

The Global **NEW LIGHT** of MYANMAR



Photo shows currency note baht of Thailand. Central Bank of Myanmar sells 50 million baht in foreign reserves on 19 January 2024.

CBM sells 50M Thai baht in foreign reserves

The Central Bank of Myanmar (CBM) sold 50 million Thai baht on 19 January.

The CBM also sold almost US\$44 million this month, with \$12.93 million on 1 January, \$16 million on 5 January and \$15 million on 15 January 2024.

Additionally, the CBM injected US\$22.15 million into the fuel oil sector last year, selling \$9.72

million on 18 December 2023 and \$12.43 million on 21 December for fuel oil importing companies.

Nonetheless, the CBM did not reveal the exchange rate in selling dollars and baht. At present, the CBM set the reference exchange rate at K2,100 against a US dollar. The Kyat-US dollar exchange rate is K3,450 at the over-the-counter-market.

On 5 December 2023, the

CBM allowed authorized dealers (private banks) to operate forex exchanges freely as per the market rate determined by the market force of the supply and demand.

Additionally, the CBM notified that outward remittance must strictly adhere to the rules and regulations of the Foreign Exchange Management Committee. — NN/EM

NATIONAL



Traditional painting styles face endangered status: artist warns

NATIONAL



Almost no queues at CNG stations due to extended sale hours based on demand

NATIONAL



Labour Dept allows sending MOU workers to Thailand via Yangon-Don Mueang Airport

Some 500 tonnes of high-quality PyinOoLwin coffee exported to eight customer countries yearly

NEARLY 400 tonnes to 500 tonnes of high-quality Arabica coffee produced in PyinOoLwin, Mandalay Region, are exported to eight countries every year, according to Deputy Director Daw Mie Mie Myint, in-charge of the coffee research and technology propagation farm under the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation in PyinOoLwin Township.

“China, Thailand, Australia, the US, the UK, the Republic of Korea, China, and Germany are among the nations that import Arabica coffee from PyinOoLwin. The coffee has been exported every year since 2020 to 2023, without fail. Export companies are buying coffee bean from the farm and export it all the time. PyinOoLwin coffee is exported to China and Thailand directly, and shipped to

the rest of other countries via Thailand,” said Daw Mie Mie Myint.

Coffee exporters buy Arabica coffee bean produced in PyinOoLwin in order to store for a long time to be able to continuously export it to the international market.

Myanmar’s current coffee production outweighs domestic consumption, so it is being exported to the international market. About 50,000 acres of land is placed under coffee plants in the entire country, and the sown acreage of Arabica coffee is nearly 40,000 acres. — ASH/TH

Arabica premium coffee beans are being dried under the sun.



NATIONAL

Basic education schools to turn out martial arts athletes



The concluding ceremony of Myanmar traditional martial arts course in progress at Institute of Sports and Physical Education (Loikaw) in 2020.

ACCORDING to international referee U Sein Win who is also an executive member of the Myanmar Traditional Martial Arts Federation, the federation decided to produce new generations in traditional martial arts based on basic education schools all over the country.

Training on Myanmar martial arts will be given to students as new generations as part of preparations to compete in the international competitions, including the Southeast Asian Games.

“The Myanmar Traditional Martial Arts Federation adopted the plan to widely produce a new generation of basic education students who are interested in Myanmar martial arts. It aims to conduct the courses at all basic education schools. The records showed outstanding athletes from students as national level athletes via inter-state/region competitions. As such, the Myanmar Traditional Martial Arts Federation and basic education schools will jointly select outstanding

athletes,” U Sein Win said. In addition, preparations are being made for the SEA Games to be held in Thailand in 2025.

Since 2014, students from basic education schools have been under training of Myanmar Myanmar traditional martial arts to turn out outstanding student athletes. Now, Myanmar Traditional Martial Arts courses are being conducted not only at basic education middle and high schools but also at private schools. — ASH/TKO

RTAD to implement Radio Frequency Identification

THE tender committee for the implementation of RFID system stated that the Road Transport Administration Department under the Ministry of Transport and Communications is planning to implement the development, construction, operation, and management of a vehicle registration system using Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) by inviting local and international Public-Private Partnership (PPP) developers.

The Interested PPP Developers (Myanmar-owned companies and/or joint ventures of Myanmar and foreign companies) are invited to submit the Pre-Qualification Application for the RFID project.

The complete set of Pre-Qualification documents can be purchased at the computer division, office building No 29 of the RTAD in Nay Pyi Taw during the working hours from 22 January 2024 to 5 February 2024.

For further information, dial +95(67)3405359 and +95(67)3405099 during working hours or visit the websites of www.motc.gov.mm, www.rta.gov.mm and www.myanmarrtad.com. — GNLM

Traditional painting styles face endangered status: artist warns

AN artist has expressed concern over the declining number of people proficient in the creation of traditional painting styles, highlighting the looming threat of the crafts' near-extinction.

Artist Ko Thet Maw said: “Considering the mural paintings in the Padalin Cave of Shan State, the art of mural painting might be a history spanning over 10,000 years in Myanmar. Among the six eras of Myanmar art history, Bagan stands out as the pinnacle. The artists from that age employed a sketching and colouring technique.”

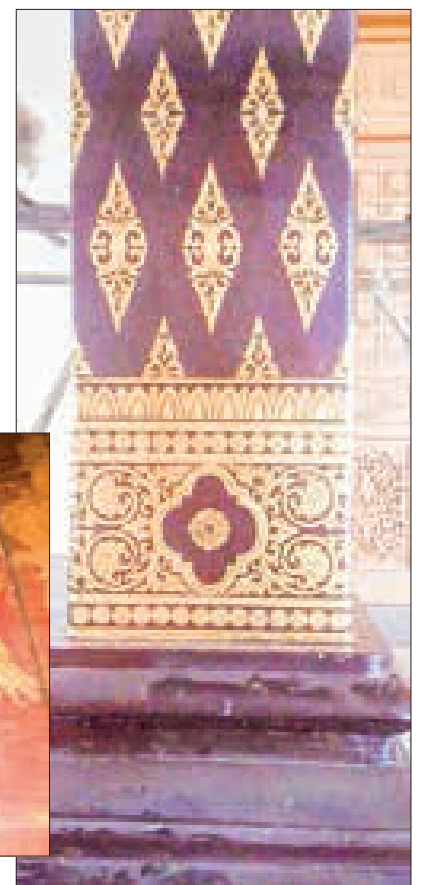
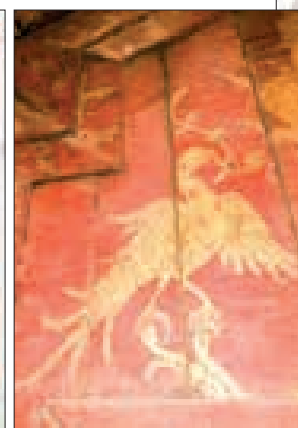
Among 14 traditional painting styles in Myanmar, Nipat Painting (painting Buddhist chronicles), combined painting (crafting figures using paints and materials), and Shwezawah Yoon (painting figures on a lacquerware surface using gold foils) are on the brink of extinction, he emphasized.

Moreover, fewer artists practise

traditional sketching techniques. The basic of traditional Myanmar painting involves floral motif, nari (women), kapi (monkeys, ogres, dragon, garuda), and gaza (large figures such as elephants).

Beginners need to take a practice of these figures initially with charcoal or soapstone before progressing to the next level, which incorporates the use of colours. Myanmar paints typically consist of vermilion, soot, copper sulfate, black ink, and various coloured soils. The painting brushes are crafted from feathers and animal fur.

A total of 14 Myanmar traditional art styles are Nipat painting, combined painting, graphite painting, oil-colour painting, water-colour painting, lacquerware painting, gold painting on lacquerware, straw painting, batik painting, gems painting, signboard painting, glass painting, bottle painting, and mural painting. — ASH/NT



Gold paintings on lacquerware are on the brink of extinction.

NATIONAL

Water Resources Assessment Committee holds 1/2024 meeting

MEMBER of the State Administration Council, Deputy Prime Minister and Union Minister for Transport and Communications General Mya Tun Oo addressed a coordination meeting 1/2024 of the Water Resources Assessment Committee on the current work implementations and further strategies of the committee yesterday.

Speaking at the meeting, the Union minister, who is also Chairman of committee, stressed the vital role of water management in Myanmar as the country usually encounters the water resource issues due to its geography and weather condition despite being rich in water resources, the duties of relevant ministries and organizations to make arrangements for the effective use of water resources to promote the socioeconomic well-being of the people through systematic water irrigation, hydropower



Deputy Prime Minister Union Minister General Mya Tun Oo addresses meeting of Water Resources Assessment Committee yesterday.

generation, water transportation and preventive measures on water-related natural

disasters.

He also added that the relevant ministries, organiza-

tions and region/state governments should cooperate with the experts to implement the

water related development programmes ensuring the economic growth of the country and Sustainable Development Goals of the UN based on the data collected by the Water Resources Assessment Committee.

Therefore, all should make collaborate efforts for the sustainable interest of the country and the public.

Then, he heard reports on current work plans of the committee, data collection and transfer, review on collected-data and other matters.

The State Administration Council organized the Water Resources Assessment Committee on 7 March 2022 with notification No 43/2022 to measure the water current from the main stream of Ayeyawady, Chindwin, Sittoung and Thanlwin rivers to the sea and access the water resources including the water current. — MNA/KTZH



Union Minister for Construction U Myo Thant receives Ambassador of the Arab Republic of Egypt to Myanmar Mrs Aya Saad Mohamed Abdelkarim yesterday.

