

The Global **NEW LIGHT** of MYANMAR

Myanmar, China underscore commitment to fostering peace & stability in border region



Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and Mr Sun Weidong, Vice-Minister of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, exchanged views on efforts to forge peace and stability in the border region between Myanmar and China.

Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing held talks with Mr Sun Weidong, Vice-Minister of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, at the Tatmadaw Guesthouse in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

Both sides discussed the promotion of frank cooperation between the two countries based on the Pauk-Phaw relationship, plans to further promote cooperation between the two countries, and future programmes.

Also present at the meeting were SAC Joint Secretary Lt-Gen Ye Win Oo, Union Minister for Home Affairs Lt-Gen Yar Pyae, Union Minister for Foreign Affairs U Than Swe, and officials. The Chinese Vice-Minister of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was accompanied by Ambassador of China to Myanmar Mr Chen Hai and Mr Deng Xijun, Special Envoy for Asian Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China, and officials. — MNA/TTA

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing shakes hands with Mr Sun Weidong, Vice-Minister of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China.

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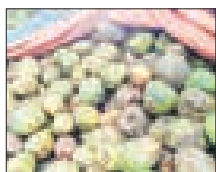
European tourists flock to Wa Ale Resort in Lampi Marine National Park annually

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Japanese firms verify demand letters for modifications

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China buys Myanmar coconut to make shell charcoal



Myanmar's natural gas exports bag over US\$2 bln in 8 months

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NATIONAL

National Objectives of 77th Union Day 2024

- To protect the perpetuity of the Union by the entire ethnic people through the Union spirit
- To join hands in harmony with the government, Tatmadaw, and the entire people to ensure the state stability and rules of law
- To promote all-inclusive livestock breeding-based manufacturing industries and MSMEs, ensuring the socioeconomic development of the entire ethnic people
- To make collaborative efforts of all ethnic nationals to ensure the prosperity of the nation and food security which are the two national visions
- To strive to emerge a modern and developing country, as well as a Union based on democratic and federal systems, by all ethnic nationals

Mottos of 77th Union Day 2024

1. Unity is strength,
Power of Union
2. Drifting in one boat, on the same voyage we float
Ethnic brethren of the land joining hand in hand
3. Marching towards with unity
Ensuring the destination of the Union
4. Let's firmly join hands among ethnic national brethren
of the Union
5. Let's go forward with unity of the ethnic nationals

Mr Bashar al-Assad, President of the Syrian Arab Republic, 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 occasion of the celebration of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, I am pleased to extend to you my warmest congratulations and best wishes for good health and prosperity, and more progress to the friendly people of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

I also renew to you our keenness to exert joint efforts for strengthening and developing the existing relations of cooperation between our two countries to serve the interests of our two friendly peoples.

Myanmar's natural gas exports bag over US\$2 bln in 8 months



The photo shows the M5 and M6 offshore national gas blocks by Yadana offshore projects in the Gulf of Mottama in 2018.

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THE value of Myanmar's natural gas exports totalled over US\$2 billion in the current financial year 2023-2024, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

Of the top export groups, Myanmar's natural gas export sector ranked second between 1 April and 22 December. The statistics released by the Ministry of Planning and Finance indicated that

natural gas earnings crossed \$841.7 million in the Q1 (April-June) of the current FY, which was down by \$67.8 million compared to that of the corresponding period last FY.

Myanmar exported natural gas to Thailand, China, and Japan. Yadana, Yedagun, Shwe, and Zawtika offshore gas production projects conduct drilling and extraction of natural gas at present. — TWA/KK

MOGE initiates replacement of expired CNG cylinders for vehicle safety

THE CNG Department under the Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise (MOGE) of the Ministry of Energy is set to replace expired CNG cylinders in CNG vehicles with new ones, as reported.

The CNG Department has requested that CNG cylinders used in vehicles undergo checks and be utilized within the specified period. Once the expiry date is reached, the department will arrange for the cylinders to be replaced to ensure the safety of both drivers and passengers. The designated period for using CNG cylinders is 15 years.

A total of 41 CNG filling stations in the Yangon region, two in the Mandalay region, and three in the Magway region daily distribute 20 million cubic feet of CNG to 28,301 vehicles, according to the CNG Department. — TWA/MKKS



NATIONAL

MIC greenlights 4 new investment projects

The meeting 1/2024 of the Myanmar Investment Commission was held yesterday afternoon at the Union Government Office in Nay Pyi Taw. State Administration Council Member, Deputy Prime Minister, and Myanmar Investment Commission Chairman General Mya Tun Oo, and members of the commission attended the meeting.

In the meeting, the capital increase of the ongoing investment, including the industrial sector, the housing construction and development sector, and the service sector of four new investment projects were

approved. The investment amount of these enterprises is K48,864.955 million, which will create 392 local employment opportunities.

Until the end of November 2023, among the 52 countries/regions that invested in Myanmar, the most investments were from Singapore, China, and Thailand. Among the 12 economic sectors, the most invested sectors are the energy sector with 28.50 per cent of the total investment, 24.45 per cent of the total investment in the oil and natural gas sector, and 14.41 per cent of the total investment in the industrial sector.



Myanmar Investment Commission meeting 1/2024 in progress in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

The Myanmar Investment Commission is responsible for verifying and approving invest-

ment proposals submitted by domestic and foreign investors and currently providing invest-

ment services for investors under the Myanmar Investment Law. — MNA/TS



MIFER Union Minister receives Ambassador of Bangladesh to Myanmar

DR KAN ZAW, Union Minister for Investment and Foreign Economic Relations received Ambassador of Bangladesh to Myanmar Dr Md Monwar Hossain in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday afternoon.

They cordially discussed matters on bilateral investment

and economic cooperation between Myanmar and Bangladesh.

The meeting was also attended by senior officials from the Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations. — MIFER

MoI UM warns against dangers of misinformation

UNION MINISTER for Information U Maung Maung Ohn addressed the forum titled “State Building and the Role of State Media” at the Naypyitaw State Academy in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. Government officials, faculty members, teachers, and students of the academy were among the attendees. The forum began with documentary videos namely “Preventing Media Poisoning” and “State Building and the Role of State Media”.

The Union minister emphasized the detrimental impact of misleading information circulated by malicious media outlets, labelling it as fake news designed to mislead the public. He warned against the dangers of misinformation, pointing out the biased

and “toxic” nature of many news reports on social media platforms like Facebook.

He also highlighted the Information Ministry’s efforts to combat fake news and inform the citizens of accurate reports.

He expressed concerns over the terrorists’ disregard for essential infrastructure such as bridges and roads, which the government constructed nationwide, during the conflicts in Shan State (North).

He emphasized the plight of internally displaced people and noted that while the destruction was swift, the restoration efforts demanded significant time and resources. He highlighted the extensive damages inflicted, affecting not only local communi-

ties but also the State as a whole.

He conveyed his appreciation for the presence of students among the attendees and highlighted the Prime Minister’s commitment to prioritizing education. Encouraging the students, he urged them to dedicate themselves to education and the advancement of their nation. He stressed the importance of responsible media consumption, thoughtful contemplation of current circumstances, and the unequivocal condemnation of terrorism. — MNA/NT

Union Minister for Information U Maung Maung Ohn presents fiction and non-fiction books to attendees.



NATIONAL

Myanmar, China hold virtual meeting on cooperation to combat transnational crimes, online scams



THE Myanmar delegation led by State Administration Council Member Union Minister for Home Affairs Lt-Gen Yar Pyae held a virtual meeting with the Chinese delegation led by Member of the State Council of the People's Republic of China and Minister for Public Security Mr Wang Xiaohong yesterday at the Ministry of Home Affairs in Nay Pyi Taw. The two sides exchanged views on implementation works based on the outcomes of the 7th Myanmar-China ministerial meeting on law enforcement and security cooperation, bilateral relations in combatting transnational crimes and online scams, Myanmar-China cooperation in the tranquillity of border areas, and bilateral ties.

The meeting was also attended by deputy ministers of the Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Ministry of Immigration and Population, the permanent secretary of the Ministry of Home Affairs, and the Chinese Ambassador to Myanmar, and other relevant officials. — MNA/KTZH

SAC member Union Minister for Home Affairs Lt-Gen Yar Pyae holds talks with Member of the State Council of the People's Republic of China and Minister of Public Security Mr Wang Xiaohong yesterday.

