

The Global **NEW LIGHT** of MYANMAR

Armed attacks against each other in disunity with wrong attitudes and selfishness can lose sovereignty

The following is the full-text translation of the message sent by Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Senior General Thadoe Maha Thray Sithu Thadoe Thiri Thudhamma Min Aung Hlaing to the ceremony to mark the 76th Anniversary of Chin State Day, today.

Esteemed ethnic national brethren in Chin State,

Today is the 76th Anniversary of Chin State Day which falls on 20 February 2024. On that significant occasion, I make the best wishes for Chin ethnic people in Myanmar and all over the world and all ethnic people to have auspiciousness and well-being.

All ethnic people of the Union, including Chin ethnicities, have been living in Myanmar in unison as a single family through thick and thin sharing a same fortune for many years and prestigiously standing tall in the international community. Forging the Union spirit, they could regain independence which lost for various reasons.

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Price on high side despite influx of monsoon onions



SAC Vice-Chairman Deputy Prime Minister Vice-Senior General Soe Win addresses coordination meeting 1/2024 of Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

Value of seized illegal commodities in 2023 some K70.31 billion more than that in 2022

The value of seized illegal commodities in 2023 was some K70.31 billion more than that in 2022 but illegal trade measures still occur in the nation, said Vice-Senior General Soe Win.

Vice-Chairman of the State Administration Council Deputy Prime Minister Vice-Senior General Soe Win delivered a

speech at the work coordination meeting 1/2024 of the Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee at the Ministry of Commerce in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

In his speech, the Vice-Senior General, who is also in the capacity of Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee Chairman, retold that the SAC Chairman Prime Minister at the meeting 1/2024 of

Security, Peace and Stability and Rule of Law Committee on 26 January 2024 highlighted illegal trade can be financing armed terrorists and harming security measures, and it is necessary to effectively take action against the illegal trade measures.

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NATIONAL

Armed attacks against each other in disunity with wrong attitudes and selfishness can lose sovereignty

FROM PAGE-1

Chin ethnic leaders Bo Khai Kam, Bo Con Bik, Bo Larl Lwel and Bo Thong Ling who fought against British colonialists, U Hlur Hmong, U Thong Za Khup, Thiri Pyanchi U Thong Cin Thang and U Kio Mang, and Independence Mawgun (First Class) award winner Thadoe Maha Sithu U Vammatumong who participated in the independence struggle, Lt-Col Hrang Thio and Captain Thura Aung San Thuria Taik Chun who assaulted internal insurgencies in the post-independence era were China ethnic patriotic heroes who are honorable for the State and Tatmadaw forever for their sacrifice of life, blood and sweat in order to ensure perpetuation of the State and the Union as well as sovereignty.

February 20 designated as Chin National Day was a historical day when Chin ethnic leaders and Chin ethnic people drove out British colonialist administrative officials from Kanpetlet. Moreover, it was also the day when a rally revoked the feudal administrative system and initiated the regional democratic administrative system in Falam in 1948.

It is a significant day for Chin ethnic people together with all ethnic national brethren of the Union to launch the fighting against colonialists, battles for independence, revocation of feudalism, solidarity between all ethnic people from hilly and plain regions, and change of administrative mechanism from station head administration to the democratic administration system through the national unity and the Union spirit.

At present, violence and unrests, violation of rule of law, and destructive acts to disintegrate the nation occurring in all parts of the nation, including in some areas of Chin State, are very dangerous for the State. Everybody needs to notice that armed attacks against each other in disunity, wrong attitudes, selfishness can cause collapse of all and lose sovereignty. The Union spirit is only a need for avoiding such occurrence.

Everybody needs to notice and prevent instigations and narrow-minded concept to cause hate among all committed by internal and external destructive elements which are crushing down the century-old attachment and fraternity among national brethren of the Union. It is necessary to differentiate between right and wrong things by considering the cause and effect and wrongs and rights based on constructive and destructive measures.

The State Administration Council is implementing two political visions: strengthening the genuine, disciplined multiparty democratic system and building a Union based on democratic and federal system and two national visions: ensuring prosperity of the nation and food security. In order to achieve success in these visions, the government is implementing nine objectives and five-point roadmap. The ultimate aim of the State Administration Council is to hand over the

State responsibilities to the elected government after holding a free and fair multiparty democratic general election in accord with the aspiration of the people on completion of the measures taken in the State of Emergency. As such, it is necessary to implement the plan for the State to be peaceful and stable and return to the normalcy.

If the country is peaceful and stable, all ethnic people will enjoy peace and prosperity with improvement of socioeconomic life. So, their offspring will be able to peacefully learn education. In building the Union based on modern, developed democratic and federal system, all ethnic people must have capacities of knowledge, technology, personality and critical thinking.

However, it is obvious that ethnic people in remote areas and rural areas are facing low grade of education and lack of learning due to language barriers, weakness in encouraging education and other challenges. At present, armed terrorism, destructions and threats in some parts of the nation, including Chin State, hinder to opening the schools for ethnic students facing much loss.

Education plays a key role in shaping the future of the country. Everybody needs to prevent the attempts of hindering to learning education for degrading with destructive acts. I would like to urge all that at a time when the government is implementing the comprehensive education sector for emergence of the new generation youths with five capacities of strength in order to catch up the developing era, to uplift education qualification and to maintain national characters, so, ethnic people have to cooperate with the government in aforesaid measures.

Currently, the government is implementing socioeconomic development tasks including education, health, communications and electricity sectors under the relevant plans in order to improve human resources of Chin State. With regard to education sector, new basic education schools were opened and some schools upgraded and educational buildings were repaired with establishment of new technical and vocational education schools and appointment of teachers for relevant subjects. Assistant teachers and ethnic language teachers were appointed in ethnic areas. The government is implementing the KG+9 scheme of the compulsory education system. If efforts are made for increasing the learning rate of students in basic education sector and raising the rate of learning grades and development of human resources in Chin State, it is sure that Chin State will be a developed state in all sectors.

In the health sector, efforts are being made to open new hospitals and dispensaries with appointment of medical doctors in order to provide healthcare services to the people. Moreover, highways and internal state

roads are built in Chin State to have smooth transport and communication with the mainland. Moreover, Kaladan Multi-modal Transit Transport Project is being implemented for enabling the people to make trips to overseas countries from Chin State along the waterway in addition to construction of the port in Paletwa.

In the electric power sector, efforts are being made to supply electricity to all parts of Chin State through national grid. Moreover, local people need to systematically carry out development of micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises based on domestic products and agriculture and livestock farming tasks for improvement of their socioeconomic life.

Due to cyclone Mocha which entered Myanmar on 14 May 2023, some townships of Chin State faced loss and damage. The government made arrangements to mitigate loss and waste in the areas where the storm crossed. Moreover, foods were stored in advance for local people, and storm warnings and directives were released for relevant areas where the storm might cross. As such, although the storm was extremely severe, it left least loss and damage.

In the aftermath of the storm, the government has been leading rescue, relief and rehabilitation measures with momentum with public participation under the close supervision of Tatmadaw and Chin State government through contributions of local and foreign well-wishers, and during a two-month period, the state has returned into normalcy. All strived for possessing a better situation they anticipated. The government provided K1,002.02 million for maintenance, emergency response, rehabilitation and reconstruction tasks in Mocha-hit areas of Chin State. It showed family spirit, genuine patriotic spirit and Union spirit to national brethren of Chin State and Chin ethnicities.

Moreover, the government formed Tiddim and Paletwa districts in Chin State in order to ensure smooth process of carrying out regional development and administrative measures. I request the entire ethnic people including all Chin ethnics to join hands with the government to forge peace and stability and cease armed conflicts for development of the nation as peace and stability and rule of law is of great importance for development of the nation and nation-building tasks.

I send this message in honour of the 76th Anniversary of Chin State Day with my best wishes for Chin ethnics to have capacity for serving the interests of Chin State and the Union based on Union spirit and national spirit and for enjoying peace and prosperity forever.

*Senior General Thadoe Maha Thray Sithu
Thadoe Thiri Thudamma Min Aung Hlaing
Prime Minister
Chairman, State Administration Council*

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News and Periodicals Enterprise



NATIONAL

Value of seized illegal commodities in 2023 some K70.31 billion more than that in 2022

FROM PAGE-1

He continued that illegal trade considerably harms implementation of the sustainable development goals, especially legal businesses, revenues from investments in public service sectors of the government, thousands of job opportunities, ecosystem and life and property of the people, according to the Transnational Alliance to Combat-Ilicit Trade-TRACIT.