MoC UM receives Ambassador of Arab Republic of Egypt to Myanmar

UNION Minister for Construction U Myo Thant received Ambassador of the Arab Republic of Egypt to Myanmar Mrs Aya Saad Mohamed Abdelkarim at the ministry in Nay Pyi Taw Yesterday.

During the meeting, they cordially exchanged views on further cementing Myanmar-Egypt friendly relations, work

processes to be implemented for betterment of the socio-economic life of the people, and participation in infrastructural investment measures for development of roads, bridges and urban and housing sectors.

The meeting was attended by officials from the Ministry and the Egyptian Embassy to Myanmar. — MNA/TS

CBM Governor meets with Egyptian Ambassador, Russian Ambassador to Myanmar

DAW Than Than Swe, Governor of the Central Bank of Myanmar, met with the Ambassador of the Arab Republic of Egypt to Myanmar, Mrs Aya Saad Mohamed Abdelkarim yesterday morning and Ambassador of Russia Mr Iskander Azizov yesterday afternoon at the meeting hall of the Central Bank of Myanmar in Nay Pyi Taw. During the meeting with the ambassador of the Arab Republic of Egypt, they had a friendly discussion about opening of accounts at local banks and issues related to foreign exchange.

Similarly, during the meeting with the Russian ambassador, they had an open discussion on connection of payment to facilitate fast and smooth process of trade payments between Myanmar and Russia and bilateral process of card system. The meetings were also attended by the Deputy Governors of the Central Bank of Myanmar, the Permanent Secretary and departmental heads. — MNA/TS



CBM Governor Daw Than Than Swe meets Ambassador of the Arab Republic of Egypt to Myanmar, Mrs Aya Saad Mohamed Abdelkarim yesterday.

Myanmar, Egypt to further foster close cooperation in regional, multilateral arenas



Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs U Lwin Oo receives Mrs Aya Saad Mohamed Abdelkarim, Ambassador of the Arab Republic of Egypt yesterday.

U Lwin Oo, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, received Mrs Aya Saad Mohamed Abdelkarim, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Arab Republic of Egypt to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Nay Pyi Taw, yesterday afternoon.

During the meeting, they cordially exchanged

views on further enhancement of existing friendly bilateral relations, mutually beneficial cooperation in trade, investment, agriculture, education and culture sectors, implementation of the existing bilateral agreements and resumption of ongoing negotiations for cooperation agreements, and enhancement of collaboration both in the regional and multilateral arenas. — MNA

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NATIONAL

Construction of trade zone/ camp near border lines to meet international norms



Deputy Minister for Planning and Finance U Maung Maung Win speaking at meeting of review committee on construction of trade zones and camps near border lines yesterday.

THE second meeting of the Review Committee on Construction of Trade Zones and Camps near border lines in accordance with the international norms took place at the Ministry of Planning and Finance yesterday.

Deputy Minister for Planning and Finance U Maung Maung Win, in his capacity as Chairman of committee, said six major decisions were made at the first committee meeting.

The relevant region/state review committees and departments should prioritize the construction of trade zone/camp near the border lines considering whether the works are in conformity with the remarks and suggestions of the regions/states review committees and departments, requirements set by the current border inspection camps, further expansion of current camps, export/import volume of 2022-2023 financial year,

border line measurement, estimated land areas and costs, construction of trade zone/camp of other country and current security measures.

He also added that the meeting outcomes of the relevant review committees will be analyzed and submitted to the illegal trade eradication steering committee.

He then called for the collaborative efforts for sector-wise discussions whether the construction of trade zone/camp are in conformity with the international norms/procedures and existing laws of the country, procedures of relevant departments and organizations and whether the measures are effective for illegal trade eradication process.

The deputy minister concluded the meeting after hearing the reports of vice-chair and members of committee. — MNA/KTZH

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

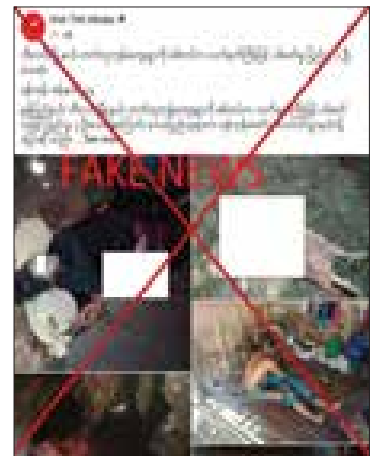
Counter-argument to false information

Alert: Malicious Khit Thit media intentionally spreads misinformation

THE malicious Khit Thit Media is spreading fake news that Article 144 of Criminal Procedures is imposed in Sintegone, Waphyuchaung, Theikwachaung, Nwekhway, Nyaunggon, Winthayet, Kaingtawso, Chaungsauk, Kaingchogyi, Myaypyar, Seywa, Linnaysan, Kanni, Tangagon, Ywashaung, Kywelpyuma and Shwekyarin villages within Bago mountain range located in Okpo Township, Bago Region, and the security forces drive out the residents from the villages or are warning to shoot to death on 18 January.

Regarding to the incident, Article 144 is not imposed at all and no authorities or organization is warning the residents to leave, according to the security officer who has been serving in Bago Region.

Similarly, malicious Khit Thit Media also spreads the misinformation to the public that the Tatmadaw shelled two heavy weapons in Tettukon Village in Bilin



Screen-shot of misinformation.

Township, killing three civilians at an estimated 11 am on 19 January. Countering the misinformation, the clashes or shelling was not occurred, according to the confirmation of relevant officials from security forces.

Therefore, malicious news outlets, including Khit Thit, are delivering misinformation and fake news on social media networks every day to make the public frightened and concerned. — MNA/TKO

Malicious media spread fake news in Dawei

THE malicious media outlets intentionally spread false information online, claiming that a clash occurred between the security forces and PDFs and the security forces arrested the locals along with seven motorcycles from Maungmeshaung village in Dawei township of Taninthayi Region on 18 January.

According to the relevant security official, even though there was engagement between the security forces and the terrorists near Maungmeshaung village, the security forces did not arrest locals or occupy the property of public.

The malicious media outlets cover the news with fake information to mislead the public about the efforts of security forces. — MNA/KTZH

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Due to limitation of space we are only able to publish "Letter to the Editor" that do not exceed 500 words. Should you submit a text longer than 500 words please be aware that your letter will be edited.

NATIONAL

Interested contestants invited to 19th Japanese Language Translation Test

JOINTLY organized by the Embassy of Japan to Myanmar, the Myanmar Association of Japan Alumni (MAJA) and the Japan Foundation, Yangon, the 19th Japanese Language Translation Contest is inviting interested contestants, according to the Embassy of Japan to Myanmar.

The test which aims to foster professional translators will be held in two categories of Japanese language translation test for advanced level and junior level translation tests for those who are learning basic level Japanese language (N3 level).

Along with honorary certificate, prizes will be awarded to winners, plus a plan for inviting outstanding translators to Japan.

The submission period of application forms is set between 16 and 30 January 2024 and it can be submitted through <https://forms.gle/kDdvvVFtDuNXGxB27> at advanced level and <https://forms.gle/T453ml3YAE4Yzd6w8> at junior level.

Email will be sent directly to contestants at advanced level for the subject of translation on 15 February 2024 and translated versions must be sent by email, not later than 21 February. There is no age discrimination, and anyone in Myanmar is eligible to take part in the contest, including those who previously participated and didn't win. The junior level translation test will be held through Zoom format on 18 February from 9 am to 12 pm and the subject of translation will be sent on the same day, and contestants must be under the age of 25 and including those who have previously contested and won no prize, anyone in Myanmar are eligible to take part. — MT/ZS



A car being filled with CNG at filling station.

Almost no queues at CNG stations due to extended sale hours based on demand

THERE are almost no queues of vehicles waiting to fill up at the CNG stations in Yangon Region, said general manager U Kyaw Thura Win from Natural Gas Vehicle Department.

There are 41 CNG filling stations in Yangon Region, and YBS buses, taxis and other vehicles can fill up as much gas as necessary from 5 am to 10 pm on a daily basis, he said.

“We supply CNG to YBS buses, taxis and other vehicles

as much as they need. So there is almost no queue at the CNG stations during these days,” he added. CNG is supplied to around 30,000 vehicles including YBS buses, taxis and other vehicles every day.

“Some CNG stations get full electricity supply, but some are still supplied on a rotational basis. During the blackout, we run gas generators at our CNG stations and sell CNG,” he said.

Depending on the demand,

some stations extend their hours of operation.

“If vehicles are still coming in, some stations continue to sell gas until 10 pm, 11 pm or midnight, depending on the demand. They extend sale hours based on the number of cars waiting. In January, there were not many queues. So, we no longer need to sell CNG till 11 pm or midnight. Usually by 10 pm, there are no cars in a queue,” he said. — MT/ZN

CRIME NEWS

Stimulant tablets valued at K1.49 billion seized in Mayangon township of Yangon region

K1.49 BILLION worth of stimulant tablets were captured in Mayangon township of Yangon 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 Than Soe, Maung Shwe Than (aka) Kyaw Than, Maung Oo Than Htay (aka) Naryaka, Hnit Oo Maung (aka) Kyetpha, Sithu Moe, Lin Lin Htoo (aka) Lin Chae, Maung Shwe Thein and Nay Zaw Latt near a restaurant at the Tawwin street in Ward 4, Mayangon township, at 3 pm on 7 January. The Myanmar Police Force captured 500,000 stimulant tablets and a Toyota Succeed.

