

The Global **NEW LIGHT** of MYANMAR

Tatmadaw's gallantry medal recipients lauded for sacrifice in State defence



Senior General Thadoe Maha Thray Sithu Thadoe Thiri Thudhamma Min Aung Hlaing poses for documentary photos together with gallantry medal recipients in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

EVERYBODY will always take pride in the sacrifice of gallantry medal recipient outstanding Tatmadaw members in their assigned duties as good sons of the people, said Senior General Min Aung Hlaing.

At the ceremony to confer Tatmadaw gallantry medals on recipients at Zeyathiri Beikman in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday afternoon, 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 honorary speech to praise the medal recipients for their excellent sacrifices.

In his speech, the Senior General urged wives of Tatmadaw members and family members as hardcore forces of the Tatmadaw to continuously forge genuine patriotic spirit as they preserved the prestige of family and Tatmadaw in all important situations.

Currently, he noted that as clashes happen not only in forests and hills but urban areas due to multi-operational warfare, frontline areas are widening. He praised

for utmost efforts of wives of Tatmadaw members in serving State defence duties for the sake of the nation and nationals, based on genuine patriotic spirit.

The Senior General revealed that at the ceremony, gallantry medals will be presented to 25 recipients for their sacrifice of life and limbs in carrying out duties, adding relevant military command commanders, on behalf of the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services will present Ye Thura title to nine recipients,

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Kachin State entrepreneurs venture into value-added banana products

Fishery product exports swell to US\$518 mln in 9 months

MYANMAR'S fishery product exports amounted to over US\$518 million in the past nine months (April-December) of the current financial year 2023-2024, the Ministry of Commerce's statistics showed.

Myanmar shipped 345,000 tonnes of fishery products worth \$518 million to external markets, with fish exports worth over \$262 million, shrimp exports worth \$32 million, and other fishery products worth \$223.707 million.

Myanmar seaborne fish-

ery product exports surpassed those at the border. Myanmar sends fish to neighbouring countries (China and Thailand) through Muse, Myawady, Kawthoung, Myeik, Maungtaw, Mawtaung, and Kenglat border posts. They are conveyed to Japan, European countries, China, Thailand, and the regional countries via maritime channels.

More than 20 kinds of fish including hilsa, rohu, catfish, and seabass are delivered to foreign markets, according to



The photo shows some fishers engaged in offshore and coastal fishing businesses.

the Myanmar Fisheries Federation. At present, fishery export has yet to increase. The fishery export is regularly going yet the volume of fishery export is still lower than those recorded in the pre-pandemic periods.

Myanmar's offshore fishing is found in the Rakhine, Mon, and Taninthayi states and, Ayeyawady and Yangon regions. There are 480,000 fish and shrimp ponds in Myanmar, with over 120 cold storage facilities, the fish and shrimp farmers shared information. — TWA/KK

NATIONAL

Congratulatory messages from foreign heads of state on 76th Anniversary Independence Day

Mr Ramchandra Paudel, President of Nepal, sends Congratulatory Message to Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, Chairman of the State Administration Council and Prime Minister of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar

ON the auspicious occasion of the 76th Anniversary of the Independence Day of Myanmar, I extend my congratulations and best wishes to Your Excellency and the people of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar. I wish for the continued progress and prosperity of the people of Myanmar.

Mr Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda', Prime Minister of Nepal, sends Congratulatory Message to Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, Chairman of the State Administration Council and Prime Minister of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar

ON behalf of the Government and people of Nepal and my own, I extend congratulations and best wishes to Your Excellency and the people of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar on the auspicious occasion of the 76th Anniversary of the Independence Day of Myanmar. I extend my best wishes for the continued progress and prosperity of the friendly people of Myanmar.

Republic of the Union of Myanmar State Administration Council Order No 1/2024

8th Waning of Nattaw 1385 ME
4 January 2024

Pardon Order

IN commemoration of the 76th Anniversary of Independence Day which falls on 4 January 2024 and on humanitarian and compassionate grounds, the State Administration Council Chairman has pardoned 9,652 male and female prisoners serving prison term from their respective prisons, jails, and detention camps under the Code of Criminal Procedure Article 401 (1), on condition that "if more offence is committed next time, they will have to serve the new punishment together with the remaining punishment to which they were sentenced".

By Order,

Aung Lin Dwe
Lieutenant-General
Secretary
State Administration Council

Republic of the Union of Myanmar State Administration Council Order No 2/2024

8th Waning of Nattaw 1385 ME
4 January 2024

Pardon Order

IN commemoration of the 76th Anniversary of Independence Day which falls on 4 January 2024 and on bilateral relations of countries and humanitarian grounds, the State Administration Council Chairman has remitted the punishment of 114 foreign prisoners from the respective prisons, and detention camps under the Code of Criminal Procedure Article 401 (1), on condition that "if more offence is committed next time, they will have to serve the new punishment together with the remaining punishment to which they were sentenced" and they are expelled from Myanmar.

By Order,

Aung Lin Dwe
Lieutenant-General
Secretary
State Administration Council

Tatmadaw's gallantry medal recipients lauded for ...

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Ye Bala title to 99 recipients, Excellent Performance in Administrative Field medal (First Class) to 14 recipients, Second Class medal to 28 recipients and Third Class medal to 34 recipients, Excellent Performance in Social Field medal (First Class) to three recipients, Second Class medal to six recipients and Third Class medal to three recipients, Excellent Performance in Technolog-

ical Field medal (First Class) to five recipients, Second Class medal to 10 recipients and Third Class medal to 33 recipients, the gallantry certificate of the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services to 111 recipients and the honorary certificate of the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services to 480 recipients respectively.

The Senior General presented gallantry medals to three Lieutenant-Colo-

nels, nine Majors, 10 Captains, one Lieutenant, one Warrant Officer-I and one Lance Corporal respectively.

After the ceremony, the Senior General cordially greeted gallantry medal recipients.

Also, present at the ceremony were Daw Kyu Kyu Hla, wife of the Senior General, SAC Vice-Chairman Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army)

Vice-Senior General Thiri Pyanchi Maha Thray Sithu Soe Win and his wife Daw Than Than Nwe, Chief of the General Staff (Army, Navy and Air) General Thiri Pyanchi Sithu Maung Maung Aye and wife, Commander-in-Chief (Navy) Admiral Zeya Kyaw Htin Sithu Moe Aung and wife, Commander-in-Chief (Air) General Zeya Kyaw Htin Sithu Tun Aung and wife, State dignitaries and medal recipients and heirs. — MNA/TTA

NATIONAL

Nation requires increased contributions from intellectuals, intelligentsia, and ethnic communities

THE government is striving for the development of the nation by cementing the genuine, disciplined multiparty democratic system, building the Union based on a democratic system and federalism, adopting political, economic and social objectives such as prosperity and food security of the State, promoting of intelligence and technologies, health and fitness of entire people, said Senior General Min Aung Hlaing.

A ceremony to confer honorary titles to mark the 76th Anniversary of Independence Day to relevant recipients took place at the SAC Chairman Office yesterday morning, attended by Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Thadoe Maha Thray Sithu Thadoe Thiri Thudhamma Min Aung Hlaing. In his speech, the Senior General stressed the need to especially emphasize nation-building endeavours and processes such as peace and stability of the whole Union, rule of law, promotion of State economy, enhancement of socioeconomic life of the entire people, and



Senior General Thadoe Maha Thray Sithu Thadoe Thiri Thudhamma Min Aung Hlaing delivers address at conferring of honorary titles on recipients at SAC Chairman honorary hall in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

cementing genuine, disciplined multiparty democratic system.

In implementing the nation-building tasks, he continued to say that all stakeholders from relevant sectors are joining hands with officials from the main estates of the nation such as the State Administration Council and the Union government.

He outlined that honorary titles will be conferred on those

recipients for their excellent performance and sacrifice of life and limbs for nation-building endeavours and serving State defence and security duties.

The Senior General revealed that at today's ceremony, the Thray Sithu title will be conferred on nine recipients, the Sithu title on five, the Thura title on six, the Thiri Pyanchi title on 42, Wunna Kyaw Htin title on 83,

Alinka Kyaw Swa title on four and Theikpa Kyaw Swa title on four, totalling 153.

On the occasion, the Senior General conferred the Thray Sithu title on four recipients, the Sithu title on three, the Thura title on six, the Thiri Pyanchi title on 16, the Wunna Kyaw Htin title on 58, the Alinka Kyaw Swa title on three and Theikpa Kyaw Swa title on four individually.