He added that the globe faces approximately 8-15 per cent of loss in illegal trade. Investments worth billions of US\$ obtained from illegal trade in other illegal businesses can worsen instabilities in businesses of the society, financing the terrorism which poses a threat to the global security.

The Vice-Senior General underscored that illegal trade causes disadvantages in productivity and profits of businesses, declining of incomes in legal businesses, harming economic development, reduction of production, sale and import of illegal businesses, lessening job opportunities, decrease of paying tax and revenue of the State, declining of investment, and increase of criminal gangs.

Moreover, he noted that illegal trade indirectly affects fish resource depletion, forced

Salient points in speech of the Vice-Senior General at meeting 1/2024 of the Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee

- Illegal commodities in the market will lose trust of consumers.
- Illegal trade may cause corruption and tremendously decline the revenue for the State.
- Illegal trade and commodities worth some K200.422 billion were seized in 10,395 cases during the 24-month period.
- More effective ways and techniques must be sought for checking illegal trade measures which threatens domestic manufacturing.

labour at illegal fishing trawlers by gangsters, degrading of ecosystem at forests and animals and threatening jobs in tourism sector due to illegal wood cutting and trading, loss in agricultural sector due to use of low-grade pesticides, and deterioration of natural environment in long run.

The Vice-Senior General highlighted that illegal commodities in the market will lose trust of consumers. Illegal trade may cause corruption and tremendously decline the revenue for the State. As such, eradication of illegal trade must be designated as a national duty for all, he added.

During the 24-month period after re-constituting the Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee, he underlined that illegal trade and commodities worth some K200.422 billion were seized in 10,395 cases.

As such, he pointed out that it is obvious that assigned staff and special task forces from Nay Pyi Taw Council Area and regions and states have to take severe action against the offenders under the law.

He stressed that as the State Administration Council has allowed installation of a modern X-ray machine at Nyaungkhashay permanent checkpoint where Customs Department will inspect export vehicles, the Ministry of Planning and Finance needs to invite tender to the project so as to install the equipment as quickly as possible.

At present, he said that bill of loading system and SOPs is being implemented for train, inland water transport vessel and coastal liners in a three-month trial from 1 January 2024. Upon completion of the trial period,

action must be taken against offenders for not conformity with the SOPs. Aviation cargo transport must be reviewed to address the weakness during the three-month trial from 11 January 2024, he noted.

The Vice-Senior General called for applying conventional inspection and ICT technological inspection in checking smuggled commodities in eradication of illegal trade. Officials need to supervise their assigned duties at checkpoints, security gates and container ports not to cause bribery cases.

On the other hand, he urged all to provide assistance for MSME businesses for their long term existence so as to increase export volume and import-substitute manufacturing at home. Hence, more effective ways and techniques must be sought for checking illegal trade measures

which threatens domestic manufacturing.

Secretary of the steering committee Deputy Minister for Commerce U Min Min reported on accomplishment over the minutes of the meeting 6/2023 and work process of the steering committee.

Task force leaders of the steering committee office reported the letters to the meeting and Union ministers and the deputy minister discussed reviews on illegal trade, taking action against seized narcotic drugs, prohibited materials, vehicles, fuel, foodstuffs, medicines and cosmetics in regions and states including Nay Pyi Taw Council Area, comparison of exports with imports, commodity flows at trade camps, e-lock system measures, and illegal sales of goods online.

The leader of the task force at the steering committee office reported on the draft minute of the meeting 1/2024. The Vice-Senior General coordinated all discussions and reports.

The meeting was also attended by Union Ministers Lt-Gen Yar Pyae, U Win Shein and U Tun Ohn, deputy ministers and officials together with chairmen of special task force from regions and states through video conferencing. — MNA/TTA

DPM MoPF UM attends MEB annual statement coordination meeting of 2023-24 FY

THE opening ceremony of 2023-2024 financial year annual statement coordination meeting of Myanmar Economic Bank was held in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

In his opening speech, Deputy Prime Minister Union Minister for Planning and Finance U Win Shein said all the bank staff should work together in unity to meet the objectives for 2024-2025 financial year by considering the actual situation of the banking services conducted in 2023-2024 financial year. Although there are 311 branches of Myanmar Economic Bank, the head office, region/state offices and bank branches are working together to serve the banking services properly.

The government also provides the necessary assistance to MSME entrepreneurs and the loans are being disbursed to entrepreneurs at low interest rate using MSME fund aiming at promoting local manufacturing sector and export

volume.

Moreover, the direct payments of Ywan/Kyat and Baht/Kyat is developed to facilitate the export/import payment in border trade. Moreover, the arrangements are also made to start the Rupee/Kyat direct payment for Myanmar-India border trade.

He also urged all to make efforts in implementing Core Banking system, and appreciated the bank and its staff for developing Centralized e-Pension system at 67 branches.

He then stressed the needs to communicate with the relevant departments and organizations to take action against the financial frauds via mobile payment, focus on information receive and proper communication system as the staff, financial and inventory are important according to the current situation and work well to facilitate the banking and



Deputy Prime Minister Union Minister for Planning and Finance U Win Shein speaking at MEB 2023-2024 financial year annual statement coordination meeting in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

financial services.

Myanmar Economic Bank organizes the annual statement closing coordination meeting for respective financial year

every year. The bank will hold the event including discussion, paper reading session and awarding the outstanding staff until 23 February. — MNA/KTZH

NATIONAL



DPM Union Minister for Foreign Affairs U Than Swe holds talks with Belarusian Ambassador Mr Uladzimir Baravikou yesterday.

Myanmar, Belarus to foster further consolidation of friendship and cooperation

U Than Swe, Deputy Prime Minister and Union Minister for Foreign Affairs of Myanmar, received Mr Uladzimir Baravikou, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Belarus to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, on 19 February 2024 at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Nay Pyi Taw.

During the meeting, they cordially exchanged views on further consolidation of the existing friendship and cooperation including activities to commemorate the 25th Anniversary of diplomatic relations between Myanmar and Belarus in September 2024, promotion of bilateral trade and facilitation of more scholarships for Myanmar students in Belarus.

The Deputy Prime Minister also appraised the Myanmar Government's priorities and ongoing efforts for economic reforms, peace and national reconciliation. —MNA

9 special civil appeal cases passed judgment, 6 cases heard

A special appeal tribunal consisting of Chief Justice of the Union U Thar Htay and Judges of the Supreme Court of the Union: Daw Khin May Yi, U Thaug Naing, U Thein Ko Ko and Daw Pyone Pyone Aye was convened Monday morning at the Supreme Court of the Union and the tribunal passed judgments for nine special civil appeal cases – Nos 19/2022 (Ayeyawady), 17/2023 (Taninthayi), 19/2023 (Ayeyawady), 23/2023 (Yangon), 39/2022 (Yangon), 47/2022 (Magway), 10/2023 (Taninthayi), 25/2023 (Kachin), and 26/2023 (Mandalay).

In addition, a total of six special civil appeal cases—Nos 26/2022 (Mandalay), 15/2023 (Magway), 22/2023 (Kachin), 31/2023 (Bago), 35/2023 (Yangon) and 42/2023 (Yangon) — were heard. —MNA

MIFER Union Minister receives Ambassador of the Republic of Belarus to Myanmar



Union Minister for Foreign Economic Relations Dr Kan Zaw receives Belarusian Ambassador Mr Uladzimir Baravikou at the ministry in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

DR Kan Zaw, Union Minister for Investment and Foreign Economic Relations, received Mr Uladzimir Baravikou, Ambassador of the Republic of Belarus to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar with residence in Hanoi at Office No 1,

Nay Pyi Taw on the morning of 19 February 2024.

During the meeting, both sides cordially discussed measures of trade, investment and economic cooperation between two countries.—MNA

COVID-19 report, 19 February 2024

NEW TESTS

14,156

NEW CASES

19

CASUALTIES

Nil

Ads

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NATIONAL

MoI UM: Media and information literacy is an essential mechanism to combat disinformation

UNION Minister for Information U Maung Maung Ohn participated in a talk on the Prevention of Toxic Media and State Building and Media Role with the trainees at Civil Service Academy (Lower Myanmar) yesterday.

First, a documentary video clip on preventing the risk of media poisoning and the role of media in nation-building tasks was played.

In his speech, the Union Minister said the trainees who are the government employees should keep in touch with modern technology and try hard to become dutiful and reliable ones in their respective sectors. Being the good civil servants who are carrying out the nation-building tasks in addition to the office works, they also should under the true news and serve duty for the development of the country and socioeconomic status of the people based on such true news.

Media and information literacy is an essential mechanism to combat disinformation. Some of the youths are misled with the false news as they are weak



Union Minister for Information U Maung Maung Ohn cordially greets trainees at Civil Service Academy (Lower Myanmar) yesterday.

in analyzing the false news and misinformation. The ministry combatted such false news and misinformation via the State-owned media and conducted press conferences with local and foreign media frequently.