MoI UM discusses holding of Myanmar Film Academy Award Ceremony

UNION Information Minister U Maung Maung Ohn, in his capacity as Chairman of the Steering Committee on the 2023 Myanmar Film Academy Award Ceremony, attended the coordination meeting of the committee in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

At the meeting, the Union minister highlighted the awarding ceremony to be held at MICC I in Nay Pyi Taw on 3 February and the plan of government to bear the cost of the golden star at the Academy statue and golden brooch for the artistes to the event, signing agreement with main sponsor Forever Group Co Ltd on 3 January, reviewing processes of 35 movies screened in 2023 and 12 movies that completed the scrutinizing process of second stage on 3 January.

He also talked about the

selection of 13 males and 13 females for the role of receptionist who gets to carry the Academy statues, and 43 artistes were chosen by the receptionist selection team, film production industries, and channels aiming at emerging talent artistes in the future, he added.

He also stressed the need to complete the installation of the lighting, sound, and camera setting not later than 28 January, while the Technical Rehearsal on 29 January, and to work together with the relevant committees to complete the operations in time.

Then, the vice-chairperson of the steering committee, the chairperson of the working committee, and the secretary of the steering committee reported on the measures to hold the event



The meeting focuses on process of Myanmar film academy award ceremony in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

successfully, cooperation with Nay Pyi Taw Council and Nay Pyi Taw Development Commit-

tee, and ongoing work plans.

The Union minister gave proper instructions after the

presentations of the participants of relevant organizations and sub-committees. — MNA/KTZH

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NATIONAL



Flocks of domestic travellers seen in Bagan.

Bagan welcomes 450,000+ domestic tourists

MORE than 450,000 visitors across Myanmar travelled the Bagan Ancient Cultural Zone last year, according to Assistant Director U Myo Min Aung of the Directorate of Hotels and Tourism (Bagan Branch).

The assistant director stated: "From 1 January to 25 December 2023, we received 457,956 domestic tourists. Lawkananda, Shwezigon and Ananda pagodas were among the most visited."

He noted that even the Sinbyushin Temple, typically drawing limited interest from travellers, had experienced a surge in visitors.

"The temple could be called a

Sangha University during the Bagan era, accommodating nearly 4,000 monks in its heyday. U Kyipwe Pond near Culamani Pagoda became popular among visitors, too," he added.

Bagan is one of Myanmar's major tourist destinations and remains bustling with visitors across the country year-round, especially during public holidays.

Renowned for its intact ancient religious buildings, Bagan continues to attract both domestic and international travellers. The Bagan Ancient Cultural Zone has 89 hotels, motels and guesthouses, and 24 municipal guesthouses. — ASH/NT

THE European tourists yearly flock to Wa Ale Resort, located in Lampi Marine National Park, just about 60 nautical miles from Kawthoung, the southernmost part of Myanmar.

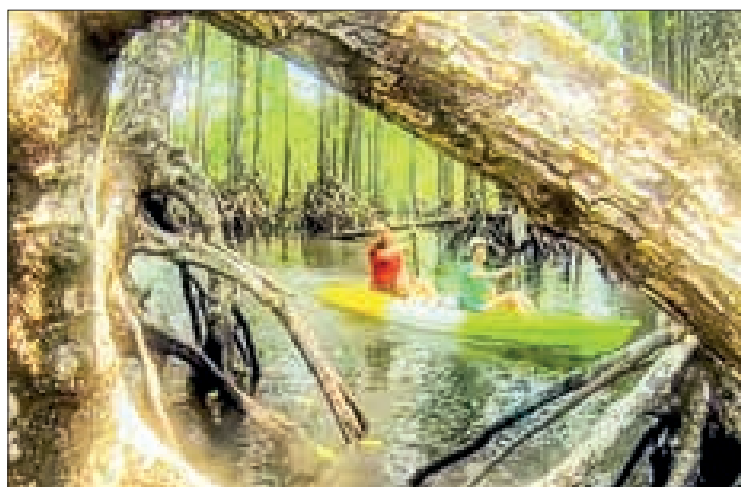
The Wa Ale Resort covers 100.15 acres of land in Lampi Marine National Park. Being the only marine national park in Myanmar, European tourists mostly visit there as it also offers varieties of botanical, biological, and marine-related amphibians, a fine natural environment, canoeing around the resort, a clean and unspoiled beach, the chance to study the living style of Salon people and nature-based trips.

"There is a travel company that rents our forest areas of Lampi Island. Now, foreign tourists visit the resort called Wa Ale Resort. They mostly prefer canoeing and watching the amphibians and birds in the sunset. They also like windsurfing and enjoying the coral reefs. Lampi Island is the very first marine national park of the country and also an ASEAN Heritage Park. We are very proud that we can earn income for the country via the green economy. We also want to urge the public to cooperate with the relevant departments to conserve the sustainability of the marine national park," said U Kyi Oo, warden of the park.

Similarly, the visitors can enjoy the fullness of the beauty of the ocean from the front and back sides of the Wa Ale Resort, as well as the sunrise and sunset



European tourists flock to Wa Ale Resort in Lampi Marine National Park annually



Travellers can enjoy canoeing in area of Wa Ale Resort at Lampi Marine National Park of Kawthoung. **PHOTOS: WARDEN OFFICE**

views. Therefore, the place is still hosting visitors by the end of December. The Lampi Island is 30 miles in length and its width is seven miles. The island boasts varieties of biodiversity, 288 species of water birds and resident birds, and is home to Hornbills and common bottlenose dolphin or Atlantic bottlenose dolphin.

In the 2024 travel season, domestic and foreign travellers visit snow-capped mountains and hilly regions in the northern part of Myanmar, Bagan, and famous destinations in the middle part,

ancient buildings of Yangon and Myeik Archipelago of Kawthoung District. Local and foreign visitors mainly visit King Island or Marcus Island, Thameehla Island, Prince Island, and Wa Ale Resort in the southernmost part of Myanmar during this season to ease the urban stress. The Directorate of Hotels and Tourism and travel agencies also provide the best services to travellers. European tourists especially visit the Wa Ale Resort in Lampi Marine National Park every year. — Nye-in Thu (MNA)/KTZH

NATIONAL

Nine-day Uppatasanti Paritta recitation ceremony held at Shwedagon pagoda



THE nine-day Uppatasanti Paritta recitation ceremony is being held at Shwedagon Pa-



The opening ceremony of the Uppatasanti Paritta recitation event.

goda, according to the Pagoda Board of Trustees.

The ceremony was organized at 5:55 am on 3 January, and attended by Ovada Cariya Chairman of Yangon Region Sangha Nayaka Committee Agga Maha Pandita Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Agga Maha Ganthavacaka Pandita Dr Bhaddanta Aggasami, invited Sayadaws, monks and relevant officials.

After the opening ceremo-

ny, the devotees took five precepts from the Ovada Cariya Sayadaw and donated offerings to Sayadaws and monks.

The Shwedagon pagoda religious organization and staff of the pagoda will recite the Uppatasanti Paritta at the Daw Saw Mra Prayer hall at the southwest corner of the pagoda from 3 to 11 January.

Moreover, the pagoda is open to the public from 5 am to 9 pm daily. — TWA/KTZH

Ministry of Labour implements e-mail submission for overseas employment agencies, warns of consequences for non-compliance

THE Ministry of Labour has declared that licensed overseas employment agencies must submit the necessary documents and the list of workers sent abroad only by email, rather than in hard copy, starting on 1 January.

The Department of Labour

has already announced that action will be taken against agencies that fail to submit the monthly list of workers sent abroad, with the potential consequence of revoking their licences.

In November 2023, six out of the thirty overseas employment agencies that failed to submit

the mentioned lists were warned three times. If this recurrence takes place, they will be required to sign a commitment letter. Should a repeated violation occur after signing the commitment letter, the licence will be suspended for a limited period. — TWA/TRKM

Traders predict paddy prices likely to drop by 10% in early 2024



A farmer is seen checking paddy quality processed by a harvester.

WITH the abundant supply during the harvest season, paddy prices this month are expected to be 10 per cent lower than the prices recorded last month, traders forecast.

The price of non-premium rice is up by K2,000 per sack in the first week of January, whereas the price of new Ayeyawady Pawsan is down by K2,000 per

sack.