Also present at the ceremony were Daw Kyu Kyu Hla, wife of the Senior General, SAC Vice-Chairman Deputy Prime Minister Vice-Senior General Thiri Pyanchi Maha Thray Sithu Soe Win and wife Daw Than Than Nwe, the council secretary and wife, the joint secretary and wife, council members and their wives and State dignitaries. — MNA/TTA

Honorary dinner hosted to mark 76th Anniversary of Independence Day

CHAIRMAN of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Thadoe Maha Thray Sithu Thadoe Thiri Thudhamma Min Aung Hlaing and his wife Daw Kyu

Kyu Hla hosted a dinner in commemoration of the 76th Anniversary of Independence Day at the honorary hall of the SAC Chairman Office in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday evening.

On the lawns of the honorary hall, the Senior General and wife together with the SAC Vice-Chairman Deputy Prime Minister and wife cordially greeted chairmen of political

parties and representatives, ambassadors and charges d'affaires of foreign embassies, honorary consuls and guests who attended the dinner.

The Senior General and

wife together with the attendees to the dinner enjoyed the launching of fireworks.

They then had dinner together with the attendees. Artists from the MRTV and Fine Arts Department performed songs and dances. The Senior General presented the flower basket to the artistes and cordially greeted attendees.

The dinner was also attended by the SAC Vice-Chairman Deputy Prime Minister Vice-Senior General and wife Daw Than Than Nwe, the Secretary and wife, the Joint Secretary and wife, council members and their wives, State dignitaries, and their wives, ambassadors, and charges d'affaires of foreign embassies, honorary consuls, title recipients, departmental heads, and guests. — MNA/TTA



Senior General Thadoe Maha Thray Sithu Thadoe Thiri Thudhamma Min Aung Hlaing cordially greets diplomats at 76th Anniversary of Independence Day dinner in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

NATIONAL

State Flag hoisting, saluting ceremonies of 76th Independence Day held in Nay Pyi Taw



The 76th Independence Day flag hoisting and saluting ceremony in progress in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

CEREMONIES to hoist and salute the State Flag to mark the 76th Independence Day were held in front of Nay Pyi Taw City Hall yesterday.

The ceremony was organized with five national objectives of the 76th Anniversary of 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 and (5) To promote agriculture and livestock-based MSMEs.

The flag-hoisting platoon raised the State Flag at 4:20 am together with the ethnic groups.

At 6 am, Union-level officials, Union ministers, the Union Auditor-General, the UCSB Chairman, the Nay Pyi Taw Council Chairman, the Governor of the Central Bank of Myanmar, the Chairman of Anti-Corruption Commission, the Myanmar National Human Rights Commission Chairman, senior military

officers, Judges of the Supreme Court of the Union, the Union Constitutional Tribunal members, Union Election Commission members, the commander of Nay Pyi Taw Command, deputy ministers, UCSB members, the CBM deputy governor, Nay Pyi Taw Council members, the vice-mayor of Nay Pyi Taw, Anti-Corruption Commission members, departmental heads, staff members and national people took their places in the square in front of the City Hall.

At 7 am, the flag saluting ceremony was organized and the Guard of Honour (Tatmadaw Army, Navy and Air) marched to the City Square.

Then, Chairman of the 76th Anniversary of Independence Day Ceremony Organ-

izing Central Committee Vice-Chairman of the State Administration Council Deputy Prime Minister Vice-Senior General Thiri Pyanchi Maha Thray Sithu Soe Win took the salute of the Guard of Honour.

He then saluted the State Flag together with the Guard of Honour and attendees to the event.

The Guard of Honour also saluted the nation's fallen leaders and soldiers and took the four-point oath.

Afterwards, the Vice-Senior General read the message sent by SAC Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Thadoe Maha Thray Sithu Thadoe Thiri Thudhamma Min Aung Hlaing to the 76th Anniversary of Independence Day ceremony. — MNA/KTZH



SAC Vice-Chairman Deputy Prime Minister Vice-Senior General Thiri Pyanchi Maha Thray Sithu Soe Win reads the message sent by the SAC Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Thadoe Maha Thray Sithu Thadoe Thiri Thudhamma Min Aung Hlaing to 76th Anniversary of Independence Day ceremony in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

NATIONAL

Independence Day amnesty: Over 9,700 local and foreign prisoners granted pardon

THE government has granted amnesty to 9,651 local prisoners and 114 foreign prisoners from Insein Prison in commemoration of the 76th Independence Day and on humanitarian grounds. Minister for Security and Border Affairs Colonel Win Tint and Commander of Yangon Region Police Force Police Brig-Gen Myo Min Htike of Yangon Region Government delivered speeches to 2,497 inmates at the gymnasium of Insein Prison yesterday morning.



The State Administration Council Government has released 1,079 prisoners from punishment from Insein Prison for the first time, 621 detainees, including those detained under section 505-A, for the second time, 322 detainees, including those detained under section 505-A, for the third time, 668 detainees for the fourth time, 844 prisoners for the fifth time, 1,477 prisoners for the sixth time, 1,167 detainees for the seventh time, 90 prisoners for the eighth time, 160 prisoners, including foreigners, for the ninth time, 985 prisoners, including foreigners, for the tenth time, 1,400 prisoners, including foreigners, for the 11th time, and 2,497 prisoners, including foreigners, for the 12th time. The released prisoners included 2,162 male prisoners, 317 female prisoners, and 18 male foreign prisoners. The prisoners were released from Insein Prison and were sent to relevant districts in the Yangon Region by YBS bus yesterday afternoon. — MNA/MKKS



Male and female inmates are lectured by officials (above) and those inmates leave Insein prison yesterday (below). **PHOTOS: KANU**

Independence Day pardon: Over 1,000 prisoners released in Mandalay Region

A total of 1,051 male and female prisoners from Mandalay Central Prison, located in Aungmyethazan Township, Mandalay, have been granted a pardon as per Order No 1/2024 of the State Administration Council. The released inmates, comprising 862 males and 189 females, received a lecture from Colonel Nay Lin Soe, Minister for Security and Border Affairs for Mandalay Region and Minister for Transport of Mandalay Region, Regional Police Force Commander Police Brig-Gen Sein Lwin at Mandalay Prison.



Families warmly welcome recently-released inmates from Mandalay Prison yesterday. **PHOTO: MAUNG AYE CHAN**

The prison officials released the inmates after conducting a thorough medical checkup and providing them with daily allowances and travel allowances. Director of the Department of Correctional (Mandalay Region) U Cho Win Tun stated, “Since

today is Independence Day, the prisoners who have served their prison terms to a certain extent were granted amnesty. There are a total of 1,697 inmates from prisons and labour stations in the Mandalay Region to be re-

leased today. They were provided allowances for food, travel, and labour after the officials addressed them in lectures, and they were transported to the bus stations, railway stations, and ports. We are glad that they were granted

the pardon”. One of the inmates who received amnesty said, “I’m very happy to be released on this Independence Day. I thank the State leaders who granted us the amnesty. I’m so excited to be reunited with my family. I’m sure I

will live my future life by learning lessons from my mistakes”. A total of 1,697 inmates, including 1,407 males and 290 females, from five prisons and seven labour camps in Mandalay Region. — Maung Aye Chan/ TMT

NATIONAL

Social Security Board's Independence Day initiative: Field medical treatment for insured staff of ministries

IN commemoration of the 76th Anniversary Independence Day, the Social Security Board under the Ministry of Labour is providing medical treatment for the ministries with a mobile medical unit.

From 2 to 15 January, medical treatment are being provided to insured workers of the Ministry of Transport and Communications, Ministry of Information, Ministry of Electric Power, Ministry of Energy, Ministry of Industry, Ministry of Immigration and Population, and Ministry of Labour. Additionally, medical treatment will be given in the industrial zones in Yangon and Bago regions.

The Social Security Board is implementing the social security project, and there are more than 1.2 million workers insured by it.



Specialists and surgeons of Social Security Board with Mobile Unit serving medical treatment.

There are three general hospitals owned by the Social Security Board, 96 township social securi-

ty clinics, 60 departmental clinics, 54 contract clinics, 23 contract clinics for Specialist OG OPD,

12 contract hospitals/maternity clinics, and one traditional medicine clinic to provide medical

treatment to insured workers.

An insured worker who receives a monthly salary of K100,000 per month is required to pay two per cent of his or her salary (K2,000), and the employer has to pay three per cent (K3,000) for him or her.

The maximum salary is set at K300,000, and two per cent (K6,000) has to be paid by the employee, and three per cent (K9,000) has to be paid by the employer.