He continued that if the media is used in nation-building tasks effectively, it can bring benefits to political, economic and social sectors. When the media

raises the public awareness regarding the policy and activities of government, the preventive measures for unusual phenomenon like natural disasters can be made ensuring least destruction in media ways.

He also talked about the modern and creative policy of the ministry to inform, educate and entertain, and highlighted the duties of ministry to conduct

educating programmes for the sake of country and people in building a nation via media and proper public relations.

He added that new information is required for daily socioeconomic development and the media toxic lead to wrong decision, vision and goodwill.

He stated that the People's Military Service Law came into force on 10 February 2024. The

2019 Inter-censal Survey shows that there are nearly 13 million people who are eligible for conscription. Among the 13 million, there are 6.3 million men and 7.7 million women. Especially for men, one per cent of 6.3 million men is 63,000 and two per cent will be 120,000. When it is ten per cent, there might be 600,000. But, that number is not required. There are 60,000 wards and villages in the country, and so there will be one or two people from one ward or village to serve the military service. He also highlighted that all the citizens are responsible to defend the country as only Tatmadaw is not responsible to do so.

He then urged the trainees to apply the knowledge acquired at the training in their work field.

He also distributed five sets of MRTV DTH receivers and 100 DVB T2 Set Top Boxes to the trainees through a lucky draw.

The talk was attended by directors-general of Ministry of Information, the rector, pro-rectors, professors, officials and 860 trainees. — MNA/KTZH



Union Minister U Tun Ohn meets Belarusian Ambassador Mr Uladzimir Baravikou at the Ministry of Commerce yesterday.

MoC UM receives Ambassador of Belarus to Myanmar

THE Union Minister for Commerce, U Tun Ohn, received the Ambassador of Belarus to Myanmar, Mr Uladzimir Baravikou yesterday at the reception hall of the ministry in Nay Pyi Taw.

During the meeting, they discussed strengthening of

friendship between the two countries and ability to increase exports of the primary agricultural produce of Myanmar, such as rice, various pulses and beans, and CMP garment products, technology and investments from Belarus, and possi-

bility of cooperation to increase mutual trade. The meeting was also attended by U Min Min, Deputy Minister for Commerce, directors-general, the deputy permanent secretary, deputy directors-general and officials. — MNA/TS

Multiple Academy Award winner Wah Wah Win Shwe undergoing regular medical check-up

THE Myanmar Motion Pictures Organization recently announced that veteran actress and multiple Academy Award winner Wah Wah Win Shwe is currently undergoing a routine medical examination at Kanthaya Hospital in Mayangon Township.

Additionally, U Kyi Soe Tun, the chairperson of the Myanmar Motion Pictures Organization, along with vice-chairperson U Aye Kyu Lay, Di-

rector U Hnin Moe, Director-cum-actor Aung Lwin, and Director Zinyaw Maung Maung, spoke words of encouragement to her.

U Aye Kyu Lay disclosed that Wah Wah Win Shwe is receiving medical treatments for age-related ailments but is otherwise in good health. She has been undergoing treatment for two weeks and is currently reported to be in a stable condition.— ASH/ TRKM



Officials from MMPO comfort veteran actress Wah Wah Win Shwe.

NATIONAL

Upgrading path to snow-capped mountains in Kachin State to promote eco-tourism industry



Views from Ziyadam Village.

LOCAL sources report that efforts are underway to enhance the trail leading to the snow-

capped mountains in Kachin State to promote eco-tourism. Mounts Phonkanrazi and

Phonrinrazi, located in PutaO Township, are well-known destinations for both alpinists and

adventurers. Along the Upper Sangong-Lonnadam-Ziyadam road, which connects to these mountains, reside 1,139 residents across eight villages. Improving this road infrastructure not only aims to attract more visitors to the area but also promises benefits for the local communities.

On 17 February, Kachin State Chief Minister U Khet Htein Nan conducted an inspection to evaluate the progress of the road upgrade.

Funding for the upgrade, spanning a length of 24 miles and seven furlongs, comes from the Union, Ministry of Border Affairs, and Kachin State government.

The improvement efforts involve paving the 34-foot-wide

gravel road, widening it by clearing mountains, and constructing reinforced concrete bridges.

Currently, the Department of Highways' bridge construction team is working on a 240-foot-long reinforced concrete bridge across Mular Creek.

Putao is home to three majestic icy peaks: Phangranrazi (14,200 feet), Phonrinrazi (14,000 feet), and Phonkanrazi (11,920 feet). Journeys from Putao to these mountains take 14 days to Phangranrazi, 13 nights and 14 days to Phonyinrazi, and 10 days to Phonkanrazi. The former two present more challenges, offering exhilarating adventures. — TWA/NT

Gyobyu water supply pipeline to be laid along Myanmar-Korea Friendship Bridge (Dala) for consumption in Dala Township

THE Gyobyu water supply pipeline will be laid across the Myanmar-Korea Friendship Bridge (Dala).

According to reports, the Yangon City Development Committee will lay the water pipeline for Dala Township along the bridge, in addition to the construction of a Toll Plaza on the Dala side.

Union Minister for Construction U Myo Thant, along with Yangon Region Chief Minister U Soe Thein, inspected the site chosen for the Toll Plaza and the ongoing approach bridge construction on 18 February.

Consultant engineer Mr Bae provided a clarification on progress of the project, plans for further implementation, and priority tasks.

The Myanmar-Korea Friendship Bridge (Dala) is one of the bridges built in Myanmar with the highest water clearance and the highest bridge deck. The main bridge and the approach bridges were designed to ensure the safety of vehicles driving at 50 km per hour, and 30 km per hour on the slope bridges. —TWA/MKKS



The Union Minister for Construction inspects construction sites of the Myanmar-Korea Friendship Bridge (Dala).



The pictures show handcraft artisans-making offering bowls, a piles of clay pots in MSMEs.

MIFER to open Start-Up Centre to connect entrepreneurs to investors

THE Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations will set up a Start-Up Centre to bridge the network between entrepreneurs and investors.

MIFER Union Minister Dr Kan Zaw addressed at a meeting held on 15 February that the Start-Up Centre is required to connect entrepreneurs to the investors at the ministry.

The Union Minister also mentioned to accelerate the micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) activities in order to enhance agriculture and livestock sectors and MSMEs, have self-sufficiency for edible oil and boost exports.

There are 24 groups registered at the ministry, as per the statistics of the private industries. Of them, 10,205 large-scale industries, 12,457 medium-scale industries and 24,457 small-scale industries, totalling 47,119.

The Union Minister highlighted the need to create investment opportunities to attract investors and spur investments. He also emphasized to learn clear patterns in how foreign businesses raise capital to attract FDIs, to measure total factor productivity for export promotion and to provide domestic investment facilitation in order to bolster agribusinesses productivity in respective regions and states. — TWA/EM

Price on high side despite influx of monsoon onions

THE price is still rising even though 990,000 viss of onions from various regions were supplied to the Bayintnaung Commodity Wholesale Centre between 13 and 17 February in the post-Chinese New Year and the post-Union Day, a trader Ko Phyo told the Global New Light of Myanmar (GNLM).

The price reached another high on 19 February despite the entry of 150,000 viss of onions. The wholesale prices of onion moved in the range between K1,300 and K3,100 per viss depending on producing areas (Seikphyu, Taung-dwingyi, Myittha and Myingyan) and sizes on 13 February and moved up to K3,200 per viss on 19 February. A warehouse owner forecast that there is price rise potential for onions around 26 February as well. Before then, the price is expected to dip a bit.

The regions other than Yangon braced for high prices owing to low supply. The highest price was K2,200 per viss in Pakokku, Myingyan and Seikphyu areas on 19 February, which rose



Trucks loaded with monsoon onions entering Seikphyu's commodity depot.

from K1,800 recorded in early February. The price of onions is strong when the harvest season of summer onions is near.

The onion prices stood at K1,000-K1,600 per viss on 18 February 2023 and surged to K5,100 per viss for large onions in late December 2023.

The profit of those traders who

keep the stocks in hands depends on the summer onion output and foreign demand, some traders said.

Of dry kitchen grocery, only onions have foreign demand without importation. Meanwhile, imported garlic and potato share the markets with locally produced ones in the domestic market.

— TWA/KK

YGN palm oil wholesale reference price set at K5,140 for the week ending 25 Feb

THE wholesale reference rate of palm oil for the Yangon market remained unchanged for this week ending 25 February to K5,140 per viss like that of the previous week ending 18 February, according to the Supervisory Committee on edible oil import and distribution.