Along with the dips in new rice prices, Pawsan paddy prices are forecast to stay below K3 million per 100 baskets, which is 10 per cent lower than the prices registered in December 2023.

The paddy prices are expected to be around K2.5 million per 100 baskets for the Pawkywe variety and below K2 million for the non-premium paddy variety. “We will see the market condition vividly in mid-January”, U Soe Tin farming paddy on 20 acres of paddy in Bogale Township shared his opinion with The Global New Light of Myanmar (GNLM).

Before the 2023 paddy cultivation season, the related non-governmental organization has already notified the 2023 paddy reference prices and issued reasonable market prices for the rice. Yet, the actual market value

is higher than the reasonable market prices.

The reference paddy prices for 2023 were set at K1.3 million to 1.5 million per 100 baskets of non-premium paddy and K1.5 million to K2 million for Pawsan paddy.

In early December 2023, the paddy prices hit a high of K2 million per 100 baskets of non-premium paddy, K2.5-K2.6 million for Pawkywe and K3.2 million, U Thein Wai, a rice seller told the GNLM.

The consumers raised concerns over the possible rice price hikes like the events in the past two years.

There are 14.99 million acres of 2023 monsoon paddy and 11.7 million acres of paddy have been harvested as of early January 2024. The rice stock volume is estimated at 5.484 million tonnes in early January. — TWA/KK

Japanese firms verify demand letters for modifications

THE Myanmar Embassy to Japan announced on 5 January that it will change the verification procedure for demand letters from Japanese enterprises to Myanmar workers.

To improve the efficiency of the Demand Letter verification procedure, the Myanmar Embassy will take appropriate action. While the Ministry of Labour forwarded demand letters to the Myanmar Embassy via the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for verification,

these letters will not be faxed to specific Japanese companies. They will be posted once a week on the Embassy’s website and Facebook.

Furthermore, the Embassy will review the data returned by the relevant Japanese companies. The list of confirmed companies will be forwarded to the Ministry of Labour via the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. These lists will be posted on the Embassy’s Facebook once every 15 days. — TWA/MKKS



Myanmar workers who would go to Japan were seen in 2023.

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Oil prices dip on 5 January

FUEL prices declined at a slower pace in the domestic market.

Fuel prices were K2,550 per litre of Octane 92, K2,655 for Octane 95, K2,440 for diesel, and K2,480 for premium diesel on 4 January. Then, the prices decreased a bit to K2,535 per litre of Octane 92, K2,635 for Octane 95, K2,320 for diesel, and K2,405 for premium diesel on 5 January.

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

Last August 2022, the oil prices hit the highest of K2,605 per litre for Octane 92, K2,670 for Octane 95, K3,330 for premi-

um diesel, and K3,245 for diesel.

The committee is therefore steering the fuel oil storage and distribution sector effectively to secure oil stocks in the domestic market and ensure price stability for energy consumers by issuing daily reference prices.

The committee is inspecting the fuel stations whether they are overcharging or not. The authorities are taking action 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



A filling station accept vehicles for providing fuel.

steering the market to mitigate the loss between the importers, sellers, and 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 those of Myanmar. However, Malaysia's oil sector receives government subsidies and the prices are about 60 per cent cheaper than those

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 energy consumers to buy the oil at a cheaper rate. — NN/EM

Sesame prices rebound on strong demand

FOLLOWING a surge in demand from foreign trade partners in the New Year period, the sesame prices returned to rise in the Mandalay market.

At present, various sesame seeds are exported to China. Also, demand from Japan, Thailand, Singapore, and Chinese Taipei is significantly rising. Furthermore, there is a steady demand from domestic oil millers and sesame-based food industries such as sesame jam and roasted sesame businesses. The sesame prices stood at K340,000 per 45-viss sack for black sesame (Samone variety), K330,000 for white ses-

ame, K280,000 for brown sesame, K305,000 for red sesame and K290,000 for new yellow sesame on 4 December.

The prices surged to K365,000 per 45-viss sack for black sesame (Samone variety), K345,000 for white sesame, K285,000 for brown sesame, K305,000 for red sesame and K295,000 for new yellow sesame on 5 December.

The figures reflected an increase of K5,000-K25,000 per sack. Myanmar exports one of the oil crops sesame to the external market through maritime channels and border posts.

In April last year, the world's

top palm oil exporter Indonesia, which is one of the main oil suppliers to Myanmar, declared an export ban on cooking oil export to reduce domestic shortage. Consequently, Trade Department under the Ministry of Commerce temporarily suspended exports of oil crops (peanut and sesame) from 9 May to have oil self-sufficiency.

Exports of Myanmar's edible oil crops resumed as the world's top palm oil exporters returned to normalcy, according to a notification dated 5 July 2022 released by the Trade Department. — NN/EM



Sesame plants bearing ripening fruits are ready to be harvested.

Corn price rebounds to one-month high

CORN prices bounced back to new highs in the domestic markets after a one-month fall on account of strong demand by feed processing factories and foreign trade partners.

The prices increased to K1,200 per viss on 5 January 2024 from K1,070 per viss in early December 2023, indicating an increase of K130 per viss in the domestic market.

Myanmar exports corn to China and Thailand through the border and also delivers to China, India, Viet Nam, and the Philippines by sea at present, according to the Myanmar Corn Industrial Association.

Thailand gives the go-ahead to corn imports under zero tariff (with Form-D), between 1 February and 31 August. However, Thailand imposes a maximum tax rate of 73 per cent on corn imports to protect the rights of their growers if the corn is imported during the corn season of Thailand.

China has been purchasing Myanmar's corn through cross-border trade under the opium substitution programme. Legitimate corn trade between Myanmar and China commenced at the end of 2022. A total of 112 Myanmar companies have been permitted for corn exports.

Myanmar shipped 918,606 tonnes of corn worldwide as of 15 December in the current financial year 2023-2024 beginning 1 April, earning US\$275.046 million, the Ministry of Commerce's statistics indicated.

Myanmar exported more than two million tonnes of corn to foreign trade in the 2022 corn season. The majority of them were sent to Thailand and the remaining went to China, India, the Philippines, and Viet Nam. The corn is cultivated in Shan, Kachin, Kayah, and Kayin states and Mandalay, Sagaing, and Magway regions. Myanmar has three corn seasons – winter, summer and monsoon. The country produces 2.5-3 million tonnes of corn every year. — NN/EM

OPINION

Promote security for staff to eradicate illegal trade

THE battle against illegal trade is being vigorously pursued by the Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee, which has established specialized task forces at various levels to address the issue in different regions and states. These task forces collaborate closely with relevant departments and security agencies on the ground to ensure a seamless process of identifying, seizing, and apprehending offenders involved in illegal trade activities.

Personnel deployed at key checkpoints and tollgates play a crucial role in inspecting and searching for illegal trade and contraband. However, their dedication to duty often exposes them to resentment and hostility from certain unscrupulous businesspersons. Consequently, it becomes imperative for authorities to provide comprehensive protection for these personnel, safeguarding them against potential dangers and obstacles.

To combat illegal trade effectively, collaboration and cooperation must be strengthened among union ministries, regional governments, and state authorities. Collective action is required to combat the illegal extraction of natural resources within the country. Legal bodies should establish information networks to promptly identify and apprehend individuals engaging in illegal trade practices.

Individuals who seek to disrupt the peace and stability of the state. Security awareness and knowledge need to be heightened to address the unscrupulous actions of businesspersons involved in the illegal importation of goods, evading the payment of rightful taxes to the state.

To combat illegal trade effectively, collaboration and cooperation must be strengthened among union ministries, regional governments, and state authorities. Collective action is required to combat the illegal extraction of natural resources within the country. Legal bodies should establish information networks to promptly identify and apprehend individuals engaging in illegal trade practices.

Implementing an e-lock system and a nationwide import declaration is essential, coupled with ongoing improvements to online systems. Additionally, measures must be taken to preserve the integrity of seized objects. It is crucial for all assigned personnel and officials to avoid information leaks that could compromise operations aimed at seizing illegally smuggled goods.

It is imperative for all staff involved in the eradication of illegal trade to recognize the risks associated with accepting bribes. Emphasizing the avoidance of bribery in their procedures, officials and personnel from special task forces must prioritize the inspection, confiscation, and apprehension of illegal goods and traders, aligning their efforts with the interests of the state and collaborating with local authorities and citizens as a national duty.

