

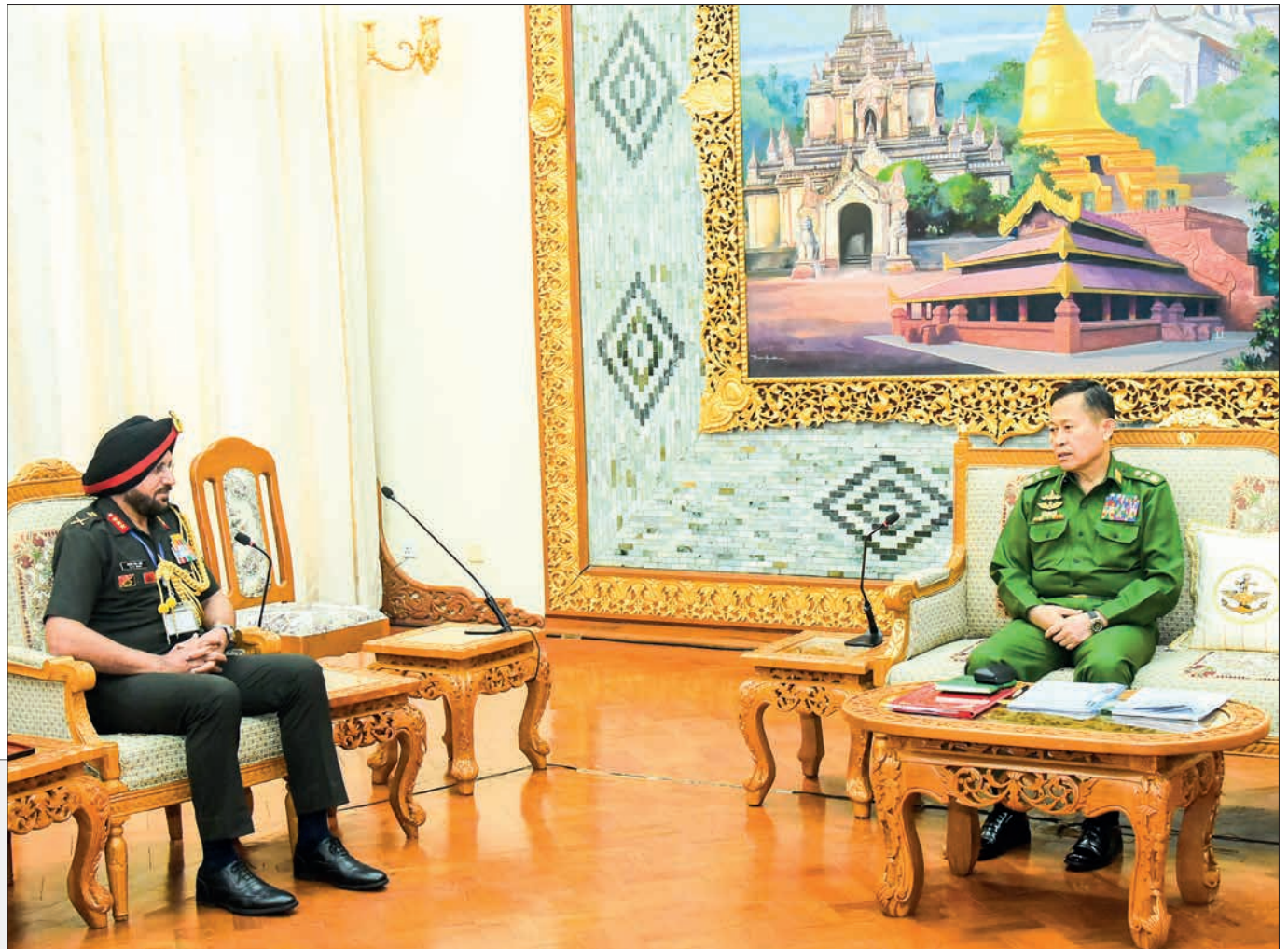
The Global **NEW LIGHT** of MYANMAR

Myanmar, Indian Armed Forces to forge friendly ties, further cooperation

Vice-Chairman of the State Administration Council Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Soe Win received a delegation led by Lt-Gen Harjeet Singh Sahi, UYSM, AVSM, YSM, SM, the General Officer Commanding III Corps of the Indian Armed Forces at Bayintnaung Villa in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

They cordially discussed friendly relations between Myanmar and India and the two armed forces and promotion of further cooperation, and plans to cooperate in peace and stability, security and development at the border regions between the two countries.

Also present at the meeting were Commander of North-West Command Maj-Gen Than Htaik and senior military officers from the Office of the Commander-in-Chief. The General Officer Commanding III Corps of the Indian Armed Forces was accompanied by Indian Defence Attaché Colonel Jaswinder Singh Gill and officials. — MNA/TTA



Vice-Senior General Soe Win receives Lt-Gen Harjeet Singh Sahi, UYSM, AVSM, YSM, SM, the General Officer Commanding III Corps of the Indian Armed Forces at Bayintnaung Villa in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.



Daw Ni Ni, who runs blood clam farming business in Taninthayi Region emphasizes, in her interview with the IPRD, that the blood clams are currently exported to Thailand only, which re-exports them.

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Myanmar Passport Office ensures normal processing amid misinformation of irregularities

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Transportation challenges affect quality of watermelon

NATIONAL

Objectives of 79th Anniversary of Armed Forces Day 2024

(A) To safeguard the State with the sacrifice of life by upholding Our Three Main National Causes: Non-disintegration of the Union, Non-disintegration of national solidarity and perpetuation of sovereignty as the national policy of Tatmadaw;

(B) To actively participate in implementing the processes of two national visions of the State: the prosperity of the country and food security by Tatmadaw members together with the government and ethnic people in their respective sectors;

(C) To steadfastly implement enhancement of three capabilities in accord with the work process of Tatmadaw, such as study, practise and obey in building a modern patriotic Tatmadaw with powerful strength and sharpening prowess;

(D) To provide necessary assistance to hold a free and fair multiparty democratic general election by Tatmadaw to ensure peace and stability, solidarity and development, which are actual needs of the State and to emerge a Union based on democratic and federal systems.

In Pyapon Township of Ayeyawady Region, the Maha Ponnyarama Minkyaung Monastery, built in the mid-Konbaung era, and an upside-down star-flower tree, which is said to be the only one in the whole Myanmar, have been conserved, according to the Maha Ponnyarama Minkyaung Monastery Preservation Body.

The monastery was built in 1208 ME (1846 AD) during the reign of the Konbaung dynasty's King Bagan. When the land was selected for the



The photo portrays Konbaung era's Minkyaungtawgyi and upside-down star-flower tree.

Over 170-year-old upside-down star flower tree conserved in Pyapon Township for visitors

construction of the monastery and the undergrowth was cleared, branches of a star flower tree were rooted in the ground and were found to be growing fresh. So, the officials moved it to the southeast corner of the monastery and planted them.

It is said that the appearance of the star-flower tree is completely different from other trees of the same species, so it is called the upside-down star-flower tree, and it still attracts visitors from all over the region.

"Pyapon, Minkyaung-

tawgyi and upside-down star-flower tree are indistinguishable. If you want to know more about this extraordinary upside-down star-flower tree, find it in Myanmar encyclopedia which contains topics starting with the first letter of the Myanmar alphabet "Kha".

The facts about the plant are described together with the photos. Minkyaungtawgyi and upside-down star-flower tree have very interesting history.

So, we are preserving these heritages that date back more than 170 years with our utmost efforts," said

a member of the monastery preservation body.

The two-storey monastery is 200 feet long and 100 feet wide and has 22 big teak pillars with two internal stairs leading to the upper floor, where two balconies (south and north) exist.

In addition, the temple having 10 rooms to accommodate studying monks is decorated with wood carvings and various other decorations of wood-turning art in both lower and upper floors. The structure is also installed with eight brick stairs.—ASH/TH

Myanmar Gazette

Head of Service Organization appointed

THE State Administration Council has appointed U Than Htwe, Deputy Director-General of Department of Political under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as Director-General of the same department on the probation from the date he assumes charge of his duties.

Sri Ksetra Cultural Zone to undergo renovation and flood prevention measures



Officials tour the ancient buildings in Sri Ksetra World Heritage site.

LIGHTNING conductors are set to be installed at the ancient buildings, and flood prevention measures will be taken in the Sri Ksetra cultural zone, a World Heritage Site in Pyay Township, according to Deputy Director U Soe Min of the Department of Archaeology and National Museum (Sri Ksetra branch).

Efforts to prevent floods involve dredging existing ponds and excavating new ones. Lightning rods will be placed at Bawbawgyi Temple, Belbel Temple, U Khinba Mound, and Phayahtaung Temple.

