE commemorative ceremony for 2023 International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer took place at the Environmental Conservation Department in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning. Union Minister for Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation U Khin Maung Yi, deputy ministers, officials, National Ozone Unit members, officials from industrial refrigeration associations, and teachers and students from the Technological University and the Technical Institute participated in the occasion.

The Union minister said that 16 September 1987, when the Montreal Protocol was signed, was designated as the International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer, and the theme for 2023 International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer is “Fixing the ozone layer and reducing climate change”. It aims to protect the ozone layer and reduce climate change by reducing the use



Union Minister for Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation U Khin Maung Yi addresses the commemorative ceremony for 2023 World Ozone Day held at the Environmental Conservation Department yesterday.

of hydrofluorocarbons (HFC), which are greenhouse gases.

He continued that Myanmar has agreed to be a member of four additional amendments to the Montreal Protocol and has participated in international

activities related to the protection of the ozone layer to control the effects of ozone depletion on human health and the environment. In order to reduce hydrofluorocarbons (HFC), the use of HFCs will be controlled and limited starting in 2024

and will be reduced to 80 per cent by 2045.

The Union minister also stated that it is important to import and distribute refrigerants that reduce energy consumption and carbon emissions, educate the public to reduce the use of substances with a high potential for global warming and increase technology promotion courses and research activities that do not harm the ozone layer, climate, or the environment. He called for relevant departments, associations, entrepreneurs, researchers, and the public as a whole to cooperate in climate change mitigation processes along with protecting the ozone layer.

All participants took collective photos after the UN Secretary-General’s video message and the awareness video commemorating World Ozone Day were shown. Finally, the Union minister and the attendees toured the display of commemorative posters. — MNA/CT



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CURRENT AFFAIRS

Three foreign, domestic investments granted in Bago Region

Bago Region sees employment opportunity for 885 residents

ACCORDING to the Foreign Investment Committee in Bago Region, foreign investment at US\$ 9.4 million and domestic investment at K220.5 million have entered into Bago Region this September.

This investment will provide labour opportunities to 885 workers and it includes two foreign investments and a Myanmar investment.

The chief minister of Bago Region said on 13 September at the regional investment committee meeting 6/2023 that it is



A general view of the city centre of Bago.

giving priority to the MSMEs' manufacturing business development to boost the export industry and import substitution industry based on agricultural and livestock products. The Chief Minister notified the investments of industrial/

construction materials with currency and CMP businesses are also welcomed and it is necessary to support and provide to the existing investment businesses to be able to stand firmly and expand the business under the law.

From February 2021 to September 2023 in Bago Region, there was US\$188.495 million in foreign investment and K75,456.275 million in Myanmar investment providing 9,451 employment opportunities. — TWA/MKKS



A taxi board to be changed that is in line with the rules and regulations.

Compliance with taxi board specifications mandatory warned

ACCORDING to the Yangon Region Public Transport Committee (YRTC), taxi boards for taxis operating in Yangon must be installed according to specifications.

Taxi boards for city taxis operating in the city are of various sizes and colours and are installed in different places. Under Section 273 (A) of the Vehicle Safety and Motor Vehicle Management Law, a white sign lamp that contains the text "TAXI" written in red paint on the roof must be installed. The YRTC stated that taxis must be installed with the specified sign in a uniform manner to ensure consistency with the city's features and to be under the prevailing laws and regulations.

The dimensions of the taxi board to be installed under the law are a bottom length of 10 inches, a top length of nine inches, a bottom width of five inches, a top width of two inches, and three inches high.

An awareness period will be set from 10 September to 8 December to observe whether or not taxi boards are installed under the law. According to the YRTC, action will be taken under Section 96 of the Vehicle Safety and Motor Vehicle Management Law starting on 9 December, when the 90-day education period ends. — TWA/CT

Rising fuel oil prices drive up purified water costs

FOLLOWING rocketing fuel oil prices, the price of 20-litre purified drinking water containers continued to rise in September, the market data indicated.

The 20-litre water container price increased by K200 over the past two months, Daw Yon from Lanmadaw Township, told the Global New Light of Myanmar (GNLM).

The various brands of purified drinking water cost K800-1,500 per 20-litre container.

The purified drinking water production lines raised the price due to a lack of sufficient electric supply, the GNLM quoted U Arkar, as saying. It has been one year that the factories have been struggling with an electric



The photo shows a delivery man pushing a trolley with purified drinking water containers.

shortage. Nonetheless, rotational load shedding has decreased these months compared with last year's rotation blackouts.

Yet, the price of water went up. Similarly, the price of diesel used in generators dropped to K2,560 per litre on 15 September

up from K3,245 per litre at the end of August 2022. The diesel price did not hit a record high in mid-2023. The lowest prices stood at K1,790 per litre on 7 August 2022 and K1,795 per litre on 4 May 2023.

As Kyat's depreciation against the greenback hiked up the consumer price index, the institutions concerned have been making efforts to offer fairer prices for consumers starting from August. Nonetheless, the purified water container cost increased to K1,000 from K800 within two months.

The consumers have concerns over the possible price hike in the scorching summer. — TWA/EM

Regional MSMEs urged to implement ASEAN SME policy index decisions

YANGON Region Chief Minister U Soe Thein urged the regional MSMEs must implement the decisions of the central committee and business committee agency

meetings as per the eight aspects of the ASEAN SME Policy Index. "It has to implement the eight aspects of the ASEAN SME Policy Index including productiv-

ity, technology and innovation, getting the financial resources for MSMEs that are beneficial to the environment and international connectivity according to ASEAN

SME policy index in carrying out the development of MSMEs in Yangon Region," said the Yangon Region chief minister at the MSMEs Development Coordina-

tion Meeting on 13 September. Then, officials discussed their respective sectors at the coordinating meeting. — TWA/MKKS

LOCAL BUSINESS

Farmers advised to monitor market sentiment for successful watermelon cultivation this year

ACCORDING to a company that exports watermelons to China's border market, farmers should monitor market sentiment and cautiously cultivate watermelons in the 2023-24 financial year because the price of watermelons was good last year. At the beginning of 2023 when watermelons were harvested, China border posts reopened, and farmers got handsome prices.

Therefore, during the current winter watermelon planting season, Chinese and local companies, and local farmers are preparing to grow watermelons extensively, so they need to monitor the market situation, said a trader who exports watermelons to China's border market.

"Even if the situation is good, we can't expect a market like last year. If we see normal market sentiment, we have to be satisfied," he said.

The cost of planting watermelons this year can cost up to K5 million per acre, so there is a need for a good watermelon market.