KO Myint Zan, a man of nostalgia, reminiscences about the days when he used to sit at the tea shop in his native town, engrossed in deep conversations with friends. These nightly gatherings were characterized by discussions about work, family, and shared literary experiences. The tea shop became a haven for the exchange of thoughts and emotions, fostering warmth and camaraderie. Despite occasional arguments, the bond between friends remained intact, and those moments at the tea shop became cherished memories.

However, life took Ko Myint Zan to another town in pursuit of livelihood, and a decade has passed since he left his native town. In his new abode, he has forged new friendships, yet the dynamics of social interaction have undergone a drastic transformation. Unlike the days of the tea shop, the contemporary social scene is dominated by the omnipresent glow of smartphones. The once-intimate gatherings have given way to a disconnected existence, with people engrossed in virtual realms, oblivious to the faces around them.

The tea shop, once a hub of interpersonal connections, has lost its charm for Ko Myint Zan. He laments the fact that conversations have been replaced by the incessant tapping of screens, as individuals immerse themselves in the digital world. The disappointment runs deep, prompting him to withdraw from the tea shop scene altogether, finding solace in the company of books within the confines of his home.

In the present era, smartphones have become ubiquitous, providing everyone with unprecedented access to the internet. While Ko Myint Zan refrains from outright condemnation of activities like using Facebook and playing games, he does express concern about the excessive indulgence in these digital pastimes. The negative consequences, he argues, are multifaceted: financial strain, time depletion, and the detrimental impact on eyesight.

The financial aspect is significant, as the cost of smartphones, internet plans, and in-app purchases can accumulate rapidly. Time, a resource that cannot be replenished, is squandered on endless scrolling and gaming. Moreover, prolonged screen time poses a threat to eyesight, a precious and irreplaceable faculty. Ko Myint

The Erosion of Human Connection in the Digital Age

By Min Zan



Note: To those who love sitting in a tea shop and chatting several years ago.

Zan emphasizes the irrevocable nature of these consequences, urging caution in the pursuit of digital gratification.

Yet, it is not merely the financial and temporal aspects that concern Ko Myint Zan. The erosion of human connection is equally troubling. In a world captivated by the virtual, the authenticity of relationships is challenged. The information shared on platforms like Facebook is not always reliable, with fake news proliferating, and individuals resorting to deceptive tactics for personal gain. The trustworthiness of online interactions becomes a critical issue, requiring users to discern between reality and manipulation.

The insidious nature of excessive internet use is further compounded by its impact on interpersonal relationships. In the pursuit of digital engagement, individuals often neglect those physically present around them, including family and close friends. The allure of the virtual world takes precedence over genuine, face-to-face interactions. Ko Myint Zan underscores the irony that, in times of trouble, it is the immediate circle of family and friends who offer support, not the distant online connections.

The heart of Ko Myint Zan's lament lies in the diminishing warmth and unity among those

sitting at a shared table in the tea shop. The camaraderie, friendliness, and mutual understanding that once defined these gatherings have dissipated, leaving behind a palpable sense of distance. Warm chats have become a rarity, replaced by the sterile glow of screens and the silent tapping of fingers.

In essence, Ko Myint Zan's yearning for the days in his native town reflects a broader societal shift. The digital age has brought about unparalleled connectivity, yet it has also sown the seeds of disconnection. The very tools designed to bring people together have, in some ways, driven them apart. The challenge, then, is to strike a balance between the virtual and the real, to leverage technology without sacrificing the depth and authenticity of human relationships.

As we navigate this delicate equilibrium, Ko Myint Zan's narrative serves as a poignant reminder of the importance of human connection. The tea shop, once a symbol of shared experiences and genuine interactions, stands as a testament to what is at stake in the face of technological progress. It calls upon us to reflect on the nature of our digital engagements and the impact they have on the fabric of our interpersonal connections. Ultimately, in the pur-

suit of progress, may we not lose sight of the essence of being truly close, even in a world that seems increasingly distant.

Ko Myint Zan's poignant narrative serves as a compelling lens through which to contemplate the profound societal changes wrought by the digital age. As we delve into the intricacies of his experiences and reflections, a profound sense of loss and nostalgia emerges — a yearning for a time when human connections were forged in the crucible of face-to-face interactions, unburdened by the omnipresence of screens and the digital realm.

The tea shop, once a vibrant crucible of shared experiences and genuine connections, stands as a metaphor for the collective human experience that is seemingly slipping away. Ko Myint Zan's recollections transport us to a bygone era where conversations flowed effortlessly, discussions about work, family, and literature unfolded organically, and the warmth of camaraderie filled the air. The loss of such moments is palpable in his words, inviting us to reflect on the intangible but irreplaceable value of physical presence and authentic engagement.

The trajectory of Ko Myint Zan's life, from the familiar confines of his native town to the unfamiliar landscape of a new town,

mirrors the broader societal shift towards digital interconnectedness. The allure of the digital realm, symbolized by the glow of smartphones, has replaced the nuanced dynamics of personal interactions. The once-intimate gatherings at the tea shop have given way to a disconnected existence, where faces are obscured by screens, and genuine conversations have become a rarity.

This shift prompts contemplation on the multifaceted nature of technological engagement. Ko Myint Zan, while refraining from outright condemnation of digital activities, draws attention to the excessive indulgence in platforms like Facebook and gaming. The contemplation extends beyond mere critique, delving into the profound consequences of this digital immersion: financial strain, temporal depletion, and the adverse impact on physical well-being.

The financial aspect resonates as a societal concern. The relentless pursuit of the latest smartphones, data plans, and in-app purchases not only places a strain on individual budgets but also contributes to a consumer-driven culture that values the tangible over the intangible. Ko Myint Zan underscores the importance of recognizing the irrevocable nature of these consequences, urging a reevaluation of our priorities in the pursuit of digital gratification.

Time, that most precious and irreplaceable resource, emerges as another focal point in the contemplation. The hours spent on endless scrolling and gaming represent a significant investment that could otherwise be directed toward meaningful endeavors or genuine human connections. The temporal dimension of digital engagement raises questions about the true cost of our virtual pursuits and prompts introspection on the nature of fulfillment in a world dominated by screens.

Furthermore, Ko Myint Zan draws attention to the erosion of human connection — an aspect that transcends financial and temporal concerns. The authenticity of relationships in a virtual world

is questioned, with fake news and deceptive tactics undermining the trustworthiness of online interactions. This contemplation delves into the dichotomy between the virtual and the real, emphasizing the importance of discernment in navigating the intricacies of the digital landscape.

The impact of excessive internet use on interpersonal relationships forms a poignant facet of Ko Myint Zan's lament. The neglect of those physically present in favor of digital engagement speaks to a larger societal trend where immediate connections take a backseat to virtual allure. This contemplation extends an invitation to reflect on the irony embedded in this shift — while online connections may offer a semblance of support, it is the tangible presence of family and close friends that proves steadfast in times of trouble.

The heart of Ko Myint Zan's reflection lies in the dwindling warmth and unity among those once bound by shared experiences. The tea shop, once a symbol of camaraderie and mutual understanding, now stands as a testament to the societal disconnection brought about by technology. Warm chats, once commonplace, have become a rarity, replaced by the sterile glow of screens — a silent testimony to the broader societal shift from the tangible to the intangible.

In essence, Ko Myint Zan's yearning for the days in his native town prompts a contemplation of the broader implications of the digital age. The narrative serves as a poignant reminder of the delicate balance required to navigate the intersection of the virtual and the real. As we ponder the significance of human connection in the face of technological progress, the tea shop becomes a symbol of what is at stake — a call to reflect on the nature of our digital engagements and their impact on the fabric of our interpersonal connections.

This contemplation, inspired by Ko Myint Zan's narrative, urges us to consider the essence of being truly close in a world that appears increasingly distant. It prompts introspection on the evolving nature of our relationships, the value we place on authenticity, and the role technology plays in shaping the human experience. As we navigate this delicate equilibrium, may we heed Ko Myint Zan's poignant reminder and strive to preserve the richness of genuine connections amidst the digital tide.

Did you know exercise can boost brain health?