Additionally, plans were revealed for the construction of an information department and a special exhibition hall at the Sri Ksetra Museum.

The department's renovation strategy includes developing a map to guide tourists to the viewing tower, using chemicals to remove unwanted banyan trees from religious structures, weeding within a 20-foot radius of ancient buildings, and installing fencing around the structures to discourage bats and birds.

Furthermore, the museum will undergo a name change from Tharay Khittaya to Sri Ksetra. Authorities will extend invitations to middle and high school students, as well as university students, and will organize pop quiz events where participants can win knowledge books as prizes. —ASH/NT

NATIONAL

SAC Member DPM MoTC UM attends 76th Anniversary of Chin National Day ceremony

STATE Administration Council Member Deputy Prime Minister Union Minister for Transport and Communications General Mya Tun Oo, accompanied by SAC Member Dr Hmu Thang, Union ministers, the Chin State Chief Minister, deputy ministers and relevant officials, attended the ceremony to mark the 76th Anniversary of Chin National Day in Haka on Tuesday.

At the ceremony, the General read out the message sent by Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Senior General Thadde Maha Thray Sithu Thadde Thiri Thudhamma Min Aung Hlaing to the event.

On the occasion, the General, SAC member Dr Hmu Thang, Union Minister Jeng Phang Naw Taung, Chin State Chief Minister Dr Wong Hsun Thang and Deputy Minister U Htein Lin presented honorary titles of the Chin State government to relevant recipients whereas Union Minister Lt-Gen Tun Tun Naung and Deputy Minister Dr Tun Htut gave aids to officials.

In the evening, they all enjoyed a bonfire to mark the Chin National Day together with Chin traditional dance troupes. — MNA/KTZH



SAC Member Deputy Prime Minister General Mya Tun Oo cuts the ribbon to open Chin National Day ceremony in Haka on 20 February 2024.

Myanmar, Russia to implement government-to-government relations as well as people-to-people contacts



Deputy Prime Minister Union MoFA Minister U Than Swe receives Mr Andrey Rudenko, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation yesterday.

U Than Swe, Deputy Prime Minister and Union Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, received Mr Andrey Rudenko, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, on the morning of 21 February 2024 at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Nay Pyi Taw.

During the meeting, they discussed further strengthening of existing friendly relations and mutually beneficial cooperation between Myanmar and Russia especially in

economic and tourism sectors, provision of more scholarships for Myanmar students and enhancement of collaboration both in regional and multilateral arenas.

They also highlighted the importance of government-to-government relations as well as people-to-people contacts between the two countries. The Deputy Prime Minister also clarified the government's endeavours to restore peace and stability in the country. — MNA

Ministry of Health approves expansion of cancer treatment facilities and funding

THREE new items of cancer radiotherapy equipment will be installed at some general hospitals this year for cancer treatment, as announced by the Ministry of Health.

Currently, Yangon General Hospital, Mandalay General Hospital, Nay Pyi Taw General Hospital (1000-bed), and Taunggyi Sao San Tun General Hospital have already been facilitated with 12 cancer radiotherapy units to serve patients.

Three new pieces of equipment, one to be purchased with a special permission from the Head of State and two others under the Ministry of Health's arrangement, will be installed at the newly-built National Cancer Treatment Centre in Dagon Myothit (Seikkan) Township this year.

Additionally, the government has already approved a fund of K12 billion for the purchase of cancer drugs this year. In 2023, the aforesaid general hospitals provided radiotherapy treatment for patients 110,367 times at general military hospitals and private hospitals in Yangon and Nay Pyi Taw. —ASH/MKKS



Union Minister Dr Thet Khaing Win talks about the construction of National Cancer Treatment Centre in Dagon Myothit (Seikkan) Township on 18 February.

NATIONAL



People queue for visa. The Royal Thai Embassy in Yangon announced on 20 February that visa application appointments can now be made online.

Royal Thai Embassy in Yangon offers two options for visa appointments

THE Royal Thai Embassy in Yangon announced on 20 February that visa application appointments can now be made online. Due to the large number of visa applicants, the Embassy has provided two options for submitting visa applications—online appointment and queue number collection at the Embassy.

To book an appointment online through Visa Appointment Booking Online (VABO) at <https://thaiconsulteryangon.com/visa> or QR Code, applicants can submit visa application from Thursday, 22 February 2024 onwards. 200 queue numbers per day will be is-

sued for visa appointments, which can be made up to thirty days in advance.

After making the appointment, online applicants are advised to take a screenshot or print out the appointment confirmation e-mailed to them and present it to embassy staff on the date of appointment.

Queue numbers will be available at the Embassy from 14.00 hrs on Wednesday, 21 February 2024 for visa applications on Thursday, 22 February 2024 and Friday, 23 February 2024 with 200 numbers allocated per day.

Those who wish to obtain a queue number must present

their own valid passports and will receive one non-transferrable queue number per person. The embassy said that one queue number is valid only for one person and it will blacklist and deny the application of those who fake the queue numbers or transfer them to others.

For in-person applications from 26 February, the Embassy will evaluate and consider the volume of applications, and make further announcements as to whether or not it will accept the applications only through VABO in the future. — MT/ZN

Counter-argument to false information

Malicious media accuses Security Forces of detaining 600 civilians after their arrival at Sittway, Kyaukpyu airports



SOME malicious media outlets spread fake news on social media to impose threats among public and mislead the people over the security forces, saying about 600 civilians were detained after their flights from Yangon landed at Sittway and Kyaukpyu airports on 19 February.

A screen-shot photo shows passengers at the airport.

The security official said that the security forces conducted their regular inspection on them and did not detain them. The malicious media just spread fake news to mislead the people. The Rakhine people are worried about the terrorist action of AA terrorists and the media deliberately spread fake news and misinformation to cover the acts of terrorism and mislead the people over the security forces. — MNA/KTZH

Smooth pension withdrawals available through Centralized e-Pension system

ACCORDING to the Ministry of Planning and Finance, retired individuals can conveniently withdraw their pensions at bank branches operating the Centralized e-Pension system without any service charge.

The Centralized e-Pension system is available in 67 branches of the bank in the current financial year. This allows retired employees to withdraw their pensions easily and smoothly, free of charge, at branches equipped with the Centralized e-Pension system. Union Minister U Win Shein expressed his appreciation and gratitude for the efforts of the bank employees during the Myanmar Economic Bank's coordination meeting on year-end closing of annual accounts for the 2023-2024 financial year, held on 19 February. The Union Minister also urged all bank employees to collaborate to achieve the targets set for the next financial year 2024-2025. This should be based on the actual conditions of the current bank operations in the 2023-2024 financial year. — TWA/TKO

Misinformation: More than 20 men arrested in Thebyu Village of Ngayokkaung in 3 days

SOME malicious news media spread false news that more than 20 young men were arrested by the security forces hidden in the Thebyu Village, Ngayokkaung, Ayeyawady Region after 8 pm from 15 to 18 February to scare the young people and public about the misinformation that they will be given military training.

Regarding the news, a resident

said that during those days, the security forces only took stability and security measures in the village and the surrounding area, and did not arrest the young people.

The malicious news media and those who don't want peace in the community are only propagandists who are convincing young people to join terrorist organizations by spreading false infor-

mation such as security forces and administrative organizations are arresting passers-by for military service.

It is being announced through the national news media that you can contact the People's Military Service Summoning Central Committee in order not to mislead the public and young people with false news regarding the People's Military Services Law. — MNA/KZL



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We appreciate your feedback and contributions. If you have any comments or would like to submit editorials, analyses or reports please email aungthuya@gnlm.com.mm with your name and title.

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

NATIONAL

When one hears Gin, it might be considered as ginger (locally called Gin in upper Myanmar regions) that is utilized in traditional medicine as well as in cooking. Meanwhile, locals in Taninthayi Region realize the term Gin as a blood clam. The blood clam has two shells. Some called them the blood cockles. The residents in Taninthayi widely called them Gin. The blood clam from the region is primarily exported to Thailand, generating foreign earnings and creating jobs for the local community.



Fishermen search blood clams in Kyunsu Township, Taninthayi Region. **PHOTOS: MYINT OO (MYEIK)**

late it in detail.

Is there any promising market beyond Thailand? Could you tell me further plans to explore more markets?

As of now, we are solely relying on Thailand's market. It seems that Thailand re-exports them to other markets. The blood clams do not survive in high temperatures. We are

Daw Ni Ni, who runs blood clam farming business in Taninthayi Region emphasizes, in her interview with the IPRD, that the blood clams are currently exported to Thailand only, which re-exports them.



Various sizes of blood clams.

The following is the interview with Daw Ni Ni engaged in blood clam farming in Yaykantaung village-tract, Kyunsu Township, Taninthayi Region, by Myint Oo (Myeik), the journalist dwelling in that region.

When did you commence the blood clam farming business?