Due to China's economy, the state of being able to consume watermelon, and the rates of customs fees to be collected by China, it is difficult to guess the market price. This year, a tonne of watermelon price is likely to be around 1,500-1,800 Chinese yuan, according to the export company.

China mainly buys 70 per cent of watermelon from Myanmar.



Watermelons are seen on the Sino-Myanmar border.

It is said that if the melons planted in China are sold out, Chinese plantations are affected by weather and output is low, Myanmar watermelon prices can go up. — TPT



The photo shows pigeon pea pods on sale in a market.

Pigeon pea prices hit one-week low

THE price of pigeon peas recorded a one-week low of K4.025 million per tonne on 15 September 2023 after it hit an all-time high of K4.15 million per tonne on 8 September.

The pigeon pea price hit the highest of K2.175 million per tonne on 19 September 2022. This year's prevailing market price doubled compared to the price recorded the year-ago last year.

The price of black gram also fell to K2.449 million per tonne on 13-14 September from K2.47 million per tonne on 12

September.

The FOB prices are US\$1,290-1,310 per tonne of pigeon pea, \$935-955 per tonne of black gram (FAQ/RC) and \$1,035-1,055 per tonne of black gram (SQ/RC).

During the market opening days on 12 September, 150 containers (3,600 tonnes) of black gram were transacted.

The new pigeon pea is cultivated in May and flows into the market at the end of the year. The pigeon pea is a weather-resilient crop compared to other crops. Approxi-

mately 300,000 tonnes of pigeon pea yield is expected in India, India's market observers forecast.

The consumption of pigeon peas is quite low in Myanmar so the majority of them are shipped to foreign markets. The growers are likely to receive high prices at harvest time on account of India's growing consumption.

Myanmar has a competitive market against African countries such as Mozambique for pigeon pea exports to India. — TWA/EM

MoC reports significant US\$170.86 mln increase in imports as of 8 September

THE value of Myanmar's imports between 1 April and 8 September of the current financial year 2023-2024 surged to US\$7.55 billion, which reflects a sharp rise of \$170.866 million compared to the year-ago period, the Ministry of Commerce's data indicated.

The import value stood at \$7.38 billion in the corresponding period of the previous FY 2022-2023.

The imports of consumer goods and CMP businesses declined, while the other import groups (capital goods and intermediate goods) witnessed a significant increase. The capital goods, such as auto parts, vehicles, machines and steel were brought into the country. The import value was estimated at \$1.59 billion as of 8 September this FY. The figure was over \$252 million higher than the value registered in the year-ago period.

Meanwhile, Myanmar imported consumer products worth \$1.2 billion, including pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, and palm oil. The imports of consumer products showed a sharp decrease of \$146.87 million compared with the same period in the previous FY.

Intermediate goods make up the largest share of Myanmar's imports, with petroleum products and plastic raw materials being the main import items. This year, imports of raw materials climbed up to \$3.6 billion from \$3.4 billion registered during the year-ago period.

During the same period, raw materials worth over \$1.08 billion were also imported by garment enterprises working on the Cut-Make-Pack (CMP) basis, showing a drop of \$157 million compared with the same time of the past FY, as per data from the Ministry of Commerce. — KK

COVID-19 report, 15 September 2023	NEW TESTS	NEW CASES	CASUALTIES
	4,941	2	0

OPINION

Save the ozone layer on a self-reliant basis

PRESERVING the ozone layer is imperative for shielding the Earth from the harmful ultraviolet rays emitted by the sun. A breach in the ozone layer represents a weakening of our natural defence against these UV rays, which pose a dire threat to all life forms on Earth.

Nations are rallying to combat ozone layer depletion, recognizing it as a critical issue. Environmentalists are sounding the alarm, urging global citizens to reduce the use of hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), as these compounds contribute to the thinning of the ozone layer. Failure to act decisively could result in catastrophic impacts of climate change, reshaping the world in unpredictable and dangerous ways.

In 2023, Ozone Day takes on special significance, with the theme "Montreal Protocol: fixing the ozone layer and reducing climate change." This occasion serves as a global celebration of the accomplishments of the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, emphasizing the vital importance of

the ozone layer to the planet. The Kigali Amendment aims to phase down HFCs and enhance efficiency in the cooling sector, offering additional climate mitigation benefits.

The journey to protect the ozone layer began with the signing of the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer by 28 countries on 22 March 1985. This historic event paved the way for the Montreal Protocol, adopted in September 1987. It took 30 years after the protocol's inception to observe the closure of the ozone layer hole. Given the long-lasting effects of ozone-depleting gases, the chemical impact will persist for several decades, between 50 and 100 years.

It is imperative for humanity to curtail the greenhouse gas emissions that threaten to unravel the ozone layer. Halocarbons such as fluorine, chlorine, bromine, or iodine are particularly concerning. Those containing bromine possess significantly higher ozone-depleting potential (ODP) compared to their chlorine counterparts. Thus, a global effort to reduce HFC emissions from everyday sources like refrigerators and air-conditioners is crucial.

To mitigate the impact of UV rays penetrating the ozone layer, the collective effort must extend beyond reducing HFCs. Environmental conservation measures, such as reforestation and the establishment of forests, play a pivotal role in fortifying the ozone layer and safeguarding the planet.

Ultimately, it falls upon every individual to understand that their actions on a self-reliant basis can make a substantial difference. By prioritizing the preservation of the ozone layer, everybody needs to protect all living and non-living entities on Earth from the looming threat of UV radiation. Saving the ozone layer is a global responsibility.

THE earliest time man discovered avocado is believed to be the Mesoamerican tribes that first domesticated the avocado tree (Persea Americana) 5,000 years ago, making the cultivation of avocado as old as the invention of the wheel. Avocado originated in South-central Mexico, sometime between 7,000 and 5,000 BC, but it was several millennia before this wild variety was cultivated.

Archaeologists in Peru have found domesticated seeds buried with the Incan Mummies dating back to 750 BC and there was evidence that avocados were cultivated in Mexico as early as 500 BC.

According to the most recent data from the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations, Mexico tops this list as the largest avocado producer in the world. This was followed by Columbia and Peru, countries that not only occupy the 2nd and 3rd place within Latin America but also shortly Brazil ranked 5th in the region and came up to be the 7th in the world.

Mexico is the top avocado grower in the world, accounting for 29.7 per cent of the global production. According to recent data from the Agricultural and Fisheries Information Service (SIAP), by its Spanish acronym, 2021 avocado production in Mexico was 2,442,945 metric tons, an increase of 2.05 per cent over 2020.