MRI brain scans from 10,125 individuals, conducted at Penuvo imaging centers, were analyzed in the study, indicating that regular engagement in activities like walking, running, or sports is associated with larger brain volumes in key areas.

A group of clinical researchers from the Brain Health Center at Providence Saint John's Health Center at Pacific Neuroscience Institute participated in an international study that found an intriguing correlation between regular exercise and improved brain health. Journal of Alzheimer's Disease published a study detailing the research, "Exercise-Related Physical Activity Relates to Brain Volumes in 10,125 Individuals," which demonstrates that physical activity is associated with larger brain regions crucial for memory and learning.

research supports earlier studies that show being physically active is good for your brain. Exercise not only lowers the risk of dementia but also helps in maintaining brain size, which is crucial as we age."

David Merrill, M.D., study co-author and director of the PBHC noted, "We found that even moderate levels of physical activity, such as taking fewer than 4,000 steps a day, can have a positive effect on brain health. This is much less than the often-suggested 10,000 steps, making it a more achievable goal for many people."



Clinical researchers from the Brain Health Center at Providence Saint John's Health Centre participated in an international study revealing a correlation between regular exercise and improved brain health. **ILLUSTRATION: PIXABAY**

MRI brain scans

The study looked at MRI brain scans from 10,125 people done at Penuvo imaging centers, a key collaborator in the research. It found those who regularly engaged in physical activities such as walking, running or sports had larger brain volumes in key areas.

This includes the gray matter, which helps with processing information, and the white matter, which connects different brain regions, as well as the hippocampus, important for memory.

Cyrus A. Raji, M.D., the lead researcher, explains the findings in simple terms: "Our

Study co-author Somayeh Meysami, M.D., assistant professor of neurosciences at Saint John's Cancer Institute and the Pacific Brain Health Center noted, "Our research links regular physical activity to larger brain volumes, suggesting neuroprotective benefits. This large sample study furthers our understanding of lifestyle factors in brain health and dementia prevention."

Modifiable risk factors

A Lancet Study in 2020 found about a dozen modifiable risk factors increase risk for Alzheimer's disease, including physical activity.

SOURCE: ANI

NATIONAL

Myanmar, China discuss preparations for Kyaukpyu SEZ Deep Seaport project



THE meeting on setting preparations to be made by Myanmar and China in advance for the implementation of the Kyaukpyu Special Economic Zone Deep Seaport project was held in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

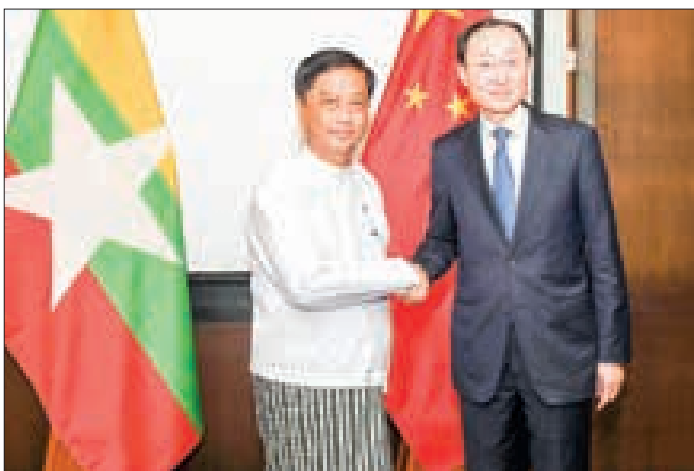
It was attended by Myanmar Special Economic Zone Central Working Committee Chair Union Minister at the Union Government Ministry 1 U Aung Naing Oo, the deputy minister

Union Minister U Aung Naing Oo gives speech at meeting on implementation of Kyaukpyu SEZ Deep Seaport project.

for Commerce, the chairperson and members of the Kyaukpyu SEZ Management Committee, officials from Rakhine State Government and relevant department officials.

At the meeting, the Union minister instructed to complete the work plan carried out in advance by the Myanmar side in time within the specific time for the implementation of the Kyaukpyu Special Economic Zone deep seaport project and further collaboration with the relevant ministries. Then, the attendees coordinated the discussion. — MNA/KTZH

Myanmar-China bilateral consultations held



Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs U Lwin Oo shakes hands with Mr Sun Weidong, Vice-Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China.

U Lwin Oo, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, held Myanmar-China bilateral consultations with Mr Sun Weidong, Vice-Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, yesterday at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Nay Pyi Taw.

At the bilateral meeting, they cordially exchanged views on matters pertaining to the further consolidation of the existing Pauk-Phaw relations and continued implementation of mutually beneficial cooperation between the two countries, acceleration of the ongoing Myanmar-China bilateral projects under China-Myanmar Economic Corridor (CMEC)

and Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), the maintenance of peace and stability along the Myanmar-China border area, intensification of collaboration between the two countries in the ASEAN and Mekong-Lancang Regional Cooperation Mechanisms and to render mutual support in regional and multilateral arenas as well as on matters of common interests.

In the afternoon, U Kyaw Myo Htut, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs, hosted a luncheon for the visiting Chinese delegation led by the Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China at the Myat Taw Win Hotel. — MNA

Laboratory science course provided at China's Jiangsu CDC in Jiangsu Province

MYANMAR'S Ministry of Health (MoH) and the People's Republic of China are collaborating with the Myanmar Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (Myanmar CDC) by sending scholars to the Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (Jiangsu CDC) in Jiangsu Province of People's Republic of China for training for a laboratory science course. The opening ceremony of the course was held on 5 January at the training hall of Jiangsu CDC in China and Deputy Minister Prof Dr Aye Tun from MoH delivered his speech via Video Conferencing.

The ceremony was attended by Director-General Dr Myint Myint Than of the Department of Public Health, Rector Dr Htay Htay Tin of the University of Medical Technology (Yangon), deputy directors-general of the Department of Public Health, and the Department of Medical Services under the Department of National Health Laboratory, deputy directors of the Ministry of Health, officials from the Embassy of the People's Republic of China to Myanmar, and officials from the Chinese construction company that is in charge of the Myanmar Centres for Disease Control and Prevention project.

Mr Zhou Minghao, Deputy



Deputy Minister for Health Dr Aye Tun speaking at opening of Laboratory science course of Jiangsu CDC yesterday.

Director of the Jiangsu Health Commission and Director of the Jiangsu Provincial Bureau of Disease Control and Prevention from Jiangsu Province, People's Republic of China, first gave a speech.

Furthermore, Deputy Minister Dr Aye Tun made a speech that the Myanmar CDC which is being carried out by the MoH with the assistance of China, will be completed in early 2024 and will play a major role in Myanmar's disease prevention and control activities. He also expressed great gratitude for China's assistance to Myanmar's public health sector, including the Myanmar CDC and it is very beneficial for the trainees to be sent for training. He also added that the academic trainees who

have been sent will play a very important role in Myanmar CDC if they return.

The person in charge of the Economic and Commercial Department of the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Myanmar then made a speech and the Director in Chief of the Jiangsu CDC gave an explanation about the status of the training, and a representative of the trainees from Myanmar expressed their thanks.

The Myanmar CDC will have international-level laboratories, including a biosafety level 3 laboratory, and for the full operation of these laboratories, 35 laboratory experts from the MoH have been sent to the Jiangsu CDC for six months since November 2023. — MNA/TKO

NATIONAL

China buys Myanmar coconut to make shell charcoal

ACCORDING to coconut traders, Chinese demand for coconut shell charcoal is rising.

“There is coconut shell charcoal. It sells well in the export market. Empty coconut shells are left after taking out the white Kernel. Carbon is produced to make charcoal. The Chinese buy as much as they can get. The market is big,” said U Than Sin of Bo Ohn Tnee Coconut Trading in Patheingyi.

As summer approaches, coconut prices and demand for coconut are rising.

“As summer approaches, coconut price rises. The same amount goes up in the towns if it rises by K100 or K200 at lower

market levels. The wholesale price is around K1,000 per coconut while the retail price can be K1,200, K1,400 or K1,500, depending on the variety,” he said.

Mandalay is the biggest coconut market in Myanmar, and buyers from China and Thailand purchase coconuts from Mandalay.

“We send coconuts to Mandalay, and then they go to China. We send them to Myawady for Thailand. There are also boat buyers from Bangladesh. Export is seasonal, only after the rainy season is over. Until then, we sell in the domestic market,” a trader who distributes over 1,000 tonnes of coconuts yearly. — Thit Taw/ZN



Pieces of coconuts seen in the domestic market.