According to the investigation, the police arrested Ma Saw Khin Kyaw (aka) Saw Khin from a house in Ward 3, Mayangon township at 6 pm on the same day with 600,000 stimulant tablets.

Similarly, the police force seized 390,000 stimulant tablets from a house hired by Than Soe who was arrested in Ward 3, Mayangon township and an AD van from a construction company of Kyaw

Lin Da who is involved in the drugs trafficking in Thingangyun township.

The investigation revealed that Maung Shwe Than (aka) Kyaw Than, among the arrestees, was one of the main chain fugitives from the seizure of 1.45 million stimulant tablets near Nyaungkyo village in Pandaung township of Bago region in January 2021 and 9.04 million stimulant tablets from his house in Yekyaw village in Hmawby township. — MNA/MKKS



Arrestees seen with stimulant tablets and seized vehicles.

Illegal timbers, industrial materials and vehicles confiscated

DURING inspections on 17 and 18 January, the combined teams seized an unregistered Toyota Hiace (approximately K7 million) at the checkpoint on the outskirts of Sagaing, an unregistered Toyota Wish (estimated value of K3.5 million) in Hinthada township and a total of 0.222 tonne of illegal teaks worth K146,916 in Kyangin township. These actions were taken under the Export and Import Law and the Forest Law.

On 18 January, the combined on-duty teams captured an unregistered Toyota Wish (approximately K10 million) in Magway township, a total of 16.617 tonnes of illegal teaks,

5.312 tonnes of illegal hardwoods and 4.686 tonnes of illegal other timbers valued at K14,001,520 in Toungoo district and nine kinds of goods worth K232,345,260 including 5,184 kilogrammes of Win Powder Wrapper roll that were submitted by owner to abandon from two containers at the Myanmar Industrial Port. The action was conducted under the Export and Import Law, the Forest Law and Customs procedures.

Six arrests were made on 17 and 18 January, with an estimated value of K266,993,696, as reported by the Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee. — MNA/MKKS

NATIONAL BUSINESS

YGEA gold reference price set lower to K3.6 mln per tical



Gold ornaments displayed at the shop.

FOLLOWING a dip in spot gold prices, the Yangon Gold Entrepreneurs Association (YGEA) has reduced the pure gold price to K3.6144 million per tical (0.578 ounce, or 0.016 kilogramme).

The current spot gold price is approximately US\$2,010 per tical.

On 5 December, the Central Bank of Myanmar (CBM) permitted authorized dealers (private banks) to freely engage

in online forex trading at a market rate determined by supply and demand market forces.

This move by the CBM resulted in a narrowing gap between the YGEA's reference price and the actual market value. Pure gold is currently being traded at K3.77 million per tical in the domestic market, indicating a price difference of K150,000 per tical from the YGEA's reference rate.

Previously, the gap be-

tween them had widened to K400,000-K500,000 per tical as the YGEA used the interbank transaction rate set by the CBM to calculate the reference price for pure gold.

Currently, the US dollar is exchanged at K3,450 in the over-the-counter market. When the Kyat depreciated to K4,000 against the greenback in the forex market, the gold price peaked at K4 million per tical in late August 2023. — NN/EM

International Famous Furniture Fair (Dongguan) welcomes Myanmar businesspersons

THE 51st International Famous Furniture Fair (Dongguan) invites Myanmar businesspersons engaged in the furniture industry to explore the latest furniture trends, various interior design styles, products, innovative solutions, and business opportunities to enhance their operations.

The fair will take place at the Guangdong Modern International Exhibition Centre in Dongguan City, Guangdong, China, from 15 to 19 March 2024. It aims to bring together industry professionals, manufacturers, interior designers, distributors, contractors, traders, importers, and suppliers, as reported by the Myanmar Trade Promotion Organization.

Consular offices related to the furniture industry will be provided with 36 square metre booths free of charge. The organizing committee will cover a two-night stay per exhibitor, while businesspersons

are responsible for their flight tickets.

The fair will feature various forums, sessions, workshops, business matching meetings, and onsite events.

Interested individuals can register through the provided links: visitor's registration [<http://iff.gde3f.net/fff49/page51/welcome.html?js=51&ly=EM>], business matching meeting [<https://jinshuju.net/f/CFxGf6>], and onsite event registration [<http://jinshuju.net/f/Qb0Sw5>].

For further details, please contact Ms. Happy Pu at Tel: +86-15374027526, Email: fbf@gde3f.com, and Website: www.gde3f.net.

Copies should be sent to Myanmar's embassy in Beijing at info@myanmarembassy.com and ec.beijingmm@qq.com. The registration deadline is 5 February 2024. — NN/EM

Rice prices hit three-week high

THE prices of rice that are locally consumed indicated an increase of K4,000-K15,000 per sack within three weeks, according to the Myanmar Rice Traders Association (Wadan rice depot).

The low-grade rice moved in the range between K68,000 and K80,000 per sack depending on varieties (Aemahta, and high quality double cropping rice). Premium Pawsan prices are K100,000-K125,000 per sack depending on producing areas (Myaungmya, Pyapon and Shwebo) on 1 January in Yangon's wholesale market.

The prices surged to K7,200-K9,000 per sack of low-grade rice and K110,000-K135,000 per sack of Pawsan rice varieties on 19 January.

Next, the reasonable market prices set for January are K70,000-K72,000 per 108-pound

sack of Aemahta rice (25 per cent broken), K72,000-K75,000 for Aemahta rice (15 per cent broken), K75,000-K78,000 for Aemahta (10-5 per cent broken), K80,000-K85,000 for 90-day short matured rice, Pakhan, Anyarthar, special Aemahta rice varieties (5-10 per cent broken), K95,000-K100,000 for Ayarmin, Anyatha, Ayeya Padaytha, Ayarmin (5-10 per cent broken), K100,000-K110,000 for Ayeyawady Pawsan rice and K90,000-K100,000 for non-premium Shwebo Pawsan, K110,000-K115,000 for Ayeyawady Kyapyan (5-10 per cent broken) and K125,000-K135,000 for Shwebo Pawsan (5-10 per cent broken).

The federation determined reasonable market prices by considering the following factors; fair profit for the farmers, millers and



A female farming worker harvesting paddy in the farm.

distributors, reasonable prices for consumers, last year's market price, global market prices and other commodities prices. Yet, the market price is higher than

the reasonable prices. Therefore, the federation rigorously reflected on high market rates.

Consequently, MRF encouraged the affiliated associations,

members of commodity depots, exporters and rice companies to follow the price.

Nonetheless, the price difference is five to ten per cent between the retail and wholesale market and 10-20 per cent for modern trade with consumer packaging at mini marts, according to the MRF. Those reasonable market prices only influence the new monsoon paddy produced this year, MRF stated. In order to have a smooth trade, MRF urged the buyers to contact the MRF and the relevant wholesale centres. The federation notified on 21 September paddy reference price for 2023 monsoon paddy and called for its affiliated companies, millers and traders to buy the paddy at the reasonable market price at the monsoon paddy harvest season. — NN/EM

Myanmar, Thailand decide to enhance economic cooperation

MYANMAR and Thailand discuss bilateral economic cooperation to boost trade and relations.

The Thai-Myanmar bilateral economic cooperation meeting occurred on 17 January, as reported by the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI).

The Thai Ambassador to Myanmar, Mr Mongkol Visitstump, and his delegation met with the President of the UMFCCI, U Aye Win, and officials at the federation's headquarters.

During the meeting, the discussions focused on promoting friendly relations between Myanmar and Thailand, enhancing economic cooperation, boosting trade, improving border trade measures, expanding businesses and investments, ensuring a smooth flow of export and import processes (including foodstuffs, personal goods, milk and dairy products), fostering the tourism sector, and upgrading infrastructures.



Thai Ambassador Mr Mongkol Visitstump calls on UMFCCI President U Aye Win on 17 January.

On 7 January, the Trade Department issued a press release allowing businesspersons to change trade camps to avoid delays in the export and import processes of Myawady Trade Zone. Export entrepreneurs were permitted to change the export of approved products destined for foreign markets through any border trade camps along the Myanmar-Thai border. If not, they

could opt for the maritime trade route.

Similarly, import entrepreneurs were granted the flexibility to change the import of goods at any border trade camps, despite having received import approvals for these goods via Myawady trade zone before 19 December 2023. For those choosing the maritime trade route, scrutiny would be applied to capital goods, inter-

mediate goods, and industrial raw materials carried by containers.

As of now, Myanmar-Thai trade has surpassed US\$3.5 billion within the first nine months of this financial year, according to the Ministry of Commerce. In the corresponding period of the 2022-23 financial year, the trade value reached \$3.951 billion. Therefore, the trade value in the current financial year has declined by

US\$385.353 million compared to the previous year.

Myanmar operates trade camps along the Myanmar-Thai border in Tachilek, Myawady, Kawthoung, Myeik, Htikhee, and Mawtaung. Among them, Htikhee camp leads with a trade value of \$2,208.736 million. Additionally, Myawady trade zone recorded \$997.411 million, Kawthoung camp \$136.23 million, Tachilek \$115.935 million, Myeik \$93.074 million, and Mawtaung \$15.087 million.