Depending on the monthly contribution, workers can enjoy benefits on sickness, maternity benefit, death benefit, temporary disability benefit due to work injury, permanent disability benefit, and survivor benefit for death due to occupational hazards. — TWA/TKO

Taxis in Yangon Region need to affix mandatory yellow sideline stickers

THE Yangon Region Public Transport Committee (YRTC) has issued an announcement stating that taxis from other regions and states operating in Yangon Region, similar to City Taxis, must affix yellow sideline stickers.

The installation process is set to commence in January 2024, and after 31 January, strict measures will be enforced against taxis lack-

ing the required yellow sideline stickers.

According to YRTC data, approximately 42,000 City Taxi have already installed yellow line stickers on both sides.

There are a total of 58,481 City Taxis registered at the Yangon Region Road Transport Department, and 55,227 City Taxis registered at the YRTC. — TWA/KZW



Taxis without yellow sideline stickers being installed.

Weekly market update of dry groceries at Bayintnaung Wholesale Centre

FOR a week from 27 December 2023 to 3 January 2024, Bayintnaung Wholesale Centre saw a spike in prices of black gram and pigeon pea (red gram). Meanwhile, the prices of Kyukok garlic and onion declined.

Onion

With the supply of 180,000 visses of onions to Yangon's market on 3 January 2024, the wholesale prices moved in the range of K1,800 and K3,500 per viss depending on the quality, size and producing areas (Seikpyu, Myingyan, and Myittha) that day.

Garlic

The prices of garlic from Aungban, Shan State stood at K15,000-K16,300 per viss depending on varieties and qualities, whereas Kyukok garlic price dropped to K9,500 per viss on 3 January 2024.

Potato

Chinese potato prices touched a low of K2,600-K2,800 per viss on 3 January.

Chilli pepper

The wholesale prices of new chilli peppers were K10,500-K15,000 per viss for long chilli pepper and Mohtaung variety on 3 January. Those red



A retail outlet of dry groceries.

chilies processed in cold storage fetched K14,800-K15,500 per viss. The prices of bell peppers from the Sinphyukyun area and delta regions were K20,000-K21,000 per viss.

Rice

The prices hit K70,000 per sack of ordinary monsoon rice, K76,000 for Manaw Thukha variety, K95,000 for short-mature old rice (90 days), K82,000 per sack of old rice grown under the intercropping season and K95,000 for Pawkywe variety. The high-grade old Pawsan rice prices were K155,000-K180,000 per sack depending on producing areas (Myaungmya, Shwebo) on 3 January. Meanwhile, the prices of new Pawsan varieties fetched K118,000 for Ayeyawady

Pawsan and K140,000 for Shwebo Pawsan. There is no demand for new Shwebo Pawsan in the Yangon market.

Palm oil

For a week from 1 to 7 January 2024, the wholesale reference price of Yangon Region remained unchanged at K4,955 per viss.

Pulses

The prices of various pulses stood at K2,995,000 per tonne of black gram (Fair Average Quality/RC), K3,325,000 per tonne of black gram (Special Quality/RC), K3,315,000 per tonne of pigeon pea (red gram) RC, K3,750 per viss of green gram and K6,150-K6,450 per viss of chickpea in Yangon's wholesale markets. — TWA/KK

Rubber prices stay low in domestic market

THE prices of rubber dipped around K1,600 per pound in Mon State's rubber market.

The prices touched a high of K1,790 per pound of Ribbed Smoked Sheet Local 3 and K1,770 for sun-dried rubber on 18 October. The prevailing prices moved down to K1,610 per pound for sun-dried rubber and K1,630 for RSS Local 3.

Global demand for rubber, rubber production in the South-east Asian nations, and the market supply are contributing factors to Myanmar's rubber prices.

The rubber price in Mon State, a major rubber production state in Myanmar, is closely tied to those factors as well, the traders elaborated.

Myanmar's annual rubber production is estimated at 300,000

tonnes. Seventy per cent of rubber produced in Myanmar goes to China. It is also shipped to Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Viet Nam, the Republic of Korea, India, Japan, and other countries.

Myanmar Rubber Planters and Producers Association aims to achieve rubber exports of 300,000 tonnes in the current 2023-2024 financial year beginning 1 April.

Myanmar conveyed 99,660 tonnes of rubber worth \$123.691 million as of 1 December in the current financial year 2023-2024 beginning 1 April.

The rubber production in the last FY 2022-2023 reached over 360,000 tonnes and more than 200,000 tonnes of rubber were shipped to foreign trade partners.



Adult rubber farm producing rubber latex.

Rubber is commonly produced in Mon and Kayin states and Taninthayi, Bago, and Yangon regions in Myanmar. As per 2018-2019 rubber season 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 bagged more than US\$449 million in revenue in rubber exports in the 2020-2021 FY. — NN/EM

Ordinary rice prices soar by K11,000 per sack in one-month surge

THE domestic rice market saw a spike in fresh non-premium grade rice prices, indicating a sharp rise up to K11,000 per sack within one month, according to the Myanmar Rice Traders Association (Wahdan rice depot).

On 4 January 2024 the prices of new ordinary-grade rice touched a high of K68,000-K77,000 per sack depending on varieties (Ngasein, Aemahta, and rice grown under an intercropping system). The prices surged from K60,500-K69,000 per sack on 4 December 2023.

The figures reflected an increase of K2,000 to K11,000 per sack.

Moreover, new Pawsan rice of premium quality was priced at K80,000 on 4 December in Yangon's wholesale market. On 4 January, the price significantly rose to K95,000 per sack, showing an increase of K15,000 per sack.

The wholesale prices of some old rice varieties remained unchanged at K100,000-K125,000 per sack of high-grade Pawsan from Pyapon, Myaungmya, Pathein, and Shwebo areas, K80,000 for Pawkywe and K72,000 for short-mature rice price (90 days), as per the prices



Quality rice seen in the market.

announced by Wahdan rice depot.

Myanmar Rice Federation (MRF) determined reasonable market prices by considering the following factors; fair profits for the farmers, millers, and distributors, reasonable prices for consumers, last year's market price, global market prices, and other commodities prices.

Consequently, MRF encouraged the affiliated associations, members of commodity depots, exporters, and rice companies to sell the rice at reasonable market prices.

Nonetheless, the price difference is five to ten percent 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.

To have a smooth trade, MRF urged the buyers to contact the MRF and the relevant wholesale centers.

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 reasonable market prices during the monsoon paddy harvest season.

— NN/EM

Pigeon pea price jumps to K3.3 mln per tonne in early 2024

THE prices of pigeon peas bounced back to K3.315 million per tonne on 3 January 2024 from K3.222 million on 30 December 2023, reflecting a significant increase of K92,500 per tonne within five days.

Strong foreign demand in a bustling domestic market raised the price. The pigeon pea price hit a record high of K4.15 million per tonne on 8 September 2023. Myanmar primarily exports black grams, green grams, and pigeon peas to foreign markets. Of them, black grams and pigeon peas are mostly conveyed to India while green grams are shipped to China and Europe.

India has growing demand and consumption requirements for black grams and pigeon peas. According to a Memorandum of Understanding between Myanmar and India signed on 18 June 2021, India will import 250,000 tonnes of black grams and 100,000 tonnes of pigeon peas (tur) from Myanmar for five consecutive years from 2021-2022 financial year to 2025-2026 FY. This G-to-G pact will not affect the pulses' annual quota set by India. Myanmar's exporters are also entitled to deliver the pulses to India under that annual quota. Myanmar exported around 1.1 million tonnes of pulses worth over \$953 million to foreign trade partners over the past eight months of the current 2023-2024 financial year beginning 1 April, the Ministry of Commerce's statistics showed. Myanmar's pulses exports bagged US\$1.47 billion from over 1.9 million tonnes in the previous FY 2022-2023, the Ministry of Commerce's statistics indicated. — NN/EM

OPINION

Beware of unregistered, low-quality, and counterfeit pharmaceuticals

THE Department of Food and Drug Administration is urging the public to steer clear of unregistered drugs flooding the domestic market, emphasizing their low quality, uncertain potency, and potential for adverse side effects. In an official press release, authorities underscored the rampant distribution and sale of these dubious pharmaceuticals.

To aid consumers in distinguishing between legal and illegal drugs, the department has provided guidance on identifying five unregistered substances. Individuals can scrutinize packaging for discrepancies, including mismatched barcodes and packaging forms that deviate from the prescribed instructions. Notably, unregistered drugs lack essential information in the Myanmar language, such as the medical company's title and Myanmar registration number — indispensable markers for authentic pharmaceuticals.

The repercussions of counterfeit drugs extend beyond immediate health concerns and can have far-reaching effects on future generations. While legitimate drug companies can address issues and complaints related to registered drugs, the risks associated with unregistered and fake pharmaceuticals disproportionately affect consumers.

leading to an estimated annual market value of fake drugs reaching a staggering US\$83 billion, according to the World Health Organization (WHO). Alarmingly, one in ten medical products dispatched to developing nations may be either substandard or counterfeit.