Shan State tourism businesses set to receive licences



Scenic spots in Shan State (South) and Nawnghkio Cloud Sea that attract tourists.

ACCORDING to U Htin Aung Naing, Director of the Directorate of Hotels & Tourism (Shan State), arrangements are being made to provide tourism businesses operating based on scenic places of Shan State with relevant licenses.

“In Shan State, some businessmen are implementing new tourism-related accommodation projects in the tourist hotspots. For example, there are other new places where clouds can be seen, such as the Nawnghkio Cloud Sea. We will discuss this with the local tourism committees to determine whether or not licenses should be granted for these new establishments. To issue them licenses, the cases must be presented step by step up to the state level for approval,” he explained.

“Currently, many cloud-gazing and scenic-viewing camps are being implemented in

Shan State, and tourists are also entering. By issuing them licenses, the businesses will become legal, and from this, the state will receive taxes, and tourists can be provided with safety measures,” U Htin Aung Naing added.

Myanmar’s leading tourist destinations are Yangon, Mandalay, Bagan and Shan State’s Inlay areas. There are over 400 hotels, motels and guest houses in Shan State, and currently 337 are operating. The southern part of Shan State is an area with tourists all year round.

In addition, Kalaw City in southern Shan State is being developed as a tourism city, and Chinese and Russian basic language courses have been offered to employees working in hotels and motels so that tourists from those countries can visit without a language barrier. — ASH/TH

Counter-argument to false information

Misinformation: Htigyaing airstrike kills three locals, four wounded

MALICIOUS news media RFA is spreading false information that three residents were killed and four were injured due to an airstrike on Doepin, kyutaungchey and Wegyi villages, Htigyaing Township, Sagaing Region, on 3 January.

According to reports on the ground, there was no flight from the Tatmadaw to Htigyaing Township on that day, and the terrorists used drones to attack the locations of their security forces, causing explosions in local villages and leaving innocent local people dead and hurt.

Malicious news media are making up fake news items that are viral on social media like poisoning propaganda to the public. — MNA/KZL



A screen-shot of misinformation.

Fake news: Tatmadaw’s heavy weapon fire causes casualties in Kalay, Maungtau

THE Ayeyawady Times media is circulating misinformation that a nine-year-old boy from Letpanchaung village was killed and at least six civilians were wounded when Tatmadaw opened fire on Kalay Township (North), Sagaing Region on the morning of 3 January.

According to a resident, there have been no shootings near the village these days, and PDF terrorists occasionally use hand-made mortars. Although there have been drone attacks, these days the villagers are regularly carrying out rice harvesting and threshing measures. Similarly, AA sources said that four civilians, including three children, were wounded when the military opened fire on Kanthaya (Upper) village, Maungtau Township, Rakhine State on 4 January.

Khit Thit media is spreading false information on social networking sites, and after contacting a person in charge of security in the relevant area, Tatmadaw did not fire heavy weapons at that village. AA insurgents fired heavy weapons into the villages of the security forces, injuring the people. The malicious media is poisoning the public by spreading propaganda on social networks about events that do not have accurate information sources to destroy the peace of the community and the rule of law. — MNA/KZL

ECONOMY WORLD

Chennai's industrial corridor promises numerous benefits for the 'Detroit of Asia' and Southern India

Chennai is emerging as the industrial hub of South India, with government plans to upgrade highway roads, reducing travel time and vehicle operating costs.

CHENNAI is slowly but surely becoming the industrial hub of South India, if not the entire subcontinent. With the government's plans to upgrade the highway roads, travel time will be reduced as well as vehicle operating costs. As a major seaport, the city's proximity to raw materials, easy access to major seaports, airports, and different parts of Southern India has rendered it a major industrial hub.

The presence of industrial corridors, acting as an economic ecosystem, fosters heightened economic activity within the transportation corridor. Like a vital artery, it serves as the central hub of economic vitality in the region.

In 2022, the Government

of India greenlit eight projects to develop industrial corridors between major hubs in the country. These projects will take place under the National Industrial Corridor Development and Implementation Trust (NICDIT).

One of these projects is the 96-km Chennai-Bengaluru Industrial Corridor (CBIC). This project is already underway and is scheduled to be completed by 2025. With the completion of the project, the travel time between Chennai and Bengaluru will be cut to two to three hours.

"The project will also increase economic activity in the region by opening up new areas for industrial development. — ANI



India is coming up with 11 Industrial Corridor Projects as part of the National Industrial Corridor Programme in a phased manner. **PHOTO: ANI**

French inflation ticks up in December



A customer shops in a Lidl discount supermarket, in France in 2023. **PHOTO: JOEL SAGET / AFP**

INFLATION in the eurozone's second-largest economy France accelerated in December, official data showed Thursday, with food prices a persistent sore point for consumers.

Prices grew 3.7 per cent year-on-year last month, statistics authority Insee said in preliminary figures, up from the 3.5 per cent pace in November.

There had been "acceleration... in the price of energy and services", Insee said, although price growth slowed for

manufactured goods and the closely-watched food items in the consumer basket.

With food inflation still running at 7.1 per cent last month, many shoppers have been switching to lower-cost alternatives or scouring supermarkets for special offers.

In response, Paris has brought forward annual talks between food producers and retailers, hoping lower costs for food inputs can be passed through more swiftly to the public. — AFP

Private sector funding key to climate transition, World Bank chief says

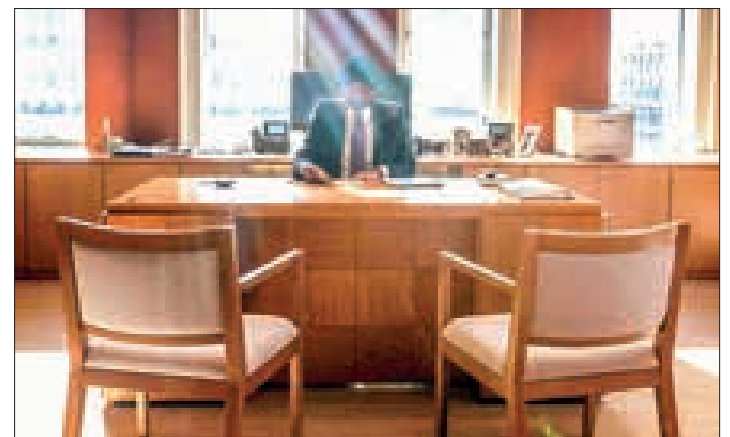
Ajay Banga, who assumed leadership in June, is focused on transforming the bank and increasing its lending capacity by promoting greater private investment, especially in combating climate change.

THE World Bank is working to slash how long it takes to get financing projects off the ground as part of a push to speed up and scale up the 79-year-old development lender, its president told AFP on Wednesday.

It currently takes 27 months, on average, before "the first dollar goes out the door", Ajay Banga said in an interview in his brightly lit office in the Bank's headquarters close to the White House.

"If I can bring it down by one third over the first couple of years, that would be pretty good," he said. "The Bank needs to change and evolve."

Banga, an Indian-born, naturalized US citizen who previously ran the payments company Mastercard, took over the management of the



World Bank President Ajay Banga works at his desk at the World Bank headquarters in Washington, D.C., US, 3 January 2024. **PHOTO: AFP**

bank in June on a pledge to boost its lending firepower by encouraging greater private investment in the fight against climate change.

In the seven months since, the 64-year-old has made some big changes, altering the devel-

opment lender's mission statement to include a reference to climate change, and setting up a private sector advisory body to recommend solutions to address the "barriers to private sector investment in emerging markets". — AFP

US holiday online sales grow 4.9%, says Adobe Analytics

Despite the robust growth in online sales, e-commerce constituted only around 20 per cent of total retail sales in the United States, with in-store sales showing slower expansion.

CONSUMERS in the United States spent 222.1 billion US dollars in online purchases in the last two months of 2023, up 4.9 per cent year on year, data issued by Adobe Analytics on Thursday showed. Notably, US online spending was driven in part by major discounts across categories and increased usage of the flexible “Buy Now, Pay Later” payment method, said Adobe Analytics. Discounts hit record highs across major categories in this holiday

season with discounts in electronics as much as 31 per cent. The usage of the “Buy Now, Pay Later” payment method hit an all-time high and contributed 16.6 billion dollars of online sales, up 14 per cent year on year.

