

# The Global **NEW LIGHT** of MYANMAR



State Administration Council Chairman Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Thadoe Maha Thray Sithu Thadoe Thiri Thudhamma Min Aung Hlaing returns the salute of the graduate female cadet company at the OTS parade ground in Hmawby, Yangon Region, yesterday.

## Tatmadaw remains in serving national politics for nation's sake

**T**atmadaw has remained an enduring presence at the forefront of the country's national politics, said Senior General Min Aung Hlaing.

Chairman of the State Administration Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Thadoe Maha Thray Sithu Thadoe Thiri Thudhamma Min Aung Hlaing delivered an address at the passing out parade of the 10<sup>th</sup> Intake of Graduate Female Cadet Course of Defence Ser-

vices (Army) Officer Training School (Hmawby) at its parade ground in Yangon Region yesterday morning.

The Senior General highlighted that "National Politics" entails the pursuit of the spectrum of meritorious deeds such as serenity, prosperity, justice and freedom for the entire Nation and the holistic well-being of every citizen, both physically and mentally.

He underscored that Tatmadaw remains steadfast, irrespective of governmental

forms and political structures, committed to embracing the national policy, which encompasses safeguarding Our Three Main National Causes and the Nation's Constitution and ensuring the lives and property of the people without reservation.

He urged the cadets to persist in upholding the revered conduct and virtuous traditions of Tatmadaw, guided by an unwavering commitment to moral integrity.

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# NATIONAL

## Five national objectives of 76<sup>th</sup> Independence Day

1. To uphold "Our Three Main National Causes" – Non-disintegration of the Union, Non-disintegration of national solidarity and Perpetuation of sovereignty, which are national interests and national politics
2. To ensure the promotion of a comprehensive education sector that produces human resources with perfect abilities like intelligence, skills, and talents in building a Union based on democracy and federalism.
3. To make efforts to hold free and fair elections under the law and ensure the right to vote across the nation
4. To foster public cooperation for state stability and strengthen the multiparty democratic system at the end of acts of terrorism
5. To promote agriculture and livestock-based MSMEs



Serene View: Akauktaung Pagoda along the Ayeyawady River.

## Akauktaung Pagoda packed with pilgrims daily in Bago Region

ACCORDING to U Min Aung, a member of the Trustees Board of the Pagoda, Akauktaung Pagoda in Padaung Township, Bago Region, is always open regardless of the season, and pilgrims enter every day. Free accommodation and vegetarian meals are provided daily for lunch and dinner for the pilgrims.

Pilgrims who come to Akauktaung Pagoda are also given beds, which have been arranged for them to stay free of charge. In addition, the Sayadaw residing at Akauktaung also donates vegetarian dishes to the pilgrims every day from 6 am to 6 pm.

"There is no specific season for pilgrims. It is always open. Arrangements are also provided for all pilgrims for free. In addition, for the accommodation, the vegetarian meals are also donated under the Akauktaung Sayadaw's plans from 6 am to 6 pm today. About two hundred pilgrims always arrive there on weekends. And about

twenty or thirty pilgrims come on weekdays," U Min Aung said.

The Akauk Hill is located at the end of Htonebo town in Padaung Township, Pyay District, Bago Region, and Thaukkyaduu Village, Kyangin Township, Hinthada District, Ayeyawady Region. Many statues of ancient pagodas are engraved on the banks of the Ayeyawady River, earning the interest of domestic pilgrims and tourists.

In history, Akauktaung was a place where taxes were collected by boat. Therefore, the stone carvers who came by boat carved the cliffs of Akauktaung and donated their knowledge to offer to the deceased. There are about 370 statues of Buddha at Akauk Hill, and all the statues are carved on a cliff. There are 246 sitting Buddha statues, 109 standing statues, and 15 reclining statues. The statues are from the Konbaung era, and some of the works from the Inwa era are also included. — ASH/TKO

### MYANMAR GAZETTE

## Head of Service Organization confirmed

THE State Administration Council has confirmed the appointment of Daw Thanda Lay as Director-General of the Technological Development and Training Department of the Union Auditor-General's Office on the expiry of the one-year probationary period.

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Enthusiastic visitors enjoying the Cherry Blossom Festival in the previous year.

## Kengtung to host Cherry Blossom Festival & Ethnic Food Exhibition on 24 Dec

THE 2023 Cherry Blossom Festival and Ethnic Traditional Food Fair will be held in Loimwe, Kengtung Township of Shan State (East), on 24 December, according to the Directorate of Hotels and Tourism (Shan State). The Cherry Blossom Festival is held every year during the

winter when the cherry blossoms bloom, and this is the third time that the Cherry Blossom Festival will be held along with an ethnic traditional food exhibition.

To attract domestic travelers and tourists to the festival and to promote tourism, local ethnic cultural dances and songs from Shan, Arkha, Lahu, and Wa will be performed during the festival. "The festival is designated to hold five days during the cherry blossoming season, estimated to be the first week of January. In this territory, cherry plants have been grown since colonial years, and some are planted from generation to generation under projects. Therefore, the territory is covered with hundreds of cherry plants. The Cherry Blossom Festival will be held jointly with the Shan State government's guidance, the Hotels and Tourism

Directorate, and the Myanmar Hoteliers Association (Golden Triangle Zone) to promote the development of tourism in the Loimwe, the conservation of cherry trees, the traditional culture and customs of the ethnic people, and the food of the ethnic groups so that travellers can get to know more about them and achieve progress," U Htin Aung Naing said.

In Myanmar, Chin and Shan States are the regions with the most cherry trees, and in the Loimwe region, there are two types of cherry trees, sweet and bitter, and cherry blossoms take about a month to bloom alternately.

In Southeast Asian countries, cherry blossom festivals are often held in Viet Nam and Thailand, including Myanmar, and Japan also values cherry trees. — ASH/TKO



# NATIONAL

All our national people always cherish and value our traditions and national characteristics. Safeguarding and promoting national characteristics and national culture will contribute to fostering the patriotic spirit and thereby bringing great benefits to the nation and people. Now is the crucial time to have the national spirit as we strive for peace and development and for the establishment of a Union based on democracy and federalism.

*[An excerpt from the message sent by Chairman of the State Administration Council, Prime Minister Senior General Thadoe Maha Thray Sithu Thadoe Thiri Thudhamma Min Aung Hlaing to the ceremony to mark 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary (Diamond Jubilee) of Kachin State Day on 10 January 2023.]*



## Tatmadaw remains in serving national politics for nation's sake

### FROM PAGE-1

The Senior General noted that every single military personnel is the person who voluntarily joined the Tatmadaw, propelled by their personal commitment to safeguard the Nation, devoid of any coercion or external influence. In the assorted training offered by the Tatmadaw, comrades eagerly embark on the journey to becoming commendable servicewomen, driven by their own resolute decisions.

As the behaviours of every military individual significantly reflect upon the Tatmadaw's prestige, it becomes imperative for each comrade to exemplify military discipline, he added.

In the life of junior officers, the Senior General stressed that they strictly follow the orders of superiors as a nurture of good leader and good follower, adding good follower in the life of subordinate is the first step for a good leader of the future.

He noted that military personnel must abide by issued orders, directives, rules, and regulations whilst faithfully executing the duties for the Nation and the Tatmadaw, exemplifying the commendable soldiers.

The Senior General unveiled that As Tatmadaw is born of the people as a people's Tatmadaw, they have to join hands with the people with utmost efforts in overcoming any difficulties and challenges to become a reliable Tatmadaw of the people.

At the parade, the Senior General took the salute of a graduated cadet company. The Senior General presented the Best Cadet Award to Cadet Yu Yu Naing.

After the parade, the Senior General



State Administration Council Chairman Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Thadoe Maha Thray Sithu Thadoe Thiri Thudhamma Min Aung Hlaing and wife Daw Kyu Kyu Hla cordially greet the graduate female cadets at the dinner yesterday.

met with outstanding cadets namely Best Cadet Award winner Cadet Yu Yu Naing, the Excellent Award in Shooting winner Cadet Kyi Baho Seint, the Excellent Award in Training winner Cadet Shwe Yi Win and the Excellent Award in Fitness winner Cadet Shwe Wut Hmon Oo at the headquarters of the training school and gave words of honour.

The Senior General advised the cadets to try hard to become good military officers on whom the families take pride

in their positions and the State and Tatmadaw can rely. They have to apply social relation experiences obtained from learning education and basic training to improve their lives and shape their ambitions along their lifespan.