The Supervisory Committee on edible oil import and distribution under the Ministry of Commerce has been closely observing the FOB prices in Malaysia and Indonesia, adding transportation cost, tariff and banking service to decide the wholesale market reference rate for edible oil on a weekly basis.

However, the market price is higher than the reference price.

To control overcharging, the Consumer Affairs Department under the Ministry of Commerce informed the consumers of lodging the complaints for overcharging through Call Centre's Hot Line in late August. The department urged the consumers not to buy the palm oil at high price.

The department is making concerted efforts to steer the high vol-



The photo shows imported jerry cans of palm oil at the warehouse in Yangon.

atility in palm oil prices in the retail market and offer fairer prices to the consumers, in coordination with Myanmar Edible Oil Dealers Association and oil importing companies.

The complaints for overcharging can be lodged over Hot Line: 1535 of the Call Centre of the Consumers Affairs Department or sent to the Facebook Page of the department

and the region and state departments concerned.

The domestic consumption of palm oil is estimated at one million tonnes per year. The local palm oil production is just about 400,000 tonnes. To meet the domestic demands, about 700,000 tonnes of palm oil are yearly imported through Malaysia and Indonesia. — NN/EM

Pigeon pea price moves down following bearish market sentiment

THE price of pigeon pea declined to K3.85 million per tonne on 19 February amid the sluggish market after a record high of K4.197 million per tonne on 5 February.

The figures showed a sharp drop of about K350,000 per tonne in the past two weeks.

Myanmar primarily exports black gram, green gram and pigeon peas to foreign markets. Of them, black gram and pigeon peas are mostly delivered to India while green gram is shipped to China and Europe.

India has growing consumption requirements on black gram and pigeon peas. According to a Memorandum of Understanding between Myanmar and



Pigeon pea plants bearing ripening pods.

India signed on 18 June 2021, India will import 250,000 tonnes of black gram 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.

Black gram that India primarily purchases is commonly found only in Myanmar, whereas pigeon pea, green gram and chickpeas are grown in African countries and Australia, the Myanmar Pulses, Beans, Maize and Sesame Seeds Merchants Association stated.

Myanmar conveyed 1.3 million tonnes of various pulses worth exceeding US\$1.123 billion over the past ten months of the current financial year 2023-2024 beginning 1 April, the Ministry of Commerce stated.

Myanmar bagged \$1.47 billion from 1.9 million tonnes of pulses exports last FY 2022-2023, the Ministry of Commerce's statistics showed. — NN/EM

OPINION

Ensure lasting peace and prosperity for Chin State and the Union

A momentous occasion unfolds as the Chin ethnic community, alongside their fellow ethnic brethren throughout the Union, embarks on a journey against colonial oppression, striving for independence, dismantling feudal structures, fostering solidarity among diverse hill and plain regions, and transitioning from a station head administration to a democratic system, all under the umbrella of national unity and the spirit of the Union.

However, the current landscape is marred by violence, unrest, the erosion of the rule of law, and acts threatening the disintegration of the nation, particularly in certain areas of Chin State. It is imperative to recognize that internal conflicts, misguided attitudes, and selfish actions can lead to the collapse of the entire nation, endangering its sovereignty. The antidote to such perils lies in embracing the Union spirit.

The State Administration Council's principal goal is to relinquish state responsibilities to an elected government following a free and fair multiparty democratic general election, aligning with the people's aspirations upon the completion of measures taken during the State of Emergency. This entails executing plans to restore peace, stability, and a return to normalcy within the state.

The call to action is clear – the Chin ethnic community must collaborate with the government to cultivate peace and stability, putting an end to armed conflicts. Recognizing that peace, stability, and the rule of law are integral to the nation's development and the ongoing task of nation-building, this collective effort serves the interests of both Chin State and the Union. By upholding the Union spirit and national ideals, the people can relish enduring peace and prosperity for generations to come.

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Three Life Essentials of Longevity

Life is just a moment, but whether short or long, depending on each individual's time perception, we all know. Anyone who is almost always alive and kicking will find the length of a day quite short, whereas the one who has little to do may think even a 24-hour day much longer than it takes. To be able to lead human life today calls for loads of needs, needless to say. Fundamentally, food, clothing, and shelter are considered the three basic needs for life. According to Maslow's Theory of Hierarchical Needs, these physiological needs lie at the bottom of his triangular order while self-actualization needs such as acceptance stands at the top. Of course, the person who has got something enough like parental love is unlikely to hanker for this need any more. All the same, longevity generally requires three life essentials at least, as far as I can see. Those essentials include a healthy and

active body, food and environmental safety, and proper vocational education.

Good health is a kind of gift from nature. Health affairs play an inalienable part in human beings' longevity. However, it cannot be said for sure that just good health will lead to the full extent of living a long life. Noticeably enough, a long-lived body demands excellent health and physical well-being. An inactive body despite being in good health would look much like a dead living person. I hope that we have all seen a patient with a chronic disease who lay flat on the bed long before his death. When a man cannot do physical activity very well, his health will surely break down bit by bit in the not-too-distant future. A person's daily routine, sound mind, a temperate climate, and sufficient nutrients will bring about fine everyday physical activity and well-being, speaking of Buddhist teachings.

Usually, the well-aged meet



This photo taken on 28 June 2023 shows 85 year old rugby player Yasutake Oshima (R) taking part in a rugby training session for his senior over 70s team, at the Fukasawa Multi-Purpose Sports Plaza in Kamakura, Kanagawa prefecture. PHOTO: KAREN HAIBARA / AFP

food and environmental safety to a certain extent. They often eat

edible food that is rich in adequate

nourishment, especially free from food additives, colourants, and preservatives, which will give rise

to ill health. Also, they like to enjoy well-cooked or fresh food rather than half-cooked or overcooked food. Some of them even grow their regional plants such as rice for organic food and drink; others carefully choose and have food which will be good for their health, like fish soup, meat soup, or vegetable soup. As always, they tend to avoid eating tinned or packed food, street food, fast food, saturated fats, beverages, and even snacks. At least these foods should harm their health somehow or other. Not only that, environmental safety is very important to them for the simple reason that an unsafe environment in some violent crime is given to threaten human life. This is intraspecific competition between human beings, not for mates and greener pastures, but for life and property, instead of interspecific competition with wild beasts. A pleasant environment full of peace and quiet where green plants grow well here and there becomes

part of human longevity in that they can get emotional safety and mental well-being from such an environment.

To earn a long life could not be done with a healthy and active body or food and environmental safety but with proper vocational education, including life-long knowledge. Buddha the Unrivalled once preached a sermon that the seven right codes of conduct will prolong human life. A person who would like to live for a long time shall: 1) know anything suitable for his living and acting, 2) get its appropriate degree, 3) eat easily digestible food, 4) not go out under the inopportune time and circumstances, 5) do noble deeds, 6) refrain from having sex, and 7) keep in contact with good friends. His career education can make him have a long life, too. That education-oriented job lessens his tiredness more than average, offers enough income, and creates work-in happiness as

well as job satisfaction, enabling him to stay out of debt and dangerous life-threatening.

In a summarized conclusion, those who are living long well are supposed to face adult happiness and life satisfaction for certain. Often, they unconsciously appear to pride themselves on their longevity. Quite interestingly, they never seem to feel lonely as the only tree in an open field even though it can be. They mostly die of old age and rest in peace. In general, they are absolutely stable, both intrapersonally and interpersonally, with themselves and others respectively. Currently, the population growth of those aged 100 or so in Japan is going up to the number of over 10000, as far as I know. Almost all the aged have a happy big family, high self-care for their health and also follow their religious teachings to the letter on a regular basis. Long live the public!

Study reveals how protein-rich breakfast can increase satiety, improve concentration

Researchers followed 30 obese women, testing different breakfast types over three days, measuring satiety, hormone levels, and energy intake. The study underscores the importance of breakfast in cognitive function, challenging the notion that it's merely a cliché.

A new Danish study investigated the relationship between diet and cognitive function, and the findings show that a protein-rich breakfast can boost satiety and concentration.

This is important knowledge in a society with increasing obesity rates and lifestyle-related diseases, said researcher.

"Breakfast is the most important meal of the day." This is a well-worn platitude that has never had much basis in scientific evidence.

But a new Danish study has explored how different types of breakfast affect satiety and concentration and it has added new fuel to the old cliché.

The study followed 30 obese women aged 18 to 30 for three days, during which the women



A Danish study found that a protein-rich breakfast boosts satiety and concentration, vital in combating rising obesity and lifestyle-related diseases. PHOTO: ILLUSTRATION: UNSPLASH

consumed a protein-rich breakfast, a carbohydrate-rich breakfast or no breakfast at all.