I noticed the Gin in 2011. I had a knack to start farming the baby blood clams. Before I got

into that business, I did market research by selling big blood clam in the potential Thailand's market.

Please tell me about the market potentials in Thailand at that time.

The blood clams were offered only 10 Thai Baht per kilo then. As it was not profitable enough to be placed in the market, I just farmed them only. Later, it fetched 15 Thai Baht. At present, the clam receives up to 90 Thai Baht per kilo.

Could you tell me the expansion of the business operation?

We were granted a business licence to farm the blood clams in the 2013-2014 financial year. Thereafter, the business has become popular. It was incredibly trendy to run this business in the 2017-2018 FY. The department concerned keeps issuing the licences.

Could you elaborate on Myanmar's blood clam market and export?

Earlier, we used to sell them in Thailand as per the rate they offered. Now, they're commercially valued even in the domestic market. We distribute the blood clams to the clam farmers. The business can be considered lucrative.

How does this business contribute to the local community?

From baby blood clam farming to market, the business creates job opportunities.

How about the current market situations?

The average price of the clam is K8,000 per kilo when there are less than 100 clams. The price is cut to K6,500-K7,500 if the number exceeds 100 clams.

Please explain about clam harvesting.

The capacity of a clam farm is 30,000 clams. When the blood clams reach one kilo with less than 100 clams, it's the right size to deliver them to market.

How is the success rate of clam farming?

The death of baby blood clams occurs. The production rate this year is around double to triple. We have yet to calcu-

late it in detail.

I would like to know how you purchase the clam farming site.

We buy them according to the market rate. We also raise a community fund. Whoever can harvest the blood clams. About 500 boats are used for harvesting.

Could you explain about the spawning season?

The spawning season is normally in October. We open our constructed pond surrounded by mud and clay soil depending on up-tide and down-tide during the spawning season. This way, the blood clam population increases.

Is there any challenge or something you would like to add on?

There are around 100 clam farming ponds in Taninthayi Region. We have concerns over the scarcity of the clam larvae. This business can thrive throughout the year as long as there are young seeds to be raised.

Thank you for taking time to answer the interview.

Translated by EM



The photo shows blood clam market.

NATIONAL

Shan potato floods market on 19 Feb amid supply shortage of Chinese potato

The wholesale price of Shan potato is K500 lower than Chinese potato.



Shan potato flooding the domestic market.

THE potato from Shan State (Aungban and Heho) is increasingly flowing into the market when there is a supply shortage of Chinese potato on 19 February, a seller involved in Yattama Street at Bayintnaung Brokerage told the Global New Light of Myanmar (GNLM).

The shortage of Chinese potatoes shot up the price. High influx of Shan potatoes slowed down the supply of Chinese potatoes. The wholesale prices stood at K2,400 per viss for Chinese potato and K1,900-K2,000

per viss for Shan potato.

The potato depots set the price only for Chinese potato while they have disclosed that of Shan potato for half of the year.

The prices were K1,200-K1,700 per viss for potatoes from Sinbyukyun ara and K2,150 for Chinese potatoes in the corresponding period last year.

New potato from Sinbyukyun area is soon to enter the Yangon market, yet the output is likely to decline. The potato is cultivated in Shan State

throughout the year.

Chinese potatoes usually flood the domestic market when the production of potatoes drops locally.

The onion prices have reached a record high of K5,100 per viss, when the garlic fetched up to K17,000 per viss. Meanwhile, the highest price of potato was just K4,200 per viss.

The prices of kitchen groceries were K2,400-K3,200 per viss of onion, K1,700-K9,000 for garlic and K2,000 for potato on 20 February. — TWA/KK

Myanmar Passport Office ensures normal processing amid misinformation of irregularities



Applicants are seen lining up to get their passport at Myanmar Passport Office (Yangon).

THE Myanmar Passport Office stated on 20 February that passport applications are being

processed and issued as usual. They also announced that they would take action against

brokers and individuals who demand large sums of money for passport services.

Despite misinformation suggesting otherwise, the office clarified that passports would continue to be issued following the existing procedures and approved quotas.

Additionally, the Passport Office conducts online reservations via QR codes, processing around 2,700 reservations daily. Passport services are available at various branches across different cities in Myanmar, including Nay Pyi Taw, Myitkyina, Mandalay, and others. — TWA/MKKS

Weekly market update of dry groceries at Bayintnaung Commodity Wholesale Centre

FOR a week from 14 to 21 February 2024, the prices of black gram and pigeon pea plunged. The prices of onions moved up. The wholesale reference price for palm oil stayed the same this week.

Onion

Bayintnaung market saw the supply of 132,000 visses of onion on 21 February. The wholesale prices hit the highest of K2,100-K2,650 per viss depending on the producing areas (Seikphyu, Myittha and Myingyan) on that day.

K115,000 per sack of Pawkywe variety on 21 February. Meanwhile, the new Pawsan rice of premium quality were worth K140,000-K166,000 per sack depending on producing areas (Pyapon, Myaungmya and Shwebo). The sticky rice fetched K100,000-K110,000 per sack. The door to door price of Ayeyawady Pawsan is K150,000-K155,000 per sack in Yangon Region.

Palm oil

For a week from 19 to 25 February 2023, the wholesale reference price of Yangon Re-



A consumer is seen buying dry grocery at a retail shop.

Garlic

The prices of garlic from Aungban, Shan State touched a high of K16,000-K17,800 per viss depending on varieties and qualities, whereas Kyukok garlic prices stood at K9,150-K9,200 per viss on 21 February.

gion remained unchanged at K5,140 per viss like that of the previous week.

Potato

Prices of Shan potatoes were ranged at K1,950-K2,400 per viss on 21 February.

Chilli pepper

The wholesale prices of chilli peppers were registered at K8,000-K11,000 per viss for long chilli pepper and Moehtaung variety on 21 February. The price of bell peppers from Sinbyukyun and delta regions was K15,600-K16,500 per viss.

Pulses

The prices of various pulses stood at K3.12 million per tonne of black gram (Fair Average Quality/RC), K3.34 million per tonne of black gram (Special Quality/RC), K3.9 million per tonne of pigeon pea (red gram) RC, K4,500 per viss of green gram (Shwewah) and K6,300-K6,600 per viss of chick pea in Yangon's wholesale markets on 21 February 2024. — TWA/KK

Rice

The prices hit K86,000-K90,000 per sack of non-premium monsoon rice, K103,000-

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

Green tea leaves in high demand, dried tea prices rise

SOME tea traders said that price of green tea has gained higher due to increase in purchase of the green tea leaves.

Tea growers have reduced the amount of drying the green tea as its price is good.

Currently, traders are buying the green tea leaves directly from the farms. As the leave price has risen, farmers sell it as soon as they stop making dried tea, said a tea trader.

He added that traders are making a purchase of green tea leaves that have been plucked at a rate of around K4,000 to K5,000 per viss.

In the southern Shan State, the price of dried tender tea leaves is rising up to around



Tea plants are thriving in the farm.

K14,000 per viss.

In 2023, the tender green tea leave was only around K12,000 per viss and the price has risen by about K2,000 per viss at present.

The price of dry tea leaves produced in southern Shan State depends on the location and type, and it ranges from K10,000 to K18,000 per viss.

According to a tea grower, merchants from Mandalay come to the southern Shan regions and are directly purchasing green tea leaves, and they are buying them as far as they can.

As a result, production of dried tea leaves is decreasing.
— TPT

Transportation challenges affect quality of watermelon

The more extreme watermelons are damaged, the more significant the loss.



Watermelon seen at a fruit shop.

MYANMAR'S watermelons exported to China are bracing for transport hurdles such as rough roads and extreme weather conditions, affecting the quality of the fruits. The loss is mounting as much as they are damaged and rejected for inferior quality, Khwanyo Fruit Depot stated.

At present, heavy snow blankets some regions in China. Additionally, the quality of watermelon deteriorates amid the transport on rough roads and scorching weather on the Myanmar side. China's demand has faltered. Therefore, some watermelon traders are facing two to three-digit losses, traders

stressed.

Myanmar's watermelon is stockpiled for many days. Traders grappled with quality defects triggered by China's snow wave and freight transport on rough roads. Some were forced to sell them at a huge loss, according to the Khwanyo Fruit Depot.

This being so, the fruit traders suggest the exporters and suppliers consider thoroughly the law of supply and demand amid the challenges.

At present, watermelons and muskmelons are mostly delivered to China through Lweje and Mongla road channels.

Myanmar's watermelon is

primarily exported to China. However, traders are facing prolonged challenges amid the policy changes of China, fruit traders emphasized.

In early February last year, tight inspections of Chinese Customs hindered truck transport. That being so, only 20-30 trucks were able to pass the checkpoint despite high demand. Consequently, watermelon was sold out at the depots on the China side, and more than 500 trucks queued in line on the Myanmar side.