Also present at the ceremony were Daw Kyu Kyu Hla, wife of the Senior General, Commander-in-Chief (Navy) Admiral Zeya Kyawhtin Sithu Moe Aung and wife, Commander-in-Chief (Air) General Zeya Kyawhtin Sithu Tun Aung and wife,

Union-level dignitaries and their wives, senior military officers from the Office of the Commander-in-Chief and their wives, the Chief Minister of Yangon Region and officials.

In the evening, Senior General Min Aung Hlaing attended the graduation dinner of the 10<sup>th</sup> Intake of Graduate Female Cadet Course of the Defence Services (Army) OTS (Hmawby) at its Pyidaungsu Hall. — MNA/TTA

# NATIONAL

**S**ports is a competition based on physical and mental strengths, resulting in the emergence of a strong spirit and sporting spirit to forge fairness and justice, mental strengthening, and mutual respect among the athletes, Vice-Senior General Soe Win highlighted.

Vice-Chairman of the State Administration Council Deputy Prime Minister Vice-Senior General Soe Win, who is in the capacity of Chairman of Education, Health and Human Resource Development Committee, delivered a speech at the opening of the Inter-Education Degree College Sports Competition of the Department of Higher Education under the Ministry of Education at Wunna Theikdi Gymnasium A in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday afternoon.

Speaking on occasion, the Vice-Senior General said that the competition aims to create chances for students to meet with each other amicably, exchange regional knowledge, and bring out outstanding primary education teachers in sports.

He expressed his firm belief that the competition would turn out more selected athletes to bring honour to the State, urging those athletes to try hard to become outstanding athletes steadfastly.

As success in the sports arena proves the development



State Administration Council Vice-Chairman Deputy Prime Minister Vice-Senior General Soe Win cordially greets student-athletes, managers and coaches yesterday.

## Student-athletes have to strive to uplift prestige of relevant degree colleges as well as the State

of the State, all athletes have to strive to target achievements in the sports as well as becoming outstanding athletes to pay back debt of gratitude not only to relevant organizations but to the nation and its national.

He urged all to compete in sports with fairness and sporting

spirit to set records for themselves as the students who value disciplines in uplifting the prestige of relevant education degree colleges and the prestige and integrity of the State.

The sports persons from all education degree colleges took the sports oaths.

The Vice-Senior General and party cordially greeted student-athletes, managers and coaches.

The Vice-Senior General and party viewed physical fitness dances, Myanmar martial arts demonstration, Myanmar traditional caneball demonstration

and aerobic sports presented by students from education degree colleges in Meiktila, Hlegu and Toungoo.

The sports competition will take place at Wunna Theikdi Stadium and gymnasiums in Nay Pyi Taw from 22 to 26 December with 800 student-athletes.

The competition comprises men's football, women's and men's volleyball, men's and women's Sepak Takraw and track and field sports. The competition started at inter-schools and zonal contests in upper and lower Myanmar areas. — MNA/TTA

## National Land Utilization Council emphasizes drafting national land law

LAND is considered the most essential and fundamental natural resource for human beings and the existence of the social community, said Member of the State Administration Council Deputy Prime Minister and Union Minister for Defence Admiral Tin Aung San at the fifth meeting of the National Land Utilization Council yesterday morning.

At the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation in Nay Pyi Taw, the Admiral, the National Land Utilization Council Chairman, said that all should notice that land resources are limited natural resources.

Therefore, long-term visions were set to ensure the basic needs of citizens and sustainable development of the country, and the National Land Utilization Policy was drafted with public participation and released in January 2016 to manage the country's land resources.

Moreover, it should prioritize drafting a National Land Law that has proper



SAC Member Deputy Prime Minister MoD Union Minister Admiral Tin Aung San chairs the fifth meeting of the National Land Utilization Council yesterday.

coverage of the existing law to develop the social status of all citizens, guarantee the land use permit, protect the environment and cultural heritages, develop the land use that contributes to the highest economic profits and minimizes the impacts

on the environment.

The council has already organized a supporting work group under the National Land Law Compilation and Land Management Laws Harmonization Work Committee, and the supporting workgroup

also comprises three units.

The Admiral also appreciated the efforts of those participating in drafting a national land law containing 16 Chapters as per the national land utilization policy.

He then urged the lawmakers to complete the law drafting procedures within the set time frame slated from August 2023 to October 2024.

Then, Vice-Chairman of the council Union Minister Lt-Gen Yar Pyae explained the need to follow 12 facts made at the fourth meeting, the condition to revise the national land utilization policy once every five years, systematic state-owned land management and authority conferred under the Land Management Law.

Union ministers, deputy ministers, the Nay Pyi Taw Council chairman and officials reported on the progress of tasks undertaken by relevant work committees, drawing the national land utilization law and management measures. — MNA/KTZH



# NATIONAL

## Youth & Literary Fine Arts Festival Organizing Committee Chair MoI UM, MoEA UM visit festival's final day

UNION Minister for Information U Maung Maung Ohn, as Chairman of the Organizing Committee on Youth and Literary Fine Arts Festival, and Union Minister for Ethnic Affairs Jeng Phang Naw Tung, accompanied by Deputy Minister U Ye Tint and relevant officials participated in the final day of the festival yesterday.

First, the Union Ministers viewed the photos depicting Myanmar's traditional cultures and stunning places across the country at the "Beautiful and Pleasant Myanmar" booth. They also viewed round the booths of ministries concerned and MRTV and watched the visitors who donated voices for the schools for the blind at MRTV's studio.

They then enjoyed the entertainment programmes of MRTV and ethnic traditional dance

groups.

The festival was organized from 20 to 22 December, aiming at sharpening the intelligibility and critical thinking of youths, motivating the young people to read books and publications, know the advantages of literature, uplift patriotic spirit, prestige and integrity through literature and fine arts, adore the independence of the nation with the knowledge of independence struggle and sufferings in the colonial era, enjoy peace, stability and beautifying scenes of the country with development activities as well as panoramic rural scenes to have the soul for adoring the relevant regions and states, and quickly know endeavours of relevant ministries through the displays of booths at the event. — MNA/KTZH



Union Minister U Maung Maung Ohn (2R) and Union Minister Jeng Phang Naw Tung (3R) view round the exhibition yesterday.

## Youth & Literary Fine Arts Festival concludes



The winding up event of the Youth and Literary Fine Arts Festival in progress yesterday in Nay Pyi Taw.

THE Youth and Literary Fine Arts Festival commemorating the 76<sup>th</sup> Independence Day continued its third day yesterday. It came to a successful conclusion with the strong participation of government personnel, teachers, students, youths and enthusiastic people.

At the three-day festival, 227 government employees, students and people read 56 books as voice donations for the schools of the blind at MRTV's booth.

The booths of the ministries concerned were also crowded with visitors.

Moreover, the students and youths at the festival participated in the youths' talk show themed "Youths and Friendship".

After the talk show, Deputy Minister for Information U Ye Tint presented certificates of honour to the presenters and artistes of MRTV-4 Channel.

In the evening, the artistes of MRTV sang songs to conclude the festival and the ethnic dance groups, students, youths, and people joyfully participated in it. — Aung Ye Thwin, Aye Aye Thant/KTZH

## Graduation ceremony held for female cadets of Defence Services (Army) OTS (Hmawby)

THE graduation ceremony for the 10<sup>th</sup> intake of female cadet course of Defence Services (Army) Officer Training School (Hmawby) was held at the Myawady Hall of the school yesterday.

According to the ceremony, senior Tatmadaw officers handed out commissioning certificate to each graduating cadet. Lt-Gen Lin Aung, Military Appointment-General, gave

a speech and concluded the ceremony.

The ceremony was to appoint female cadets who graduated from the school with the rank of second lieutenant. The female cadet training course was opened in 2014 with the aim of producing qualified officers for Tatmadaw.

As female graduates who have completed the training, they must serve in the relevant (Army, Navy and Air) corps. — MNA/KZL



The commissioning ceremony for the 10<sup>th</sup> intake of female cadet course in progress yesterday.

# NATIONAL



The picture shows varieties of pulses being sold in the domestic market.

## Black gram price hits fresh peak; pigeon pea price rebounds

THE black gram price hit an all-time high of K3.005 million per tonne on 22 December 2023 in Yangon's market. Similarly, the price of pigeon peas also bounced back to K3.175 million per tonne on 22 December.

The pigeon pea price stayed at K3.15 million per tonne between 30 November and 21 December 2023. The green gram price remains unchanged at present.

Despite the increase in black gram and pigeon pea prices, the FOB prices did not rise on 22 December.

The pigeon pea price hit

a record high of K4.15 million per tonne on 8 September 2023. The prevailing price is down by K1 million per tonne compared to that. The newly harvested pulses stood at K95,000 per basket of pigeon peas and K92,000 per basket of black gram on 20 December.