The women's sense of satiety, hormone levels and energy intake were measured at lunchtime. Their total daily energy intake was measured as well.

The participants also had to complete a cognitive concentration test during the study.

"We found that a protein-rich breakfast with skyr (a sour-milk product) and oats increased satiety and concentration in the participants, but it did not reduce the overall energy intake compared to skipping breakfast or eating a carbohydrate-rich breakfast," says Mette Hansen, associate professor and PhD at the Department of Public Health, and one of the authors of the study.

The number of overweight people is increasing both in Denmark and across the globe. Obesity is often accompanied by lifestyle-related diseases such as type 2 diabetes.

Previous studies have shown that people who eat breakfast have a lower BMI than people who do not eat breakfast, and protein-rich foods have generally been shown to have an increased satiety effect compared to carbohydrate-rich and high-fat foods with the same calorie content.

The idea was therefore to test whether a protein-rich breakfast could be a good strategy to achieving greater satiety during the day and thus reducing daily calorie intake.

SOURCE: ANI



Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 7:00 pm Monday 19 February 2024)

BAY INFERENCE: Weather is a few cloud over the North Bay and partly cloudy to cloudy over the Andaman Sea and elsewhere over the Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL NOON OF THE 20 February 2024: Light rain or thundershowers are likely to be isolated in Taninthayi Region and Kachin State. Degree of certainty is (60%). Weather will be partly cloudy in Upper Sagaing, Yangon and Ayeyawady regions and Kayin and Mon states and generally fair in the remaining regions and states.

STATE OF THE SEA: Sea will be slight to moderate in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about (4-7) feet in off and along Myanmar Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Likelihood of isolated light rain or thundershowers in Upper Sagaing Region and Kachin State.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 20 February 2024: Generally fair weather.

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 20 February 2024: Partly cloudy.

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 20 February 2024: Generally fair weather.

NATIONAL

THE second coordination meeting of Myanmar-China Central Level Work Committee for joint-protection of forest fire was organized in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

First, Union Minister for Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation U Khin Maung Yi, in his capacity as Chairman of the working committee, said Myanmar is striving for reducing fire hot-spot and haze pollution after being a member on the ASEAN Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution (AATHP) in 2003. The five facts agreed with China at the first meeting are being implemented by cooperating with relevant region/state departments. The matters related to prevention of forest fire along Myanmar-China border area, formation of joint task force for extinguishing forest fire and rescue works and procedures to prevent forest fire should be discussed, he added.

Then, Vice-Chairman (1) of the working committee Un-



Union Minister for NREC U Khin Maung Yi speaking at Myanmar-China Central Level Work Committee for joint-protection of forest fire in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

Myanmar accelerates bilateral mechanism with China for reducing damage by forest fire in border areas

ion Minister for Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation U Min Naung discussed the damages of crops and soil in wildfire,

educating programmes to eradicate the slash and burn method and also for farmers residing along Myanmar-China

border, technical and machinery assistance to recycle the agricultural waste and plans to promote agriculture and live-

stock breeding.

Moreover, Vice-Chairman (2) Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr Soe Win emphasized to draft plans for preventive measures and reducing damages due to forest fire, providing assistance to disaster victims including outbreak of fire and cooperation work with relevant departments and organizations to conduct public awareness programmes, preparations and rehabilitation.

The meeting adopted decisions regarding the formation of the joint work committee and designate the contact person for effectively implementation of extinguishing forest fire and rescue works along Myanmar-China border, collaboration for capacity building in fire prevention and technical training, increasing surveying and controlling the transboundary haze pollution and the points to be added to the responsibilities of the work committee. — MNA/KTZH

Counter-argument to false information

Inside Myingyan Prison’s Reality: Dispelling false claims of verbal abuse, forced labour, and threats

ON 11 February, the Facebook Page known as Khit Thit Media falsely posted disinformation titled “Political Prisoners in Myingyan Prison Subjected to Ill-Treatment through Verbal Abuse, Forced Labour, and Threats.”

Within the prison compound, staff typically perform security and administrative duties without holding weapons, including rods. However, on Sundays during prison drills, they are permitted to carry rods or shields. All prisoners are managed equally without discrimination, and their sleeping quarters and cells are equally distributed among them.

Prisoners are not assigned heavy labour tasks. However, they are responsible for cleaning their sleeping areas and cells. Additionally, they must cultivate vegetables for their consumption and collect clean water from the faucet using buckets to transport it back to their cells. Moreover, they are required to fetch rice and meals from the kitchen, which is approximately 40 feet away from the women’s hostel, and bring them to their cells.

The stronger prisoners take turns carrying out heavy tasks. Light cleaning tasks are shared among all prisoners in rotation. All prisoners are assigned duties equitably according to the rules and regulations, and they can also equally benefit from reductions in their punishment days as stipulated by the law. Prisoners aged 50 and above are not assigned any duties, as confirmed by a official from Myingyan Prison.

Furthermore, within the prison, there is no discrimination based on political or criminal backgrounds. All inmates are responsible for cleaning their bedrooms or

cells and the surrounding areas. Occasionally, they are tasked with watering the radish plantation (measuring 40x20 feet) using a hose connected to the faucet. No heavy labour is assigned.

The prison compound has a water purification distiller with an RO system, providing clean and fresh water that is accessible to all inmates. In addition, there are two four-inch thick brick-rimmed underground wells that provide enough water for bathing and personal hygiene. Furthermore, two more of two-inch thick brick-rimmed additional underground wells have been dug near the women’s ward to ensure sufficient water distribution.

Based on current data, each individual inmate can use an average of 40 gallons of water per day from the water tanks and wells, allowing them to bathe twice daily, in the morning and evening. Additionally, the responsible personnel from Myingyan Prison noted that there have been no outbreaks of skin-related diseases among the inmates.

Prisoners have the option to purchase necessary items through the prison commissary twice a month. The cost and transportation charges are deducted from the money they have deposited, ensuring that prices remain reasonable and not higher than market rates. Additionally, their meals include meat four times a week, while on other days, they are provided with warm, freshly cooked vegetables sourced from both prison plantations and the market. It is important to note that the Facebook Page named “Khit Thit Media” is intentionally spreading false information to mislead the public with ill-intentions. — MNA/TMT

Tatmadaw confronts false allegations amidst counter-attack on KIA, PDF terrorists in Shan State (North)

THE Khit Thit media outlet is deliberately spreading false information, alleging that the Tatmadaw killed at least 102 people and committed acts of rape and murder against a woman and three underage girls. In reality, the Tatmadaw conducted a counter-attack on the KIA and PDF terrorists who had assaulted security posts and government buildings in Moemeik, Shan State (North), on 18 February.

Additionally, KIA and PDF terrorists launched an offensive against the Tatmadaw, using monasteries and schools as cover and employing civilians as human shields. Furthermore, they planted mines on the roads, prompting the Tatmadaw to take precautions to prevent civilian injuries from these explosives.

Local residents report that during their retreat, KIA and PDF terrorists suffered considerable casualties and resorted to firing at residential buildings using both small arms and heavy weapons.

The illegal and subversive Khit Thit media is fabricating and disseminating fake news on social media platforms to tarnish the reputation of the Tatmadaw and mislead the public. — MNA/TKO

NATIONAL

MoHA Deputy Minister leads strategic meeting on anti-human trafficking efforts

DEPUTY Minister for Home Affairs and Chief of Myanmar Police Force Lt-Gen Ni Lin Aung, who also chairs the working committee for implementing the five-year anti-human trafficking plan, convened a strategic meeting with other members yesterday.

The chairman began by reflecting on last year's achievements, which included educating the public on human trafficking through media channels, collaborating with local and international organizations such as embassies and INTERPOL's National Central Bureau to rescue foreigners who had suffered plights in Myanmar, and rehabilitating trafficked victims.

He stated that 94 per cent of the work programmes involving

collaboration, prevention, legal actions, and protection were successfully achieved in 2023.

Looking ahead to the future, the chairman presented four missions which included 62 points of procedures, and 169 task points for 2024. The new tasks aim to address the new forms and routes of human trafficking, including digital-assisted anti-human trafficking. The members of the working committee discussed the 2024 action plan.

Subsequently, the chairman encouraged team members to strive towards completing the fourth quarter of the five-year project (2022-2026), drawn up in accordance with internationally accepted norms, within the designated timeframe. — MNA/NT



Deputy Minister for Home Affairs and Chief of Myanmar Police Force Lt-Gen Ni Lin Aung addresses the meeting on implementing the five-year anti-human trafficking plan in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

CRIME NEWS

Confiscation of illegal items; timbers, consumer goods, industrial materials and vehicles

THE Nay Pyi Taw Council's Illegal Trade Eradication Special Task Force seized 16.294 tonnes of illegal teak, valued at K10.754 million, in Tatkon township on 16 February. This action was taken under the Forest Law.