Spanish conquistadors loved the fruit and couldn't pronounce its name so changed the Aztec word to a more manageable word, which eventually became avocado in English so that it became the first English language word to mention avocado by Sir Henry Sloane in 1696. Then Judge R. Bord of Santa Barbara successfully introduced avocados to the US with trees from Mexico. By the early 1900s, growers were seeking the potentiality of its commercial value and ever since growers, enthusiasts and researchers have been hunting for improved varieties. A search through the industry's foremost annals, particularly the California Avocado Society reveals that many new selections of avocados were made in the infant industry, and over subsequent years, but few had commercial significance. By the 1950's around 25 different varieties of avocado were commercially packed and shipped in California with "Fuerte" accounting for more than two-thirds of productions: even though "Hass" had discov-

ered in the late 1920s and patented by Rudolf Hass in 1935. It was not until the large-scale industrial expansion occurred in the late 1970s that "Hass" replaced "Fuerte" as the leader.

California variety
Today California is the leading producer of domestic avocados and home to about 90 per cent of the nation's crops. Most California avocados are harvested on approximately 50,000 acres from Monterey through San Diego by about 3,000 growers. Venture and San Diego top the list of avocado-producing producers

California avocados are grown year-round, a single California avocado tree can produce up to 200 pounds of fresh fruit each year. In 2002 the tree to which every Hass avocado in the world can trace its lineage finally succumbed to root rot at the size old age of 76. Her offspring account for 95 per cent of the avocados grown in California and the fruit of her labour resulted as to be one of the state's most important industries. Yet, despite speculation on the contrary, nobody knew what variety of seeds produced the original Hass mother tree.

The tree began life as a lucky find, a simple seed planted by A R Rideout of Whittier. Rideout, a pioneer in avocados was always searching for new varieties and tended to plant whatever seeds he

Avocado

By U Win Sein



Avocado contains approximately 76 milligrammes (mg) of a natural plant sterol called beta-sitosterol per 100 grammes. Beta-sitosterol and other plant sterols may contribute to maintaining healthy cholesterol levels. **ILLUSTRATION: PIXABAY**

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The tree began life as a lucky find, a simple seed planted by A R Rideout of Whittier. Rideout, a pioneer in avocados was always searching for new varieties and tended to plant whatever seeds he

could find, often along streets and or in neighbour's yards.

In the late 1920, Mr Rudolph Hass a postman purchased a seed from Rideout and planted it in his orchard. He planned to graft another variety on it. But when the repeated graft didn't take effect result, he planned to cut the tree down. Fortunately for avocado lovers everywhere, Hass's children talked him out of it. They preferred the taste of the tree's fruits to that of the Fuerte, the predominant variety and the industry's standard in those days.

Why is avocado good for you?
Avocados contain a wide range of nutrients and may have various health benefits. These include improving digestion, lowering the risk of depression, preventing bone loss, supporting heart health and preventing cancer

Here are 11 reasons why avocados can contribute to a healthy diet.

1, Health for the heart

In every 100 grammes of avocado, there are 76 milligrammes (mg) of a natural plant sterol called betasitosterol. There is a saying, that roughly consuming beta-sitosterol and other plant sterols may help maintain healthy cholesterol levels, which are important for heart health.

2, Great for vision

Avocados contain lutein and zeaxanthin, two phytochemicals

present in eye tissue. They provide antioxidant protection to help minimize damage, including from UV light.

The monounsaturated fatty acids in avocados also support the absorption of other beneficial fat-soluble antioxidants, such as beta carotene. As a result, adding avocado to the diet may help reduce the risk of developing age-related macular degeneration.

3, May help prevent osteoporosis

Half an avocado provides, approximately 18 per cent of the daily value of vitamin K.

This nutrient is often overlooked but is essential for bone health. Taking in enough vitamin K can support by increasing calcium absorption and reducing the urinary excretion of calcium.

4, Components may prevent cancer

Studies have not yet assessed a direct link between avocado consumption and a reduction in cancer risk. However, avocados do contain compounds that may help prevent the onset of some cancers.

Research has associated an optimal intake of folate with a reduced risk of developing colon, stomach, pancreatic, and cervical cancers. However, the mechanism behind this association remains unclear. Half of an avocado contains roughly 81 microgrammes (MCG) of folate 20 per cent of the daily value.

Avocados also contain high levels of chemicals and carotenoids, which may have anti-cancer properties. Studies have shown that carotenoids, especially may protect against cancer progression.

A 2023 study discovered that more than one week serving of avocado was associated with a decreased risk of colorectal, lung, and bladder cancer. However, researchers did not observe associations between avocado consumption and the risk of total cancer or other site-specific cancers. Further research is necessary to confirm these associations.

5, Supporting feral health

Folate is important for a healthy pregnancy. Adequate intake reduces the risk of miscarriage and neural tube abnormalities. A person should consume at least 600 MCG of folate per day when pregnant. One avocado may contain as much as 160 MCG.

Avocados also contain fatty acids that are integral to a healthy diet and fetal development.

6, Reducing depression risk

Avocados are a good source of folate which plays an important role in overall dietary health. Studies have also found links between low-fat levels and depression.

Folate helps prevent the buildup of homocysteine, a substance that can impair circulation and delivery of nutrients to the brain. A review of past research, have linked excess homocysteine with cognitive dysfunction, depression and the production of serotonin dopamine, and norepinephrine, which regulate mood sleep and appetite.

7, improving digestion

Avocados are high in fibre, containing approximately 6-7g per half fruit. Eating food with natural fibre can help prevent constipation maintain digestive tract health, and lower the risk of colon cancer.

8, Natural detoxification

Adequate fibre promotes regular bowel movements which are crucial for the excretion of toxins through the bile and stool.

Studies. Have shown that dietary fibre also promotes good gut health and microbial diversity. This helps the body to maintain a healthy bacterial balance. This can reduce inflammation and aggravation of the digestive tract.

9, Osteoarthritis relief

Avocados, soy, and some other plant foods contain saponins. These substances may have a positive effect on knee and hip osteoarthritis symptoms, however, researchers have not yet confirmed the long-term effects of saponins in people with osteoarthritis.

10, Antimicrobial action

Avocados and avocado oil contain substances that have antimicrobial properties. Research shows that avocado seed extracts can help defend the body against both *Streptococcus agalactiae* and *Staphylococcus aureus* infections, for example

11, Protection from chronic disease

The Monounsaturated fatty acids in avocados may be beneficial in preventing chronic conditions, such as cardiovascular.

Meanwhile, research suggests that an optimal intake of fibre may reduce the risk of stroke, hypertension, diabetes, obesity and certain gastrointestinal diseases and avocados are rich in fibre.