Myanmar shipped 660,000 tonnes of black gram (urad) and 248,000 tonnes of pigeon peas to India between January and November 2023. Myanmar annually exports 1.5 million to 2 million tonnes of varieties of pulses to India. India has a high consumption of pulses,

and the requirement to meet domestic demand is still growing.

India's pulses output was estimated at 2.6 million tonnes in the 2022-2023 financial year, whereas 2.49 tonnes of pulses were imported then. India brought in 1.963 million tonnes of various pulses from external markets between April and October 2023.

Myanmar growers are expected to reap a handsome profit this year. Those traders who kept the stocks in hand saw an unexpected profit spike. — TWA/EM

## No 2 Steel Mill (Pangpet) construction surpasses 85% completion



The map of No 2 Steel Mill (Pangpet) in Taunggyi township, Shan State (South).

THE Ministry of Industry reported that more than 85 per cent of the construction at No 2 Steel Mill (Pangpet) in Taunggyi Township, Shan State, a collaborative effort between Myanmar and Russia, has been completed. The aim is to resume operations in the upcoming financial year 2025-26.

A total of 461 processes were identified in the maintenance construction project, which has been under the scrutiny of foreign experts since April 2021. Of these, 386 proce-

dures have been successfully executed through collaboration with factory employees and local experts. The remaining 16 processes will be carried out by a Russian company, bringing the overall completion of the construction to 85.92 per cent.

Upon its re-operation in the next financial year, No 2 Steel Mill (Pangpet) will contribute to producing pig iron, which will be supplied to No 1 Myingyan Steel Mill for the steel melting process. — TWA/MKKS



The image depicts the advertisement of the Christmas Party at Yangon Zoo.

## Yangon Zoo to host Christmas Party

ACCORDING to the Yangon Zoo, the Christmas party will be held on a grand scale from 23 to 25 December.

The party is scheduled with a magic show, a talent show for kids, a photo session with birds, a modern dance show, a band show and other exciting plans.

Stalls for domestic products and food will reportedly be opened at the Christmas Party. — TWA/TRKM

## Onion prices surge again in Yangon market

THE prices of raw onions rose again in the Yangon onion market on 21 and 22 December.

A total of 138,000 visses of onion entered Yangon's Bayintnaung Commodity Warehouse on 22 December, catching good prices of the onions.

The onion price reached K5,100 per viss on 12 December, dropped to K5,000 from 14 to 16 December, and fell again to K4,800 from 18 to 19 December. But the price rose again by K300 per viss on 20 December.

Therefore, these days, the price of old onion has reached last year's price, resulting in the price of monsoon onion rising to the highest price of the previous year. Myitha onion also rose on 21 December.

Hundreds of thousands of new onions are entering the local market these days. On 21 December, the amount of rain onions entering the Pakokku market reached 200,000



Onions seen spreading for sale at the Pakokku market.

visse, and the highest price was K2,300 per viss, according to the local onion market report.

During the seven days from 14 to 22 December, 1,085,000 visse-

of new onions entered the Yangon market. Still, only 730,000 visse of old and new onions arrived in the Yangon market during the same seven-day period. — TWA/KZL



# Myanmar to ship 100,000 tonnes of rice to Bangladesh under G2G pact for fourth time

MYANMAR will export 100,000 tonnes of rice to Bangladesh for the fourth time this year under the Government-to-Government pact, according to the Myanmar Trade Promotion Organization under the Ministry of Commerce.

A virtual meeting for the Myanmar-Bangladesh rice sale contract was held on 19 December 2023 at the Myanmar Trade Promotion Organization's meeting hall.

Daw Naw Muta Kapaw, director-general of the Myanmar Trade Promotion Organization, delivered an opening remark that Bangladesh's Directorate General of Food and the Myanmar Rice Federation (MRF) signed the sales contracts as per the Memorandum of Understanding on Rice Trade and Myanmar sent 100,000 tonnes of white rice to Bangladesh each in 2017 for the first time and 2021 for the second time, as per the sales contract.



Export rice bags seen being loaded onto the overseas-going merchant vessel at Yangon Port.

The MRF stated that Myanmar was able to export 200,000 tonnes of rice to Bangladesh as of 14 March 2023, in line with con-

tract rules.

This virtual meeting focused on the period of shipment and transaction price and rice grading

for rice trade for the fourth time between Bangladesh's Directorate General of Food and the MRF. The two parties reached a

sale contract and concluded the meeting successfully.

The MRF aims to reach a rice export target of 2.5 million tonnes for the current financial year 2023-2024, generating earnings of US\$1 billion.

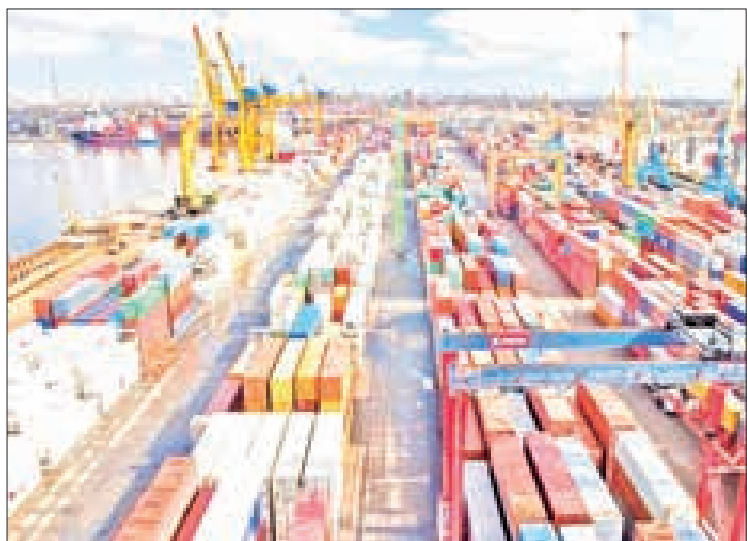
MRF's statistics indicated that Myanmar conveyed nearly 760,000 tonnes of rice and broken rice in the past eight months of the current FY beginning 1 April.

The seaborne rice export hit 695,415 tonnes, while border posts saw 64,258 tonnes of rice exports, totalling 759,673 tonnes.

Myanmar exported 2,261,203 tonnes of rice and broken rice to foreign trade partners in the past 2022-2023 FY (April 2022-March 2023), estimated at \$853.472 million.

Myanmar pocketed over \$809.135 million from approximately 2.164 million tonnes of rice export in the 2021-2022 FY (April 2021-Mar 2022). — NN/EM

## Export revenue from rice, pulses, and corn to boost fuel oil imports



An aerial view of the container yard at Yangon Port.

EARNINGS from rice, broken rice, pulses and corn exports will support the fuel oil import sector, as per the notification of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry released on 21 December 2023.

The notification mentioned that the Central Bank of Myanmar will send the export dec-

laration of each company that exports rice, broken rice, pulses, and corn, provided by the Myanmar Customs Department, to the relevant authorized dealers.

According to the Export Declaration, the exporters have to convert 35/30 per cent of export earnings into local currency according to the CBM's reference exchange rate within one day

through the Authorized Dealers (private banks), while 65/30 per cent of export earnings can be exchanged according to the market exchange rate transacted on Online Trading Platform. Meanwhile, the remaining 70 per cent of export earnings must be deposited into a foreign currency account for fuel oil import. Otherwise, exporters can sell 70 per cent of earnings from rice, broken rice, pulses and corn exports to fuel oil importing companies through the authorized banks, which will directly transfer those amounts to foreign currency accounts of the buyers. Interbank transactions across different banks are also available.

Thus, the fuel importing companies must show the authorized dealers' credit advice and bank statements to prove how they earn export earnings or purchase from those rice, broken rice, corn and pulses exporting companies while seeking the licence. — NN/EM

## PlexConnect 2024 invites Myanmar business leaders to participate in plastic fair

PLEXCONNECT 2024 invited Myanmar businesspeople to enter India's export-focused international trade fair for plastics scheduled for 7-9 June 2024 in Mumbai, India, according to the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry.

The PlexConnect 2024 is organized by the Plastics Export Promotion Council (PlexCouncil), established by the Department of Commerce, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India organized this event.

More than 900 international buyers from over 100 countries are expected to participate in the PlexConnect 2024. The fair will connect a network between over 500 exhibitors and 25,000 visitors and create job opportunities.

Qualified plastic buyers from Myanmar are invited to join the Reverse Buyer Seller Meet (RBSM) arranged by PlexConnect. Those selected buyers will be covered by flight ticket, two-night hotel accommodation and ground hospitality.