Myanmar conducts export and import processes with neighboring countries, including China, Thailand, Bangladesh, and India, through border trade camps. Myanmar exports agricultural produce, animal products, fishery products, minerals, forest products, finished industrial products, and more. The country primarily imports capital goods, intermediate goods, personal goods, and CMP raw materials through border camps. — NN/TTA

Rubber prices rise at slow pace

MYANMAR'S rubber market witnesses increment in prices amidst global demand shifts

The prices of rubber have experienced a slight increase in Mon State's rubber market. Presently, Ribbed Smoked Sheet Local 3 is priced at K1,650 per pound, and sun-dried rubber is priced at K1,630.

On 18 October, 2023, prices reached K1,770 per pound for sun-dried rubber and K1,790 for RSS Local 3. Myanmar's rubber prices are influenced by global demand for rubber, the rubber production of Southeast Asian nations, and market supply. Mon State, a major rubber-producing state in Myanmar, is particularly impacted by these factors, according to traders.

Myanmar's annual rubber production is estimated at 300,000 tonnes, with 70 per cent of it going to China. Additionally, it is exported to Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia, Vietnam, the Republic of Korea, India, Japan, and other countries. The goal of the association is to achieve rubber exports of 300,000 tonnes in the current 2023-2024 financial year.

As of 29 December in the current financial year, Myanmar has shipped



RSS rubber sheets pile at production site.

114,855 tonnes of rubber valued at an estimated US\$144.046 million. In the previous financial year 2022-2023, rubber production exceeded 360,000 tonnes, with over 200,000 tonnes shipped to foreign trade partners.

Rubber is commonly produced in Mon and Kayin states, as well as in Taninthayi, Bago, and Yangon regions in Myanmar. According to 2018-2019 data, there are over 1.628 million acres of rubber plantations in Myanmar, with Mon State accounting for 497,153 acres, followed by Taninthayi Region with 348,344 acres and Kayin State with 270,760 acres.

Myanmar generated more than US\$449.102 million in revenue from rubber exports in the 2020-2021 financial year. — NN/EM

Fuel oil prices show slight rise

THE fuel market sees a slight increase of over K60-K95 per litre.

The prices stood at K2,515 per litre of Octane 92, K2,625 for Octane 95, K2,360 for diesel and K2,430 for premium diesel on 18 January 2024. The prices moved up a bit to K2,585 for Octane 92 and K2,720 for Octane 95, K2,430 for diesel and K2,495 for premium diesel on 19 January. The figures reflected a small rise of K65 and K95 per litre.

The price index set by Mean of Platts Singapore (MOPS), pricing basis for many refined products in south-east Asia, weighs on the domestic fuel prices, according to the Supervisory Committee on Import, Storage and Distribution of Fuel Oil.

In August 2022, the oil prices hit the highest of K2,605 per litre for Octane 92, K2,670 for Octane 95, K3,330 for premium diesel and K3,245 for diesel. The committee has been therefore steering the fuel oil storage and distribution sector effectively not to have a shortage of oil in the domestic market and has been issuing daily reference prices to ensure price stability for energy consumers.

The committee is inspecting the

fuel stations whether they are overcharging or not. The authorities are taking actions against those retailers of fuel stations under the Petroleum and Petroleum Products Law 2017 if they are found overcharging rather than the set reference rate.

As per the statement, 90 per cent of fuel oil in Myanmar is imported, while the remaining 10 per cent is produced locally. The domestic fuel price is highly correlated with international prices. The State is steering the market to mitigate the loss between the importers, sellers and the energy consumers. Consequently, the government is trying to distribute the oil at a reasonable price compared to those of regional countries.

Some countries levied higher tax rates and hiked oil prices compared to that of Myanmar. However, Malaysia's oil sector receives government subsidies and the prices are about 60 per cent cheaper than that of Myanmar. Every country lays down different patterns of policy to fix the oil prices. Myanmar also levies only a lower tax rate on fuel oil and strives for the energy consumers to buy the oil at a cheaper rate. — NN/EM

OPINION

Implement strategic education plan through government and private schools

THE government takes charge of overseeing primary, middle, and high school levels in basic education institutions, with a focus on cultivating qualified citizens year after year. To streamline the management of private schools, the Education Ministry has established regional/state private school supervisory committees, including representation from the Nay Pyi Taw Council Area. These committees are entrusted with scrutinizing applications for newly established private schools and ensuring the lawful operation of existing ones.

In a concerted effort to advance the National Education Strategic Plan (2021-2030), both government-managed and private basic education schools, along with universities, are encouraged to collaborate. The overarching goal is to produce educated individuals who contribute to the socioeconomic development of

the State. Private schools are urged to align with international education standards, foster critical thinking skills, conduct research aligned with national education policies, and equip students with knowledge and technologies that create employment opportunities.

All the work processes are purposed to benefit relevant private schools and their management boards with the aim of having legal recognition over the teaching and learning process of these schools. If they have some problems, they can seek help from the supervisory committee to be able to seek the best solutions and console the parents and guardians of students. Consequently, students from relevant private schools have safe and secure learning environment.

Private education policies are designed to integrate the private sector into the broader education development landscape. This involves adhering to state education policies, continually enhancing the capacity of private school teachers, learners, and staff, and promoting increased participation from the private sector and international scholars across all educational domains.

Collaboration is a key in the establishment of internationally-recognized private schools, ensuring student qualifications, providing lifelong educational opportunities for all citizens, safeguarding

the rights of private students and parents, and maintaining the independence of private schools from religious and political influences.

At the basic education level in private schools, the process involves seeking approvals from the relevant private school supervisory committee. This includes issuing registration certificates, renewing registration validity, upgrading schools, changing management officials, and modifying locations and school names. These procedures are in place to legally recognize and support the teaching and learning activities of private schools.

In cases of challenges, private schools can seek assistance from the supervisory committee to find optimal solutions, providing reassurance to parents and guardians. Ultimately, these measures contribute to the establishment of a secure and conducive learning environment for students in private schools.

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ACCORDING to Wikipedia, information overload is the difficulty in understanding an issue and effectively making decisions when one has too much information about that issue. It is generally associated with the excessive quantity of daily information.

Information overload reduces our capacity to function effectively, which can lead to poor decisions in both work and life, as well as the inability to make decisions, which is sometimes referred to as analysis paralysis or paralysis by analysis. When the situation persists, burnout is a common result.

Causes of Overload

There are typically three types of 'Infobesity':

- 1) Task-related obesity: otherwise known as 'work overload'.
- 2) Message obesity: resulting from the massive amount of incoming communication (email, Viber, Telegram, WhatsApp, Messenger, and their respective groupings in particular).
- 3) Media obesity: media messages across many outlets, including those from outlaw media outlets (sources of information).

There are nearly as many causes of information overload as bits of information available to us. The most common reasons behind modern information overload include:

- Huge volumes of new information being constantly created (imagine millions of wannabe celebrities)
- Pressure to create and compete in information provision – leading to a quantity over quality effect (consider many Myanmar ladies dancing the same way to show off their assets in TikTok)
- The simplicity of creating, duplicating and sharing information online (nowadays, you don't even need a computer anymore)
- The exponential increase in channels to receive information by radio, television, print media, websites, e-mail, mobile telephony, RSS feeds, etc. (think of fake news on Myanmar coming out of Chiang Mai

alone)

- The increasing weight of historical data available to us (hence, ChatGPT!)
- High volumes of conflicting, contradictory and plain old inaccurate information (more conspiracy theories than ever on social media these days)
- No simple methodologies for quickly processing, comparing and evaluating information sources (no efficient way to identify fake news in this world yet)
- A lack of clear structure in groups of information and poor clues as to the relationships between those groups (anonymity promotes the creation of propaganda groups void of accountability and responsibility)

Technically speaking, "infoglut" occurs when a system's input exceeds its processing capacity. Human decision-makers have fairly limited cognitive processing capacity. Consequently, when information overload occurs, a reduction in decision quality will likely occur.

Effects of Overload

We are so primed and conditioned to consume information that we often engage in behaviours that trigger information overload without even realizing it. Examples of this can include habitually scrolling through social media or instant messages on your phone while at work or attempting to focus on one task, having multiple screen tabs open simultaneously, shifting between them and juggling multiple tasks while splitting your attention between them.

Performance-wise, some symptoms of information overload are inefficient work, confusion, delay in making decisions, lack of critical evaluation of information, loss of control over information, refusal to receive communication, lack of general perspective, greater tolerance for error, anxiety, stress, etc. 'Infoxification' has been found to increase the production of the stress hormone cortisol, as well as the fight-or-flight hormone adrenaline, which can overstimulate your brain and

Information Overload and its Economic Impact

By U AC



INFORMATION OVERLOAD

Choose triumph or succumb to information onslaught. ILLUSTRATION: ASIAFORJESUS.NET/FREEPIK

cause mental fog or scrambled thinking. Maybe many Myanmar citizens may be guilty of that, too, believing in fake news and consequently feeling scared to death, and some even refusing to come out of their houses.

The constant noise created by cognitive overload has a collective effect on our minds, developing both anxiety and confusion. The perpetual tension and restlessness can rise, affecting our emotional well-being, which can lead to many psychological discomforts such as mood swings, irritability, and depression.