The right fibre intake can also lower blood pressure and cholesterol levels, improve insulin sensitivity, and enhance weight loss for people, with obesity.

US surgeons report longest successful pig-to-human kidney transplant

US SURGEONS who transplanted a genetically modified pig kidney into a brain-dead patient announced Thursday they had ended their experiment after a record-breaking 61 days.

The latest experimental procedure is part of a growing field of research aimed at advancing cross-species transplants, mainly testing the technique on bodies that have been donated for science.

There are more than 103,000 people waiting for organ transplants in the United States, 88,000 of whom need kidneys.

"We have learned a great deal throughout these past two months of close observation and analysis, and there is great reason to be hopeful for the future," said Robert Montgomery, director of the New York University Langone Transplant Institute, who led the surgery in July.

It was the the fifth so-called xenotransplant performed by Montgomery, who also carried out the world's first genetically modified pig kidney transplant in September 2021.

Tissue collected during the study indicated a mild rejection process had begun, requiring intensification of immunosuppression medication.

By "knocking out" the gene responsible for a molecule called alpha-gal — a prime target for roving human antibodies — the NYU Langone team were able to stop immediate rejection.

The donor pig in this experiment came from a herd cultivated by Virginia-based biotech company Revivicor.

The herd has also been approved by the Food and Drug Administration as a source of meat for people with hypersensitivity to the alpha-gal molecule, an allergy caused by some tick bites.

These pigs are bred, not cloned, meaning the process can be more easily scaled.

Early xenotransplantation research focused on harvesting organs from primates — for example, a baboon heart was transplanted into a newborn known as "Baby Fae" in 1984, but she survived only 20 days.

Current efforts focus on pigs, which are thought to be ideal donors for humans because of their organ size, their rapid growth and large litters, and the fact they are already raised as a food source.

In January 2022, surgeons at the University of Maryland Medical School carried out the world's first pig-to-human transplant on a living patient — this time involving a heart.

He died two months after the milestone, with the presence of porcine cytomegalovirus in the organ later blamed.

Last week, Chinese scientists published a paper showing they had succeeded in hybrid pig-human kidneys in pig embryos, an alternative approach that also has the potential to one day help address organ donation shortages.

But the development raised ethical issues — especially since some human cells were also found in the pigs' brains, experts said.

SOURCE: AFP



The latest experimental procedure is part of a growing field of research aimed at advancing cross-species transplants, testing the technique on bodies that have been donated for science. **PHOTO: NYU LANGONE HEALTH/AFP**

NATIONAL



Schoolchildren are seen at one of the private schools which comply with legal requirements in Yangon. PHOTO: XINHUA

Compliance with legal requirements remains pending for several private schools in Yangon

NEARLY two-thirds of private schools in Yangon are failing to meet the requirements particularly the space specifications of a classroom prescribed under the Private School Registration Law, according to a private school association.

Yangon has 279 private schools as of September this year and two-thirds of them still need to comply with the space requirements of a classroom as well as that of a school, prompting the operators

to make changes under the law, U Nay Oke, chair of the association said on 14 September.

“The law for private schools is already in place, waiting for its bylaw to get enacted. Now, the private schools have to abide by the law.

“The specification of a classroom required by the law is identical to a classroom in a public school. Most of the private schools in Yangon use houses and apart-

ments as schools and the classrooms are small for the number of students placed in them. And the classroom conditions are unhealthy,” he said.

Most of the private schools outside Yangon meet the requirements, but in Yangon, the space is one of the most challenging factors the private schools face. Some private schools in Yangon are bracing for the situation of closure if they are not able to comply with the law. — TC/TH

Above 700,000 international tourists enter Myanmar in Jan-Aug 2023

FROM January to August 2023, 751,216 international tourists entered Myanmar, and most of them came through border entrances, according to the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism.

A total of 558,199 foreign tourists visited Myanmar through border entrances within eight months, from January to August, and 193,017 international travellers were arriving by air.

The border entrances where the most international tourists enter Myanmar are the Myanmar-Thailand border entrance and the Myanmar-China border entrance.

It is known that most visitors came from China, Thailand, Japan, South Korea, and India this year, and Myanmar will soon grant tourist visas on arrival to Chinese and Indian tourists. — ASH/CT



People and vehicles are seen crossing the Myanmar-Thai border.

Myanmar students invited to participate in Asian International Children's Film Festival in Japan

ACCORDING to the Embassy of Japan to Myanmar, children from Myanmar have been invited to participate in the Asian International Children's Film Festival to be held in Japan.

The 16th Asian International Children's Film Festival 2023 will take place at Minami Awaji in Hyogo Prefecture, Japan, on 16 December. Myanmar high school students aged 18 and under are invited to participate in the film festival, and the works of the contestants will be accepted through the Embassy of Japan to Myanmar.

Applicants must be high school students aged 18 and under (not university students) and Myanmar citizens living in Myanmar. The cameraman, the director, and the actors also need to be high school students, and their work must have never been shown outside and was filmed within three minutes of Home Video.

Contestants will also be accepted to compete individually or as a team, and a maximum of four people can participate in the team competition. They must not have studied in or travelled to Japan and must hold valid passports.

The selected works, recognized as outstanding among the competing works, will be screened at the film festival, and those who meet the requirements of the JENESYS programme will be allowed to visit Japan.

Applications must be sent to the Embassy of Japan in Myanmar by 8 October. The embassy will evaluate the works submitted within the specified period and select the works to be entered into the competition. The selected candidates will be contacted directly by the Embassy of Japan to Myanmar around mid-October. — ASH/CT

NATIONAL

Seismometers and GPS devices installed in Yangon Region

YANGON Region has initiated the installation of seismometers and GPS devices across six townships, aimed at studying ground movement, subsidence, and elevation. This installation work began in the second week of September.

Currently, the installation of these devices is underway at Maha Wizaya Pagoda in Dagon Township. The six townships involved in this project include Bahan Township, Dagon Township, Lanmadaw Township, Latha Township, Pabedan Township, and Kyauktada Township.

The Federation of Myanmar Engineers and the Myanmar Earthquake Committee are collaborating on these projects to study land displacement, subsidence, and elevation within these townships.



The photos show the installation of seismometers and GPS devices in Yangon Region.



installation of seismometers and GPS devices inside the pagoda.

The installation will continue in Shwedagon Pagoda and Alampya Pagoda, followed by Lanmadaw, Latha, Pabedan, and Kyauktada townships.

These devices will provide crucial data on ground motion in the area where they are installed over six months to a year, aiding earthquake mitigation research. — ASH/KZL

CRIME NEWS



Officials inspect smuggled timbers.