Supervised by the Shan State Illegal Trade Eradication Special Task Force, combined teams conducted inspections on 18 February and confiscated nine types of goods, worth K7.22 million, including 190 colourful stone bead necklaces (suspected to be jade) from a vehicle parked near Sinphyu market in Muse township. This action was conducted under Customs procedures.

On the same day, a Hino Profia truck (approximately valued at K25 million), travelling from Myawady to Yangon, was intercepted at the



A vehicle sized with illegal good at Mayanchaung permanent checkpoint on 18 February.



Colourful stone bead necklaces seized in Muse on 18 February.

Mayanchaung permanent checkpoint. It was found to be

carrying 4,500 kilogrammes of Ivory Art Card, valued at K8.1 million. This action was also conducted under Customs procedures.

According to the Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee, four arrests were made on 16 and 18 February, with an estimated value of K51.074 million. — MNA/MKKS

YBS fare is cheaper if passengers use YPS Card or YPS QR code service

PASSENGERS can take YBS buses with cheaper bus fare if they use YPS Card or YPS QR code payment, according to Yangon Payment Services-YPS.

YBS bus fare costs K400 if passengers pay in cash but it is only K300-K350 if passengers pay by YPS card or YPS QR code.

YPS recently announced that YPS QR services are available for more than 60 bus lines, they are: YBS (55), YBS (13), YBS(57), YBS (63), YBS (42), YBS (65), YBS (22), YBS (64), YBS (111), YBS (133), YBS (134), YBS (84), YBS(135), YBS (142), YBS (130), YBS (136), YBS (138), YBS (139), YBS (39), YBS (21), YBS (131), YBS (80), YBS (81), YBS (132), YBS (85), YBS (76), YBS (27), YBS(66), YBS(79), YBS (12), YBS (14), YBS (25), YBS (30), YBS (38), YBS (117), YBS (128), YBS (100), YBS (103), YBS (19), YBS (40), YBS (35), YBS (61), YBS (68), YBS (137), YBS (62), YBS(87), YBS (108), YBS (88), YBS (37), YBS (43), YBS (96), YBS (104), YBS (109), YBS



(72), YBS (89), YBS (24), YBS (28), YBS (58), YBS (113), YBS (36), YBS (116), YBS (11), YBS (115), YBS (60), YBS (29), YBS (17), YBS (141), and YBS (145).

It is only needed to register for using YPS QR service after the download of MPyp+ Application (Android Version) on Google Play Store, and the QR code service can be used in a short time if data are correct for registration.

YPS card services and YPS QR code top-up service are available at YPS card counters (KIOSK), salespersons, G&G convenience stores, Mingalar cinemas, Capital Hypermarket and Wellington Pharmacy. — MT/ZS

ECONOMY WORLD



A Singapore Airlines commercial passenger jet approaches for landing at Singapore Changi Airport in Singapore on 2 May 2023. **PHOTO: AFP**

Singapore to charge levy for eco-friendly aviation fuel

PASSENGERS departing Singapore will pay higher flight fares as the country will introduce a levy to expand the use of sustainable aviation fuel from 2026, according to the Singapore Sustainable Air Hub Blueprint launched Monday.

Singapore vows to achieve net-zero by 2050, and sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) will contribute two-thirds of carbon emission reduction needed, said Transport Minister Chee Hong Tat, while launch-

ing the blueprint at the Changi Aviation Summit 2024.

Singapore will require departing flights to use SAF from 2026 and lift the SAF-using target from one per cent in 2026 to between three per cent and five per cent by 2030, Chee said. The current price of SAF made from non-petroleum feedstocks, including food waste, is about three to five times more than conventional jet fuel.

“Thus, Singapore will introduce a fixed levy based

on the SAF target and projected SAF price to provide cost certainty to airlines and travellers,” Chee said.

The ticket price for an economy class passenger on a direct flight from Singapore to Bangkok will increase 3 Singapore dollars (2.2 US dollars) after charging the SAF levy, the minister said, adding that passengers in premium classes will pay higher levies.

More details of the SAF levy will be announced in 2025. — Xinhua

Economists maintain Malaysia’s economic growth forecast in 2024

ECONOMISTS have maintained Malaysia’s economic growth forecast in 2024, although the fourth quarter growth slipped below estimates.

Hong Leong Investment Bank said in a note that it maintained its expectation for Malaysia to grow at a faster pace of 4.8 per cent year on year, led by continued household spending, tourism recovery and realization of investments.

The easing global interest rate environment, ebbing inflation figures and turnaround in trade activity are also expected to support growth, said the research house.

Kenanga Research said in a note that it maintained its view that Malaysia’s GDP will grow strongly at 4.5 per cent to 5 per cent in 2024, primarily on the back of a recovery in the manufacturing sector and resilient domestic demand.

According to the research house, the growth is also supported by improvements in the external sector, especially expected recovery in China and technology upcycles, which subsequently will boost export-oriented industries.

It said the growth is also supported by higher investment realization, ongoing multi-year infrastructure projects, and the implementation of various projects under the major policy framework by the federal government.

UOB Global Economics & Markets Research said in a note that it is maintaining Malaysia’s growth forecast of 4.6 per cent for 2024.

According to the research house, Malaysia’s slower-than-expected GDP growth in 2023 will provide a favourable base effect for this year’s economic outlook, in addition to several positive growth catalysts including initiatives outlined in national master plans and realization of impressive investment approvals since 2021.

A slightly expansionary budget announced in October 2023 is also expected to help support the growth momentum this year, it said.

“Although the first half growth path could still be bumpy, the second half is expected to see a meaningful pick-up as global monetary conditions start to ease and the global economy holds up a soft landing,” it said.

The Malaysian central bank announced last Friday that Malaysia’s economy eased to 3.7 per cent in 2023 from 8.7 per cent in 2022, amid global trade challenges. The Malaysian economy expanded 3 per cent in the fourth quarter of 2023. — Xinhua

Thailand’s economic growth slows to 1.9% in 2023

THAILAND’S economy expanded 1.9 per cent in 2023, slowing from a revised 2.5 per cent growth in the previous year due to softening government spending and exports, the country’s economic planning agency said on Monday.

The gross domestic product (GDP) for the final quarter of last year grew 1.7 per cent from a year earlier, up from a revised 1.4 per cent growth in the third quarter, driven by rising private consumption, according to data released by the Office of the National Economic and Social Development Council (NESDC).

The NESDC expects the economy to expand in the range of 2.2-3.2 per cent this year, down from a prior projection of 2.7-3.7 per cent, supported by the return to expansion of goods exports, growth in private consumption and private investment, as well as an ongoing recovery of the tourism industry.

However, reduced fiscal impetus and space resulting from a

delay in 2024 fiscal budget approval, a high ratio of household debt to GDP, and global geopolitical uncertainty remain a challenge for this year’s growth, the NESDC said in a statement.

It also forecasts the Southeast Asian nation’s headline inflation growth to range between 0.9-1.9 per cent this year, compared with an actual 1.2 per cent increase in 2023. —Xinhua

This photograph taken on 18 November 2023, shows tourists posing for pictures on the Mai Khao Beach as an airplane lands at Phuket International Airport in the southern Thai island of Phuket. **PHOTO: AFP**



New Zealand's dairy giant looks to expand business in China

NEW Zealand's dairy giant Fonterra plans to expand its food service business to more second- and third-tier cities in China by enhancing its products through investment in innovation, continuous menu development, and strengthening its offerings in Chinese cuisine.

"Fonterra has had a lot of success in China. China is one of Fonterra's most important strategic markets," Teh-han Chow, Fonterra's Greater China chief executive, told Xinhua.

Owned by New Zealand farmers, Fonterra



A photo taken on 13 August 2022 shows a herd of cows during milking time on a dairy farm near Cambridge in New Zealand's Waikato region, known for its fertile land and dairy industry. **PHOTO: AFP**

has benefitted greatly from the healthy bilateral relationship between New Zealand and China, Chow said, adding over the years, Fonterra has witnessed tremendous business growth through partnering and collaborating with local customers in the areas of nutrition, innovation and sustainability.

There is strong alignment between Fonterra's priorities and those of the Chinese government, such as nutritional targets for dairy consumption and China's emissions reduction targets, he said.

"The China market is showing strong signs of recovery post-COVID. Over the years, dairy consumption has grown significantly in China and is expected to continue to do so," Chow said, adding Fonterra combines high-quality New Zealand dairy products with Chinese consumer preferences to develop new and innovative products.