This can be incredibly overwhelming, and if not managed, make your whole new life much less enjoyable. When our brains are overloaded with too much data from the outside world, we can struggle to absorb, process, and make sense of it — hampering our ability to make smart decisions and perform at our best. Take the example of many holidaymakers refusing to go to Ngapali during this season despite being such a safe place to rest and relax.

While it might sound innocuous enough, the long-term effects of information overload are serious. Some of the negative effects of experiencing informa-

tion overload include:

Textual overload is the eventual outcome of receiving more textual data and information than you can process, leading to confusion, frustration and exhaustion. I am sure all of us can recall such recent experiences.

Outcome overload – the effect of information overload on the outcome of your tasks. Too much information can leave you fatigued and slow down your workflows, hindering your productivity and leaving work vulnerable to errors, omissions and inaccuracies. Envision the news, or lack thereof, on northern Shan State, clashes for decision-makers.

Analysis paralysis – being overwhelmed with too much data makes you prone to overthink and overanalyze every potential option and its outcome, creating more confusion and uncertainty and leaving you unable to progress or move forward with a final decision. Many stay-at-home wives are guilty of that, wanting their husbands to be henpecked and forcing them to stay put at home.

Over time, repeated exposure to information overload can impact a person's physical and mental well-being, commonly leading to feelings of disillusion-

ment and persistent confusion while working or conducting research. Fatigue, mental exhaustion and burnout can also occur more quickly when we're operating in a constant state of information overload.

If you consider social media and digital platforms, our clicks and engagement with the content presented to us also inform their algorithms about what kind of content we most enjoy and interact with. Thereafter, we are fed incessantly all the related content, regardless of whatever impact these feeds might have on the viewers/users. More ad \$ for the platforms, more Infoxification for us. In this information age, where content can be created and curated seamlessly for the purpose of views, this can quickly become hazardous, increasing our chances of viewing and engaging with fake news and misinformation.

The more fatigued we become from information overload, the more likely we are to engage only with surface-level social media content (whether for work or life), which can be fake, inaccurate or even irrelevant. Not only can this negatively impact our work and our professional relationships, but it can also leave us vulnerable to

consuming potentially harmful content that could subliminally influence our beliefs and actions. We have in Myanmar, so many cases of relatives and close friends becoming brusque and stand-offish to each other after being convinced by the misinformation on social media or fake news spread by illegal digital media outlets.

Prevailing over Overload

Suffering from Infobesity is not something we ever feel used to, no matter how connected we are to our phones, the internet, apps and so on. The long-term effects and consequences are not worth it.

What can we do as modern humans? Unplug entirely? That's not a viable option for 99 per cent of us, but we can do a few things to mitigate the effects of Infoglut and protect our precious attention, focus, creativity and minds.

Avoid juggling multiple tasks – multitasking is often touted as a skill worth bragging about, but in reality, it's not good for our mental health or productivity. Try to eliminate multitasking or, if impossible, limit it to no more than two tasks at a time.

Use tech and tools to manage data – dealing with inordi-

nate volumes of data is exhausting for a person. If you're feeling overwhelmed, look into AI and other digital tools that can process large data volumes in seconds to do the mental heavy lifting for you. Generative AI can be a great tool for speeding up research, summarizing, collecting and presenting information in a digestible way.

Implement attention management strategies – simplify and segment your roles and responsibilities where possible. Prioritizing urgent tasks while delegating less urgent ones or postponing them can free up your time and your focus. Breaking down your tasks into smaller steps can also make them more easily manageable, reducing the likelihood of information overload.

Take breaks – if you suddenly feel overwhelmed, tired, frustrated or confused, take a break from your screen. Get up and stretch your legs, drink coffee or tea or take deep breaths. It's impossible to avoid cognitive overload completely, so taking breaks and disconnecting at certain times is an important coping strategy that can relieve stress and boost productivity.

In terms of what is happening and being specific to Myanmar, we can summarize five short ways to deal with news/information overload:

1. Be choosy about choosing: Choose the right news channel that would represent true news or a channel that does not have a histo-

ry of representing fake news. Take note that even mainstream media failed to produce balanced news most of the time.

2. Identify three or five channels/sources to follow. When it comes to news gathering, it is no longer the more the merrier.
3. Understand the importance of each story; is it propaganda? Is it for spreading hatred towards a particular group? Is it to induce sympathy and subsequent donations? Be sure, or at least make an educated guess about its motives.
4. Put a time limit on information gathering. The world will not end tomorrow, and no one is going to give you a Pulitzer or a Nobel for getting the perfect ten.
5. Schedule your information viewing activities. Looking at FB, Telegram, WhatsApp or Messenger every five minutes is no point. The sky is not going to collapse during your absence from screen time. It's time to choose: either you prevail or let the information and accompanying falsehood overload us to ruin us all! As Confucius said, "Life is really simple, but we insist on making it complicated".

The Global New Light of Myanmar

www.gnlm.com.mm

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NATIONAL



Two cargo barge seen at the Mandalay Port for freight-handling process.

35 cargo ships run from Mandalay port to Yangon, Bhamo in 2nd week of January

THE Department of Marine Administration recently stated that there were thirty-five cargo ships to transport the goods from the Mandalay port to Yangon and Bhamo ports along the Ayeyawady River in the second week of January.

From 8 to 16 January, these cargo ships transported 10,288.02 tonnes of cement, 21,895.9 tonnes of millet, 250 suds of gravel, 150 packs of various goods, 500 sheets of plywood, 800 tonnes of molasses and 454.3 tonnes of sugar

in total.

The Department of Marine Administration warned not to carry overloads of the goods and to be careful the water navigation signs on the banks and in the water for safe driving. — TWA/TRKM

Solar power system, cold storage project to complete in 2025 in two regions

ACCORDING to the Rural Development Department, implementation of solar power system and cold storage project will be completed in 2025 with Lancang-Mekong Cooperation special fund in Taninthayi and Ayeyawady regions.

This will be accomplished by implementing small-scale power and water supply projects in Kanseik village in Dedaye township of Ayeyawady region as well as launching small-scale hydropower and cold storage projects for aquatic products in Kyeinmetaung village in Bokpyin township of Taninthayi region.

As it gets ready to sign the contract, the company that won the tender with the Mekong-Lan-

cang Cooperation Special Fund has sought approval from the Ministry's Tender Committee. The project is scheduled to finish in August 2025.

In addition, a small-scale power supply system and a cold storage system for aquatic products will be initiated with US\$820,000 granting the locals access to high-quality electricity.

In implementing the project, a cold storage system will be set up as part of the project's implementation to keep aquatic products in temporary storage. Additionally, it is stated that the cost of the small-scale power supply system and cold storage system for aquatic products will be more than US\$820,000. — TWA/MKKS

Labour Dept allows sending MOU workers to Thailand via Yangon-Don Mueang Airport

THE Department of Labour has informed that it is allowed to send MOU workers to Thailand via Yangon-Don Mueang Airport.

In order to be able to send MOU workers through Yangon-Don Mueang Airport, a meeting between the directors-general of Thailand and Myanmar was held on 3 January through video conferencing, and the two countries reached an agreement.

When sending workers through the airport, workers need to apply for a visa at the Thai embassy to Myanmar, and agencies can also send them by private or charter airlines.

If workers were sent by private means, it would not be necessary to notify the air traffic control department, but if they were sent by charter, it would be notified to Thailand's air traffic control department.

Similarly, if it is sent by charter airline, it must be coordinated and notified to the Ministry of Transport and Communications.

Upon arrival at Don Mueang

Airport, the Thai immigration will issue a residence permit for two years, and the employer or representative must come and pick up the workers, undergo a medical examination in the relevant area, and submit them to the Employment Department, the statement said.

The trainees will be issued a work permit after submitting proof of medical examination and obtaining a visa. When sending workers by plane, the flight schedules must be sent to Thailand one week in advance, and the date of recruitment must also be submitted to the Thai Employment Department.

For agencies that want to send by airlines, they must submit their permission to the Department at least 10 days in advance except official holidays.

It is mentioned in the statement that the name list of the workers must be submitted along with the name of the airlines, the flight number and the flight time.

— TWA/KZL



Some Myanmar MoU workers leave for Thailand via Kawthoung border in July 2022.

High influx of monsoon onion cuts price in Yangon market

HIGH supply of monsoon onions to Yangon's market brought down the price, according to the Bayintnaung Wholesale Commodity Centre.

More than 3.2 million visses of onions flowed into the depot each in November and December 2023.

Only on 19 January 2024, over three million visses of onions entered the centre, as per daily price report of the centre.

Excess supply in Yangon's market cut the price, Ko Thein Myint, an onion

seller on Yetamar Street of Bayintnaung Wholesale Commodity Centre told the Global New Light of Myanmar (GNLM).

The prices showed a drop of K900-K1,200 per visses over the past 15 days. The small size of onions drastically fell.

The onion prices moved in the ranged between K1,100 and K2,800 per viss depending on the sizes and producing areas (Myingyan, Seikphyu and Myittha) on 19 January 2024.

The prices stood at K1,600-K2,200 per viss recorded in the year-ago period.

Onion yield is estimated at 5,000 visses per acre in Myinmu Township. They can be harvested four months after cultivation. The onion output in Myingyan District is around 3.8 million visses, with a yield of 2,100 visses per acre.

New summer onions are expected to be supplied to Yangon's market in March. There are around 100,000 acres

of monsoon and summer onions, with the yield rate of 1 million tonnes.