For further details, those interested affiliated associations and businesspeople can visit the websites [www.plexconcil.org/plexconnect/](http://www.plexconcil.org/plexconnect/) and <https://www.plexconcil.org/plexconnect/buyer-details>, and contact Mr Ruban Hobday, Regional Director, through email [ruban.hobday@plexconcil.org](mailto:ruban.hobday@plexconcil.org) for registration. The UMFCCI notified them of sending information about the participants through email: [itpc.umfcci@gmail.com](mailto:itpc.umfcci@gmail.com) and phone number 01 2314344 (Ext: 301). — NN/KK



# OPINION

## Seize illegal commodities through the exchange of information

**T**HE Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee plays a pivotal role in coordinating efforts to combat illegal trade fostering collaboration between countries and departments. This committee oversees the implementation of guidelines for special task forces across various regions and states, ensuring timely and effective measures against illegal trade activities for the nation's and its citizens' benefit.

Special task forces dedicated to eradicating illegal trade in different regions and states focus on verifying the conformity of commodities with import declarations. On a daily basis, they confiscate illicit items and take legal action against offenders. It is imperative that officials and service personnel within these task forces maintain loyalty to the State and refrain from engaging in corruption.

From January to December 2022, the combined efforts of these task forces resulted in the seizure of illegal and smuggled goods valued at K65.056 billion in 4,232 cases. In the corresponding period of 2023, this figure rose significantly, with the confiscation of goods worth approximately K127.447 billion in 5,753 cases. Over the 23-month period of the steering committee's existence, a total of approximately K182.503 billion worth of illegal trade goods were seized in 9,985 cases.

In its meeting held in June 2023, the steering committee noted the increased efforts of special task forces in regions and states. For instance, the Taninthayi Region task force, acting on a tip-off, seized 123.904 tonnes of illegally excavated lead metal valued at approximately K3.717 billion in September 2023. Simultaneously, the Customs Department

intercepted 16 kilogrammes of gold and 259 iPhones from passengers arriving from Singapore on 4 November, amounting to a total seizure value of over K3.946 billion, including US\$120,000 worth of gold.

International cooperation played a crucial role in these successes, as exemplified by the Customs Department of India informing Myanmar's Customs Department about narcotic drugs. This timely exchange of information led to the seizure of narcotic drugs at the Yangon International Airport on two occasions.

Recognizing the importance of information in tracking illegal commodity routes, it is recommended to reward informants promptly for their efforts and risks in providing valuable information. Additionally, it is crucial for these task forces to establish and maintain an efficient information network, enabling them to prevent and take swift action against those involved in illegal trade activities as part of preventing loss of deserved revenue for the State, protecting the interests of traders and consumer people engaged in legal process and consumption.

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**A**FTER the collapse of the USSR and the end of the Cold War, the United States and its NATO allies began to actively "re-educate" the former Soviet republics, trying to build democracy there on Western patterns, regardless of the national interests of those states.

To strengthen its own dominance, the "collective West" has been using its concept of "rules-based order," which comes in place of universally agreed upon international legal mechanisms and allows its proponents to exert significant influence on the decision-making process.

Western policy in the post-Soviet space has paid special attention to Ukraine as the most developed of the republics with powerful industrial, agricultural and scientific potential. Her economy was to be enfeebled and made to work for Western capital.

In the early 2000s, the "collective West" resorted to more resolute measures vis-a-vis Ukraine. It inspired the "Orange Revolution" of 2004, which resulted in the coming to power in Kyiv of forces bent on distancing Ukraine from Russia and integrating the country into Euro-Atlantic structures. Gross interference of the West in the internal affairs of the country provoked an acute and permanent political crisis, leading Ukraine to the tragic events of late 2013 - early 2014.

The United States and its allies acted in a brutal and cynical manner in full accordance with the principle "those who are not with us are against us", forcing Kyiv to choose with whom it should be - with them or with Russia.

In November 2013, it was Ukrainian President V Yanukovich's decision to postpone the signing of the Association Agreement with the EU that served first as the reason for the "Euromaidan". The latter, in its turn, led to the armed coup d'état in Kyiv in February 2014, inspired and financed by the West. As a result, nationalist radical forces came to power in Ukraine.

On 22 February 2014, the Verkhovna Rada (Ukrainian Parliament) adopted a resolution on Mr V Yanukovich's being aloof from performing the duties of the President of Ukraine, thereby usurping power (although the legitimate president continued to stay on the territory of Ukraine and did not make statements about his resignation). The launching of a "government of the winners" was announced.

Representatives of the United States and the EU produced no official statements urging compliance with the agreement concluded between President Yanukovich and the opposition with the mediation of Germany, France and Poland on 21 Feb-

# 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Euromaidan in Ukraine

by Embassy of the Russian Federation in Myanmar

ruary 2014. The West hastened to acknowledge the "change of power" in Ukraine and began to encourage the putschists in their anti-Russian policies.

So-called "mediation" efforts of Westerners led, in fact, to a sharp polarization of the Ukrainian society, which created preconditions for an armed civil conflict. The very first legislative steps of the "winners of the Maidan" - in particular, an attempt to repeal the law on regional languages - were received with alarm in the Russian-speaking southeast of Ukraine (Donbass), where the spontaneous formation of militia forces began. Kyiv immediately accused all residents of that region of "treason" and "terrorism", sending the regular army and neo-Nazi punitive battalions to suppress the protests.

The spread of civil war in Ukraine was avoided. With the active mediation of Russia, the "Package of Measures for the Implementation of the Minsk

Agreements" was signed on 12 February 2015 by the parties in conflict and approved by the UN Security Council Resolution 2202. It has become the uncontested legal basis for internal Ukrainian settlement. However, Kyiv sabotaged its implementation, and the West turned a blind eye to this. Later, in 2022, the former President of Ukraine P Poroshenko admitted that the Minsk agreements were designed to give Kyiv time to strengthen the Armed Forces of Ukraine and not to stop the fighting. And in December 2022, this was confirmed by the former German Chancellor A Merkel and ex-President of France F Hollande.

The coming to power in Ukraine of President V Zelensky in 2019 did not bring about positive changes. Under the influence of various internal and external political forces, he continued to sabotage the Minsk agreements.

The armed forces of Ukraine never stopped shelling Donbass.

An inhumane socioeconomic and transport blockade was introduced against its population to put the region on the brink of survival.

Under the supervision and with direct participation of advisers from NATO member-states, Ukraine has been rapidly turning herself into "anti-Russia" since 2014.

The most important element of the Western anti-Russian line in Ukraine and throughout the Black Sea and Eastern European region has been her accelerated militarization - the transformation of this country into a NATO springboard against Russia. In recent years, the United States and its allies have accelerated the military reconstruction of the territory of Ukraine, beefing it up with weapons and equipment, staging large-scale military exercises near Russian borders, and training Ukrainian military personnel. For a long time, American biological laboratories op-

erated secretly in Ukraine. At those facilities, military biological programmes were implemented in stark violation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction (1972).

At the end of 2021, Russia prepared and, in December of that same year, sent proposals to Western partners to provide her with legal security guarantees, including the non-expansion of NATO to the East. However, those proposals were ignored.

Russia and Ukraine have common historical roots. Ukraine is an integral part of Russian history, the cradle of our Orthodox faith and spirituality, and a zone of Russian national interests. Moscow cannot let a threat to Russia and our population come from Ukrainian territory. Russia has also repeatedly warned that a further escalation of the situation in Donbass could have the most

serious consequences for regional and pan-European stability.

The inculcation of Russophobia, falsification of history and revival of neo-Nazism in Ukraine, as well as the eight-year neglect by the Kyiv regime of Donbass civilians' right to live, could no longer remain unchecked.

Moreover, a serious concern was caused by Kyiv's bid to repossess nuclear weapons, publicly voiced by V Zelensky in February 2022 at the Munich Security Conference, which, if unstopped, would entail real risks not only for Russia but for international security in general.

Since the beginning of 2022, there was observed an escalation of the situation along the entire line of contact in Donbass. The population of the two republics of that region faced a real threat of direct physical elimination by the Kyiv authorities. As was later confirmed, the Ukrainian Armed Forces were preparing to seize Donbass by force in March 2022.

Russia was, thus, left with no other option but to recognize the independence of the Donetsk People's Republic and Lugansk People's Republic (on 21 February 2022) and to launch a special military operation on 24 February 2022 to protect Donbass, demilitarize and denazify Ukraine, eliminate threats to the security of Russia emanating from the neighbouring territory. These

goals and objectives will be achieved in full.

Russia did not "attack" Ukraine, as claimed by Western propaganda, but acted in compliance with Article 51, Part 7 of the UN Charter, as well as the Russian legislation and at the request of the Donbass republics, subjected to shelling and blockade for eight years by the Kyiv regime with the connivance of the West.