The WHO, monitoring fake drugs since 2013, has identified approximately 1,500 hazardous substances, notably malaria and antibiotic drugs. The consumption of such counterfeits can result in drug resistance, genetic mutations in viruses, and adverse health effects. Consequently, the WHO asserts that this issue is a global concern, transcending geographical boundaries.

The repercussions of counterfeit drugs extend beyond immediate health concerns and can have far-reaching effects on future generations. While legitimate drug companies can address issues and complaints related to registered drugs, the risks associated with unregistered and fake pharmaceuticals disproportionately affect consumers.

In response to the public's preference for genuine and high-quality drugs, authorities must conduct surprise inspections of medical stores and pharmacies. Simultaneously, the establishment of state-owned pharmaceutical factories is essential to ensure the production of potent and quality drugs, safeguarding the well-being of the populace. As such, authorities need to raise awareness among people to know the disadvantages of counterfeit drugs to be able to stay away from improper side effects and take severe action against producers of those low-quality drugs.

IN TODAY'S rapidly advancing digital age, where technology plays a pivotal role in our daily lives, the concept of a password has become increasingly essential. A password is like a secret key that unlocks the doors to our online world, safeguarding our personal information and ensuring the security of our digital presence. This article will explore the significance of passwords, their role in online safety, and some basic tips for creating strong and secure passwords.

To begin with, a password serves as a virtual lock that protects our sensitive data from unauthorized access. Whether it's logging into our email accounts, social media profiles, or online banking, a password acts as the first line of defense against potential cyber threats. With the prevalence of cybercrimes and identity theft, the need for strong and unique passwords has never been more crucial.

Creating a secure password involves a careful balance between complexity and memorability. A strong password typically includes a mix of uppercase and lowercase letters, numbers, and special characters. While it might be tempting to use easily memorable words or phrases, it is advisable to avoid common words, birthdays, or easily guessable information. The goal is to create a password that is difficult for others to crack but easy for the user to remember.

Furthermore, it's essential to avoid using the same password across multiple accounts. Reusing passwords increases the risk of a security breach, as a compromised password on one platform could potentially lead to unauthorized access on other accounts. Developing a habit of

using unique passwords for each online service enhances the overall security of one's digital identity.

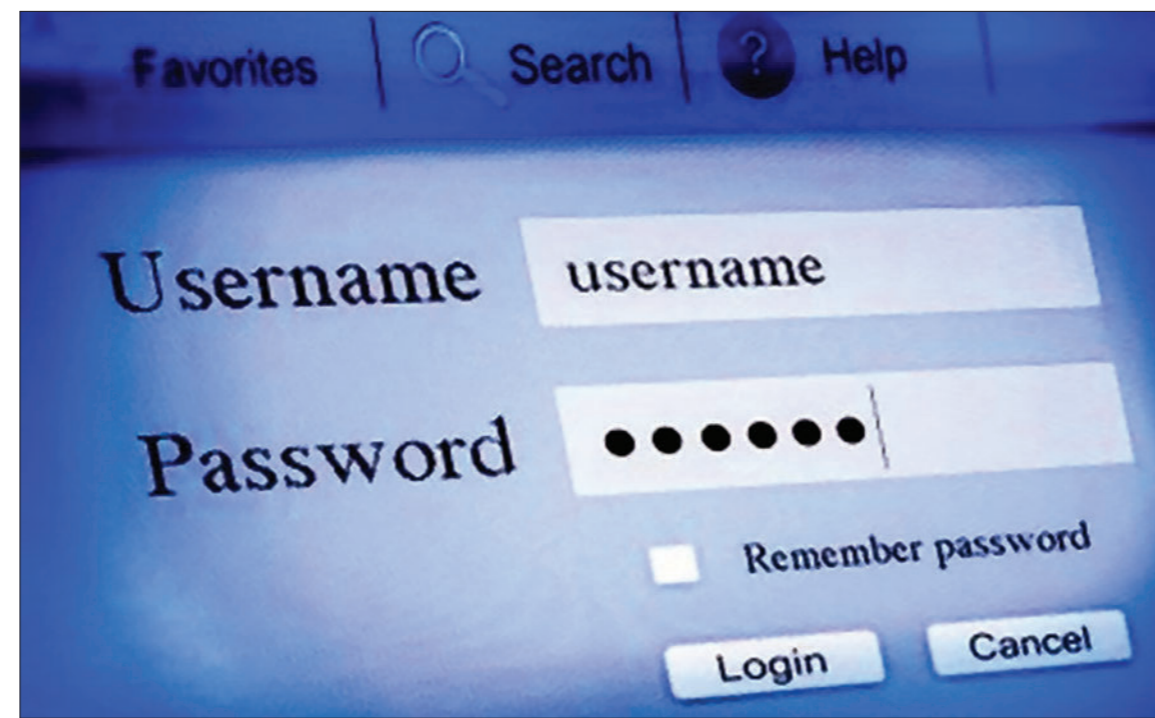
Regularly updating passwords is another good practice to ensure ongoing security. Periodic changes make it more challenging for potential hackers to gain unauthorized access to an account. Many online platforms now prompt users to update their passwords at regular intervals, reinforcing the importance of maintaining password hygiene.

In addition, the humble password plays a pivotal role in the digital landscape, serving as a crucial tool in safeguarding our personal information and maintaining online security. As we celebrate the one-year anniversary of this article, it is an opportune moment to reflect on the significance of passwords and to encourage individuals, especially those new to the digital realm, to adopt good password practices. By creating strong, unique, and regularly updated passwords, we can fortify our online presence and navigate the digital world with confidence and security.

As mentioned above, to make sure nobody else can open something, you use a special word — that's your password. In real life, we have special things that only we should know about, like our favorite color, pet's name, or best friend. These things are like our real-life passwords. They help us connect with our personal stuff and keep it safe.

Similarly, when we go into the digital world, we have online places like email, games, and social media. These places also need a special key — a digital key, or password. Just like in real life, we want to keep our online stuff safe and sound.

Think about your pet's name



Passwords act as secret keys, crucial for unlocking access to our online world and protecting personal information.

PASSWORD AND LIFE

By Yin Nwe Ko

or your favorite food — these could be part of your password! But remember, it's not a good idea to use something too easy, like just your name or birthday. Just like in real life, we want our online keys to be strong and not easy for others to guess.

Also, it's important not to use the same password for everything. Imagine if you had one key that opened all your doors — it wouldn't be very safe, right? The same goes for online places. Each one should have its own special key.

Sometimes, it's good to change our passwords, just like we might change our real-life locks. This helps keep things extra

safe. So, whether in our everyday adventures or in the digital world, passwords are like magical keys that keep our special things safe and secure. By choosing strong and unique passwords, we make sure that only we can open the doors to our online treasures.

Moreover, passwords are like secret friends, helping us keep our online things safe, just like we do in our everyday lives. Let's explore how passwords and human life are similar and share important lessons.

Firstly, trust is crucial both in real life and with passwords. In our daily lives, we trust our friends and family with our secrets. Similarly, when we create a

password, we trust it to keep our online secrets secure.

Identity is another big similarity. In real life, we have our own names, personalities, and things that make us unique. Passwords are like our digital names, making sure that online places know it's really us. It's like having a secret handshake with the internet!

Security is super important, too. In our homes, we lock our doors to stay safe. Passwords act as digital locks, protecting our online spaces from unwanted visitors. We want our homes and digital spaces to be safe and secure.

Change is a part of life, and it's the same with passwords. We grow and learn new things,

just like we should update our passwords regularly. This helps keep our online things safe from problems, just like learning helps us face life's challenges.

Furthermore, passwords are like little life teachers, reminding us about trust, identity, security, and the importance of change. Just like we want to be safe and happy in our everyday lives, we also want our online adventures to be secure. Let's remember these lessons from passwords as we explore the exciting digital world together! Now, you will have to read the true story of a lady.

In a small town, there lived a friendly lady named Phoo Lay. She enjoyed spending time online, connecting with friends and family, and sharing her adventures. Phoo had a special place on the internet where she stored her photos, chatted with friends, and played games. To keep this online world safe, she used a magical key called a password.

One day, Phoo met someone new online. They seemed nice and friendly, sharing common interests with Phoo. Excited to make a new friend, Sarah decided to tell this person her password, thinking it would be a fun way to play games together.

However, things didn't go as expected. The new friend turned out to be tricky. Instead of playing games, they started doing things that caused trouble for Phoo. They sent strange messages to her friends, changed her profile picture to something silly, and even tried to buy things using Phoo's account without asking.