In 2021, the COVID-19 restrictions hindered Myanmar's watermelon and muskmelon exports to China. Chinese Customs Regulation increased delay. Long delays of trucks caused harm to watermelon quality, and only one in five trucks heading to China remained undamaged with quality watermelons. The traders need to consider delivery time, price and profitability as watermelon is a perishable fruit, while trying to explore new markets beyond China. — NN/EM

Domestic sugar price going upward spiral

THE sugar price is on an upward trend in the domestic market as global sugar prices spiked.

With the global price soaring to \$630 per tonne. The sugar price rose to K4,050 per viss in the domestic market. It is the time of sugarcane harvest season. The sugar mills notified sugarcane growers that they raised the price of sugarcane to K150,000 per tonne for the 2023-2024 sugarcane season.

The company set the sugarcane floor price at K90,000-K100,000 per tonne last season. Sugarcane and sugar traders emphasized that the rise in the offering price is aimed at covering the high input cost of the growers amid the rise in sugar price.

Additionally, sugar mills en-

couraged the growers to ramp up per-acre yield and expand the cultivation acres. Myanmar's annual sugar production is estimated at 450,000 tonnes. Myanmar earlier sent sugar to China and Viet Nam beyond self-sufficiency. At present, it is delivered to Viet Nam only, Myanmar Sugar and Cane Related Association stated.

Sugarcane is commonly found in the upper Sagaing Region, followed by northern Shan State. It is also found in the western and eastern Bago Region, Yangon Region and Mandalay Region. The sugarcane is grown in December-January. It can be harvested from November to February of the following years. The sugarcane growing rotation cycle lasts four years in Myanmar. — NN/EM



Quality sugar seen in depot.

OPINION

Promote development and academic excellence through research initiatives

IN the quest for modernity, workplaces across the globe are recognizing the pivotal role of research processes in aligning with contemporary challenges. Researchers play a crucial role by embarking on field trips and investigating pertinent subjects that contribute to the advancement of political, economic, and social domains. The application of research findings in practical fields is integral for fostering progress.

Countries that prioritize research experience tangible development outcomes. Myanmar, in its pursuit of comprehensive progress, must sustain a continuous commitment to research across all sectors. Scientists and researchers are called upon to engage in thorough and thoughtful investigations, drawing on their experiences and critical thinking skills to yield refined results.

Universities, as custodians of knowledge dissemination, heavily rely on research as their lifeblood. The research process acts as a vital bridge connecting faculty members and students in academic endeavours. The conventional learning experience hinges on research and academic workshops that emphasize deriving optimal solutions from research findings and implementing them

The benefits of research extend beyond academia to tangible contributions in the manufacturing sector, ensuring the production of high-quality, side-effect-free products. Faculty members are encouraged to pursue a relentless cycle of research endeavours, investing their expertise to serve the nation's interests and elevate the value of research works for the benefit of the people. In essence, the commitment to research emerges as a cornerstone for both national development and academic excellence.

the capacity of students. Healthy competition among faculty members in conducting research is a catalyst for national development and the continuous improvement of relevant academic disciplines.

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in practical settings. Both faculty members and university students must actively participate in relevant research processes to enhance their qualifications and elevate the standards of the subjects they impart to the next generation.

The government's focus on national development, particularly in the agriculture and livestock sectors, underscores the importance of research in these domains to stimulate both state and private economies. Faculty members and students alike should not shy away from research endeavours, recognizing them as indispensable for the modernization of their academic disciplines.

Internationally, the qualifications of professors are often gauged by the number and impact of their research papers. Professors are entrusted with the dual responsibility of researching while imparting knowledge to students. Their role extends to providing academic guidance on research methodologies and enhancing

NOW is very important for sovereignty and Union issue and the ethnicity issue of the country. Unscrupulous persons are making attempts to plot the country with their partners for weakness in all aspects. The government believes internal strengths. So, the government is building the internal strengths with utmost efforts. At present, the govern-

Some Tatmadaw members are serving the duties in the frontline for years. So, people need to consider the life of those Tatmadaw members serving for 20, 30 and 40 years term in the Tatmadaw. They have to hold the empathy over the Tatmadaw members who are serving the military duties for us to peacefully live in, learn education and work for life. I dare to say so

I accept that all citizens have to follow that law whether they love nationality or a good citizen. They don't need to think much. I would like to advise them to read and observe information shared by Myanmar Radio and Television, Myawady TV and newspapers on a daily basis. Despite enactment of a law, it cannot be implemented immediately. Only when bylaw,

with internal conflicts and external invasion. Although Union issue, national cause and ethnic issue are being implemented under the spirit of Myanmar, it can be seen that Myanmar people at home and abroad are in fear of serving the military service and holding the arms like dying.

EAO at home understand that they will miss the chance to deploy Myanmar youths who will have military techniques in the future. Especially, they are in fear of enabling Myanmar people to have military techniques. I can understand the nature of some wise persons for the prospects of physical and mental strengths of Myanmar at a time when they were united in the first, second, third and fourth Myanmar empires.

I mean that the wise persons emphasized the talks between US and Thai Foreign Ministers after the Myanmar has issued the order on enactment of the People's Military Services Law. It is significant that British army did not allow Myanmar for serving military service except some ethnic people to hold even a knife as an arm in the colonial era. As such, attempts are being made to seriously hinder to effectiveness of the People's Military Services Law.

Some persons wish to early serve military duties with benefits

There a lot of benefits for those who serve the People's Military Services. Dutifully serving the duties as a responsible citizen is a benefit. It is sure that they will comprehensively understand the policies of the Tatmadaw and empathize with life of Tatmadaw members. They will clearly know natures of the human and the society. In addition to leadership, teamwork cooperation, management and disciplinary measures are necessary personality of the youths.

They will understand the trend of the Tatmadaw via empathy. If they understand val-

“*There a lot of benefits for those who serve the People's Military Services. Dutifully serving the duties as a responsible citizen is a benefit. It is sure that they will comprehensively understand the policies of the Tatmadaw and empathize with life of Tatmadaw members. They will clearly know natures of the human and the society. In addition to leadership, teamwork cooperation, management and disciplinary measures are necessary personality of the youths.*”

ment is striving for ensuring unity of the ethnic people with fraternity not to disintegrate the Union amid attempts of powerful foreign countries and internal axe-handles. Implementing such an aim, the government arranged the approved People's Military Service Law to come into force.

With consideration

This law has been approved since 1959. It was amended in 2010, and it came into force recently. But, the law was not implemented due to unnecessary time. Currently, the law is necessary for the country for coming into force. The issuance of the order to the law to come into force is necessary for all. Everybody needs to note it so. A two-year term mentioned in the law is a part of the life. They should not consider it as the whole life. In fact, today's soldiers are serving the military services for 24 hours as it is a nature of the regular army.

that those who will serve the duties under the People's Military Services Law will not face tiredness and exhaustion less than those permanent Tatmadaw members.

Compare restrictions for military services with forced recruitments

People have to serve the military services under many restrictions and limits of age for military service, occupation, marital status, education, health conditions and so on. Even everybody cannot have the chance to serve the military services. Although all soldiers are males, all males will not have chance to be soldiers. Only then, will qualified males have to be soldiers. We have offspring as well as soldier friends. All soldiers may not serve duties in frontline. All soldiers at frontlines may not face clashes. Those soldiers facing clashes may not encounter danger of life.

rules and regulations have been systematically drawn will such a law be implemented. Now is not to forcibly recruit the people.

Individuals may compare the situation in the areas of EAOs who forcibly recruit the under adults as well as adults in quota for households. Nobody can criticize it. Those EAOs are doing things for their ethnics, their regions and their warlords. But, residents are forcibly recruited without laws and with least salaries and entitlements. **Hindrances to all under comparison with the past**

Myanmar's vision is holding the Our Three Main National Causes. Except Iran and Israel engaging with fighting, it can be observed that the international community exercising the national military service system do not have internal conflicts and external invasion, and they are peaceful. Such a point indicates that the national military services law is not directly concerned

Depending on goodwill of concept and farsightedness

By Swan Pyae

ue of the Tatmadaw and individual Tatmadaw members as well as the essential position of the Tatmadaw in a country, the military-civilian relations will have lesser frictions. If so, it can be surely said that the Tatmadaw and the people will be inseparable in coming decade. Moreover, different confidence, prestige and job opportunities may happen between military-served persons and non-military-served persons in the society. But, despite many advantages on one hand, it is necessary to empathize with the people with rising concerns.