Bayintnaung depot is a bustling market, handling 500 visses of onions per year. The traders involved in regions outside Yangon are heavily relying on the Bayintnaung market when there is a lack of global demand.

That market brings a great profit for the brokers. Thus, the traders eye the market and consumers are closely observing the market changes as well. — TWA/EM

Archaeologists find first temple-era coin ahead of Judean Hills roadwork

Archaeologists in the Judean Hills discovered a rare 2,550-year-old silver coin dating to the Persian period, shedding light on ancient trade practices and currency evolution.



Excavation of a First Temple-era house in the Judean Hills, in an image released on 17 January 2024. PHOTO: EMIL ALADJEM/ISRAEL ANTIQUITIES AUTHORITY

ARCHAEOLOGISTS working at a site in the Judean Hills ahead of planned infrastructure work uncovered an extremely rare silver coin dating back 2,550 years to the Persian period, the Israel Antiquities Authority announced on Wednesday.

The Antiquities Authority said the discovery sheds new light on ancient trade practices and the evolution of currency in the region. “The coin is extremely rare, joining only half a dozen coins of its type that have been found in archaeological excavations in the country,” said Dr Robert Kool, head of the Antiquities Authority’s Numismatic Department.

“The coin was minted in a period when the use of coins had just begun. The rare find contributes information concerning the way trade was carried out, and the process whereby global commerce moved from payment by weighing silver pieces, to the use of coins,” Kool explained. — ANI

Lack of snow sparks worry for drought-hit Afghanistan

Afghanistan is experiencing a notable lack of snow in mid-January, a concerning indication of the impact of global warming on a country accustomed to harsh winters.

AFGHANISTAN saw almost no snow as of mid-January, a new sign of the heavy toll of global warming on the Central Asian country which is usually accustomed to harsh winters, experts say.

The exceptionally low level of rain in a country that

relies heavily on agriculture has forced many farmers to delay planting.

“In previous years by January we had a lot of rain and snow,” said Rohullah Amin, head of climate change for the National Environmental Protection Agency (NEPA).

But “now we don’t have enough of anything at all”, he told AFP this week.

“It is very worrying, as there could be serious droughts in the future, putting heavy pressure on livelihoods and the economic sector.” — AFP



Afghanistan saw almost no snow as of mid-January, a new sign of the heavy toll of global warming on the country which is usually accustomed to harsh winters. PHOTO: AFP

Austrian heiress pays to give away 25 million euro fortune

Heiress Marlene Engelhorn, at the Davos summit, is advocating for higher taxes on the rich, despite the event’s exclusive nature.

THE rich and famous are paying top dollar for a place at this week’s Davos summit but heiress Marlene Engelhorn is on the other side of the fence at the glitzy Swiss resort, demanding that they pay more in taxes.

The 31-year-old is also pursuing an ambitious plan to pay people to come up with ideas for her to give away the bulk of her 25 million euro (\$27.4 million) wealth so she can escape what she calls a “dynastic rich swamp”. “I’ve inherited a fortune and therefore power, with-

out having done anything for it. And the state doesn’t even want taxes on it,” said the Austrian-German activist and founder of the Taxmenow initiative.

Engelhorn is joining several protests by a wealthy minority on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum calling for higher taxes on the rich. The scion of the founder of BASF chemical giant, Friedrich Engelhorn, is among an exclusive group of millionaires pushing for governments to tax them more to bridge the growing wealth gap. — AFP



Austrian Marlene Engelhorn, who inherited from her family who owns the Germany’s chemical giant BASF, poses with a placard reading “Tax the rich!” at the entrance of the Congress center on the opening of the annual meeting of the World Economic Forum (WEF) in Davos, on 15 January 2024. PHOTO: FABRICE COFFRINI/AFP

Kindergarten misbehaviour may cost society in the long run: Study

FOR the first time, a new economic analysis has linked kindergarten pupils’ misbehaviour to significant societal costs in terms of criminality, associated medical expenses, and lost productivity as they grow up.

“Providing effective, evidence-based programming designed to address behavioural problems early on has the potential to improve students’ wellbeing in the long term,” said project collaborator Damon Jones, associate research professor in

the Edna Bennett Pierce Prevention Research Centre (PRC). “This study implies that there could be an additional benefit of reduced need for government services and lower costs related to crime, where conduct problems are reduced.” Researchers reviewed teacher- and parent-reported data on conduct problems among more than 1,300 kindergarten students from two multi-site, longitudinal studies conducted in US schools in the late 1980s and early 1990s. — ANI

ECONOMY WORLD

China's manufacturing goes intelligent with modern factories

Yangshan Port in Shanghai exemplifies China's intelligent industrialization progress, evolving from a barren island to a smart container terminal with automated operations.

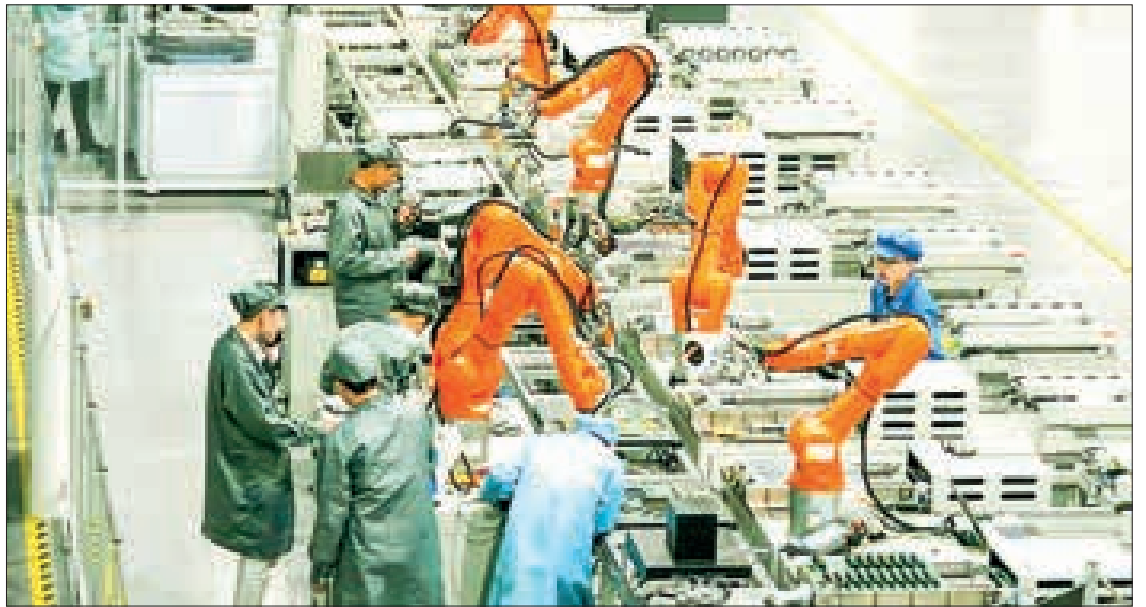
DEPARTING from downtown Shanghai and driving over the magnificent Donghai Bridge, people can witness the busy Yangshan Port. Evolving from a barren island to a wharf with automated operation, the port illustrates China's intelligent industrialization progress.

As a smart container terminal, Yangshan Port covers a total automated storage area of 945,000 square metres, with automated cargoes shuttling back and forth. The 5G network realizes the transmission of HD video and the precise delivery of control commands.

Facilitated by the 5G communication technology, the port

currently has six bridge cranes that can achieve remote control and carry out the remote pick-up from 100 km away, according to Jin Jian, an official with the Shanghai International Port (Group) Co., Ltd.

High operational efficiency cuts the number of personnel at the fourth phase of the port by 70 per cent compared with traditional terminals of the same scale. In recent years, Shanghai witnessed flourishing development of intelligent manufacturing. The industry scale of intelligent manufacturing equipment exceeded 100 billion yuan (about 13.98 billion US dollars). — Xinhua



Technical workers work on a production line at a future factory of Unisplendour Corporation Limited (UNIS) in Xiaoshan District of Hangzhou, east China's Zhejiang Province, 27 April 2023. **PHOTO: HAN CHUANHAO/XINHUA**

Kenya invites foreign investors to invest in agriculture to improve ASAL regions

KENYA on Wednesday called on foreign investors to invest in agriculture in the 80 per cent arid and semi-arid lands



The file photo shows Njoki Mitugo, a household economic expert in indigenous vegetables, attending to pumpkin plants on the outskirts of Nairobi, the capital of Kenya, on 24 October 2023. **PHOTO: CHARLES ONYANGO/XINHUA**

(ASAL) portion of the country to improve food security.

Paul Rono, principal secretary of the State Department of Agriculture in the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development, said the ASAL regions are capable of producing food since they are fertile but only lack water.

"We have created an environment to enable the private sector and foreign investors to invest in agriculture to help improve food security, create jobs, and increase income in the regions," Rono told journalists in the Kenyan capital of Nairobi. — Xinhua

Zimbabwe's currency further tumbles against US dollar

THE cost of goods and services keeps on increasing in Zimbabwe as the local currency depreciates against the US dollar, a trend that accelerated at the beginning of 2024. The local dollar, which officially traded at 6,192 per 1 US dollar on 2

January, is trading at 8,746 as of 17 January, according to the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe daily exchange rate updates.