Phoo was surprised and worried when she discovered what had happened. She felt sad and upset that her online world, which was supposed to be a happy place, had turned into a chaotic mess.

It was a big problem caused by sharing her magical key, her password, with someone she didn't really know.

After realizing her mistake, Phoo knew she needed to fix things. First, she changed her password right away to stop the person from causing more trouble. She learned that passwords should be like a secret code, known only to the person who created it. Sharing this magical code with others, especially with someone new, could lead to unexpected problems.

To make things right, Phoo decided to talk to her friends and explain what had happened. She apologized for the strange messages and silly pictures, assuring them it wasn't her doing those things. Phoo's friends were understanding and helped her clean up the mess left by the tricky person.

From this experience, Phoo learned an important lesson about online safety. She understood that passwords were like keys to a treasure chest, and just like in real life, it's crucial to keep our keys safe and not share them with just anyone. Sarah realized that even though the internet is a fun place, there are some people who may try to use others' passwords for the wrong reasons.

Phoo became more careful with her online adventures. She chose a strong and unique password that was not easy for others to guess. Phoo also decided to use a different password for each of her online accounts, like one for her email and another for her games. This way, even if someone found out one password, they wouldn't have access to all of Phoo's online treasures.

Phoo's story spread through the town, and it became a helpful reminder for everyone, young

and old, about the importance of keeping passwords safe. Parents talked to their kids about the magical keys they use online and encouraged them to choose strong and unique passwords. Teachers shared Phoo's story in classrooms, turning it into a valuable lesson about responsible online behavior.

In the end, Phoo's surprising experience became a positive force for change in the small town. People have become more aware of the need to protect their online worlds with strong and secret passwords. Phoo, once troubled by the misuse of her password, became a hero in her community, teaching others about the importance of keeping their online adventures safe and secure.

All in all, Phoo Lay's story teaches us a valuable lesson about the importance of keeping our passwords safe. Just like in our everyday lives where we keep our secrets and special things to ourselves, online passwords are like digital secrets that should be guarded closely. Sharing passwords with new friends, even in the exciting world of the internet, can lead to unexpected problems, just as Phoo experienced. By learning from Phoo's adventure, we understand that passwords are like keys to our online treasures, and it's crucial to choose strong, unique passwords and keep them to ourselves. As we navigate the digital world, let's remember Phoo's story and ensure that our online adventures are filled with safety, security, and the joy of keeping our digital secrets just for us.

Reference: Based on the true story of my niece

Hearing aids may help individuals live longer: Study

ACCORDING to statistics, nearly 40 million American adults suffer from hearing loss, yet barely one in ten people who require hearing aids use them.

Those who don't use hearing aids but should should make it one of their New Year's resolutions, according to a new study published today in The Lancet Healthy Longevity by Keck Medicine of USC.

Researchers found that the almost 25 per cent difference in mortality risk between regular hearing aid users and never-users remained steady, regardless of variables such as the degree of hearing loss (from mild to severe), age, ethnicity, income, education and other demographics; and medical history.

There was no difference in mortality risk between non-regu-

lar users and non-users, indicating that occasional hearing aid use may not provide any life-extending benefit.

Hearing loss

"We found that adults with hearing loss who regularly used hearing aids had a 24 per cent lower risk of mortality than those who never wore them," said Janet Choi, MD, MPH, an otolaryngolo-

gist with Keck Medicine and lead researcher of the study.

"These results are exciting because they suggest that hearing aids may play a protective role in people's health and prevent early death."

Previous research has shown that untreated hearing loss can result in a reduced life span (as well as other poor outcomes such as social isolation, depression and

dementia)

However, until now, there has been very little research examining if the use of hearing aids can reduce the risk of death. The study represents the most comprehensive analysis to date on the relationship between hearing loss, hearing aid use and mortality in the United States, according to Choi.

SOURCE: ANI



Almost 40 million American adults experience hearing loss, but only one in ten who need hearing aids actually use them, as per recent statistics. PHOTO: ANI/PIXABAY

NATIONAL

MoI Deputy Minister encourages 76th Independence Day celebrations with fun & sports

IN celebration of the 76th Independence Day in 2024, various fun and sports events were organized across ministries, basic education schools, and residences within Nay Pyi Taw Council Area. Civil servants, teachers, students, and the public enthusiastically participated in these celebrations.

Led by the Ministry of Information, along with the Ministry of Cooperatives and Rural Development, Ministry of Industry, Ministry of Labour, and Ministry of Science and Technology, the joint festivities and sports events took place at No 11 Basic Education High School in Wunna Theikdi ward, Zabuthiri township. Deputy Minister for Information U Ye Tint, accompanied by teachers, students, and guardians, enjoyed competitions such as long jump, race,



Deputy Minister for Information U Ye Tint enjoys competition of students in Independence Day fun and sports in Nay Pyi Taw Council Area yesterday.

foot-tied race, lemon spoon biting, hula hooping, makeup, dressing clothes, snack eating, balloon shot, cock fighting, back jump, tug of war, burlap sack,

traditional golden dragon race, volleyball tournament, Sepak Takraw, slow bicycle race, and Myanmar's traditional games among others.

Following the spirited competitions, the deputy minister awarded prizes to the winners of various contests, including tug-of-war, lemon spoon biting,

and Myanmar's traditional games.

The deputy permanent secretary of the Ministry of Information, along with deputy directors-general and directors from the Ministry of Cooperatives and Rural Development, Ministry of Industry, Ministry of Labour, and the Ministry of Science and Technology, as well as the headmistress of the No 11 Basic Education High School, presented additional awards.

Simultaneously, sports competitions unfolded in various basic education schools and residences within the Nay Pyi Taw Council Area. Students, family members, and residents participated, and awards were distributed by educators, school heads, and officials from each ward based on sports achievements. — MNA/TS

Conservation efforts for yellow-breasted buntings in Ayeyawady Region by NSCI and local collaboration

THE Native Species Conservation and Identification in Myanmar (NSCI) has announced plans to conserve the pastureland in Kyonkapyin-Tatseik area, Ayeyawady Region, where the Yellow-breasted Buntings, a species on the brink of extinction, typically settle during winter. This initiative will be undertaken in collaboration with the local community.

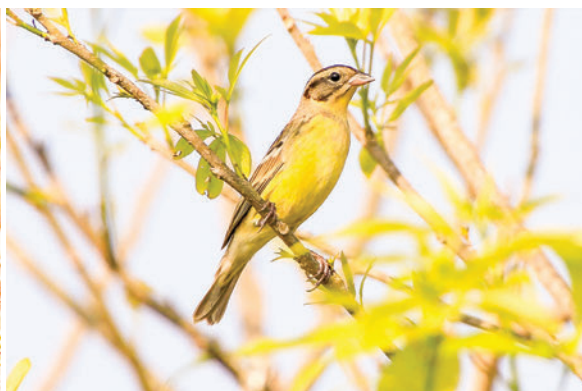
Yellow-breasted Buntings, seeking refuge from the harsh conditions of the north pole, migrate to Myanmar for hibernation. In the period from January to June 2023, the

NSCI, in conjunction with the local wild species conservation group, conducted research and preservation efforts in the Kyonkapyin-Tatseik area. The findings revealed that a total of 6,378 Yellow-breasted Buntings migrated and settled in the specified areas during the research period.

The primary threat to the Yellow-breasted Buntings is the reduction of reed areas crucial for their habitat. Consequently, the NSCI plans to implement awareness-raising and educational programmes for the local community to encourage the

preservation of lands and fields. The report notes that U Thet Zaw Naing, one of the founders of the NSCI, is spearheading these programmes.

The NSCI is actively engaged in on-ground research on biodiversity in Myanmar and aims to disseminate knowledge about biodiversity to the public. Comprising domestic and international experts, the NSCI produces articles on Myanmar's biodiversity, classifies biodiversity varieties, preserves them, and shares information and knowledge about plants and wildlife. — ASH/TMT



Yellow-breasted Bunting is observed in the Kyonkapyin-Tatseik area

Counter-argument to false information

Misinformation: Two civilians wounded, one arrested when security forces opened fire in Madaya



A screen-shot picture of misinformation in Madaya Township.

MALICIOUS news media named DVB is spreading false information that the security forces from Madaya, Mandalay Region, ambushed Tawpu Village Monastery on 2 January and opened fire with heavy and small arms, injuring two people and arresting one person and taking valuables from village homes.