Fonterra opened its fifth Fonterra Application Centre in Shenzhen in 2023 and recently upgraded its application centres in Shanghai and Beijing. — Xinhua

Nintendo shares dive on new Switch delay report

SHARES in Japan's Nintendo tumbled as much as 8.5 per cent on Monday after a report suggesting that its next-generation console will be delayed until early 2025.

The successor to the popular Switch was targeted for release at the end of this year but

several publishers have now been told to expect it to slip into next year, Bloomberg News reported, citing unnamed sources.

That would mean that the next console would miss the key Christmas holiday shopping period in December.

The delay was also reported by the Video Games Chronicle website.

A Nintendo spokesperson said the company has nothing to comment on, Bloomberg News said.

The Switch, both a handheld and TV-compatible device, became a

must-have among all age groups during the Covid pandemic.

Buzz around the gadget is slowly fading with the console now in its seventh year, but the company has so far remained tight-lipped about its plans. — AFP

Philippines to revitalize seaweed industry to regain top exporter

THE Philippines' Department of Agriculture (DA) on Monday vowed to revitalize the country's seaweed industry by beefing up the government support to local seaweed producers and boosting the potential of the second biggest export earner in Philippine aquaculture.

Philippine Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel expressed optimism about the Philippine seaweed industry's potential to regain its sta-

tus as the world's biggest exporter.

The DA said the seaweed industry earned around 250 million US dollars during the pandemic and generated export sales of 350 million dollars in 2022. Laurel said the government will help seaweed farmers by providing seedlings, implements, lines, floaters, and counterweights to increase their annual 70,000 metric tons of seaweed produce. — Xinhua

Auto parts supplier Forvia to cut staff in Europe

FRENCH-GERMAN auto parts manufacturer

Forvia announced plans to cut 13 per cent of its

workforce in Europe over the coming years in an effort to boost competitiveness and profitability in a sluggish and shifting car market.

The company, created in 2022 from the merger of France's Faurecia and Germany's Hella, returned to profit in 2023 but unveiled the plan to achieve 500 million euros (\$540 million) in savings by 2028.

Forvia's announcement follows job cuts announced by a number of its rivals as suppliers

adjust to an auto industry that has yet to fully recover from the Covid pandemic but is also in the midst of shifting to electric vehicles that will eliminate the need for certain products like mufflers.

Forvia's management said up to 10,000 of its 75,500 posts in Europe could go by 2028, with a lower recourse to interim staff and the use of Artificial Intelligence to optimize research and development. — AFP



(FILES) A battery platform is presented at the booth of automotive technology supplier Forvia during the International Motor Show IAA in Munich, southern Germany, on 6 September 2023. **PHOTO: AFP**

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V ISEACO GENESIS VOY.NO. (217N/S)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V ISEACO GENESIS VOY.NO. (217N/S)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **20-2-2024** 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
Myanmar Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S NEW GOLDEN SEA LINES

ROLLING UPDATES

WORLD

China, US agree to implement consensus of San Francisco summit

CHINESE State Councillor and Minister of Public Security Wang Xiaohong and US Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas on Sunday agreed to implement the important consensus reached at the San Francisco meeting between the two heads of state.

During their meeting in Vienna on Sunday, the two officials had candid, in-depth and constructive communication on implementing the consensus reached at the San Francisco meeting between the two heads of state, advancing bilateral cooperation in drug control and law enforcement, and addressing each other's concerns.

Wang pointed out that during their historic meeting in San Francisco, Chinese President Xi Jinping and US President Joe Biden laid out the future-oriented "San Francisco Vision".

Wang said he hopes that the two sides will adhere to the important consensus reached by the two heads of state, uphold the principles of mutual respect, peaceful coexistence and win-win cooperation, respect each other's core interests and



Chinese State Councillor and Minister of Public Security Wang Xiaohong meets with US Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas in Vienna, Austria, 18 February 2024. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

major concerns, and remove obstacles to bilateral drug control and law enforcement cooperation and people-to-people exchanges.

Wang urged the US side to stop harassing and interrogating Chinese students for no reason, and ensure that Chinese citizens enjoy fair entry treatment and full dignity.

Washington should also take concrete and effective measures to ensure the safety of Chinese diplomatic and consular missions and personnel in the United States, lift visa restrictions on relevant Chinese

institutions and personnel, and correct the mistake of listing China as a "major drug source country", Wang said.

The two sides agreed to contribute to the steady development of China-US relations by implementing the important consensus reached by the two heads of state, maintaining dialogue and cooperation on drug control and law enforcement, attaching importance to each other's concerns, and properly resolving issues on the basis of mutual respect, managing differences and mutually beneficial cooperation. — Xinhua

NEWS IN BRIEF

Landslide kills 25 in east Afghanistan

AT least 25 people were killed and 10 others injured as a landslide struck a village in the Norgaram district of east Afghanistan's Nuristan province on Sunday, district Governor Qari Habibullah Sabir said Monday.

The disaster took place in the wake of heavy rain and snow in Tatin Dara area of Norgaram district late Sunday night, the official said, adding women and children are among the victims.

Rescue operations have been continuing, the official said. At least 20 houses were also destroyed or badly damaged due to the landslide.

Confirming the incident, spokesman for national disaster authority Mullah Janan Saeq said that the number of casualties would change.

Parts of Afghanistan including the capital city Kabul have been receiving rain and snowfall since Sunday afternoon. — Xinhua

2 killed in landslide in Indonesia's West Java

TWO people were killed and two others injured after a landslide in the Indonesian town of Bogor in West Java province on Sunday, the local disaster mitigation agency said on Monday.

The Bogor Disaster Mitigation Agency said that the disaster took place in Muarasari in South Bogor subdistrict when 22 construction workers were building retaining walls. Four of the total workers were trapped in the landslide, said an official of the agency.

Following the disaster, Bogor Mayor Bima Arya Sugiarto has called his administration to temporarily stop the project and conduct an evaluation.

Disasters like floods and landslides often occur in Indonesia during the rainy season. — Xinhua

Houthi missile attack damages British ship in Gulf of Aden

THE Houthi group in Yemen said on Monday that they have fired missiles at a British ship in the Gulf of Aden.

"Our naval forces have attacked the British ship, Ruby-mar, in the Gulf of Aden with a number of missiles," Houthi military spokesperson Yahya Sarea said in a televised statement aired by his group's satellite TV channel al-Masirah.

"The ship suffered catastrophic damage and came to a complete halt," said Sarea, adding the ship is now at risk of sinking in the Gulf of Aden.

"Our attacks in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden will not stop unless (Israeli) aggression on Gaza stops," the Houthi spokes-



The screenshot captured from a video on 19 February 2024 shows Houthi military spokesman Yahya Sarea making a statement in Sanaa, Yemen. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

person said.

He also claimed that his group had shot down a US MQ9 drone off Hodeidah port city, which is under Houthi control, without revealing the exact time. — Xinhua

EU launches mission to protect Red Sea shipping

THE European Union on Monday officially launched a mission to help protect international shipping in the Red Sea from attacks by Yemen's Huthis, EU chief Ursula von der Leyen said.

"Europe will ensure freedom of navigation in the Red Sea, working alongside our international partners," the European Commission president wrote on X.

The Huthis, who control much of war-torn Yemen, have been attacking the vital shipping lane since November in a campaign they say is in solidarity with Palestinians in Gaza amid the Israel-Hamas war.

An EU official said Fri-

day that the bloc aims to have the mission — called Aspides, Greek for shield — up and running in a "few weeks" with at least four vessels.

The overall commander will be Greek, while the lead officer in operational control at sea will be Italian, the EU official said. — AFP



Stacks of containers are pictured on the deck of the MSC Allegra container ship, docked beside container cranes at the UK's largest freight port, in Felixstowe on the East coast of England, on 27 January 2024. Hundreds of cargo ships and tankers are being rerouted around the southern tip of Africa to avoid Houthi attacks in the Red Sea. **PHOTO: AFP**

SPORTS

Sad Pacquiao accepts his Olympic dream is over



Filipino boxer Manny Pacquiao (L) and Thai Muay Thai fighter Buakaw Banchamek (R) pose for photographs during a press conference in Bangkok on 21 July 2023, to promote their 2024 fight. **PHOTO: AFP**

A "saddened and disappointed" Manny Pacquiao conceded Monday his Olympic boxing dream was over after the ring great was denied a berth at this year's Paris games.

The International Olympic Committee rejected a special request for Pacquiao to take part, the Philippine Olympic Committee announced Sunday.