The collective West actively continues to arm the Kyiv regime. In addition, the United States and its NATO allies are providing military training for Ukrainian personnel to use modern weapons, including tanks, air defence systems and even aircraft.

The actions of the countries of the "collective West" and the Kyiv regime spotlight the global nature of the confrontation in Ukraine. In reality, Russia is not dealing with Kyiv but rather with a NATO-Ukrainian military-industrial axis. Ukraine is just a tool in the hands of the United States and NATO allies, with a long-term goal to "triumph over Russia on the battlefield" at any cost and dismantle the security architecture in the so-called post-Soviet space and Eurasia as a whole.

*(The views in the article are only those of the Russian Embassy in Myanmar).*

## AI creates proteins with high binding strengths

Scientists employed software to design protein molecules with unusually high affinity and specificity to a number of complex indicators.

**A**RECENT study published in Nature describes an AI-driven advancement in biotechnology with implications for medication discovery, disease diagnosis, and environmental monitoring.

Scientists at the Institute for Protein Design at the University of Washington School of Medicine employed software to design protein molecules with unusually high affinity and specificity to a number of complex indicators, including human hormones.

### Computer-generated biomolecule

Notably, the scientists obtained the strongest ever documented contact strength between a computer-generated biomolecule and its target.

Senior author David Baker, professor of biochemistry at UW Medicine, Howard Hughes Medical Institute investigator, and recipient of the 2023 Frontiers of Knowledge Award in Biology and Biomedicine, emphasized the potential impact:

"The ability to generate novel

proteins with such high binding affinity and specificity opens up a world of possibilities, from new disease treatments to advanced diagnostics."

The team, led by Baker Lab members Susana Vazquez-Torres, Preetham Venkatesh, and Phil Leung, set out to create proteins that could bind to glucagon, neuropeptide Y, parathyroid hormone, and other helical peptide targets.

Such molecules, crucial in biological systems, are especially difficult for drugs and diagnostic

tools to recognize because they often lack stable molecular structures. Antibodies can be used to detect some of these medically relevant targets but are often costly to produce and have limited shelf lives.

"There are many diseases that are difficult to treat today simply because it is so challenging to detect certain molecules in the body.

As tools for diagnosis, designed proteins may offer a more cost-effective alternative to antibodies," explained Venkatesh.

### Protein design approach

The study introduces a novel protein design approach that uses advanced deep-learning methods. The researchers present a new way of using RFdiffusion, a generative model for creating new protein shapes, in conjunction with the sequence-design tool ProteinMPNN.

Developed in the Baker Lab, these programs allow scientists to create functional proteins more efficiently than ever before. By combining these tools in new ways, the team generated



AI-driven advancement in biotechnology with implications for medication discovery, disease diagnosis, and environmental monitoring. PHOTO: PIX FOR VISUAL PURPOSE/AFP

binding proteins by using limited target information, such as a peptide's amino acid sequence alone.

The broad implications of this "build to fit" approach suggest a new era in biotechnology in which AI-generated proteins

can be used to detect complex molecules relevant to human health and the environment.

SOURCE: ANI



# NATIONAL

## MIFER holds 41<sup>st</sup> Friday Talk

THE Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations (MIFER), aiming to develop human resources and improve staff members' capacity, conducted the 41<sup>st</sup> ceremony of Friday's Talk of Knowledge Sharing Programme (KSP) at Office No 1, Nay Pyi Taw, yesterday. MIFER Union Minister Dr Kan Zaw attended and delivered the opening remarks.

The Union minister pointed out that the topic "Theory and Practice of China's Foreign Aid for Myanmar" is directly related to the ministry and also necessary to understand all MIFER's staff. He highlighted that the approaches of supporting aid/assistance from developed countries and international organizations to all developing countries are technical, financial, human



Union Minister Dr Kan Zaw addresses the 41<sup>st</sup> Friday Talk conducted by the Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations yesterday.

resources, education and investment assistance, and the country's approaches and aid policies are different and pro-

viding ways are based on its Foreign Aid Policy. Likewise, China is also supporting based on its Foreign Aid policy, and MIFER's

staff will realize China's Foreign Aid policy, theories, and experiences through the discussion. It can implement the Standard

Operating Procedures (SOP) for the country's practical aid assistance. Therefore, he urged participants to participate actively in the debate.

Daw Moh Moh Thi, Assistant Director from the Foreign Economic Relations Department, presented the topic titled "Seminar on Theory and Practice of China's Foreign Aid for Myanmar". The attendees openly discussed matters related to China's foreign aid policy towards Myanmar; and the Union minister added discussion concerning China's Government Concessional Loan (GCL) and Preferential Buyer's Credit (PBC).

The deputy minister, directors-general and senior officials total 120 persons of the staff joined this programme. — MIFER

## Second day of 22<sup>nd</sup> Myanmar Traditional Medicine Seminar



The second-day session of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Myanmar Traditional Medicine Seminar in progress yesterday.

UNION Minister for Health Dr Thet Khaing Win attended yesterday's second day of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Myanmar Traditional Medicine Practitioners' Conference and

Myanmar Traditional Medicine Seminar in Nay Pyi Taw.

At the event, the representatives from Mandalay Region, Shan State, Magway Region,

Bago Region, Yangon Region, Kachin State, University of Traditional Medicine and Department of Traditional Medicine respectively read out traditional medicine-related papers and exchanged views with the participants.

At the closing ceremony of the Myanmar Traditional Medicine Seminar, Director-General Dr Su Su Dwe of the Traditional Medicine Department expressed gratitude to those who participated in the event and gave certificates of honour to the traditional medicine producers. — MNA/KTZH

## MNHRC inspects Pyapon Prison

THE inspection team, led by Commission member U Tin Aung from the Myanmar National Human Rights Commission, inspected the Pyapon Prison in Pyapon Township, Ayeyawady Region, on 22 December 2023, under Section 43 and Section 44 of the MNHRC Law.

The inspection team inspected the prison under the MNHRC law and procedures to determine whether prisoners and detainees enjoy fundamental rights, including appropriate food supply, healthcare and adequate purified water. The inspection team enquired about prisoners to ensure that they get their personal items and

items sent by families and whether there were human rights violations and torture cases in the prison.

The inspection team also inspected the dormitories, clinic, library, kitchen, food storage, water purifier, water sanitation system of the prison and family visitation status.

Besides, MNHRC donated 50 books for the prisoners.

MNHRC will send recommendations to the relevant departments for the necessary action based on the findings during the inspection. — MNHRC

### COUNTER-ARGUMENT TO FALSE INFORMATION

## Fake news: Kokke Police Station attacked with 40 mm grenades, killing 8 policemen

TERRORISTS attacked the Kokke Police Station, Myingyan Township, Mandalay Region, with 40 mm bombs, which exploded inside the bunker, killing eight police members and injuring five on 21 December, according to Khit Thit media.

Regarding the news, according to an official from the police station, there were no explosions or explosives, and the troops were serving their duties as usual on 21 December.

Malicious media outlets use social networking sites to spread fake news and mislead security forces, making up false information and staking terrorist acts. — MNA/KZL



Screenshot validates misinformation.

### Daily newspapers available online

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

News and Periodicals  
Enterprise

# NATIONAL

## Heritage Trust Team (Bagan) maintains 8 ancient pagodas in Bagan

U Myint Naing, a member of the Heritage Trust Team (Bagan), has reported ongoing maintenance efforts for eight ancient pagodas within the cultural heritage area of Bagan. Collaborating with the Department of Archaeology and National Museum (Bagan Branch), the Bagan Heritage Trust Team has taken measures such as weed suppression through spraying, repairing mortar cracks, sealing openings vulnerable to bird entry, and installing security

screens.

Emphasizing their focus on weed control within the compounds of eight pagodas in Taungbi and Bagan Myothit, U Myint Naing said the repair work started at the beginning of December. The commitment to preserving ancient pagodas will persist through continued collaboration with the Department of Archaeology and National Museum.