“In an uncertain demand environment, retailers leaned on discounting and flexible payment methods to entice shoppers this holiday season,” said Vivek Pandya, lead analyst with Adobe Digital Insights. — Xinhua



E-commerce constituted only around 20 per cent of total retail sales in the United States. Sales assistants wait for customers at Macy's Herald Square in New York, the United States. PHOTO: PIX FOR VISUAL PURPOSE/ XINHUA

Shanghai handles over 19.6 million inbound, outbound travellers

In December 2023, 19,000 ordinary passport holders from France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, and Malaysia entered China visa-free via Shanghai, as per the city's border inspection station.

SHANGHAI recorded more than 19.6 million inbound and outbound travellers in 2023, the city's border inspection authorities said on Thursday.

Some 19 million passengers entered or left China during this period via the two major airports in the city, namely Pudong and Hongqiao, accounting for about one third of China's total inbound and outbound travelers using

airports. A total of 19,000 ordinary passport holders from France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, and Malaysia entered China visa-free in December 2023 via Shanghai, according to the city's border inspection station. China's unilateral visa-free policy for ordinary passport holders from these countries took effect on 1 December, facilitating inbound travel of such passport holders. —Xinhua



Tourists visit the Bund in east China's Shanghai. PHOTO: XIN MENGCHEN/XINHUA

Notice for change of distributor

We, **Yingde Greatchem Chemicals Co., Ltd.** would like to change the Distributor of the following products, which registered under Pesticide Registration Board, Myanmar, from **Myanmar Nicely Crop Science Co., Ltd** to **Shwe Taung International Trading Co., Ltd.** If any objection or enquiry, please contact to Co-Secretary, Pesticide Registration Board, Plant Protection Division, Department of Agriculture, West Gyogone, Insein township, Yangon from here to next two weeks.

No	Old Distributor	Trade Name	Active Ingredient	Registration Type	Registration number	New Distributor
1	Myanmar Nicely Crop Science Co., Ltd	Great Fome 250 SL	Fomesafen 25% SL	Provisional	P2020-4942	Shwe Taung International Trading Co., Ltd
2		Great Azo-D 325 SC	Azoxystrobin 20% + Difenconazole 12.5% SC	Provisional	P2020-4873	

Shwe Taung International Trading Co., Ltd. (Address: YANGON-MANDALAY ROAD, NEAR KWAEEL SAE KAN KAR KYI KWIN ATWIN, PYIGYITAGON, MANDALAY REGION, MYANMAR. Ph no .09403723854)

Notice for change of distributor

We, **GuangDong ZhenGe Biotechnology Co., Ltd.** would like to change the Distributor of the following products, which registered under Pesticide Registration Board, Myanmar, from **Myanmar Golden Byter Co., Ltd** to **Mingalar International Trading Co., Ltd.** If any objection or enquiry, please contact to Co-Secretary, Pesticide Registration Board, Plant Protection Division, Department of Agriculture, West Gyogone, Insein township, Yangon from here to next two weeks.

No	Old Distributor	Trade Name	Active Ingredient	Registration Type	Registration number	New Distributor
1	Myanmar Golden Byter Co., Ltd	Aceta 5 EC	Acetamiprid 5% EC	Full	F2023-4113	Mingalar International Trading Co., Ltd
2		Top Killer 25% SC	Pymetrozine 25% SC	Provisional	P2020-4066	

Mingalar International Trading Co., Ltd. (Address: PANSODAN AND ANAWRAHTA, NO-3, KYAUKTADA, YANGON REGION, MYANMAR. Ph no .09403723854)

Notice for change of distributor

We, **Xuzhou Fengwei Chemical Factory**, would like to change the Distributor of the following products, which registered under Pesticide Registration Board, Myanmar, from **Friends Helper Co., Ltd** to **Mingalar International Trading Co., Ltd.** If any objection or enquiry, please contact to Co-Secretary, Pesticide Registration Board, Plant Protection Division, Department of Agriculture, West Gyogone, Insein township, Yangon from here to next two weeks.

No	Old Distributor	Trade Name	Active Ingredient	Registration Type	Registration number	New Distributor
1	Friends Helper Co., Ltd	Pyaing San Sharr 75 WP	Chlorothalonil 75% WP	Provisional	P2020-4846	Mingalar International Trading Co., Ltd

Mingalar International Trading Co., Ltd. (Address: PANSODAN AND ANAWRAHTA, NO-3, KYAUKTADA, YANGON REGION, MYANMAR. Ph no .09403723854)

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V T12 APPLE VOY.NO. (2304E)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V T12 APPLE VOY.NO. (2304E)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **6-1-2024** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MIP** 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 T12 LOGITSTICS PTE LTD

ROLLING UPDATES: WORLD

Italy's PM lays out G7 priorities in year-end remarks

Meloni expressed concern about AI's impact on labour markets, planning a special G7 session on the topic before the main leaders' summit in June in Apulia, Italy.

ITALIAN Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni said on Thursday that pushing development in Africa and developing a global rulebook for artificial intelligence (AI) would be among Italy's priorities this year, as it takes over the rotating presidency of the Group of Seven (G7) countries.

Though it took place in January, Meloni's address was officially her end-of-year address for 2023. Her remarks were delayed twice due to illness.

Meloni, who became Italy's first female prime minister in 2022, focused much of her remarks on development in Africa, which is part of her broader effort to curb the number of refu-

gees arriving in Europe, many of them from poor and war-torn African countries.

"What I think needs to be done in Africa is not for charity," Meloni said. "What I think needs to be done in Africa is to build cooperation and serious strategic relationships as equals."

On the topic of AI, Meloni said she intended to call a special session of G7 leaders to address the topic before the main leaders' summit, which Italy will host in June in the southern Italian region of Apulia.

"I am hugely concerned about the impacts (of artificial intelligence) on the labour markets," the Italian leader said.

The G7 is a group of sev-



Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni outlined priorities for Italy's G7 presidency, emphasizing development in Africa and establishing global rules for artificial intelligence (AI). **PHOTO: XINHUA/FILE**

en large, industrialized countries: Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, and the United States. Italy last held the presidency of the group in 2017.

Meloni said that discussions of the conflicts between Russia and Ukraine and between Israel and Gaza would also be on the G7 agenda.

The prime minister's year-end address also touched on economic matters, including Meloni's prediction that the Italian economy would outpace the economic growth in the European Union as a whole — contrary to estimates from multilateral organizations that have predicted a modest economic growth for Italy. — Xinhua

3 killed, more than 10 injured in Indonesia's train accident

THREE people were killed and more than 10 others injured as two trains were involved in a face-to-face collision in Indonesia's West Java province, a police officer said.

The casualties were a train driver, his assistant and an employee, police spokesman of the provincial Police

Office Senior Commissioner Ibrahim Tompo said in a live interview with local media MetroTV.

The train Commuter Line Bandung Raya and Turangga train collided in Cicalengka regency at 06:03 am Jakarta time, according to Supriono, head of the operation unit of

the provincial search and rescue office. "Our personnel have rescued many injured people, at least more than 10 wounded persons. It could be more than that," he told Xinhua by phone. All of the injured have been rushed into the General Hospital of Cicalengka, he added. — Xinhua



Staff members work at the site of a train accident in Cicalengka, Bandung, West Java province, Indonesia, 5 January 2024. **PHOTO: SEPTIANJAR MUHARAM/XINHUA**

South Korea orders evacuation on Yeonpyeong Island over North's shelling – Reports

The evacuation order, prompted by a South Korean military request, was announced after a call about a maritime strike on Yeongpyeong Island in response to a North Korean provocation.



This photo taken on 5 January 2024 shows residents staying at an emergency shelter on Yeonpyeong island, South Korea. **PHOTO: NEWSIS/HANDOUT VIA XINHUA**

SOUTH Korea has ordered civilians of Yeonpyeong Island, which borders North Korea in the north, to evacuate to shelters amid "apparent signs of a military provocation" by Pyongyang, South Korean news agency reported on Friday, citing officials.

The emergency evacuation order was issued at 12:02 pm local time (03:02 GMT) and repeated at 12:30 pm local time (03:30

GMT) on Friday at the request of the South Korean military, the report cited the local county office as saying.