On the black market, where most Zimbabweans buy foreign currency, 1 US dollar can fetch up to 13,000

Zimbabwean dollars. Economist Prosper Chitambara said the accelerated depreciation of the local currency started after the announcement of the 2024 national budget at the end of last year by Finance Minister Mthuli Ncube. — Xinhua

A majority of US districts report little or no change in economic activity: Fed Beige Book

Reserve districts reported little or no change in economic activity since the prior survey period. Of the four districts that showed differences, three reported modest growth, and one reported a moderate decline.

A majority of 12 Federal Reserve districts reported little or no change in economic activity since the prior survey period, the US Federal Reserve said in its Beige Book released on Wednesday.

Of the four districts that differed, three reported modest growth, and one reported a moderate decline, the Fed said in its latest Beige Book, a survey on

economic conditions based on information collected from its 12 regional reserve banks.

Consumers delivered some seasonal relief over the holidays by meeting expectations in most districts and exceeding expectations in three districts, including New York, which noted strong holiday spending on apparel, toys and sporting goods, the survey showed. — Xinhua



Consumers met or exceeded expectations during the holidays, providing seasonal relief, with strong spending noted in New York on apparel, toys, and sporting goods. Visitors look around at the 116th Annual North American International Toy Fair at the Jacob K. Javits Convention Centre in New York. **PHOTO: WANG YING/XINHUA/FILE**

Indian tycoon Adani advocates green hydrogen

GAUTAM ADANI, Chairman of the Adani Group, has underscored the pivotal role of Green Hydrogen in steering countries like India towards achieving net-zero emissions. In his blog for the 54th Annual Meeting of the World Economic Forum (WEF) titled "Reducing costs: According to a press release by Adani, the key to leveraging green hydrogen on the road to net zero, is that Adani delves into the viability and potential of Green Hydrogen as a crucial alternative to fossil fuels, steering the world towards a cleaner and renewable future.

In the blog, available on the WEF website, Adani articulates the environmental and

developmental benefits of Green Hydrogen, emphasizing its viability as a zero-emission clean fuel.

Recognizing it as the key to realizing global carbon neutrality, Adani points out that hydrogen, a potential energy storage medium,

can produce electricity in fuel cells with water being the sole waste product. Adani said, "For India, the equitable solution is not to replace one fossil fuel with another but to leapfrog to renewables and green hydrogen. — ANI



Adani group chairman Gautam Adani. PHOTO: ANI



PHOTO: FABRICE COFFRINI/AFP

Turkish Airlines contributes 56 bln USD to economy in 2023

TÜRKIYE'S flag carrier, Turkish Airlines (THY), is the country's most valuable brand, contributing 56 billion US dollars to the national economy in 2023, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said on Thursday.

In a video speech sent to THY's management summit in Istanbul, Erdogan said, "Turkish Airlines is not only Türkiye's

most valuable brand but has also made a name for itself with its contributions to our country's economy."

"According to 2023 figures, Turkish Airlines has contributed 56 billion dollars to the Turkish economy and has strengthened its leadership in this field with service exports of around 16 billion dollars," he stated.

The Turkish leader

also noted that the company's success gives a boost to the tourism sector and is one of the most important driving forces in increasing the number of tourists travelling to Türkiye.

The number of foreign tourists to Türkiye surged to over 51 million in the first 11 months of 2023, according to the latest official data. — Xinhua

China's catering revenue surpasses 5 trln yuan in 2023

CHINA'S catering industry registered robust recovery in 2023, with its total revenue nearing 5.29 trillion yuan (about 743 billion US dollars) for the first time, official data shows.

The figure hit a record high last year, according to the National Bureau of Statistics.

In 2023, the catering industry led to about 2 trillion yuan of operating revenue growth in the sectors of agricultural and sideline products, as well as food processing, according to the calculation from the China Hospitality Association. Among nearly 15.73 million catering enterprises across the country, more than 4.1 million were newly registered last year, with private firms accounting for over 80 per cent, industry data shows. — Xinhua

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar Ministry of Transport and Communications

INVITATION TO SUBMIT THE PRE-QUALIFICATION APPLICATIONS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT, CONSTRUCTION, OPERATION, AND MANAGEMENT OF A VEHICLE REGISTRATION SYSTEM USING RADIO FREQUENCY IDENTIFICATION (RFID)

1. Road Transport Administration Department (RTAD) of the Ministry of Transport and Communications (MOTC) is planning to implement the Development, Construction, Operation, and Management of a Vehicle Registration System using Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) by inviting Local/International Public-Private Partnership (PPP) Developers.
2. The Interested PPP Developers (Myanmar-owned Companies and/or Joint Ventures of Myanmar and Foreign Companies) are invited to submit the Pre-Qualification Application for the RFID Project.
3. The complete set of Pre-Qualification Documents can be purchased at the following address during the working hours **from 22 January 2024 to 5 February 2024:**
Director, Computer Division
Office Building No. 29
Road Transport Administration Department
Ministry of Transport and Communications
Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar
4. Further information may be obtained at Tel. +95(67)3405359 and +95(67) 3405099 during working hours or visit the websites of www.motc.gov.mm, www.rtad.gov.mm and www.myanmarrtad.com.

**TENDER COMMITTEE FOR THE
IMPLEMENTATION OF RFID SYSTEM**
Ministry of Transport and Communications

Public Announcement

Fraudulent Activities by Mr. Ashish Trivedi (Passport No: Z4817624), Employee of Dabur India Limited

This announcement is on behalf of Fair Deal Co., Ltd, a prominent company engaged in the marketing and distribution of Pharmaceuticals, Healthcare, and Consumer products in Myanmar.

Fair Deal Co., Ltd and Dabur India Limited entered into an exclusive distribution agreement for the territory of Myanmar, effective from 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2022. The agreement authorized Fair Deal to distribute Dabur's extensive range of consumer products in the Myanmar market.

However, it has come to our attention that Mr. Ashish Trivedi (Passport No: Z4817624), an employee of Dabur India Limited, who was responsible for Dabur's business operations in Myanmar, engaged in fraudulent activities. Specifically, Mr. Trivedi withdrew money from Fair Deal Co., Ltd under the pretext of creating 1,500 advertisement stands. However, investigations revealed that he used fake invoices and failed to deliver the stands, resulting in financial losses for Fair Deal.

In response to this financial fraud, Fair Deal Co., Ltd has taken legal action against Mr. Ashish Trivedi (Passport No: Z4817624). A case under (Pa) 212/2022 has been filed against him at the Thaketa City Police Station. After due legal proceedings, Mr. Trivedi was found guilty of the charges.

Despite being found guilty, Mr. Ashish Trivedi (Passport No: Z4817624) is currently absconding and has not cooperated in resolving the financial irregularities. In light of this, the Thaketa Township Court has issued a notice and a warrant under Sections (87) and (88) of the Code of Criminal Procedure.

We hereby announce to notify Fair Deal Co., Ltd and the undersigned if anyone possesses information regarding the whereabouts of Mr. Ashish Trivedi (Passport No: Z4817624). Your cooperation in this matter is crucial for bringing him to justice and resolving the financial issues resulting from his actions.

For and on behalf of **Fair Deal Co., Ltd**

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ROLLING UPDATES: WORLD

China leads global manufacturing sector for 14 consecutive years

Xin Guobin, the vice minister of MIIT, announced the overall year-on-year growth of 4.6 per cent in total value-added industrial output for 2023, marking a 1 percentage point increase compared to 2022.

CHINA has remained the world's top manufacturing hub for 14 consecutive years, the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology (MIIT) said Friday.

The country's large man-

ufacturing enterprises, each of which has an annual main business turnover of at least 20 million yuan (about 2.8 million US dollars), saw their combined value-added output increasing 5 per cent year on year in 2023,

said Xin Guobin, vice minister of MIIT, at a press conference.

The total value-added industrial output went up 4.6 per cent year on year in 2023, up 1 percentage point from that of 2022, Xin said. — Xinhua



Workers operate at a production line of the new energy vehicle AVATR at a workshop of Chang'an Auto in Jiangbei District, southwest China's Chongqing Municipality, 20 July 2023. **PHOTO: TANG YI/XINHUA**

North Korea tests underwater nuclear weapon system after South Korea, US & Japan drills – Reports

The test, named "Haeil-5-23," was carried out in the East Sea in response to what North Korea perceives as a serious threat to its security posed by the regional exercises.



A view of what state media report was a launching ceremony for a new tactical nuclear attack submarine in North Korea, in this picture released by North Korea's Korean Central News Agency on 8 September 2023. **PHOTO: KCNA**

NORTH Korea has tested an underwater nuclear weapon system in response to joint military drills by South Korea, the United States and Japan, the Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) reported citing a statement by a spokesman for North Korea's Defence Ministry.

"Joint maritime exercises were staged again in the waters off Jeju Island for three days from 15 January with the involvement of the US nuclear carrier Carl Vinson and Aegis cruiser Princeton and warships of the

Japanese maritime "Self-Defense Force" and the ROK navy," the spokesman said.

He said the drills further destabilized the regional situation and seriously threatened North Korea's security.

"In response to it, the Underwater Weapon System Institute under the DPRK Academy of Defence Science conducted an important test of its underwater nuclear weapon system "Haeil-5-23" under development in the East Sea of Korea," the spokesman said. — SPUTNIK

Red Sea crisis: a week of escalation

These Huthi attacks, driven by opposition to Israel's conflict with Hamas, disrupted shipping in a crucial route responsible for approximately 12 per cent of global maritime trade.