The maintenance efforts for ancient pagodas and old



Ancient Bagan pagodas seen in the cultural heritage area.

religious structures in the cultural heritage area involve joint initiatives by the Department

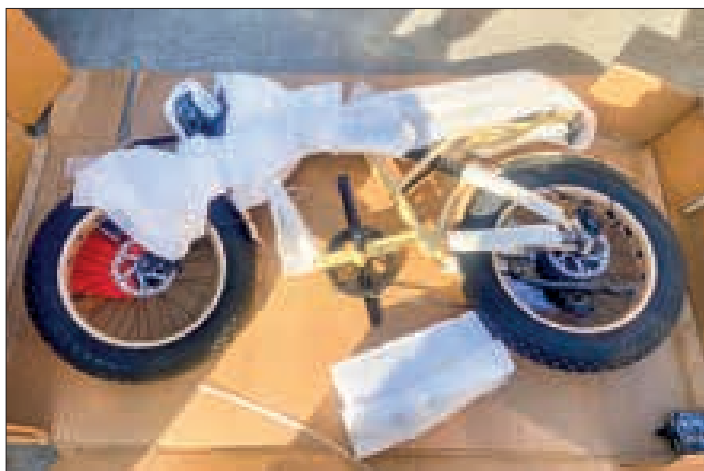
of Archaeology and National Museum and contributions from the Heritage Trust Team

(Bagan), supported by domestic and international donors. — ASH / TRKM

## CRIME NEWS

### Confiscated illegal items: Timbers, consumer goods, foodstuffs, industrial materials and vehicle

THE combined teams managed by the Mandalay Region Illegal Trade Eradication Task Force nabbed 109 kinds of goods valued at K101,696,100, including 19 electric bikes and 1,403 bottles of nail polish without official documents from a Mitsubishi Fuso truck (estimated value of K28 million) travelling from Taunggyi to Mandalay near Myitnge bridge on the outskirts of Mandalay township on 19 December. The action was taken under Customs procedures.



Seized illegal item.

During inspections on 20 December, the on-duty teams seized 30 kinds of goods worth K4,192,600, including 29 bags of SCG cement (50 kilogrammes each) and 240 bottles of Chang beer without official documents from a motorboat near Thahtay Island in Kawthoung township, four kinds of goods worth K11.568 million including 14,400 bags of Oupai Wipe tissue that were not

declared in the Import Declaration (ID) at Asia World Port and a total of 5.378 tonnes of illegal timbers worth K137,510 in Thaboung township. The action was conducted under Customs procedures and the Forest Law.

On 21 December, 96 gallons of illegal diesel valued at K850,560 was seized in Than-

lyin township, and the action was taken under the Petroleum and Petroleum Products Law.

Nine arrests were made on three consecutive days from 19 to 21 December, with an estimated value of K146,444,770, as reported by the Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee. — MNA/MKKS

### K1 bln worth of Ice seized in Pyigyidagun township

THE Myanmar Police Force impounded over K1 billion worth of 52 kilogrammes of Ice (methamphetamine) in Pyigyidagun township of Mandalay Region, according to the Myanmar Police Force.

Acting on a tip-off, a combined team consisting of members of the Anti-Drug Police Force searched a Toyota Mark II car driven by Hein Htet Aung in Pyigyidagun township at 4:30 pm on 19 December and captured 52 kilogrammes of Ice (methamphetamine) worth

over K1 billion.

According to the investigation, the Police Force arrested Ma Nan (aka) Ma Shan Ma (aka) Ma Nan Shwe Lu, who is a drug trafficker, in Pyigyidagun township at 5 pm on the same day.

Offenders admitted the seized drugs to transport from Shan State to Yangon Region.

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



Offenders seen along with seized drugs.

### Drugs seized in PwinOoLwin, Tachilek townships

A combined team consisting of members of the Anti-Drug Police Force stopped and searched a Toyota Corolla Fielder passenger bus in PwinOoLwin

township at 6 pm on 20 December and seized 120,000 stimulant tablets and 36.4 kilogrammes of solid opium oil.

In addition, the Police Force ex-

amined a motorbike driven by Lawju accompanied by Janu in Tachilek township at 4 pm on 21 December and captured 20,000 stimulant tablets.

Offenders are prosecuted under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law. — MNA/MKKS



# ECONOMY WORLD

## Italian MPs vote against reform of eurozone rescue fund

Italy stands out as the only country that has not ratified the 2021 reform of the European Stability Mechanism (ESM), a move that enhanced the fund's financial capabilities and expanded its authority to oversee countries facing economic challenges.

ITALY'S lower house of parliament, including members of Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni's party, rejected an opposition motion to approve a reform of the eurozone's bailout fund on Thursday.

But it is likely that Meloni's hard-right government will come back with its own proposal for ratification, with some conditions, analysts said.

Italy is the only country that has not yet ratified a 2021 reform of the European Stability Mechanism (ESM), which strengthened the fund's financial firepower



Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni has said that she will 'sign in blood' that Italy would not join the ESM. **PHOTO: AFP**

and increased its authority to supervise countries in difficulty.

Meloni's coalition government is torn between deep suspicion of the ESM and pressure from European Union allies to green-light an accord that cannot be implemented without approval of all national parliaments.

Thursday's vote was on a motion for ratification presented by members of the centre-left opposition Democratic Party. The lower house's finance commission said the motion "lacks appropriate mechanisms to ensure the involvement of parliament"

in "procedures of significant importance in terms of economic and financial policy choices".

In December last year, Meloni said she would "sign in blood" that Italy would not join the ESM.

Italian commentators have suggested in the past few months that its potential ratification was dependent on a loosening of EU budget rules.

As reforms to loosen them were agreed in Brussels on Wednesday, "the government has no more alibis," said analyst Wolfgang Piccoli from Teneo political risk consultancy. — AFP

## Gaza war to throw Lebanon back into recession: World Bank

THE impacts of the Israel-Hamas war are set to push crisis-hit Lebanon's economy back into recession, the World Bank said Thursday, blaming mainly a "shock to tourism spending".

Lebanon's southern border has seen regular exchanges of fire, mainly between the Israeli army and Hamas ally Hezbollah, since the Gaza conflict erupted on 7 October.

The impact of the conflict had reversed a slight recovery for Lebanon, which has battled a deep economic crisis for years, the Washington-based bank said in a report. — AFP



Cars queue in a long line outside a gas station due to the fuel crisis at Jieh region in southern Beirut, Lebanon on 3 September 2021. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

## Bank of Finland, Ministry of Finance confirm recession

FINLAND is currently in a recession, the Bank of Finland and the country's Ministry of Finance confirmed on Tuesday. Both authorities have defined the decline in the gross domestic product (GDP) this year as

0.5 per cent, but the Ministry is predicting a faster recovery from the slump next year.

The Bank of Finland has predicted that the decline will continue next year by 0.2 per cent, whereas previously it had

estimated a return to 0.9 per cent growth.

The Ministry of Finance also downgraded its earlier projection of one per cent growth for 2024, settling on 0.7 per cent. — Xinhua

## Angola to quit OPEC over oil production quotas disagreement

*Diamantino Azevedo, the Minister of Mineral Resources and Petroleum, emphasized that this decision was not made lightly, stating that OPEC membership no longer aligns with Angola's interests.*

ANGOLA said on Thursday it would leave OPEC over a disagreement on production quotas following the oil cartel's decision last month to further slash output next year.

Mineral Resources and Petroleum minister Diamantino Azevedo said that the decision was not taken lightly, but OPEC membership no longer served

the African country's interests.

"Angola has decided to leave. We think the time has come for our country to be more focused on our goals," Azevedo told state broadcaster TPA.

He said Luanda was unhappy with the group's decision last month to further slash production next year in an effort to prop up volatile prices. — AFP



Angola is one of the largest oil exporters in Sub-Saharan Africa, alongside Nigeria. **PHOTO: RODGER BOSCH / AFP**

## Etsy targeted by child trafficking conspiracy theories

*Conspiracy theorists are targeting Etsy, alleging the involvement of a secret child sex trafficking cabal. They cite "suspicious listings" on Etsy, like high-priced pizza images, as evidence of child trafficking.*

CONSPIRACY theorists who believe in a secret cabal of child sex traffickers have set their sights on yet another online retailer: Etsy, a website best

known for selling hand-made items. Social media users point to what they say are "suspicious listings" on Etsy — including downloadable images of pizza selling for thousands of dollars — as evidence that the platform is selling children to be abused.

"Don't let them gaslight you anymore," said one QAnon supporter sharing screenshots from the website on X, formerly known as Twitter, during the busy holiday shopping season. — AFP



The Etsy company logo is seen at its New York headquarters building on 13 December 2023. PHOTO: AFP

## Nike shares tumble as it cut costs amid 'softer' outlook

NIKE promised up to \$2 billion in cost savings Thursday involving job cuts and greater use of automation as it eyes "softer" sales in the coming period. The sports giant reported an uneven performance across major markets in the latest quarter, with revenues declining in North America but rising in China and its Asia Pacific/Latin America regions.

Shares fell heavily in after-hours trading as Chief Financial Officer Matthew Friend described the environment as "highly promotional" during a conference call with analysts.

"We are seeing indications of more cautious



Nike executives described heightened consumer caution as it targets up to \$2 billion in cost cuts. PHOTO: AFP

consumer behaviour around the world in an uneven macro environment," Friend said.