Smuggled timbers, fuel oil, foodstuffs, consumer goods, industrial materials and vehicles confiscated

THE Customs on-duty teams conducted inspections on 11 and 12 September and nabbed four kinds of goods worth K35,565,768 including 17,744 kilogrammes of granite tiles that were different from the Import Declaration (ID) from two containers at the Asia World Port Terminal container checkpoint, a total of 10,000 kilogrammes of toluene diisocyanate worth K47.25 million that exceeded the ID from six containers at the Myanmar Industrial

Port, 978 kilogrammes of Handkerchief tissue worth K2,402,946 that exceeded the ID from three containers at the MITT container checkpoint and a Gabar Thit bus and a Toyota HiAce (approximately K50 million), headed to Yangon from Myawady, carrying four kinds of goods worth K4.23 million including 900 pairs of D&C slipper sandal and 1,250 bottles of Lipovitan-D energy drink without official documents at the Ma-yanchaung permanent checkpoint.

The action was taken under Customs procedures.

The on-duty team seized six kinds of goods worth K7.6 million including 200 male clothes and 10 Solar lights without official documents from two vehicles, headed to Yangon from Myawady, at the Kawkareik (Tadakyoe) combined checkpoint on 12 September. The action was taken under Customs procedures.

A total of 46.038 tonnes of illegal teak, 5.610 tonnes of illegal hardwood and 13.669 tonnes of other illegal timbers worth K35,209,814 were seized in Toungoo and Nyaunglebin districts on 13 September. The action was taken under the Forest Law.

The Sagaing Region Illegal Trade Eradication Task Force confiscated 11 gallons of illegal diesel and 15 gallons of illegal petroleum at the Shwemoe oil dregs shop on 14 September. The action was taken under the Petroleum and Petroleum Products Law.

A total of 12 arrests were made on four consecutive days from 11 to 14 September with an estimated value of K182,567,045, as reported by the Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee. — MNA/ MKKS



Over K1.5 bln worth of Happy Water captured in Tachilek

OVER K1.5 billion worth of Happy Water was captured in Tachilek township in Shan State, the Myanmar Police Force stated.

A combined team consisting of members of the Anti-Narcotics Task Force searched and examined a paper carton, which was carried by Ma Phyo Kaythi Kyaw to be sent to Yangon, at the Tachilek township at 4:30 pm on 7 September.

Officials captured K585 million worth of a total of 7.8 kilogrammes of Happy Water.

Police also arrested Ma Mu Mu Kyu (aka) Nan Laung Ngin, Sai Wi Lat and Ma Mi Nyah together with 8.52 kilogrammes of Happy Water worth over K930 million, a Toyota Crown and a motorbike in Tachilek township at 5 pm on the same day.

The police have taken legal action against the offenders and an investigation is underway to identify the perpetrators of the crime chain. — MNA/MKKS



Three offenders are seen along with seized drugs and a saloon.

ECONOMY WORLD

Britain's economy shrinks more than expected in July

The UK's economic output contracted in July, with declines observed in the services, construction, and production sectors.

BRITAIN'S economic output shrank by a larger-than-expected 0.5 per cent in July after growing 0.5 per cent in June, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) said on Wednesday.

The output of all three main sectors dropped in July. The ONS said the services and construction sectors fell by 0.5 per cent, and production went down by 0.7 per cent.

According to the ONS, the decline in the services output was

the main contributor to the fall in gross domestic product (GDP) in July. "In July, industrial action by healthcare workers and teachers negatively impacted services, and it was a weaker month for construction and retail due to the poor weather. Manufacturing also fell back following its rebound from the effect of May's extra Bank Holiday," said Darren Morgan, director of economic statistics at the ONS.

"However, the broader pic-

ture looks more positive, with the economy growing across the services, production and construction sectors in the last three months," Morgan noted.

"A busy schedule of sporting events and increased theme park visits provided a slight boost," Morgan added.

The ONS data showed Britain's GDP increased by 0.2 per cent in the three months to July, with growth in all three main sectors. — Xinhua



People walk past promotional signs in Manchester, Britain, 13 December 2022. PHOTO: JON SUPER/XINHUA

French firm nets 2 bln euros for major battery factory



This photograph taken on 9 May 2023 shows workers at the site of the newly constructed Billy-Berclau Gigafactory ACC battery factory, in Billy-Berclau, northern France. PHOTO: FRANCOIS LO PRESTI, AFP/FILE

FRENCH startup Verkor said Thursday it has raised more than two billion euros (\$2.15 billion) to build a gigafactory for electric car batteries, boosting Europe's efforts to develop a sector dominated by Asia.

The plant is among a clutch

of factories set to emerge in northern France under President Emmanuel Macron's "reindustrialisation" plan for the country.

Verkor said that it had secured at least 850 million euros in private financing, a record

fundraising effort for a French startup. It came on top of some 650 million euros in public subsidies and a 600-million-euro loan from the European Investment Bank. Construction in Dunkirk has begun, with the factory due to begin production from mid-2025, producing 16 gigawatt hours (GWh) per year and creating 1,200 direct jobs.

"This new, historic fundraising for French Tech, with the support of France 2030 resources, is a bold sign of our ambition for reindustrialisation," President Emmanuel Macron was quoted as saying in a company press release.

Elected officials and business leaders hope to turn the Hauts-de-France region into "Battery Valley" — the electric car industry's answer to Silicon Valley. — AFP

Major Australian lender shuts Hong Kong office

NATIONAL Australia Bank (NAB), a major lender in the Asia-Pacific region, announced on Thursday its decision to pull out from Hong Kong, leaving Shanghai as its last operational base in China.

NAB is the second major Australian financial institution to be leaving the Chinese financial hub this year, following the exit in June of Westpac, which was fined by Hong Kong authorities for breaching anti-money-laundering and counter-terrorism rules.