Concerns of the people are actually based on misinformation. They have to analyze the action of opportunists in utilizing the weakness of the people to review whether these are misinformation or not. It is noticeable that individuals should be worried about youths lead-

calculation can be based on 13 million eligible persons for the law. Possibility for serving the military services will be two persons for one ward as well as one person for 200 eligible persons per year. If so, there will be 60,000 persons per year to serve the military service. Depending on our age limit, males at an age of 33, 34 and 35 years old and females at 25, 26 and 27 years old must serve the military duties in a long run. So, the law will be effective in terms of any governments.

Some persons oppose the Tatmadaw and the State due to misinformation, lack of thorough understanding, fear of losing life or facing hardships or lesser patriotism, but it can be seen that the mass rallies support the People's Military Services Law in some areas of the nation. Some people will be willing to serve the military duties with

the armed military training for defending themselves. Some persons express their anticipations that they have respect for the law of the State and wish to dutifully serve the military service for two years or three years. **Need to review misinformation and rumours**

Unscrupulous persons intimidate the people with the use of misinformation about recruiting porters. You should think like this. Today is not a time of recruiting porters. If somebody does not report to the authorities for summoning based on the ward/village statistics, they will face action under the law. So, anyone will not recruit porters without facing busy work. Otherwise, the guest list will be checked at night for security of the community. If one is arrested at night, they will be thieves, gangsters, robbers, pick-pockets or saboteurs, not good citizens.

of checking guest lists and to threaten the people. It is just an example in the nature of law. Authorities will organize the people under the organizational and educative ways based on patriotic spirit and national spirit. With regard to departure for abroad, there is no restrictions and people are allowed under verification for systematic departure for abroad. But, it is necessary to notice that some cases of corruption may occur in implementing the ways of military services in accord with the enacted law. If so, severe action will be taken against those offenders.

Whatever it may be, everybody needs to emphasize the national cause globally. It can be seen that past and present global issues are concerned with present Myanmar issues. Proxy plays, traps, racism, localism and militants are in vogue across the world, and all countries including Myanmar are facing such impacts. Although everything are based on various reasons, it is necessary to take lessons from causes and effects in order to serve the duties as much as possible.

As people live in this country and they are citizens of this country, they have to follow this law. In so doing, only when they do everything with genuine goodwill and farsightedness in unison can they all enjoy fruitful results. As such, I would like to urge all to actively participate in serving the military services.

That is why individuals need to have a concept that people's military services means protecting themselves, their families, their societies and their country so as to prevent wars as well as forge peace of the country. If they have such a concept for ensuring betterment of their new generations via their goodwill and self-security, they will have a correct answer for what they should do.

“*Concerns of the people are actually based on misinformation. They have to analyze the action of opportunists in utilizing the weakness of the people to review whether these are misinformation or not. It is noticeable that individuals should be worried about youths leading to the jungle. At present, such a situation is an expression for attitude of unconcern. The calculation can be based on 13 million eligible persons for the law. Possibility for serving the military services will be two persons for one ward as well as one person for 200 eligible persons per year. If so, there will be 60,000 persons per year to serve the military service. Depending on our age limit, males at an age of 33, 34 and 35 years old and females at 25, 26 and 27 years old must serve the military duties in a long run. So, the law will be effective in terms of any governments.*”

ing to the jungle. At present, such a situation is an expression for attitude of unconcern. The

the patriotic spirit.

Some people wish to sacrifice. Some people wish to take

In fact, such an aim may purpose for spreading misinformation to delay the process

Translated.

NATIONAL

Myanmar's locally-grown coffee demand rises in both local and foreign markets

MYANMAR'S locally-grown coffee demand has risen in both domestic and foreign markets, according to coffee growers.

"Both supply and demand of coffee has increased in local and overseas market. The crop market has been good. Rather than refined coffee, coffee cherries which are peeled, has been good now in the raw market. And dried and peeled berry are stocked for the next whole year. Now the price has been good and the sale has been good too," said an official from KK Maymyo natural brewed coffee.

In Myanmar, Arabica coffee is mainly grown. Myanmar coffee has gained popularity in both local and foreign markets since 2019, according to coffee growers and producers.

"In export market, demand from Vietnam has been good. According to the



File photo by MOI shows workers collecting coffee berries from the coffee plants.

researches made from 2019, demand from foreign countries has increased visibly. Coffee plantations have received state-level supports. Our Myanmar coffee has also gained popularity in the international market. Our coffee quality is also high. With increasing popularity, the coffee sector has quite improved. There are also

new plantations," said a coffee plantation owner.

There are varieties of coffee in Myanmar produced from Ywangan and Myeik, and Arabica coffee is mainly grown.

Price of Arabica coffee is K28,000 a kilogram and Arabica coffee is highly popular in the international market. — Thit Taw/ZS

Myanmar migrants in Thailand invited to Dhammakaya Temple's one million oil lamp offering on Tabodwe Full Moon Day

MYANMAR migrants in Thailand have been invited to the celebration of one million oil lamp offering which will take place at Thailand's famous Buddhist temple Dhammakaya on Tabodwe Full Moon Day, Māgha Pūjā Day, said a Myanmar national in Thailand.

The temple is located at Pathum Thani province in Thailand and Buddhist leaders, social organizations and more than 200,000 Buddhist devotees from around the world will come to join the festival.

Tabodwe Full Moon Day falls on 24 February and is called Ovāda-pāṭimokkha Day in Myanmar while in Thailand and other countries it is called Māgha Pūjā Day. The day is also 54th anniversary of the establishment of Dhammakaya Temple.

"Myanmar nationals in Thailand have been also invited. This festival is the biggest Buddhist festival in Thailand. Contact numbers for those who would come to the festival have been announced. A shuttle bus will be provided if there are at least 45 people," said the Myanmar national.

The event will feature prayers and group meditation. It will also include other ceremonies — Guinness world record announcement for the world's largest group meditation, leading monk's recitation of Magha Pujā Day mantra, marching round the Maha Dhammakaya Temple from right side by relaying lighting of Māgha Pūjā oil lamp from leading monk to his donors and offering lighting of oil lamp and making determination and saying prayers. — Htet Oo Maung/ZS

Steady sales of electric cars and slowing sales of petrol cars in automobile market

IN Myanmar's automobile market, electric vehicles (EVs) sell steadily but petrol car sales are sluggish, according to U Min Min Maung, chairman of Yangon Region Automobiles Manufacturers and Distributors Association. "EVs were selling well before. We heard that more permits have been granted to the companies recently, but the market has slowed down a bit. It is just selling steadily. Petrol cars were sold at good prices for one month, but it became slow," he said.

The market slackened in the second half of 2023, resumed

trading at the end of 2023 and became slow again in mid-February. "Especially, the price of SKD cars worth less than K 100 million increased by K 7 million. It was almost three days. During these days, the market has slowed down again. The market is in a wait-and-see mode with few buyers and many sellers," he said. The price of left-hand drive cars worth K 100 million increased by 10 per cent and those worth K100-200 million by 7 per cent, he said. However, the price of K400-K 500 million cars hasn't increased at all, he added. — MT/ZN



Various sorts of cars at Yangon port.

Apartment rental market high, buy and sell market cool in Yangon

IN Yangon property market, apartment rental has been high while buying and selling has been dull, said a real estate expert.

At present, property rental, from condominium room to separate house, has been high and apartment rent has been active too, he said.

"Currently, rental has been high in Yangon market. Apartment rent has been also active. And rental price has also increased. Some owners asked to pay 3-month down-payment, if not they refused to rent. But the buying and selling has been quiet," he said.

Among tenants, there are people who come from other regions and states and those who had previously lived in Yangon have moved, said Ma Phyu Wint War Lwin, a estate



Photo shows completion of housings.

agent from Thingangyun township.

"Market price is different. I deal with apartment only. As apartment rental price rose, some tenants moved to other places. There are many tenants who are not Yangon residents.

Recently, the rental market has been quite active," she said.

At present, there are land transactions only and the sale of apartment and separate house has been slow, according to real estate agents. — Htet Oo Maung/ZS

NATIONAL

Digital gold investment scams target housewives

A scam to trade gold online in foreign market has broken out, targeting housewives, according to interviews with some victims.

Using the name of an official Thailand-based investment company, scammers have created a website and application and from which, they manipulate the investment trade.

"I accepted a friend request from a man on Facebook. He started a chat on messenger to make friends. Later we talked about each other. He said he had started engaging in gold trade after the business was not good since Covid-19. He talked to me about how he was playing the gold trade, about how much the trade could profit or face loss, just a narrow margin. He

convinced me every day by saying how much we could make commercial success and gave guarantee that he would help not to lose," said a woman who was cheated.

The man helped her in opening an account on their application to make gold investment and she gave K3 million by KPay for initial investment and dollars equivalent to the invested amount in kyat was shown entering the account, she said.

"On the day the account was opened, I received \$90 profit after playing the trade twice with his help. When I withdrew the profit \$90, Myanmar kyat entered my Kpay in equivalent amount. He convinced me totally that it would not be like fraud.