Pacquiao, 45, who hung up his gloves in 2021 before an unsuccessful presidential run, said he respected the decision of the IOC, which has an age limit of 40 for Olympic boxers.

"While I am very saddened and disappointed, I understand and accept the age-limit rules," said a statement from Pacquiao, who won world titles at eight different weights during a glittering professional ring career spanning more than a quarter of a century.

The Philippines last year

asked the IOC for a "universality place" for Pacquiao, who has never boxed in the Olympics.

Universality places are usually awarded to athletes from smaller countries who struggle to secure slots in the Olympics through normal qualification.

Philippine Olympic Committee president Abraham Tolentino claimed Sunday the IOC decision would deprive the country of a "sure podium or first ever gold" in Olympic boxing.

Pacquiao said he will continue to support and cheer for Filipino athletes competing in the Olympics.

He also reminded his fans that despite his retirement, he intends "to bring pride and honour to my country inside the boxing ring in the near future".

A Pacquiao aide confirmed to reporters Monday that Pacquiao will fight Thai kickboxer Buakaw Banchamek in an 20 April exhibition match in Bangkok.

The match against Muay Thai great Buakaw will be fought under international boxing rules, the aide said. — AFP

Wild card Diaz Acosta wins Argentina Open

WILD card entrant Facundo Diaz Acosta clinched his first ATP singles title with a 6-3, 6-4 victory over Chilean third-seed Nicolas Jarry in the final of the Argentina Open on Sunday.

Diaz Acosta won 73 per cent of his first serves and saved all six break points against him to prevail in an hour and 45 minutes on the outdoor clay of the Buenos Aires Lawn Tennis Club.

"This hasn't sunk in yet," said the Buenos Aires-born 23-year-old. "I've dreamed about this moment for a long time, working with my team and having my family to back me. It's a dream come true that this happened in Argentina."

The result is expected to catapult Diaz Acosta from 87th to 59th in the world rankings, which will be updated on Monday.

Jarry, who was seeking his fourth ATP title, lavished praise on his unheralded opponent.

"Congratulations, Facu, for this tremendous moment," the 28-year-old Chilean said. "Enjoy it. I knew that we would meet on a bigger stage when we played against each other on the Challenger circuit a couple of years ago." — Xinhua

Ten-man Milan capitulate to Monza for first time

AC Milan lost to Monza for the first time on Sunday as they suffered a 4-2 away defeat in Serie A with Luka Jovic seeing red.

The Rossoneri were coming off a 3-0 Europa League win



Monza's Dany Mota (L) competes during the 25th round football match between Monza and AC Milan at the 2023/24 Serie A in Monza, Italy, 18 February 2024. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

over Rennes and rotated their line-up for Sunday's game.

Monza surged into a 2-0 lead in a matter of minutes before half-time, as Matteo Pessina converted a penalty before Dani Mota Carvalho finished with a curling effort.

Milan's situation went from bad to worse straight after the break as Jovic was sent off for slapping Armando Izzo.

However, the away side got one back as Christian Pulisic flicked on for Olivier Giroud to tap in from close range, and Pulisic's left-footed strike went beyond the out-stretched Michele Di Gregorio in the 88th minute.

But Monza ruined their opponents' hopes in the dying minutes when Milan loanee Daniel Maldini assisted for Warren Bondo to drill home from the edge of the box, before fellow Milan-owned player Lorenzo Colombo sealed the game.

The setback saw Milan fail to overhaul second-placed Juventus, as they still rank third with 52 points.

Elsewhere, Roma dominated Frosinone 3-0 thanks in part to Dean Huijsen's sensational solo goal. Lazio, who had stunned Bayern Munich in the Champions League in mid-week, lost to Bologna 2-1. Udinese drew with Cagliari 1-1, and Empoli and Fiorentina also played out a 1-1 draw. — Xinhua

Hojlund makes Premier League history as Man Utd hold off Luton

RASMUS Hojlund made Premier League history as the Manchester United striker's double ensured his side survived a scare from lowly Luton in their 2-1 win on Sunday.

Hojlund became the youngest player to score in six consecutive Premier League games after netting twice in the

first seven minutes at Kenilworth Road.

At 21 years 14 days old, Hojlund surpassed Newcastle midfielder Joe Willock's previous record set when he was 21 years 272 days old.

Ruud van Nistelrooy scored in 10 successive United top-flight outings in 2003 before Leicester's Jamie Vardy

beat his Premier league record with 11 in a row in 2015.

After failing to score in his first 14 Premier League appearances following his August move from Atalanta, Hojlund has scored eight times in his last eight games in all competitions. — AFP



Natural pesticides gain ground in 'agri-tox' capital Brazil



Agronomist Adriano Cruvinel inspects the soybean plantation at one of the plots of the Bom Jardim Lagoano farm in the municipality of Montividiu, Goias State, Brazil, on 22 January 2024. **PHOTO: AFP**

INSPECTING a thriving green field, Brazilian farmer Adriano Cruvinel is beaming: Using a fraction of the chemical products he used to, he is growing even more soy, thanks to natural pesticides.

Agricultural powerhouse

Brazil may be the world leader in chemical pesticide use, but Cruvinel is part of a growing trend of farmers turning to natural products known as "biopesticides".

"Our soy is doing great," says the 36-year-old agricultural engineer, giving a tour of his

1,400-hectare (nearly 3,500-acre) farm in the central-western county of Montividiu, as combine harvesters work their way across a field.

"Thanks to the microorganisms we apply to the crop, it's a lot more resistant to pests and

disease."

Brazil, the world's biggest exporter of soy, corn and cotton, is also the top consumer of chemical pesticides: nearly 720,000 metric tons in 2021, or one-fifth of global sales, according to the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization.

Seeking to improve his profits, in 2016 Cruvinel started transitioning toward so-called "regenerative" agriculture.

The technique seeks to restore the soil's biodiversity, replacing chemical fertilizers and pesticides with natural alternatives.

He still uses genetically modified soy, widespread in Brazil. But near those fields he built an ultra-modern laboratory and factory. Inside, refrigerators conserve fungi and bacteria, some harvested from forestland on his farm. He cultivates them en masse in vats, then uses them to treat his fields.

"Here, we imitate nature on a giant scale," says Cruvinel, who has replaced 76 per cent of the chemical pesticides he formerly used with natural products.

The approach is good for

health and the environment, but also business: His production costs have fallen by 61 per cent, while his soy yields have risen by 13 per cent, he says.

'Long way to go'

Natural pesticides "could revolutionize Brazilian and global agriculture," says Marcos Rodrigues de Faria, a researcher at Embrapa, Brazil's public agricultural research agency.

But "there's a long way to go," he adds.

Brazil still relies heavily on chemical pesticides, known here as "agrotóxicos," or "agri-toxic" products.

Natural products grew from four per cent of total pesticide sales in Brazil in 2020 to nine per cent in 2022. Their use has expanded four times faster in Brazil than internationally, says Amalia Borsari, of CropLife Brasil, an organization representing the agricultural chemicals industry.

"There has been exponential growth," she says.

Geographer Larissa Bombardi, an expert on pesticide use in Brazil, calls the trend "interesting." — AFP

Munich Security Conference concludes with anxiety to seek "silver lining"

THE 60th Munich Security Conference concluded on Sunday after three days of discussion on security challenges, during which Western leaders expressed worries and anxiety about geopolitical risks.

The organizer highlighted "a real risk that more and more countries end up in a lose-lose situation".

Addressing the conference on Friday, United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said the global community is more fragmented and divided than at any time in the past 75 years.

Faced with regional challenges including the Ukraine crisis and Gaza conflict, participants were looking for a "silver lining" amid the current global situation.

An increasing number of representatives from the Global South have been invited to the event in recent years.



Munich Security Conference (MSC) Chairman Christoph Heusgen speaks during the opening of the 60th MSC in Munich, Germany, 16 February 2024. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

They expressed their views on reforming a global order defined by the West.

"A multilateral system needs to be

able to make voices heard," said Barbados Prime Minister Mia Mottley during the conference. — Xinhua

Iran condemns US Senate's approval of 14-bln-USD aid package for Israel

IRAN'S Foreign Ministry Spokesman Nasser Kanaani on Sunday denounced the US Senate for approving a 14-billion-US-dollar aid package for Israel, which he said would enable more Israeli killings in the Gaza Strip.

Kanaani made the comments on social media platform X, in response to the bill passed on 13 February by the US Senate for security assistance to Israel.

He said the US Senate's decision, funded by American taxpayers, showed that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and its government would receive 100 million dollars a day from the United States for "killing innocent Palestinian civilians". The US Senate passed the bill by 70 votes to 29. It included 14 billion dollars in security assistance to Israel, among other things. — Xinhua