The move is expected to impact about 50 jobs in Hong Kong, including staff in the treasury, finance, risk, legal and technology departments. "A small number of corporate and institutional bankers" would also be affected, with some to be offered re-employ-

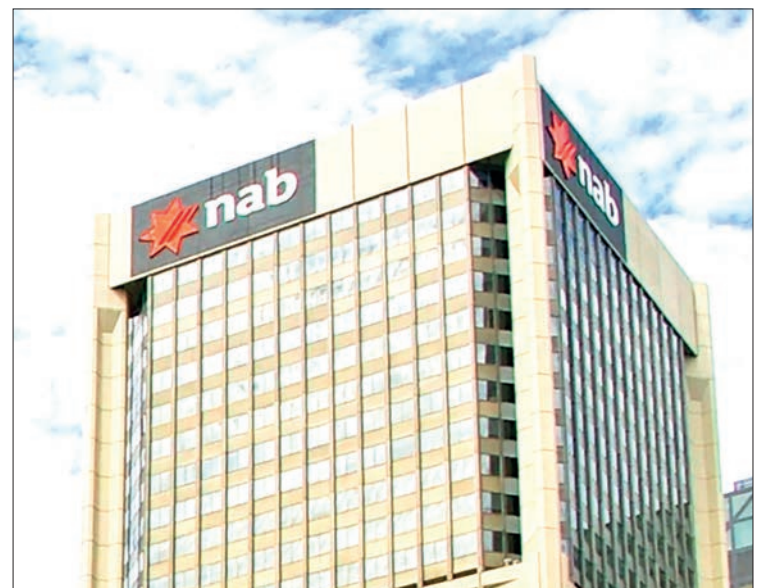
ment and relocation, NAB said.

The wind-down is expected to take approximately 18 months, according to Krista Baetens, a Singapore-based NAB executive.

"The decision was made following a thorough assessment of our strategy and reflects our ambition to align our corporate and institutional business with the greatest opportunities for NAB and our clients," Baetens said in an emailed statement.

The decision will leave Shanghai as NAB's last operational post in China, following its exit from Beijing last year.

Baetens said NAB would remain committed to Asia and its branches in Singapore, Tokyo and Shanghai would be its key customer outreach hubs in the region. — AFP



National Australia Bank (NAB) Tower in Melbourne, Australia. PHOTO: WIKICOMMONS/FILE

Interest rate cliffhanger as ECB mulls hike or pause

EUROZONE interest rate setters face the toughest call of their long battle against red-hot inflation Thursday, when they decide whether to raise borrowing costs again or finally pause the unprecedented hiking campaign. The European Central Bank is struggling to navigate

competing data that could push them either way — prices continue to rise fast, but the outlook in the single currency area is also deteriorating rapidly.

The central bank for the 20 countries that use the euro has already lifted rates by 4.25 percentage points since July last

year to combat runaway consumer prices. But analysts are divided on whether they will implement another 25-basis-point increase — which would be the 10th straight hike and take the closely watched deposit rate to a record high — or take a pause. — AFP



A jump in Chinese retail sales has lifted hopes for the world's number two economy. **PHOTO: AFP**

China retail sales surge in August, boost hopes for economy

CHINESE retail sales jumped last month, data showed Friday, beating expectations and fuelling hopes that consumers are helping kickstart the world's second-biggest economy.

Sluggish domestic consumption, an embattled property sector and soft overseas demand for China's exports have complicated the country's post-Covid recovery after restrictions were lifted last year.

The retail data, which also revealed a better-than-expected rise in industrial output, is the latest pointing to a stabilization and follows a num-

ber of stimulus measures by the government.

Retail sales -- the main indicator of household consumption that is closely followed by markets -- jumped 4.6 per cent on-year in August, the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) said.

That marked a big improvement on July's 2.5 per cent and was higher than the three per cent forecast in a Bloomberg survey of economists.

Meanwhile, industrial production climbed 4.5 per cent on-year, which was also a significant increase from July and more than estimated. — AFP

UK designer rejects 'fast fashion' to protect planet

DRIVEN by a passion to protect the planet, Phoebe English hasn't bought a centimetre of fabric or a single plastic button for her collection at London Fashion Week.

The fashion industry is one of the most polluting, accounting for up to 10 per cent of greenhouse gas emissions, according to World Bank estimates.

"Fast fashion", where clothes are bought for a few dollars and then discarded after a few wears, leads to a high volume of

waste, which often ends up in illegal landfills in the Global South.

It's an issue that preoccupies English, a 37-year-old designer who graduated from London's prestigious Central Saint Martins arts college in 2010. "We are producing too much too quickly, in quite an unnecessary way, and we need to really think about it," she told AFP.

"Is that something that can actually continue with the planetary boundaries that we have?"



Her work is a way of fighting back against excess in the fashion industry. **PHOTO: DANIEL LEAL/AFP**

Like millions of people, she admits to a degree of "eco-anxiety" that at first glance is difficult to reconcile with her profession. — AFP

Airbus opens probe into hacking of supplier data

AIRBUS said Friday that it was investigating a hacking of data held on an IT account storing information on thousands of suppliers. "Airbus has launched an investigation into a cyber event during which an IT account associated with an Airbus customer has been attacked," the European aeronautics giant said.

"This account was used to download business documents dedicated to this customer

from an Airbus web portal. Immediate remedial and follow-up measures were taken by our se-

curity teams to prevent our systems from being compromised," the firm added. — AFP



Airbus has launched an investigation into a cyber event during which an IT account associated with an Airbus customer has been attacked. **PHOTO: PASCAL PAVANI/AFP**

EU fines TikTok 345 million euros over child data

A European Union regulator fined social media platform TikTok 345 million euros over child data breaches on Friday.

Ireland's Data Protection Commission said in a statement that it has handed down the "administrative fine", which is equivalent to \$369 million, over the breaches it uncovered in a two-year inquiry.

The watchdog gave TikTok three months "to bring its processing into compliance" with its rules. — AFP

<p>CLAIMS DAY NOTICE M.V GSS YANGON VOY.NO. (177N)</p> <p>Consignees of cargo carried on M.V GSS YANGON VOY.NO. (177N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 16-9-2023 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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day. Phone No: 2301185</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Shipping Agency Department Myanma Port Authority</p> <p>Agent For: M/S NEW GOLDEN SEA SHIPING PTE LTD</p>	<p>CLAIMS DAY NOTICE M.V SINAR SOLO VOY.NO. (1012N)</p> <p>Consignees of cargo carried on M.V SINAR SOLO VOY.NO. (1012N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 16-9-2023 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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day. Phone No: 2301185</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Shipping Agency Department Myanma Port Authority</p> <p>Agent For: M/S SAMUDERA SHIPPING LINE</p>	<p>CLAIMS DAY NOTICE M.V FLORA VOY.NO. (03/23)</p> <p>Consignees of cargo carried on M.V FLORA VOY. NO. (03/23) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 18-9-2023 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of MKH where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day. Phone No: 2301928</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Shipping Agency Department Myanma Port Authority</p> <p>Agent For: M/S UNI SPRING LOGISTICS HOLDINGS PTE LTD</p>
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ROLLING UPDATES

WORLD

Xi meets Cambodian prime minister



Chinese President Xi Jinping meets Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Manet at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, capital of China, 15 September, 2023. **PHOTO: HUANG JINGWEN / XINHUA**

CHINESE President Xi Jinping met Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Manet at the Great Hall of the People on Friday.