Profits for the quarter ending 30 November jumped 19 per cent to \$1.6 billion, while revenues edged up one per cent to \$13.4 billion.

The sports giant's cost-cutting plan will

simplify product offerings, increase automation and institute a "streamlining" of the company organization, Nike said in a news release.

The plan anticipates a one-time charge of \$400 million to \$450 million in the current quarter primarily to cover employee severance costs. — AFP

<p><b>CLAIMS DAY NOTICE</b> M.V MSC FORTUNE F VOY.NO. (SB349A)</p> <p>Consignees of cargo carried on <b>M.V MSC FORTUNE F VOY.NO. (SB349A)</b> are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on <b>23-12-2023</b> and cargo will be discharged into the premises of <b>AWPT</b> 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: <b>2301185</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Shipping Agency Department Myanma Port Authority</b></p> <p>Agent For:</p> <p><b>M/S MEDITERRANEAN SHIPPING COMPANY S.A</b></p>	<p><b>CLAIMS DAY NOTICE</b> M.V ASIAN ACE VOY.NO. (348W)</p> <p>Consignees of cargo carried on <b>M.V ASIAN ACE VOY.NO. (348W)</b> are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on <b>23-12-2023</b> and cargo will be discharged into the premises of <b>MITT/MIP</b> 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: <b>2301185</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Shipping Agency Department Myanma Port Authority</b></p> <p>Agent For:</p> <p><b>M/S SEALAND MAERSK ASIA PTE., LTD</b></p>	<p><b>CLAIMS DAY NOTICE</b> M.V IAL 001 VOY.NO. (W167)</p> <p>Consignees of cargo carried on <b>M.V IAL 001 VOY. NO. (W167)</b> are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on <b>23-12-2023</b> and cargo will be discharged into the premises of <b>AWPT</b> 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: <b>2301185</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Shipping Agency Department Myanma Port Authority</b></p> <p>Agent For:</p> <p><b>M/S INTER ASIA LINES</b></p>
<p><b>CLAIMS DAY NOTICE</b> M.V JING CHANG VOY.NO. (2307)</p> <p>Consignees of cargo carried on <b>M.V JING CHANG VOY.NO. (2307)</b> are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on <b>23-12-2023</b> and cargo will be discharged into the premises of <b>TMIT</b> 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: <b>2301928</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Shipping Agency Department Myanma Port Authority</b></p> <p>Agent For:</p> <p><b>M/S NEW HIGHEST MARINE CO LTD</b></p>	<p><b>CLAIMS DAY NOTICE</b> M.V TOYO WORLD VOY.NO. (104498)</p> <p>Consignees of cargo carried on <b>M.V TOYO WORLD VOY.NO. (104498)</b> are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on <b>25-12-2023</b> and cargo will be discharged into the premises of <b>MITT-4</b> 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: <b>2301928</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Shipping Agency Department Myanma Port Authority</b></p> <p>Agent For:</p> <p><b>M/S CHUN AN INTERNATIONAL LOGISTICS CO LTD</b></p>	<p><b>CLAIMS DAY NOTICE</b> M.V SUN NOBLE VOY.NO. (2302)</p> <p>Consignees of cargo carried on <b>M.V SUN NOBLE VOY.NO. (2302)</b> are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on <b>25-12-2023</b> and cargo will be discharged into the premises of <b>AIPT-1</b> 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: <b>2301928</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Shipping Agency Department Myanma Port Authority</b></p> <p>Agent For:</p> <p><b>M/S BEN LINE AGENCIES (S'PORE) PTE LTD</b></p>



# ROLLING UPDATES

## WORLD

## Last French troops to bow out of Africa's Sahel

*The withdrawal of the last French troops from Niger on Friday marks the conclusion of over a decade of French anti-jihadist operations in the Sahel region of West Africa.*

THE last French troops are to withdraw from Niger on Friday, marking an end to more than a decade of French anti-jihadist operations in west Africa's Sahel region.

The French exit from Niger leaves hundreds of US military personnel, and a number of Italian and German troops, remaining in the country.

France said it would pull out its roughly 1,500 soldiers and pilots from Niger after the former French colony's new ruling generals demanded they depart following the coup on 26 July.

It was the third time in less than 18 months that French troops were sent packing from a country in the Sahel.

They were forced to leave fellow former colonies Mali last year and Burkina Faso earlier this year following military takeovers in those countries too.



'Let us manage our country': The Nigerien army wants France out. **PHOTO: AFP**

All three nations are battling a jihadist insurgency that erupted in northern Mali in 2012, later spreading to Niger and Burkina Faso. But a string of coups in the

region since 2020 have seen relations nosedive with former colonial power France and a pivot towards greater rapprochement with Russia.

French President Emmanuel Macron in September announced the withdrawal of all French troops from Niger by the end of the year, with a first contingent leaving in October.

The Nigerien army said last week their departure would be complete by Friday.

### Perilous desert routes

Most French troops in Niger are at an air base in the capital Niamey.

Smaller groups have been deployed alongside Nigerien soldiers to the border with Mali and Burkina Faso, where jihadist groups linked to the Islamic State group and Al-Qaeda are believed to operate. — AFP

## Former Trump lawyer Rudy Giuliani files for bankruptcy protection

*The filing reveals Giuliani's ownership of over \$4.7 million in legal fees and unpaid state and federal income taxes. He also faces undisclosed liabilities in lawsuits involving Dominion Voting Systems, Smartmatic USA Corp, and others.*



Former New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani outside the Fulton County Jail in Atlanta, Georgia, on 23 August 2023. **PHOTO: CHRISTIAN MONTERROSA/AFP**

RUDY Giuliani, who once worked as a personal lawyer for former US President Donald Trump, filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection in New York on Thursday, one day after he was ordered to

begin paying 146 million US dollars to two former Georgia election workers.

Giuliani, former New York City mayor, also owns over 4.7 million dollars in legal fees, as well as unpaid state and fed-

eral income taxes, according to the filing paper submitted to a federal bankruptcy court in New York.

He also faces unknown liabilities in four lawsuits involving Dominion Voting Systems, Smartmatic USA Corp, and others.

Giuliani has assets worth between one million and 10 million dollars, the filing showed.

Last week, Giuliani was ordered by a jury to pay 148 million dollars to former Georgia election workers Ruby Freeman and Shaye Moss for defaming them with false accusations that they committed election fraud in Georgia during the 2020 general elections. — Xinhua

## Peru seizes 4,000 live Amazon turtles at airport

PERUVIAN authorities have seized some 4,000 turtles that originated in the Amazon at the country's main international airport, the national wildlife service said Thursday.

The National Forestry and Wildlife Service said in a statement it has intercepted "a shipment of live turtles at the Jorge Chavez airport that were going to be exported to Indonesia."

Among the reptiles were

baby Arrau turtles — the largest river turtle in South America — and the yellow-spotted river turtle, which were found in small transparent plastic containers inside cardboard boxes.

Both turtles are listed on the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) of Wild Fauna and Flora Appendix II, which requires the tracking and regulation of trade. — AFP



CITES says that tortoises and turtles are one of the most threatened groups of animals in the world. **PHOTO: SERFOR/AFP**

# SPORTS

## Arteta challenges Arsenal to end winless run at Anfield

*Arteta, celebrating four years as Arsenal manager, has overseen victories at Manchester United, Chelsea, and Tottenham, including this season's win against Manchester City at the Emirates.*

MIKEL Arteta has challenged Arsenal to win in the Premier League at Anfield for the first time in 11 years, saying they can learn from last year's bitter disappointment of throwing away a 2-0 lead.

The Gunners head to Liverpool on Saturday knowing victory would leave

them top of the table at Christmas.