"We announced the evacuation after receiving a call from a military unit saying it was carrying out a maritime strike on Yeongpyeong Island as it has a situation with a North Korean provocation," the official was quoted as saying. — SPUTNIK

SPORTS

FA Cup: Arsenal vs Liverpool eye-catching, many others to enjoy

THE majority of the matches from the third round of the FA Cup will be played over the weekend with one standout tie between Arsenal and Liverpool. Arsenal vs Liverpool is the biggest game of the round, as the Premier League leader travels to play the team they recently knocked off top-spot.

Liverpool will be without Mohamed Salah, who is with Egypt in the African Cup of Nations, and Wataru Endo, who is jetting off to the Asian Cup, while Arsenal has lost Takehiro Tomiyasu and Mohamed Elneny to the two international tournaments.

The two sides drew in the Premier League at Anfield earlier this season, and Arsenal will see this game as a great chance to bounce back after recent setbacks.

Traditionalists will also be anticipating the Tyne-

Wear derby as Sunderland entertains local rival Newcastle United in a return of one of the bitterest rivalries in the game after several years.

Sunderland is currently sixth in the Championship while Newcastle's efforts in three competitions before Christmas have left them looking tired and perhaps vulnerable in what will be a packed Stadium of Light.

Brighton has impressed

this season, but will have a physical battle in their visit to play Championship side Stoke City, while second-tier Queens Park Rangers entertains Premier League's in-form Bournemouth at Loftus Road.

Aston Villa also has a potential banana skin away to Championship opposition as they travel to the northeast to play Middlesbrough, who is coached by former Manchester United midfielder Michael Carrick. — Xinhua



Arsenal's Norwegian midfielder Martin Odegaard (left) celebrates scoring the team's second goal during the English Premier League football match between Arsenal and Wolverhampton Wanderers at the Emirates Stadium in London PHOTO: AFP/FILE

Thway Thit Win Hlaing to take on Kyaw Swa Win at TGL-6 Challenge



Thway Thit Win Hlaing (left) versus Kyaw Swa Win (right).

THWAY Thit Win Hlaing will face Kyaw Swa Win for the second time at the Great Lethwei (TGL) tournament.

The tournament organizing committee has announced that their fight will be held as the main bout in TGL 6, which is event number 6.

The fight of these famous fighters will be held with a knockout system. The two met for the first time in November 2023 and the five-round bout was finished as a draw.

The Great Lethwei (TGL) tournament is scheduled to be held on 28 January at 3 pm and will be available to watch live on the CANAL+ Sports 1 channel and the CANAL+ app. — TWA/KZL

Poland's Marciniak named world's best referee of 2023



Szymon Marciniak from Poland received the 2023 Men's World Best Referee award from the International Federation of Football Historians and Statistics (IFFHS). PHOTO: WIKIWAND

SZYMON Marciniak of Poland was named the 2023 Men's World Best Referee by the International Federation of Football Histo-

rians and Statistics (IFFHS) on Thursday.

The 42-year-old Pole won the award with 175 points, followed by Daniele Orsato of Italy with 95 and France's Clement Turpin with 64.

Marciniak had also won the 2022 award after his performance officiating the 2022 FIFA World Cup final.

In 2023, he refereed the UEFA Champions League final between Manchester City and Inter Milan in Istanbul.

"It was a great year with beautiful matches and good decisions, but as it happens in refereeing, there were also decisions that should have been better," said Marciniak. — Xinhua

Star swimmers to skip Doha World Aquatics for Paris preparation

SEVERAL prominent swimmers will be notably absent from the Doha World Aquatics scheduled for February as they focus on preparations for the

upcoming Paris Olympics.

Compared to the 48 swimmers who participated in the Fukuoka World Aquatics in July last year, the United States will

be represented by 18 swimmers in Doha. Among the notable absentees is Katie Ledecky, the 16-time individual world champion. Other key figures like Caeleb Dressel and Ryan Murphy will also choose to skip. Defending champions Hunter Armstrong (50m backstroke) and Kate Douglass (200m individual medley) will seek to retain their titles. Australia, who topped the tally with 13 gold medals in Fukuoka, will also witness significant absences, including Kaylee McKeown, Mollie O'Callaghan, Ariarne Titmus, Kyle Chalmers, and Samuel Short. Leading the powerhouse will be Cam McEvoy, the current 50m freestyle world champion. — Xinhua



Several prominent swimmers will be notably absent from the Doha World Aquatics scheduled for February as they focus on preparations for the upcoming Paris Olympics. PHOTO: PIX FOR VISUAL PURPOSE/XINHUA



Nepal inks long-term power deal with India, to sell 10,000 MW electricity over 10 years

The agreement, endorsed during Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal's visit to India last year, was officially signed by officials from both nations during the ongoing visit of India's External Affairs Minister Dr S Jaishankar.



Kathmandu and New Delhi signed a long-term agreement on electricity trade, with Nepal set to export 10,000 megawatts to India over the next decade. **PHOTO: ANI**

KATHMANDU and New Delhi on Thursday inked a long-term agreement on electricity trade, as part of which Nepal will export 10,000 megawatts of electricity to India over the next ten years.

The agreement was signed in the presence of Nepal's Minister for Energy, Water Resources and Irrigation, Shakti Bahadur Basnet.

Secretary at the Ministry of Energy, Water Resources and Irrigation, Gopal Sigdel and India's Energy Secretary Pankaj Agrawal signed the agreement

on behalf of the two countries.

The bilateral understanding on electricity exports was reached during Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal's visit to India from 31 May to 3 June, last year. During the visit, Prime Min-

ister Narendra Modi expressed India's commitment to long-term electricity purchase from Nepal and both nations reached a consensus in this regard.

The Council of Ministers in India has already endorsed the Memorandum

of Understanding (MoU) reached between the two neighbours in this regard. The agreement was signed during the ongoing two-day visit of External Affairs Minister Dr. S Jaishankar, starting Thursday. — ANI

Cambodia attracts 268 new FDI's, which creates more than 307,000 jobs in 2023

The country approved 268 projects, predominantly in industries, infrastructure, agriculture, agro-industry, and tourism, with China, Singapore, and Malaysia being the top three foreign investors, contributing 66 per cent of the total investment.

CAMBODIA attracted fixed-asset investment of \$4.92 billion in 2023, up 22 per cent from \$4.03 billion in a year earlier, the Council for the Development of Cambodia (CDC) said in a news release on Wednesday.

The Southeast Asian country approved 268 investment projects last year, which could create approximately 307,000 jobs, the CDC said, adding that those projects were mainly focused on industries, infrastructure, agriculture and agro-industry, and tourism.

Top three foreign investors in the kingdom last year



Cambodia witnessed a 22 per cent increase in fixed-asset investment, reaching \$4.92 billion in 2023. People work at a factory in the Sihanoukville Special Economic Zone (SSEZ) in Preah Sihanouk province, Cambodia on 19 July 2022. **PHOTO: SSEZ/HANDOUT VIA XINHUA/FILE**

were from China, Singapore and Malaysia, the CDC said, adding that investment from China accounted for 66 per cent of the total investment. — Xinhua

HIGHLY PATHOGENIC AVIAN INFLUENZA (HPAI)

France detects bird flu on vaccinated ducks: official

FRANCE detected on 2 January an outbreak of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) among vaccinated ducks in a duck farm in its western department of Vendee, the local prefecture said on Thursday.

According to the prefecture, in order to contain the spread of the bird flu, all the 8,700 ducks, all vaccinated against HPAI as requested by the French government last year, would be killed.

"To avoid any risk of spreading the virus to other farms, the prefect of Vendee has adopted a decree defining regulated protection zones and surveillance zones which are respectively set up within a radius of 3 and 10 km around the contaminated establishment," it said in a press release.

Although the ducks were vaccinated against HPAI, the prefecture said that the vaccination does not completely eliminate the risk of infection in poultry if the virus is introduced into the farm.

The French Ministry of Agriculture said that a total of seven HPAI outbreaks have been confirmed in France since 27 November last year, the date of the first HPAI outbreak since fall 2023.

France escalated last December its alert status for avian influenza from "moderate" to "high" nationwide after confirming the contamination of a turkey farm by HPAI. — Xinhua