Xi pointed out that Prime Minister Hun Manet chose

China as the destination for his first bilateral visit after taking office, which fully demonstrates the great importance the new Cambodian government attaches to consolidating and developing China-Cambo-

dia friendship.

Xi also called on both sides to enrich the China-Cambodia "Diamond Hexagon" cooperation framework, jointly build the "Industrial Development Corridor" and the "Fish and Rice Corridor", and promote the early implementation of relevant key cooperation projects.

Hun Manet said that he chose China as the destination for his first official visit to show that the new Cambodian government will continue to firmly pursue a friendly policy towards China and further carry forward the ironclad friendship between Cambodia and China.

The prime minister said Cambodia will abide by the one-China principle, firmly support China in safeguarding its core interests, and support the Global Development Initiative, the Global Security Initiative and the Global Civilization Initiative proposed by President Xi. — Xinhua

UK govt pumps £500 mln into Tata Steel but says 3,000 jobs at risk

THE UK government on Friday said it would provide £500 million (\$621 million) to fund the production of "greener" steel at the country's biggest steelworks but that 3,000 jobs were still at risk.

The Department for Business and Trade said the money would help finance a

new electric arc furnace at Tata Steel's Port Talbot plant in south Wales, safeguarding 5,000 of the more than 8,000 jobs.

Port Talbot steelworks is the UK's single biggest carbon emitter, and the government has been looking to help Indian-owned Tata Steel and

British Steel, run by Chinese group Jingye, to replace dirty blast furnaces.

The Mumbai-based conglomerate had threatened to shut the giant plant unless it received state aid to help decarbonize production and cut emissions.

Business and Trade Secretary Kemi Badenoch hailed the funding as a "historic package of support" that would protect jobs and the UK steel industry, as well as help boost economic growth.

She dismissed concerns about potential job losses, insisting on a visit to the plant: "We are saving jobs which would have been lost."

"Without this investment we would probably have seen the end of steelmaking certainly in this part of the country, possibly the whole of the UK." — AFP



This funding will aid in establishing a new electric arc furnace, preserving 5,000 jobs out of over 8,000. **PHOTO: AFP**

Pentagon using Ukraine as testing ground for electronic warfare, says US commander

The US Army's 350th Spectrum Warfare Wing, established to enhance the US military's electronic warfare capabilities, is monitoring these developments.

THE Pentagon is "taking notes" on the electronic warfare (EW) tactics being used by Russia and Ukraine during the special military operation as a means to prepare for any future direct hostilities, a US military official has revealed.

US Military Commander Josh Kozlov was quoted as saying such during the Air, Space and Cyber Conference in Maryland by a military-focused US media outlet. The leader of the US Army 350th Spectrum Warfare Wing, which was established two years

ago to catch the US military up with its rivals in electronic warfare, said that both sides of the conflict in Ukraine have shown impressive abilities in the field.

"The agility being displayed by both parties, in the way that they're executing operations in the spectrum, is awesome," Kozlov said. "Both sides are doing the cat-and-mouse game very, very well. "In the future, for us, if we do confront a peer, being agile and being rapid is the key to success in the spectrum," he added. — SPUTNIK



Russia's EW tactics have hindered drone attacks within its territory, disrupted Western targeting systems, and affected communication among Ukrainian forces. **PHOTO: SPUTNIK**

TOP HEADLINE

Indonesia rice imports spike as Jakarta shores up stocks

INDONESIA recorded a large increase in rice imports in the first eight months this year compared to the same period last year, the statistics agency said Friday, as Southeast Asia's biggest economy seeks to boost stocks of its staple commodity.

Global rice prices rose to a 15-year high last week after top producer India's decision in July to ban exports of non-basmati rice, citing several factors including soaring domestic prices and "extreme climatic conditions".

Indonesia imported 1.59 million tonnes of rice from January to August this year, Statistics Indonesia head Amalia Adininggar Widyasanti said, while more than 429,000 tonnes of rice were imported for the whole of 2022. "Rice imports from January and August 2023 experienced quite a high increase compared to the same period last year," Widyasanti told reporters, without disclosing the import figure for the same period last year. — AFP

SPORTS



The Myanmar U-23 men's football team is seen posing for a group photo. PHOTO: MFF

Myanmar U-23 team heading to Asian Games

THE Myanmar U-23 men's football team will compete in the XIX Asian Games to be held in Hangzhou, China, as stated by the Myanmar Football Federation.

Team Myanmar has been competing in a series of international tournaments since

August and will join the Asian Games just days after the Asian Cup U-23 qualifiers.

Germany's Michael Feichtenbeiner will be the head coach of the Myanmar U-23 team. Team Myanmar will take training in Yangon for a few days before leaving for China, and the

final roster will be announced.

The men's football tournament of the Asian Games will be held from 19 September to 7 October, and the Myanmar squad will face host China, Bangladesh and India in the same group. — Ko Nyi Lay/KZL

PSG agree to release Lee Kang-in for Asian Games group phase

PARIS Saint-Germain have agreed to release key attacking midfielder Lee Kang-in so he can join South Korea during the group phase of the Asian

Games next week, the country's football association said Friday.

South Korea's men's football coach for the Games, Hwang Sun-hong, on Thursday

expressed his frustration over the French champions' failure to clarify when Lee would be available for the tournament in Hangzhou. — AFP

US investment firm 777 partners agree deal for Everton takeover

EVERTON are set to become the latest Premier League club to fall into American hands after Farhad Moshiri agreed a deal with investment firm 777 Partners for his 94 per cent shareholding on Friday.

British-Iranian businessman Moshiri has been seeking investors to help complete the club's new 53,000 capacity stadium at Bramley-Moore Dock, which is due to open next season.

The 777 Football Group already owns or holds stakes in Sevilla, Genoa, Hertha Berlin, Standard Liege, France's Red Star and Melbourne Victory.

"The days of an owner/benefactor are seemingly out of reach for most, and the biggest clubs are now typically owned by well-resourced PE (private equity) firms, specialist sports investors or state-backed companies and funds," said Moshiri.

"Through my lengthy discussions with 777... I believe they are the best partners to take our great club forward, with all the benefits of their multi-club investment model."

Since becoming majority shareholder in 2016, Moshiri splashed over £500 million (\$620 million) on new signings to little positive effect.

The Toffees have narrowly avoided relegation for the past two years and taken just one point from their opening four Premier League games this season.