That is just one time and later he gave me different kinds of reasons and stopped doing the trade. I felt doubtful and asked him various questions, then he disconnected two weeks later," she said.

When she attempted to take out the initial investment, another deposit about one fourth of the initial investment was asked to pay again to withdraw all invested money, but couldn't take out her money and even showed losses when she continued the trade, she said.

She said there were other women who encountered similar fraud and the Facebook account they were using to communicate was actually a fake using other person photo. — Htet Oo Maung/ZS

ME Seoul receives complaints from Myanmar students in Korea about losses from paying tuition fees through intermediaries

MYANMAR Embassy in Seoul has announced that it has received documented complaints of losses suffered by Myanmar students in Korea who had paid entrance and tuition fees through their friends and some education service firms.

Myanmar students enrolled in the universities and language schools in the Republic of Korea are required to make direct transfers from Myanmar banks to respective banks in Korea to pay their tuition fees, but some who couldn't make so were found to be making payments via their friends and education service firms, it stated.

When they didn't actually pay, Myanmar students suffered losses and they complained to the embassy with evidence. Therefore, the embassy informed that the students should thoroughly check before transfer payments without making reckless transactions to avoid unnecessary losses, disputes and lawsuits. The embassy will also carry out necessary scrutiny after communicating with relevant authorities. — MT/ZN

CRIME NEWS

Drugs seized in some Hopong, Tachilek townships

A combined team consisting of members of the Anti-Drug Police Force stopped and searched a motorbike driven by Sein Matt accompanied by Ah Jay near Loitawkham village in Tachilek township at 5:50 pm on 20 February and seized 6,000 stimulant tablets.

Similarly, the police force searched a motorbike driven by Zaw Moe in Hopong township at 1:15 pm on the same day and captured 2,000 stimulant tablets. The offenders have been prosecuted under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law. — MNA/MKKS



Sein Matt and Ah Jay arrested with seized stimulant tablets on 20 February.

Confiscations of illegal items; timbers, crude oil, consumer goods, industrial materials and vehicles

THE Customs Department's on-duty teams confiscated various goods worth K45.913 million from two containers at the Asia World Port Terminal and goods worth K40.053 million from a container at the Thilawa Port Terminal on 19 February. Among the items seized were 150 kilogrammes of towels, an External Counter Pulsation Device (used), 700 kilogrammes of seasoning powder, and 2,800 kilogrammes of undeclared cloth rolls. Action was taken according to Customs procedures.

On the same day, a Mitsubishi Fuso truck carrying 6,500 kilogrammes of East Hope PVC powder, undeclared in the Import Declaration (ID), was impounded at Ywathagyi Dry Port. Additionally, 600 gallons of smuggled diesel were confiscated from a motorboat in Ye township, and 95 gallons of illegal crude oil and a XIAOMI phone valued at K932,500 were seized at the Htaukshapin-Htankaik-Yenanma oil field in Minbu township. Action was taken under the Petroleum and Petroleum Products Law and the



Various items of consumer goods seized at Asia World Port Terminal in Yangon.



East Hope PVC powder packages seized in Yangon Region.

Public Property Protection Law. During inspections on 20 Feb-

ruary, illegal timber weighing 8.593 tonnes, valued at K4.296 million, was seized in Maubin township, and illegal teak weighing 38.227 tonnes, valued at K8.353 million, was seized in Lewe township. Action was taken under the Forest Law.

The Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee reported 16 arrests on 19 and 20 February, with an estimated total value of K153.791 million. — MNA/MKKS

ECONOMY WORLD

Russia's Lavrov to hold several bilateral meetings with top G20 diplomats - Moscow

Lavrov's packed schedule includes discussions with various foreign ministers, alongside participation in key G20 events on 22 February.

RUSSIAN Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov plans to hold bilateral meetings with his counterparts from Mexico, South Africa, Egypt, Bolivia and Brazil on the sidelines of the G20 foreign ministers' meeting, Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said on Wednesday.

"Sergey Viktorovich Lavrov will begin a marathon of bilateral meetings. These are G20 colleagues ... A number of bilateral meetings are scheduled with counterparts from

Mexico and South Africa, and a meeting with a colleague from Türkiye is being prepared.

There are a lot of meetings. There will be a meeting with the foreign minister of Brazil, of course. There will also be a meeting with the foreign ministers of Egypt and Bolivia," Zakharova told Radio Sputnik.

Lavrov will also take part in the key events of the G20 on 22 February, she added.

On 19 February, Lavrov kicked-off his Latin American



Russia considers the development of cooperation with Venezuela on the use of peaceful nuclear energy promising. **PHOTO: SPUTNIK**

tour with a visit to Cuba, where he met with President Miguel Diaz-Canel and Foreign Minister Bruno Rodriguez.

On 20 February, he arrived

in the Venezuelan capital of Caracas, where he met with Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro.

After the visit to Venezue-

la, Lavrov has already arrived in Rio de Janeiro, where he will take part in the G20 Foreign Ministers' Meeting from 21-22 February. — SPUTNIK

Japan trade deficit halves to 1.76 tln yen on record January exports

Japan's exports surged to a record high in January, driven by robust shipments of autos to the US, helping the nation cut its trade deficit by half from a year earlier to 1.76 trillion yen (\$11.74 billion).



Despite concerns about slowing global demand, exports increased by 11.9 per cent to 7.33 trillion yen, marking the second consecutive month of growth. **PHOTO: KYODO**

JAPAN'S exports rose to a record high in January as US-bound auto shipments were robust, helping the nation halve its trade deficit from a year earlier to 1.76 trillion yen (\$11.74 billion) as energy imports also slumped, government data showed Wednesday.

Exports increased 11.9 per cent to 7.33 trillion yen, marking

the second straight month of growth despite concerns about slowing global demand after aggressive interest rate hikes in the United States and Europe.

Imports of coal and liquefied natural gas fell by double digits, leading the resource-scarce nation to report a 9.6 per cent drop in overall imports, which came to 9.09 trillion yen. The country

posted a record 3.51 trillion yen trade deficit in January 2023, due to massive imports inflated by a weak yen. Comparable data became available in 1979.

Japan had a 415.04 billion yen trade surplus with the United States as exports hit their largest-ever level for the month, at 1.42 trillion yen. Imports rose 6.0 per cent to 1.01 trillion yen.

Japan logged a 959.52 billion yen trade deficit with China, another major trading partner, even as its shipments were supported by strong demand for chip-making equipment and cars. Exports jumped 29.2 per cent to 1.25 trillion yen, a record, while imports dropped 7.6 per cent to 2.21 trillion yen. China-bound shipments tend to decrease during its Lunar New Year holidays. The holidays began in early February this year, later than in 2023, which may have contributed to the strong export number. — Kyodo

German economy buffeted by 'perfect storm'

WEAKER exports, costly energy and a stuttering green transition have combined to form a "perfect storm" for the German economy, leaving Chancellor Olaf Scholz's coalition bickering over how to change course.

The government will unveil its latest economic forecasts for 2024 on Wednesday, with media reports suggesting a sharp downgrade to a mere 0.2 per cent growth.

In its autumn projections, the government was still expecting output to expand by 1.3 per cent.

The country ended 2023 in

recession, shrinking by 0.3 per cent, and the latest data suggest the first quarter of 2024 will see another contraction.

Germany also risks facing anaemic growth up to 2028 if no action is taken, German media said.

The German economy, Europe's largest and traditionally a driver of eurozone growth, is being buffeted by "a perfect storm", Economy Minister Robert Habeck said earlier this month.

The situation was "dramatically bad", he added. — AFP



Tractors and trucks besieged Berlin's landmark Brandenburg gate in January as farmers protested at the elimination of fuel subsidies. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

HSBC reports 'record profit' of \$30.3 bln in 2023

HSBC said Wednesday it achieved "record profit" in 2023 as pre-tax gains soared by nearly 80 per cent, with the banking giant also announcing further share buybacks.

The Asia-focused lender and its peers have been buoyed by rising interest rates for more than a year, but are bracing for greater economic uncertainties in 2024. The bank generates most of its revenue in Asia and has spent several years pivoting to the region, vowing to develop its wealth business and target fast-growing markets.

Despite bumper profits, HSBC noted the effects of China's slower-than-expected economic recovery after the Covid-19 pandemic as well as heightened geopolitical tensions.

The firm reported pre-tax profits of \$30.3 billion, up from \$17.1 billion the year before, in a statement to the Hong



HSBC said Wednesday it achieved "record profit" in 2023 as pre-tax profits soared by nearly 80 per cent, with the banking giant also announcing further share buybacks. **PHOTO: AFP**

Kong stock exchange.

Profit after tax increased by \$8.3 billion, to \$24.6 billion, while revenue rose by 30 per cent to \$66.1 billion.