Regarding the news, security officials said that no security forces visited the village on 2 January, and there was no shooting at the residents with large or small arms. Malicious news media is writing and spreading fake news to make people to be afraid of the security forces. — MNA/KZL

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NATIONAL

Kachin State entrepreneurs venture into value-added banana products

ENTREPRENEURS have expressed interest in venturing into the production of value-added banana products and commodities derived from bananas to explore new market opportunities, as reported by the Kachin State Small-Scale Industries Department.

U Aung Maung, the department head, stated, "We have initiated training sessions to educate banana planters on producing banana wine and jam in response to entrepreneurs' requests. Subsequently, we plan to expand these sessions to encompass the creation of various consumer goods."

Despite previous attempts by officials to educate banana planters on producing value-



Banana plantations in Kachin State.

added products, the planters did not show significant interest, likely due to robust

banana exports to China during that period. However, the landscape shifted during the

COVID-19 pandemic when exports were temporarily halted. Upon resumption, buyers be-

came more discerning about quality, resulting in numerous rejections and challenges for the planters. In response, U Aung Maung mentioned that the department redirected its focus toward value-added products.

The department has been disseminating technology and know-how for producing 10 banana-based food items, including wine, jam, dried banana, and chips. Additionally, they offer classes on creating garments, bags, paintings, and umbrellas using fibers derived from banana leaves and stems.

Across Myitkyina, Bhamo, Mohnyin, Mogaung, and Waingmaw townships in Kachin State, there are over 100,000 acres of banana plantations. — ASH/NT



Stars glittering in the sky.

Myanmar can see first quadrantid meteor shower in 2024

MYANMAR can see a quadrantid meteor shower, which is the first in 2024, through 3 January night to 5 January before sunrise, according to MASES-Myanmar Astronomy and Science Enthusiasts Society.

The meteors are debris of 2003 EH1 broken asteroid.

"Quadrantid meteor shower peak time just lasts about 6 hours. We can see quite a large quantity on night of 3 January, but this year meteor shower peak is predicted from 8:00 pm of 4 January to next morning before sunrise. However, the

quadrantid meteor shower is difficult to predict and the meteor called Zenith stays just below the horizon at 8:00pm of 4 January and gradually rises up at around 1:30 am. The quadrantid meteor shower falls 60 per hour to the minimum and 200 per hour to the maximum. The fireball can also be seen," said MASES.

People should watch the meteor shower from a site where the sky is clear and the light is low, and it can be seen the best with bare eyes without equipment like telescope. — MT/ZS

State-of-the-art on-site wastewater treatment facility planned for Insein

YANGON City Development Committee (YCDC) will build a high-tech on-site wastewater treatment plant near Aung Zeya Bridge in Insein Township and provide services to Insein, Hlinethaya, Shwepyitha and Hline townships, according to U Zaw Min Htut, Staff Officer of YCDC's Engineering Department (Water and Sanitation).

"Before we started this project, we had been doing research since 2022 on a 10-cubic-metre small-scale on-site wastewater treatment plant at Thanlyatsun Sewage

Treatment site in Botahtaung Township. The wastewater treatment facility to be built in Insein is a 100 cubic metres capacity. The sewage and wastewater discharged from houses will be transported by vacuum trucks to discharge to the wastewater treatment plant before sending them to the sun-dried tank. From there, it will be separated and filtered before discharging into the rivers as pure water. The residents in the area can save a lot of service charges as there is a treatment plant around their

townships, and it will also reduce the amount of sewage discharged into the drainage canals. After the wastewater treatment plant is constructed, we can provide service to Insein, Hlinethaya, Shwepyitha, and Hline townships," U Zaw Min Htut said.

The high-tech on-site wastewater treatment plants that treat water to reach a certain purity level before being returned to the rivers will be built in the townships located near the rivers and creeks in Yangon Region. — ASH/TH



The photo depicts an area near Aung Zeya Bridge where an on-site wastewater treatment plant is to be built.

ECONOMY WORLD

Rosy prospects: Gold aims for sky-high 2024

Looking ahead to 2024, investors in gold predict a promising year, influenced by factors such as unresolved geopolitical challenges, a gradual shift away from using the American dollar for international settlements by world governments, and increased interest from central banks in the precious metal, all stemming from the events of 2023.

MORE investors are turning to gold as a hedge against the weakening dollar. November saw a notable increase in investments, according to an investment fund that tracks gold prices. Anticipated rate cuts in various economies could further bolster gold's appeal.

Investors in gold foresee a promising 2024 for gold, with factors like unresolved geopolitical challenges, a gradual shift of world governments from using the American dollar for international settlements and central banks' increased appetite for the choice metal all shaping the market after the events of 2023.

Spot gold, currently trad-



Investors are increasingly turning to gold as a hedge against the weakening dollar, with a significant uptick in November investments reported by a gold price-tracking investment fund.

PHOTO: SPUTNIK

ing around \$2,060 per ounce, has demonstrated resilience throughout 2023 by posting a 13 per cent annual increase, the

most significant since 2020. The rising trend of dedollarization is expected to drive gold prices further in 2024. — SPUTNIK

'The American Century is Over': US Faces Economic Turbulence in 2024

Kanthan highlighted a shift in power dynamics, emphasizing the diminishing influence of the United States, pointing to the dominance of Asian container sea ports and a decline in Western trade significance, signaling the end of a post-World War II era fantasy for the US.

IN this year's first episode of the New Rules podcast, host Dimitri Simes Jr spoke

with India-based geopolitical analyst SL Kanthan about how will the world look like

in 2024.

"The US has been living in a fantasy world since the World War Two, but that ride is now coming to an end. If you look at the top ten busiest container sea ports, seven of them are in China, and one or two more are in South Korea and in Singapore.

The trade is all happening on the east side of the world. And the western part, if you look at Los Angeles and so on, they really have dropped in trade and they're not significant anymore. So, whatever way you slice the cake, the US is losing its preeminence. And the power has moved to the East." — SPUTNIK



Among the top ten busiest container sea ports, seven are located in China, with one or two additional ports situated in South Korea and Singapore. A container ship of China's COSCO Shipping docks at a container terminal of the Port of Long Beach in California, the United States, 20 August 2021. **PHOTO: GAO SHAN/XINHUA/FILE**

Sweden faces bankruptcy avalanche not seen since the 1990s

The country witnessed a 29 per cent surge in insolvencies in 2023, the highest since the 1990s, triggered by the burst of the property bubble.

SWEDEN faces a possible recession in 2024, especially after the central bank ended its 18-month run of interest rate hikes.

Swedish insolvencies spiked by 29 per cent in 2023 — the highest since 1990s — after the property bubble burst.

Credit rating firm UC said December saw a 23 per cent year-on-year rise in bankruptcies, which could indicate deeper economic issues, especially against the backdrop of sustained high inflation and interest rates.

"The slightly optimistic trend that we saw in the autumn, where bankruptcies seemed to stabilize, has now reversed, and the development has picked up

speed again," said Gabriella Goransson, CEO of UC.

Sweden's central bank has ended its 18-month run of interest rate hikes as the spectre of recession looms in 2024.

Goransson stressed that previously healthy firms now faced financial challenges.

Major sectors including construction, retail and the hospitality industry are seeing fewer new start-ups than at any time in the past decade. But the number of bankruptcies has not yet level of the 1990s recession because "today's market is more global than it was then, and the crisis has hit more broadly," Goransson said. — SPUTNIK



A number of people enjoy their meals at a restaurant in Sweden. In December, credit rating firm UC reported a 23 per cent year-on-year increase in bankruptcies, suggesting potential deeper economic issues. **PHOTO: PIX FOR VISUAL PURPOSE/ XINHUA**

Pakistan urges efficient implementation of track and trace system for imported cigarettes

IN wake of the widespread smuggling of foreign cigarettes, Pakistani officials have called for the effective implementation of a track and trace system and bringing the informal sector into the tax net, The Express Tribune reported on Wednesday.

It reported that in a recent meeting of the economic coor-

dination committee, the policymakers' expressed concern over the unorganised sector of tobacco and noted that a very little amount of taxes was being collected from the formal tobacco sector owing to large scale smuggling of foreign cigarettes, which was not under the tax net. — ANI

Disney's Mickey Mouse enters public domain after 95 years

The 95-year intellectual property hold by the entertainment giant on the beloved character ended on 1 January.

FROM 2024, artists can incorporate Mickey Mouse into their creations — with some restrictions due to Disney's ongoing copyright on more recent versions of the iconic character.

The world-famous image of cartoon character Mickey Mouse has entered the public domain following the end of the Walt Disney Company's copyright on his first appearance in 'Steamboat Willie' from 1928. The entertainment mega-corporation's 95-year intellectual property hold on its squeaky-voiced star expired on 1 January. From 2024, creators can use Mickey Mouse in their artistic works, including paintings, novels, and

songs. But there are limitations due to Disney's continued copyright on newer versions of the character.