Moshiri had stayed away from Goodison Park in recent months after the board members claimed there was a "real and credible threat to their safety and security" at home matches last season. — AFP



Farhad Moshiri has agreed to the sale of his 94 per cent shareholding in Everton. PHOTO: AFP

Howe tells Newcastle to rediscover mojo after poor start

NEWCASTLE manager Eddie Howe has called on his players to rise to the challenge of higher expectations after a poor start to the season.

The Magpies have lost three of their opening four Premier League games after finishing fourth last season to return to the Champions League for the first time in 20 years.

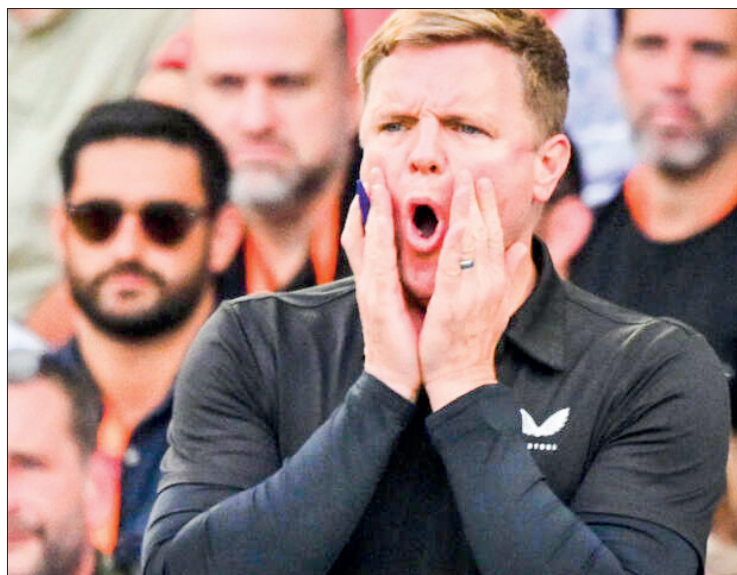
Newcastle will try to get back on track when they host Brentford on Saturday before their European adventure begins with a trip to AC Milan on Tuesday.

"We've got to return to our

highest level of performance and I think if we do then I back us to get the job done," said Howe, whose side have suffered consecutive defeats to Manchester City, Liverpool and Brighton.

"The challenges aren't going to go away this year, all through pre-season we had tough fixtures and tough fixtures at the start of the season.

"But with the competitions we're in there are no easy games, so we have to respond and we have to grow to the challenge." Questions have been asked over whether Howe's men will be able to

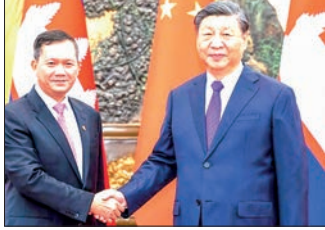


Newcastle United manager Eddie Howe. PHOTO: GLYN KIRK / AFP/FILE

handle the rigours of a Champions League group that also features Paris Saint-Germain and Borussia Dortmund, as well as competing at the top of the Premier League.

But the manager believes the strength of the English top flight means his side are well-prepared to take on the best in Europe.

"I don't see it being a huge difference to be honest — you're preparing against teams that are from Europe rather than England, (but) for me the Premier League is the best league in the world," he said on Friday. — AFP



Blocked Thai PM challenger Pita resigns as party leader



Former Thai PM candidate Pita Limjaroenrat speaking to the media on 13 July 2023. Pita says on Friday he is resigning as Move Forward Party leader. **PHOTO: AFP**

The MFP split from Pheu Thai, which formed a coalition with pro-military parties. Pita resigned to enable an MFP MP to become the opposition leader, hampered by his July suspension due to a media company share ownership inquiry.

PITA Limjaroenrat, whose reformist party won the most seats at Thailand's national elections in May, resigned as its leader on Friday.

The young challenger led the Move Forward Party (MFP) to the top spot in the polls, capitalizing on a swell of voters disenchanted at a near-decade of junta-backed rule, before he was blocked by conservatives and suspended as an MP.

The MFP left a partnership with opposition rivals Pheu Thai, who went on to form a coalition government with pro-military parties, and said they would go into opposition.

"I resigned as the MFP's party leader to pave the way for an MP that is able to have a voice in parliament, be the opposition leader," Pita wrote on his official Facebook page.

Under current rules, the leader of the opposition must be an MP.

"Due to my MP suspension, I won't be able to get my MP position and be opposition leader in the near future," Pita wrote.

He was suspended in July while waiting for the Constitutional Court's ruling over his ownership of shares in a now-defunct media company. — AFP

Libya's flood-ravaged Derna in grisly hunt for thousands missing

RESCUERS sifted through mud and rubble Friday in their search for people missing from the tsunami-sized flash flood that swept the Libyan port city of Derna, killing more than 3,000.

The surge of water burst two upstream dams on Sunday, turning Derna into an apocalyptic wasteland with entire city blocks and untold numbers of

people washed into the Mediterranean.

The United Nations launched an appeal for more than \$71 million to assist hundreds of thousands in need and warned the "extent of the problem" remains unclear.

An AFP journalist in Derna said central neighbourhoods on either side of the river, which normally dries up at this time

of year, looked as if a steam roller had passed through, uprooting trees and buildings and hurling vehicles onto the port's breakwaters. "Within seconds the water level suddenly rose," said a survivor, who was swept away with his mother in the late-night ordeal and injured, before they both managed to scramble into an empty building downstream. — AFP



The UN blamed the high death toll from flooding in Libya in part on the legacy of years of war and chaos. **PHOTO: AFP**

Biden's son Hunter indicted on gun charges

Hunter Biden faces charges for illegally purchasing a gun in 2018 while falsely stating that he wasn't using drugs at the time. This development adds a new challenge to his father's reelection campaign.

US President Joe Biden's son Hunter was indicted Thursday for illegally buying a gun when he was using drugs, casting a new shadow over his father's campaign for reelection next year. Hunter Biden, 53, was charged with two counts of making false statements when claiming on forms required for the 2018 gun purchase that he was not using drugs illegally at the time. A third charge said that, based on the false statements, he illegally possessed the gun during an 11-day period in October that year.

If convicted on all three felony charges, Biden could in theory face 25 years in prison, though in practice they are seldom punished by any jail time.

In attesting that he was not an unlawful user of drugs when he bought the Colt Cobra revolver, Biden "knew that statement was false", the Jus-



US President Joe Biden's son Hunter was indicted on 14 September 2023 for illegally buying a gun five years ago at a time when he admits he was using drugs heavily. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

tice Department said.

The indictment came two days after Republicans in Congress opened an impeachment probe against Democrat Joe Biden, alleging that when he was vice-president he benefited financially from his son's foreign business dealings. — AFP