"Our record profit performance in 2023 enabled us to reward our shareholders with our highest full-year dividend since 2008," said chief executive Noel Quinn. — AFP

United flight makes emergency landing due to wing damage



A screenshot of a video taken from a United Airlines Boeing plane shows a piece of the wing's flap missing. **PHOTO: KEVIN CLARKE VIA CHINA MEDIA GROUP/CHINA DAILY**

UNITED Airlines confirmed on Tuesday that its flight 354 from San Francisco to Boston made an emergency landing on Monday due to a damaged wing.

The company said there was "an issue with the slat on the wing of the aircraft" but did not specify the cause of the damage to the Boeing 757-200 aircraft.

A video shared on social media by Kevin Clarke, one of the 165 passengers on board, showed the slat panel partially shredded. "Just about to land in Denver with the wing coming apart from the plane," Clarke said in the video clip. — Xinhua

Indonesia issues more tax incentives for EV sales

It will also lower value-added tax to 1 per cent from 11 per cent for EV buyers this year, extending a tax break that had expired at the end of 2023.



Guests pose for photos with a BYD new electric car during BYD grand launch in Jakarta, Indonesia, 18 January 2024. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

INDONESIA has announced new incentives to encourage sales of locally produced and imported electric vehicles (EVs), in its latest bid to boost take-up of environment-friendlier cars as well as attract investment to its domestic EV industry.

The detailed incentives are a follow-up to a December-announced tax incentives plan for imported EVs for manufacturers that match import numbers with domestically made EVs in coming years.

Under new rules made public late on Tuesday, Indonesia will remove the luxury tax on EVs for the 2024 fiscal year and import tax until the end of 2025.

It will also lower value-added tax to 1 per cent from 11 per cent for EV buyers this year, extending a tax break that had expired at the end of 2023.

The incentives are aimed at stimulating domestic demand for EVs while attracting investment by automakers, the

government has said.

Many EV makers have disclosed plans to launch vehicles in Indonesia since the government announced its intention to introduce incentives, said Rachmat Kaimuddin, deputy coordinating minister overseeing EV sector development.

China's BYD the world's biggest EV maker by sales volume, last month unveiled three all-battery EV models it plans sell in Indonesia. — Xinhua

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V SEOUL GLOW VOY.NO. (405W)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V SEOUL GLOW VOY.NO. (405W)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **22-2-2024** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MITT/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 SEALAND MAERSK ASIA PTE LTD.

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V TI2 APPLE VOY.NO. (2408E)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V TI2 APPLE VOY.NO. (2408E)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **22-2-2024** 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 TI2 LOGISTICS PTE LTD

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V SITC CHENMING VOY.NO. (2402S)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V SITC CHENMING VOY.NO. (2402S)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **22-2-2024** 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
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S SITC CONTAINER LINE CO., LTD

ROLLING UPDATES

WORLD

NEWS IN BRIEF

Iraq no longer needs US-led coalition forces: PM

IRAQI Prime Minister Mohammed Shia' al-Sudani said Tuesday that Iraq does not need military advisors from 25 countries to work within the mission of the US-led international coalition to fight the Islamic State (IS) group.

Al-Sudani made the comments during a press conference, in which he stressed that the Iraqi government began an integrated programme to improve the armament of the security forces in conjunction with seeking to end the presence of the international coalition in the country.

The justifications for the coalition's existence in 2014 have ended today, and "we are in the year 2024," al-Sudani said.

He said that the IS group no longer poses a threat to Iraq's security, adding that the capabilities of the Iraqi security forces have improved significantly and it can now maintain security throughout the country. — Xinhua

House Speaker says requested meeting with Biden about US border security, White House rejected

US House Speaker Mike Johnson said on Wednesday that he has requested a meeting with President Joe Biden about border security, but that the White House has rejected his request.

"I've been requesting a meeting with the president for weeks now, a month. I've been asking to sit down with the president to talk about the border and talk about national security, and that meeting has not been granted," Johnson said during a press conference.

Johnson said he will continue to insist on a meeting, adding that it is a "problem" if the Speaker of the House cannot sit down with the president. House Republicans will insist on addressing the United States' border security before sending aid to foreign countries, Johnson said.

Earlier this week, Johnson said that he has no plans to bring a \$95 billion supplemental funding bill passed by the US Senate to the House floor. The bill provides approximately \$60 billion for Ukraine and \$14 billion for Israel.

However, a congressional source told Sputnik on Tuesday that House lawmakers may divide the legislation into separate portions in an effort to pass the measures. — SPUTNIK

About 32,000 NATO troops deployed near Russia, Belarus borders: Lukashenko

Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko stated that approximately 32,000 NATO soldiers, over 1,000 armoured vehicles, and 235 airplanes and helicopters are deployed near Russia's and Belarus's borders.



Polish and Romanian soldiers stand next to military vehicles and a NATO flag near Szypliszki village, located in the so-called Suwalki Gap. **PHOTO: WOJTEK RADWANSKI/AFP/FILE**

ABOUT 32,000 NATO soldiers, over 1,000 armoured vehicles, 235 airplanes and helicopters are deployed near Russia's and Belarus's borders, Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko said on Tuesday.

"The situation is no calmer on the European continent, including near our borders. In the immediate vicinity of Belarus and Russia, as part of the alliance's operations in Europe, about 32,000 soldiers of the contingents of the united armed forces of NATO and the

United States are stationed.

There are more than 1,000 armoured vehicles, about 160 artillery systems and mortars, 235 airplanes and helicopters," Lukashenko was quoted as saying by the Pul Pervogo Telegram channel.

Bosnia and Herzegovina, Moldova, Georgia and Serbia will be drawn into NATO just like the scenario of the situation in Ukraine, Lukashenko added.

In recent years, Russia has witnessed unprecedented NATO activity near its western

borders.

Moscow has repeatedly expressed concern about the alliance's buildup of forces in Europe, especially since the bloc supported the Kyiv regime amid its attacks on Donbass.

Since the start of Russia's special military operation, NATO countries have supplied Ukraine with military equipment. Moscow has repeatedly stressed that any Western weapons in Ukraine will become legitimate targets for Russian strikes. — SPUTNIK

Julian Assange's final legal battle begins

On this episode of *The Backstory*, host Rachel Blevins covered Julian Assange's final legal battle in the UK, discussing the extradition decision.

ON this edition of *The Backstory*, host Rachel Blevins delved into several topics from around the globe, including Julian Assange's final legal battle in the United Kingdom.

Rachel began Tuesday's show with an in-depth discussion on Julian Assange's final hearing with a British court before they decide whether or not to extradite him to the United States. She was joined by CIA

whistleblower John Kiriakou, who detailed the case and Assange's struggle for justice.

Later in the hour, Rachel spoke to international relations and security expert Mark Sleboda about the Russian military's strategic advance west of Donetsk city, following the capture of Avdeevka.

To kick off the final hour, Rachel was joined by Professor of international human rights at

the University of Illinois Francis Anthony Boyle who discussed Israel's planned military operation in the densely populated city of Rafah near the Egyptian border.

In the final segment, independent journalist Daniel Lazare spoke to Rachel about US President Joe Biden's 2024 campaign, which is facing several challenges as the election nears. — SPUTNIK



Former leader of Britain's opposition Labour party Jeremy Corbyn addresses supporters of WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange outside Westminster Magistrates court in London on 20 April 2022. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

SPORTS

Amid torrid spell, Bayern says Tuchel to leave at end of season

Bayern will seek a new coaching direction for next season.

BAYERN Munich said Wednesday they would part ways with manager Thomas Tuchel at the end of the season, as the reigning German champions struggled to stay in the Bundesliga title race.

“We came to the decision to end our working relationship by mutual agreement in the summer,” Bayern CEO Jan-Christian Dreesen said in a statement, following talks with Tuchel.

The coach, whose contract was set to run through to 2025, would exit the club on 30 June this year.

“Until then, I will of course continue to do everything I can with my coaching staff to achieve maximum success,” Tuchel said in the statement.

Bayern would look for a “new footballing direction” under a different coach next season, CEO Dreesen said.

Tuchel’s preemptive dismissal comes after three straight defeats, including a painful 3-0 loss to league rivals Bayer Leverkusen.

With 12 games left in the season, Bayern sit eight points behind Xabi Alonso’s side, who have yet to lose during the campaign.



Bayern Munich's German coach Thomas Tuchel. PHOTO: AFP/FILE

Leverkusen are on an historic 32-game unbeaten streak in all competitions, equalling a record set by Hansi Flick’s Bayern across the 2019-20 and 2020-21 seasons.

Following the loss to Leverkusen, Bayern slipped to a 1-0 defeat against Italian side Lazio in the Champions League round of 16 and a humiliating 3-2 loss to lowly Bochum in the league.