The movie company also plans to protect its trademarks, potentially restricting some creative uses of the character. A spokesperson for Disney stressed the enduring association between Mickey Mouse and the company's brand. "Ever since Mickey Mouse's first appearance in the 1928 short film Steamboat Willie, people have associated the character with Disney's stories, experiences, and authentic products. That will not change when the copyright in the Steamboat Willie film expires." — SPUTNIK



As of 2024, artists can include Mickey Mouse in their works, but with limitations due to Disney's continued copyright protection for more recent versions of the character. PHOTO: SPUTNIK

NE China ice and snow proving a magnet for travelers

From Shanghai, over 1,000 kilometres away in east China, Shi Lei couldn't resist the allure of the snow in Shenyang.

ONCE she arrived in Shenyang, capital of northeast China's Liaoning Province, Shi Lei discovered immediately that she couldn't resist the lure of the snow, as she found herself flushing due to both excitement and the winter cold.

"When I looked down from the plane, I saw the land coated in white, which looked so magical," said the woman from Shanghai, a metropolis in east China located 1,000-plus kilometers from Shenyang.

In this city, which served as capital of Manchuria before the establishment of the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911), where tem-



A tourist has fun at the Sun Island scenic area in Harbin, northeast China's Heilongjiang Province, 1 January 2024. PHOTO: WANG JIANWEI / XINHUA

peratures well below zero Celsius are normal in winter, Shi and her boyfriend planned to celebrate the beginning of 2024 by visiting the Qing-era imperial palace complex and eating

braised goose in an iron pot, a form of traditional cuisine in the northeast of China.

China's former major industrial heartland and once called the "rust belt" because of the difficulties

it encountered in terms of transformation and development, northeast China, which consists of the provinces of Liaoning, Jilin and Heilongjiang, is now known best for its rich ice and snow resources and is welcoming many visitors from across the country this winter.

While many flock to the northeast for winter sports like skiing, Shuangfeng Forest Farm which is known as China's "Snow Town", has also proved a significant attraction, having received close to 600,000 visitors from the start of this winter season until the end of 2023. — Xinhua

GM US sales up 14% in 2023

GENERAL Motors Co. said Wednesday it sold 2.6 million vehicles in the United States in 2023, up 14 per cent from 2022 sales and in line with industry estimates.

This marked the US automaker's best annual performance since 2019,

when it sold 2.9 million vehicles in the United States. GM reported sales increase in every brand in 2023. To be specific, GMC sales rose nine per cent, Chevrolet 13 per cent, Cadillac nine per cent and Buick 61 per cent. — Xinhua



GM expanded its market share by 0.3 percentage points in 2023, with all-electric vehicles accounting for 2.9 per cent of its overall sales. PHOTO: AFP

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V MCC ANDALAS VOY.NO. (401W)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V MCC ANDALAS VOY.NO. (401W)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **5-1-2024** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **AWPT** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S SEALAND MAERSK ASIA PTE LTD.

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V MSC SUPARNA F VOY.NO. (SB348A)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V MSC SUPARNA F VOY.NO. (SB348A)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **5-1-2024** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **AWPT** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S MEDITERRANEAN SHIPPING COMPANY S.A

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V ISEACO WISDOM VOY.NO. (106N)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V ISEACO WISDOM VOY.NO. (106N)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **5-1-2024** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **AWPT** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S NEW GOLDEN SEA LINES

ROLLING UPDATES: WORLD

Cambodia records 2 more cases of monkeypox

The ministry highlighted various transmission methods for the monkeypox virus, including person-to-person contact, sexual contact, and transmission from mother to child during or after birth, urging individuals with symptoms to seek medical consultation or testing.



Photo taken on 27 December 2021 shows the Cambodia-China Friendship Medical Building in Phnom Penh, capital of Cambodia. PHOTO: ZHANG CHAO/XINHUA

CAMBODIA reported two more cases of monkeypox, prompting a call for caution to avoid an outbreak, the Ministry of Health said in a statement late on Wednesday.

“Laboratory results from the National Institute of Public Health showed on Wednesday that two more persons were

positive for monkeypox,” the ministry said. “The duo has been currently placed under quarantine for treatment at a hospital.”

Monkeypox virus can be transmitted from person to person through all forms of sexual contact with a person with monkeypox and through

direct contact with wounds, body fluids, saliva, and equipment contaminated with the virus, the ministry said.

It added that monkeypox virus can be passed from mother to child through an umbilical cord during or after birth if a pregnant woman has monkeypox. — Xinhua

EV sales continue to dominate Norway’s new car market

The country witnessed a substantial increase in EV sales, with over 104,600 electric vehicles out of a total of 126,953 new cars sold last year.

ELECTRIC vehicles (EVs) maintained their dominance in Norway’s new car market throughout 2023, as revealed by the latest statistics from the Norwegian Road Federation on Tuesday. The data showed a significant uptick in EV sales, reaching a record high of 82.4 per cent of the total new car market last year, up from 79.3 per cent in 2022, marking a 3.1 percentage point increase.

In total, Norway saw 126,953 new cars sold in 2023, with electric vehicles accounting for more than 104,600.



PHOTO: PIX FOR VISUAL PURPOSE/ AFP/FILE

Among the leading brands in this surge, Tesla, Toyota, and Volkswagen emerged as the top sellers.

Notably, brands with Chi-

nese backing, such as Volvo, MG, Polestar, and BYD, made impressive strides, securing positions in the top 20 in sales.

— Xinhua



This picture taken on 3 March 2022 shows South Korea’s presidential candidate Lee Jae-myung of the Democratic Party gesturing to his supporters during an election campaign in Seoul ahead of the 9 March presidential election. PHOTO: PIX FOR VISUAL PURPOSE/ AFP

Stabbed S Korean opposition leader ‘recovering well’: doctor

Lee, attacked by a man pretending to be a supporter in Busan, suffered a 1.4-centimetre pierced wound cutting through his muscle, with about 60 per cent of the internal jugular vein affected.

SOUTH Korean opposition party leader Lee Jae-myung, who was stabbed in the neck, is recovering well but still needs close monitoring to avoid complications, a Seoul National University Hospital doctor said Thursday.

Lee was surrounded by journalists in the southern port city of Busan on Tuesday when a man pretending to be a supporter pushed through the crowd and lunged at him, stabbing him on the left side of his neck with a knife.

Lee, who suffered a wound to his jugular vein, was first taken to a hospital in Busan, then flown to the capital Seoul where he underwent a nearly two-hour surgery.

Lee “is fortunately recovering well”, said Min Seung-kee, the doctor who performed the surgery.

Lee had suffered a “1.4 centimetre pierced wound that cut through his muscle”, Min said at a press conference, adding that “bouts of bleeding were found” in his neck. — AFP

TOP NEWS

Over 100 dead in bomb explosions near Iran’s Quds Commander Soleimani’s Tomb

EXPLOSIONS have been reported in the Iranian city of Kerman, where IRGC General Qasem Soleimani is buried. The cause of the explosions is unknown but at least 103 people are reportedly dead and 141 wounded. Local authorities have already dubbed the explosions a terrorist attack. According to reports, two bombs were planted in bags near the cemetery and were activated remotely.

Iranian state television also announced that “following the terrorist incident in Kerman, the government declared tomorrow (Thursday) a day for public mourning across the country.”

Iran’s President Ebrahim Raisi vowed to bring the masterminds and perpetrators of the “heinous” terrorist attack to justice.

The president further declared that the enemies of his country should know that such acts of terror cannot break the Iranian people’s determination to protect their values. — SPUTNIK

SPORTS

International Show Jumping competition held to mark 76th Anniversary of Independence Day



A boy produces his stunning skill during the Show Jumping competition held in Yangon on 4 January 2024.

THE International Show Jumping competition was held yesterday at the grounds of the Myanmar Equestrian Federation in Yangon to commemorate the 76th Anniversary of Independence Day.

Five U-14 riders for the

40-50 centimetres event, six riders aged between 14 and 18 for the 60-centimetre event, and three riders aged above 18 for the 110-centimetre event competed in the tournament.

The International Show

Jumping competition was held according to the rules of the International Federation for Equestrian Sports (FEI) certificates and ribbons plus prizes were awarded by officials after the competitions.

— Lin Yamha/KZL

Premier League key for Everton's Dyche ahead of FA Cup tie

EVERTON manager Sean Dyche insisted staying in the Premier League is the "be-all and end-all" but claimed his side would "respect" the FA Cup by going into the game with the

right mentality. Dyche takes the Toffees, five-times FA Cup winners, to top-flight rivals Crystal Palace for a third-round tie on Thursday.