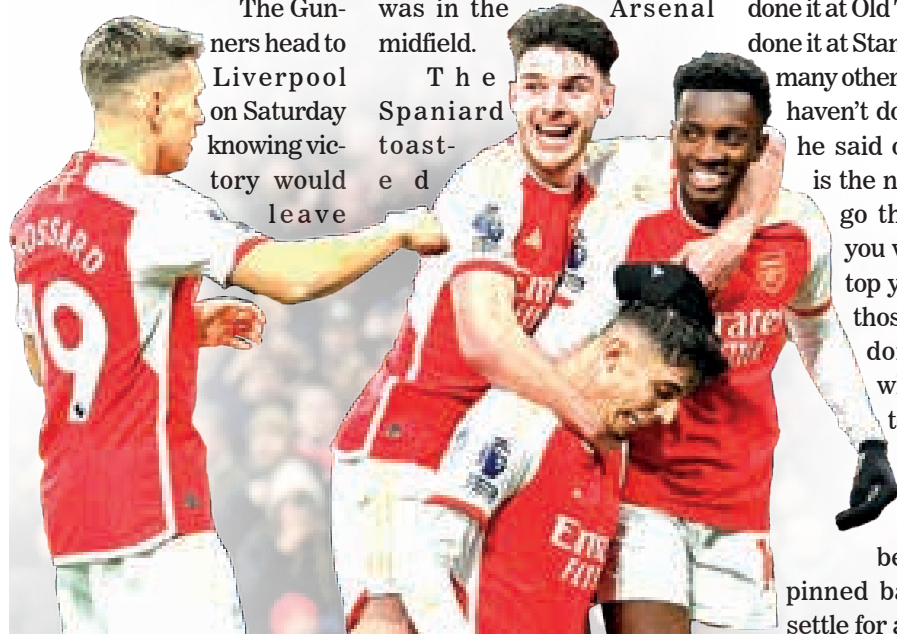
But the visitors would have to end a run of league results stretching back to September 2012 if they are to achieve that — winning 2-0 when Arteta was in the Arsenal

midfield. The Spaniard toasted

four years as Arsenal manager this week and during that time he has overseen wins at Manchester United, Chelsea and Tottenham, while this season they beat Manchester City at the Emirates. "We have done it at Old Trafford, we have done it at Stamford Bridge and many other places where we haven't done it for years,"

he said on Friday. "This is the next challenge — go there and win. If you want to be at the top you have to go to those places and be dominant. That's what we're going to try to do."

Arsenal took a 2-0 lead at Anfield last year before they were pinned back and had to settle for a draw. — AFP



Mikel Arteta's Arsenal are top of the Premier League. PHOTO: AFP/FILE

## Man City Club World Cup win would last a lifetime: Guardiola



Manchester City boss Pep Guardiola. PHOTO: AFP/FILE

MANCHESTER City boss Pep Guardiola said lifting the Club World Cup on Friday would be something his players can cherish forever as he played down the importance of the English champions' patchy Premier League form.

City won only one of their previous six league games prior to flying out to Saudi Arabia for the Club World Cup, but easily swept aside Japan's Urawa Reds 3-0 to reach the final.

Guardiola's men are strong favourites to win a fifth trophy in 2023 against Brazil's Fluminense

in Jeddah.

No European side has lost in the Club World Cup in 21 games since 2012.

"It's so difficult to come here. To win the (Copa) Libertadores, the Champions League, both competitions are really tough," said Guardiola when asked if victory could spark a recovery in City's Premier League. "(The Club World Cup) is something that remains forever. Premier League this season, next season, it will be there. I don't know if we'll come back to play a final for the World Cup." — AFP

## Ajax hit 'historic' low after humiliating cup loss to Hercules amateurs

FOUR-TIME European champions Ajax have "reached an historic low" following its shock 3-2 cup defeat at the hands of an amateur club, capping a horror season for the once-mighty Amsterdam powerhouse, pundits and fans said on Friday.

Ajax's loss against third division Utrecht-based Hercules on Thursday evening saw the Amsterdammers knocked out of the KNVB Cup by rank amateurs for the first time in its history.

Trailing 2-0, Ajax battled back to parity with late goals from Brian Brobbey and Chuba Akpom before defender Mats Grotenbreg found a winner for Hercules in the 92<sup>nd</sup> minute.

"Ajax has fallen into a crater of which the bottom seemingly

has not yet been reached," said football writer Willem Vissers.

"The word non-performance doesn't even start to describe it. The game was purely symbolic as the closure for a disastrous year," Vissers wrote in De Volkskrant newspaper.

Founded in 1900, Ajax are far and away the most successful club in the Netherlands, with 36 league titles and 20 KNVB Cups as well as those four European championships, making this defeat even more humiliating.

"This is the greatest debacle in the history of Ajax," added Fabian Nagtzaam, director of the Ajax supporters association.

"It feels like a building has toppled on me, like I've been driven over by a bus," he told the ANP news agency. — AFP

## Liverpool fan group shares Klopp's Anfield concerns

*Klopp was unhappy with the home crowd during the midweek 5-1 League Cup quarter-final against West Ham and urged fans to give away tickets if not fully supporting the team against Arsenal.*

LIVERPOOL supporters' group Spirit of Shankly said it has "no argument" with Jurgen Klopp's criticism of Anfield's

atmosphere but warned that younger fans are being priced out of the game.

Manager Klopp was unim-

pressed with the home crowd during the midweek 5-1 League Cup quarter-final demolition of West Ham and told fans to give their tickets away if they are not prepared to get behind the side against Premier League title rivals Arsenal on Saturday.

The Spirit of Shankly group admitted the atmosphere was a concern among supporters and is in talks with the club over how the situation can be addressed.

"We have no argument with Jurgen Klopp highlighting issues around the Anfield atmosphere, or lack of it, at times," said a statement from the group. — AFP



Liverpool boss Jurgen Klopp criticized the atmosphere at Anfield. PHOTO: AFP/FILE





# China's space station, Harmony OS listed as top engineering achievements

*China's space station, Huawei's Harmony OS, and Baihetan hydropower station are among the Global Top 10 Engineering Achievements 2023. Other notable inclusions are the Frontier supercomputer, NASA's asteroid redirection test, S/AS01 malaria vaccine, Boston Dynamics' robots, high-quality lithium-ion power battery, and widely-used unmanned aircraft.*



Screen image captured at Beijing Aerospace Control Centre on 17 September 2022 shows Shenzhou-14 astronaut Chen Dong (R) and Cai Xuzhe both outside conducting extravehicular activities. **PHOTO: GUO ZHONGZHENG/XINHUA**

CHINA'S space station, the Harmony operating system (OS) developed by Huawei, and the Baihetan hydropower station in southwest China have been selected as Global Top 10 Engineering Achievements 2023.

ChatGPT, the exascale supercomputer Frontier, NASA's double aster-

oid redirection test, the RTS, S/AS01 malaria vaccine, Boston Dynamics' Spot and Atlas robots, the high-quality lithium-ion power battery, and the widely-used unmanned aircraft have also been included in this list.

The results were finalized through a global collection of nominations,

expert selection and recommendations, a public questionnaire and deliberation by the selection committee, according to a report published on Wednesday in *Engineering*, the flagship journal of the Chinese Academy of Engineering. — Xinhua

## EXPLOSION CLAIMS LIFE IN DAEJEON LAB

South Korean defence research centre rocked by powerful blast, 1 employee killed - reports

A powerful explosion occurred in South Korea's Agency for Defence Development (ADD) located in the city of Daejeon, the Yonhap news agency reported on Thursday.

The incident occurred at around 12:54 pm (03:54 GMT) in an ADD laboratory building. The explosion, whose cause is still unknown, killed one employee aged over 60. ADD was cited as saying that the deceased had been a contract researcher who was rehired after retirement, Yonhap reported. — SPUTNIK

## IMPRESSIVE PROFIT

Sri Lanka's main airport makes profit of US\$80 mln this year

SRI Lanka's main international airport, Bandaranaike International Airport, has earned 26 billion rupees (about 80 million US dollars) in profits so far in 2023, state media reported on Friday quoting Minister of Ports, Shipping and Aviation, Nimal Siripala de Silva.

The minister said that in 2022, the Bandaranaike International Airport made a loss of four billion rupees (about 12.3 million dollars).

He said the government has taken steps to improve facilities in the airport, including the installation of modern communications equipment and radar. — Xinhua

# Police seek motive in Prague mass shooting

*The shooting, the country's worst in decades, caused panic among students at the Faculty of Arts.*



Czech Prime Minister Petr Fiala at a makeshift memorial outside Charles University. **PHOTO: AFP**

A devastating gun attack at Charles University's Faculty of Arts in Prague left 14 people dead and 25 wounded, marking the Czech Republic's worst shooting incident in decades and sparking a nationwide day of mourning.

Czech authorities sought a motive Friday in a student's gun attack that killed 13 people at a Prague university, where tearful mourners have left a

sea of candles to grieve for the victims.

The gunfire Thursday at the Charles University's Faculty of Arts sparked frantic scenes of students running from the attack that was the Czech Republic's worst shooting in decades.

A makeshift memorial of hundreds of candles flickered outside the university on Friday as police pursued the investigation at the campus in Prague's

historic centre.

The gunman, a 24-year-old student, killed himself after the attack after shooting dead 13 people and wounding 25 others.

"We know all 14 dead and their identity. It's 13 victims of the mad gunman and the gunman himself," Interior Minister Vit Rakusan told public broadcaster Czech TV, revising down a previous toll of 14 victims. — AFP