‘Not so realistic’

After the horror run of form, Tuchel admitted Bayern’s chances of winning the Bundesliga title were “not so realistic”.

The manager brushed off talk that he might be immediately replaced, but his planned exit reflects the uncompromisingly high standards at the Bavarian giants. — AFP

Myanmar’s Lethwei star Tun Tun Min to fight against Cambodian Kun Khmer fighter on 29 Feb

KUN Khmer Fight will be held in Cambodia on 29 February, so Myanmar’s Lethwei Icon and Myanmar’s Lethwei World Champions Tun Tun Min and former rival Cambodia’s current champion, Kun Khmer star fighter Prom Samnang, will battle it out in traditional Kun Khmer rules.

Prom Samnang, the current Kun Khmer champion, competed against traditional Lethwei king Tun Tun Min in the 32nd ASEAN SEA Games hosted by Cambodia in 2023. He defeated Tun Tun Min by points and won the gold medal.

The Cambodian star fought against Myanmar’s Lethwei fighter Shwe Rahman in Cambodia and won by knockout on 9 February 2024.



Prom Samnang also faced another Lehtwei star as a tie bout. — Pwint Thitsar/KZL

Japan women’s captain condemns Asian football chiefs over venue switch

JAPAN women’s captain Saki Kumagai has criticized Asian football officials after the away leg of their tie against North Korea for a spot at the Paris Olympics was moved to Saudi Arabia days before the game.

Kumagai said that the Asian Football Confederation “have

a responsibility” to look after players after Saturday’s match was switched from Pyongyang to Jeddah. Kumagai spoke to reporters in Japan on Tuesday as she was set to leave for Saudi Arabia, just a day after jetting in from her Italian club Roma. The 33-year-old said “this kind

of thing can’t happen”, referring to the late notice the national team had been given. Japan’s football association had reportedly asked the AFC to move the first leg from the North Korean capital Pyongyang over a lack of operational transparency and a scarcity of flights. — AFP

Paris 2024: a ‘new era’ of corruption-free Olympics?

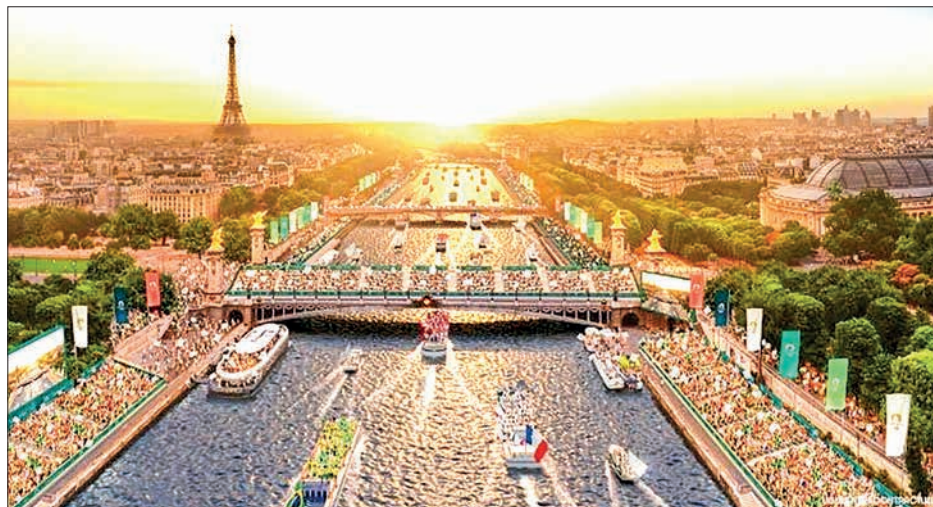
AHEAD of the Paris Olympics in July and August, French prosecutors are working on four enquiries into possible wrongdoing, but are the investigations a sign of problems or of genuine efforts to tackle graft?

Andy Spalding, an academic and author who studies corruption in sporting “mega-events” such as the Olympics or the football World Cup, believes French authorities are showing they are serious about delivering a clean Games.

Three preliminary investigations are into possible favouritism in the awarding of around 20 contracts worth tens of millions of euros, while a fourth — revealed on 6 February by AFP — is scrutinising the pay of chief organizer Tony Estanguet.

In an interview with AFP, Spalding, a

French prosecutors are conducting four investigations into possible wrongdoing ahead of the Paris Olympics.



A computer-generated image of the opening ceremony of the 2024 Paris Olympics on the river Seine. PHOTO: PARIS 2024/AFP/FILE

professor at the US-based University of Richmond School of Law, explained the troubled history of Olympic corruption and why he believes the Paris Games might spell the start of a “new era” of cleaner international sport.

Question: When did corruption in the Olympics first come to wide public attention?

“The Salt Lake City Winter Olympics in 2002 was the first time in which there was hard evidence of corruption that went public. Pre-2002, we know there’s corruption. But we can’t prove it and the world is largely resigned to corruption.

Then in the late 1990s, there’s something sometimes called the “corruption eruption” — a period of time in which all of a sudden the world starts paying a lot of attention to corruption issues. — AFP



Situated in the Gulei petrochemicals base in Zhangzhou city, it is anticipated to be the largest single Sino-foreign joint venture in Fujian Province. The project is slated for completion in 2026 and will have a maximum annual production capacity of 1.8 million tonnes of ethylene.



A view of the construction site of the China-Saudi Arabia Gulei ethylene project in Zhangzhou City, Fujian province. **PHOTO: PRESS CENTER OF GULEI DEVELOPMENT ZONE/XINHUA**

China-Saudi Arabia ethylene project enters full construction stage

CONSTRUCTION of the main complex of a joint-investment ethylene project, which involves petrochemicals giant Saudi Basic Industries Corporation (SABIC), began on

Monday in east China's Fujian Province.

The project, with a total investment of 44.8 billion yuan (about 6.3 billion US dollars) from SABIC and Fujian Energy

Petrochemical Group Co, Ltd, is being built in the Gulei petrochemicals base in the city of Zhangzhou.

As the largest single Sino-foreign joint venture in Fu-

jian Province, the project is expected to be completed in 2026 and possess a maximum annual production capacity of 1.8 million tonnes of ethylene. The project has triggered

investment totalling more than 200 billion yuan for upstream and downstream industries in the Gulei petrochemicals base, according to preliminary estimates.

The base is one of China's seven largest petrochemicals bases. It has 15 operational projects and a further 12 are under construction. — Xinhua

Foreign visitors to Japan in Jan returns to pre-pandemic level

Despite a powerful earthquake on New Year's Day, its impact on tourism has been limited.



Travellers gather in the international arrivals lobby at Narita airport near Tokyo on 7 April 2022. **PHOTO: KYODO/FILE**

THE number of foreign visitors to Japan soared 79.5 per cent in January from a year earlier to about 2.69 million, reaching the level seen in the same month in 2019 before the onset of the coronavirus pandemic, government data showed Wednesday.

The number of overseas visitors has been growing after Japan lifted border control measures related to COVID-19 in late April. A weak yen has also been fuelling the return of inbound tourists.

The impact of a powerful

earthquake that rattled central Japan on New Year's Day has been "limited", although some people in South Korea and China cancelled their trips to Japan in the wake of the quake, according to the Japan National Tourism Organization.

By country and region, the largest number of travellers came from South Korea at 857,000, up 10.0 per cent from the same month in 2019, followed by those from Chinese Taipei at 492,300, up 27.0 per cent, and those from China, which has been slower than other countries in easing travel restrictions, at 415,900, down 44.9 per cent, the data showed.

The number of Japanese travelling overseas in the reporting month jumped 89.3 from a year earlier to 838,600 but was still down 42.3 per cent compared with the number observed in January 2019. — Kyodo

NEIGHBOURLY COOPERATION

Laos, Thailand to step up cooperation in border security

LAO and Thai security forces will step up cooperation in border security, with the aim of reducing criminal activities along the two countries' shared border.

A meeting of cooperation sub-committee on maintaining peace and order along Lao-Thai border was held in northern Laos' Luang Prabang province on 13-16 February, Lao Army Television reported on Tuesday.

The attendees reviewed results of cooperation in border peace-keeping operations and general cooperative relations between Laos and Thailand.

Lao and Thai security forces are pleased that relations and cooperation between the two countries have progressed based on equality and mutual benefit, enabling the two sides to resolve various problems and improve stability in border areas, the report said.

The two sides agreed to further strengthen their neighbourly cooperation, share more information, and take necessary measures in line with laws of each country.

They also agreed to strengthen law enforcement in border areas to prevent illegal immigration and combat human trafficking, drug trafficking and smuggling.

The two sides also agreed to work with local authorities to educate people living in border areas about the law concerning crossing of the border and illicit activities, according to the report. — Xinhua