Everton recovered well af-

ter being hit with a 10-point deduction for breaching Premier League profit and sustainability rules in November by winning four successive games last month. — AFP

Kyaw Swa Win beat Thai fighter Pong Siri in Myanmar-Thailand Lethwei tourney

MYANMAR'S Kyaw Swa Win defeated Thai fighter Pong Siri in the second round of the Myanmar-Thailand Lethwei Tournament held at Thuwunna Indoor Stadium-I in Yangon yesterday.

The tourney, featuring six bouts, began at 1 pm Myanmar Standard Time.

Kyaw Swa Win tried to hit the target but missed during the first round of the 72 kg bout. In the second round, Kyaw Swa Win landed a series of punches and elbow on Pong Siri, to finish the fight at 2:09 minute.

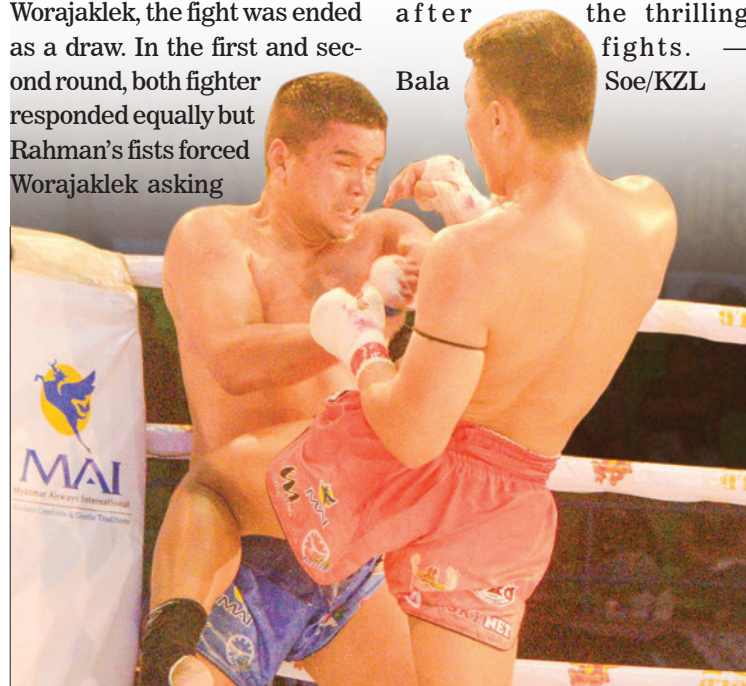
In the fight of 75kg, Myanmar's Rahman vs Thailand's Worajaklek, the fight was ended as a draw. In the first and second round, both fighter responded equally but Rahman's fists forced Worajaklek asking

for the rest in the third round. Again the fourth and fifth round sees no knock-out action till the final minute.

The 55kg event fights of Ko Ko (Cement Factory) vs Taing Kyaw (M2K Club), the 60kg event fight of Moe Hein vs Naing Aung Shin (Lethwei Warrior Club), and the 65kg event fight of Saw Ba Hein (Cement Factory) vs Aphoe Thway (Lethwei Warrior Club) ended as tie bouts.

In the 62 kg event, Thuye Kaung (Cement Factory) beat Kaung Sett Naing (Yoeya Kyar) in the second round. Officials presented awards to the winners after the thrilling fights. —

Bala Soe/KZL



Myanmar's Kyaw Swar Win lands the knee on the Thai fighter Pong Siri during the final bout of 72 kg event of Myanmar-Thailand Lethwei Tournament held at Thuwunna Indoor Stadium-I in Yangon on 4 January 2024. PHOTO: BALA SOE

Girona edge Atletico thriller, stay level with Real Madrid

SHOCK Spanish title challengers Girona snatched a remarkable 4-3 victory over Atletico Madrid to keep pace with Real Madrid at the top of La Liga on Wednesday.

After Los Blancos edged Real Mallorca 1-0 thanks to Antonio Rudiger's goal, Ivan Martin's stoppage time strike ensured the Catalan minnows matched Carlo Ancelotti's side on 48 points from 19 matches.

Alvaro Morata hit a hat-trick for Atletico at Girona's tiny

Montilivi stadium, but it was not enough as Martin found the top corner at the death to keep Girona firmly in the hunt for the title.

Atletico, third, trail both Real and Girona by 10 points, as do champions Barcelona, fourth, who visit Las Palmas on Thursday. Valery Fernandez, Savinho and Daley Blind netted for the hosts in a wild first half, with Morata twice scoring for Atletico.

The Spain international completed his treble early in the second period to pull Atlet-



Girona's Spanish coach Michel (C) celebrates victory at the end of the thrilling 4-3 win over Atletico Madrid. PHOTO: AFP

ico level but Martin's last gasp heroics snatched Girona victory from a compelling clash.

"It's a historic night for us, for the city, for the province," Girona coach Michel told Movistar.

Girona, in only their fourth season in the top flight in their history and promoted in 2022, could have taken the lead inside the first minute.

Artem Dovbyk fired wide at the near post when well placed, but his team did not have to wait much longer. — AFP



Top 10 mega-projects of China's central SOEs in 2023 selected

Notable projects include the launch of the Shenzhou-17 manned spaceship, the operation of China's new-generation "artificial sun" HL-3, and the commencement of a new nuclear power unit using the domestically designed Hualong One third-generation nuclear reactor.



The artificial sun in Chengdu of Southwest China's Sichuan Province. PHOTO: COURTESY OF CHINA ATOMIC ENERGY AUTHORITY

CHINA'S state-owned assets regulator published a list on Wednesday of mega-projects that were completed or started construction in 2023 by the country's central state-owned enterprises.

Among the projects that exemplified super engineering are the launch of Shenzhou-17 manned spaceship, the operation of China's new-generation

"artificial sun" HL-3 in the high-confinement mode under a plasma current of 1 million amperes, and the kickstart of a new nuclear power unit using Hualong One, a domestically designed third-generation nuclear reactor.

The Jakarta-Bandung High-Speed Railway, the cross-sea underwater tunnel between the cities of Shenzhen and Zhongshan, the main project of a grid

that significantly uplifted the power supply in the Greater Bay Area have been included in the list. The building of an intelligent computing center and a large ethylene project, the operation of an eco-friendly offshore oil field, and the commercial service that supports the two-way connection between consumer-grade 5G terminals and satellites also made it into the top 10. — Xinhua

CONTROVERSIAL UPDATE TO INVESTIGATORY POWERS ACT

Expansion of UK Investigatory Law to Force Tech Companies Into 'Surveillance State'

THE UK government's drive to update the country's controversial Investigatory Powers Act (IPA) is prompting "a fresh outcry" among both industry execs and privacy campaigners, a US news outlet has reported.

According to the outlet, Downing Street's actions to expand what is known as one of Europe's toughest surveillance laws could hobble efforts to protect user privacy.

In a letter to Home Secretary James Cleverly, industry body TechUK warned that the Investigatory Powers (Amendment) Bill threatens technological innovation, undermines the sovereignty of other nations and leads to far-reaching consequences if it causes a domino effect overseas.

TechUK insisted that combined with pre-existing powers, the IPA changes would "grant a de-facto power to indefinitely veto companies from making changes to their products and services offered in the UK".

"We stress the critical need for adequate time to thoroughly discuss these changes, highlighting that rigorous scrutiny is essential given the international precedent they will set and their very serious impacts," the letter reads.

The document points out that TechUK is concerned that the the proposed changes are presented by the Home Office as minor adjustments and as such are being downplayed. — SPUTNIK

US House Speaker: Border situation part of 'unmitigated disaster' created by Biden

During a visit to Eagle Pass, Texas, Johnson, along with 60 Republican lawmakers, witnessed firsthand the challenges, emphasizing the record-high illegal crossings of 302,000 in December.

US House Speaker Mike Johnson said on Wednesday that the situation at the border with Mexico is an "unmitigated disaster" of President Joe Biden's own design.

"It's an unmitigated disaster, a catastrophe. And

what's more tragic is that it's a disaster of the president's own design," said Johnson at a briefing near Eagle Pass, Texas.

Johnson added that the situation is both heartbreaking and infuriating, noting the US

saw the most illegal crossings in history last month.

US media reported on Tuesday that officials documented 302,000 migrant encounters in December — the highest figure recorded in a single month. — SPUTNIK



US law enforcement authorities are seen apprehending migrants on the US-Mexico border in El Paso, Texas, amid a recent surge ahead of the expiration of Title 42. PHOTO: SPUTNIK