US and UK strikes on rebel-held Yemen last week marked a sharp rise in tensions around the Red Sea, where Iran-backed Huthi insurgents had been attacking shipping deemed linked to Israel.

The Huthi attacks, in protest at Israel's war against Hamas, were disrupting shipping in the commercially vital route which normally carries about 12 per cent of global maritime trade.

Here is a timeline of events over the past week:

12 January

US and UK forces strike 60 Huthi missile and radar targets at 16 locations in rebel-held Yemen, the US military says, in a barrage involving more than 150 precision-guided munitions.

Five people are killed and six wounded, according to Huthi officials. In retaliation, the Huthis fire "at least one" missile without hitting any target.

The rebels declare American and British interests as "legitimate targets" after the overnight strikes.

13 January

A further US strike hits the rebels' Al-Dailami airbase in the capital Sanaa, the US military says, after Huthi warnings they will continue attacking

ships in the Red Sea.

14 January

US forces shoot down a Huthi cruise missile fired at the USS Laboon destroyer.

15 January

A Huthi missile hits the US-owned cargo ship Gibraltar Eagle in the Gulf of Aden, south of the Red Sea, causing a fire on board but no casualties.

16 January

The US destroys four anti-ship ballistic missiles prepared to launch from Huthi-controlled Yemen.

Later, a Huthi missile strikes a Greek-owned, Malta-flagged bulk carrier sailing in the Red Sea, causing limited

damage and no injuries.

17 January

A Huthi drone strikes the US-owned bulk carrier Genco Picardy, causing "some damage" but no injuries, US Central Command says.

US forces then take out 14 missiles that were "loaded to be fired" from Huthi-controlled Yemen.

18 January

The Huthis claim "direct hits" on a US cargo ship in the Gulf of Aden, although US forces say the missiles missed.

The US also says it hit two anti-ship missiles that were prepared for launch into the Red Sea. — AFP



The Huthis claimed responsibility on social media for targeting the American ship Chem Ranger with naval missiles. The specialist website Marine Traffic said the Chem Ranger was a chemical tanker sailing from Jeddah, Saudi Arabia to Kuwait. **PHOTO: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS**

SPORTS

Big games for Liverpool, Arsenal in Premier League

The semi-winter break in the Premier League results in only five games being played this weekend.

THE semi-winter break in the Premier League means that once again there are just five games played in the competition this weekend, with the ten sides that didn't play last weekend in action, while the teams that did play all enjoy a short rest.

Crystal Palace's rest was non-existent as they played and lost a midweek FA Cup replay against Everton to increase the pressure on coach Roy Hodgson, whose side has just one win from 11 in all competitions ahead of a difficult visit to Arsenal.

Consecutive defeats have seen Arsenal drop to fourth in the league, five points behind league leaders, Liverpool, but they could have Gabriel Jesus back after injury to ease some of the attacking burden on Bukayo Saka.

Saka was looking tired a fort-

night ago, and Arsenal will hope that not playing last weekend will have restored some bounce to his legs for a must-win game.

Liverpool have an interesting visit to face Andoni Iraola's Bournemouth on Sunday.

Liverpool narrowly won a Carabao Cup tie away to Bournemouth in early November, but that performance signaled the start of Bournemouth's recovery after taking time to get used to Iraola's aggressive high-press, and since then his side have won seven games in all competitions to climb into mid-table, and they should be well-rested after not playing since 6 January.

Former Liverpool striker Dominic Solanke has scored eight goals in his last eight games and will be a big threat to the league leaders. — Xinhua



Ivan Toney will captain Brentford at home to Nottingham Forest in the Premier League on Saturday as the striker makes his eagerly-anticipated return from an eight-month ban. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

Ajax sign former Liverpool captain Henderson

AFTER having terminated his contract at Saudi club Al Ettifaq, former Liverpool captain Jordan Henderson signed for Ajax on Thursday.

The 33-year-old arrived in Amsterdam for medical examination on Thursday afternoon and has signed a contract until mid-2026 at Ajax.

Henderson, who left Liverpool for Al Ettifaq last summer,

started his professional career at Sunderland and moved to Liverpool in 2011. With the Reds, he won the UEFA Champions League and FIFA Club World Cup in 2019 and the Premier League in 2020.

Ajax are currently fifth in the Dutch Eredivisie, having previously been bottom of the league in a difficult season. — Xinhua



Bach expressed that it is the young athletes' time to grow together and shine forever in the Olympic spotlight. **PHOTO: GREG MARTIN/IOC**

Bach encourages athletes to shine at Gangwon 2024 opening ceremony

IOC president Thomas Bach stated that young athletes are following the footsteps of Winter Olympic icons from Pyeongchang 2018.

INTERNATIONAL Olympic Committee (IOC) president Thomas Bach said young athletes are following in the footsteps of sporting icons who made Olympic history at the Winter Olympic Games in Pyeongchang 2018, as the opening ceremony of Gangwon 2024 took place in Gangneung Oval, South Korea, on Friday.

The IOC chief offered his support and suggestions to the young athletes in his speech, encouraging them to give of their best. "Now, it is your turn, give it your best at your first Olympic competition, make new friends, live the Olympic values, respect yourself, respect your competitors, respect the rules, enjoy your Olympic

experience. This is your time to grow together and to shine forever," he said.

Bach expressed gratitude to host nation South Korea on behalf of the IOC for giving this new generation of young athletes the stage to live their Olympic dreams. "This is a true Olympic legacy," the IOC chief concluded. — Xinhua

FIFA to announce 2026 World Cup details

The tournament, hosted by Mexico, Canada, and the United States, will feature 104 matches, with the final set for 19 July 2026, and matches taking place in 16 venues across cities in the host countries.



FIFA confirmed that the match schedule and detailed information for the 2026 FIFA World Cup will be announced on 4 February through a live program on various platforms. **PHOTO: FIFA**

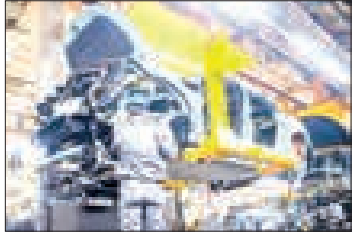
FIFA will announce the match schedule and more detailed information of the 2026 FIFA

World Cup on 4 February, world football's governing body confirmed on Friday.

The information will be revealed at a special live program airing on TSN, CTV and RDS platforms in Canada, Televisa in Mexico, and FOX and Telemundo in the United States.

A total of 104 matches will be played at the tournament in Mexico, Canada and the United States, with the final scheduled for 19 July 2026.

The allocations of the opening matches and the group stage for each host country's national teams will be shared at the program. — Xinhua



As 19th NAM Summit begins in Uganda's Kampala, Jaishankar shares glimpses

The 19th NAM Summit, under Uganda's leadership, focuses on 'Deepening Cooperation for Shared Global Affluence.'

EXTERNAL Affairs Minister S Jaishankar shared glimpses of the 19th Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) Summit, which commenced here on Friday. The foreign minister can be seen meeting various foreign dignitaries participating in the two-day summit.

Jaishankar who is leading the Indian delegation at the Summit arrived in Kampala on Thursday. "Arrived in Kampala to represent India at the 19th NAM Summit. Looking forward to engaging colleagues over the coming two

days," Jaishankar said in a post on X.

The 19th NAM Summit under Uganda's leadership is being held under the theme 'Deepening Cooperation for Shared Global Affluence' and brings together more than 120 developing countries on a platform of crucial historic significance. The NAM is a forum of 120 countries that are not formally aligned with or against any major power bloc.

India wholeheartedly supports Uganda's theme for NAM and looks forward to engaging with NAM countries. As one of the leading and found-



The summit brings together over 120 developing countries, holding historical significance. **PHOTO: ANI**

ing members of NAM, India remains committed to the principles and values of the movement, as per a statement by the Ministry of External Affairs.

On the sidelines of the NAM Summit on Thursday, EAM Jaishankar held a meeting with counterparts from Egypt and Belarus. — ANI

Thai court orders emergency plan to improve air quality

A Thai court on Friday ordered the government to come up with an urgent plan to curb air pollution within 90 days, as the kingdom braces for its annual peak of noxious haze.

Air quality plummets in Thailand in the early months of the year as smoke from farmers burning stubble adds to industrial emissions and vehicle exhaust fumes.

Bangkok and the northern city of Chiang Mai ranked among the world's most polluted cities on some days last year, prompting a group of people to bring a legal case to get the government to act.

The Chiang Mai administrative court on Friday ordered the National Environmental Commission to present "preventive methods to solve pollution both short and long term" within 90 days. — AFP

Bangkok and Chiang Mai ranked among the world's most polluted cities, prompting legal action by concerned citizens.



An Air Asia plane descends towards Chiang Mai International Airport amid high levels of air pollution in Chiang Mai on 10 April 2023. **PHOTO: AFP**

Jordan's king urges coordinated efforts toward immediate ceasefire in Gaza

KING Abdullah II of Jordan on Thursday proposed close coordination between Jordan and Türkiye to push for an immediate ceasefire in the Gaza Strip and smooth humanitarian aid delivery into the Palestinian territory.

He made the remarks during a meeting in Amman with Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan, in which King Abdullah II called for stronger international efforts to stop the Israel-Hamas conflict in Gaza, according to a statement by Jordan's Royal Hashemite Court.

The king stressed Jordan's complete rejection of the forced displacement of the Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank, highlighting the importance of mobilizing international pressure on Israel to allow Gazans to return to their homes. — Xinhua