

The Global **NEW LIGHT** of MYANMAR



State Administration Council Vice-Chair Deputy PM Vice-Senior General Soe Win addresses the coordination meeting for the Union Budget 2024-2025 yesterday.

Product manufacturing directly reflects State GDP: Vice-Senior General

ONLY when product manufacturing rises will the State GDP increase via the export of products, said Vice-Senior General Soe Win.

Vice-Chairman of the State Administration Council Deputy Prime Minister Vice-Senior General Soe Win, who is Financial Commission Vice-Chairman,

highlighted salient points in coordination on the Union Budget for the 2024-25 financial year at the Ministry of Planning and Finance in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday

afternoon.

In his speech, the Vice-Senior General underscored that some ministries handed over the allocated funds back to the government due to a lack of full spending. Such an act may cause a decline in GDP and a loss in investment and manufacturing. Budget allotment aims to control the inflation rate based on the ratio of deficiency to GDP. Hence, ministries have to manage how to overcome challenges and difficulties in spending the allocated funds to contribute to the development of the nation, he added.

With regard to clarifying the

management of the State budget, the Vice-Senior General said that the statistics showed that the ratio of budget deficiency to GDP was 8.86 per cent. After verification, the ratio of deficiency to GDP was 5.67 per cent in the 2024-25 financial year, exceeding five per cent on average. In the 2023-24 FY, the ratio of budget deficiency to GDP was 5.65 per cent, which was 0.02 per cent less than in 2024-25 FY, he noted.

He continued that such differences were based on the depreciation of Myanmar kyat with foreign currency, Hardship and Risk Allowance,

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Salient points from the speech of Vice-Senior General Soe Win at the meeting to discuss the Union Budget for 2024-25 FY

- Budget allotment aims to control the inflation rate based on the ratio of deficiency to GDP.
- Activities of re-handing over the allocated budget may cause a decline in GDP and a loss in investment and manufacturing.
- Ministries have to manage how to overcome challenges and difficulties in spending the allocated funds to contribute to the development of the nation.
- The ratio of budget deficiency to GDP in 2023-24 FY was 5.65 per cent, which was 0.02 per cent less than in 2024-25 FY.
- It is necessary to take care of keeping the budget deficiency in an appropriate amount in order to control debt resilience and inflation rate.

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Successful start: Matriculation exam begins in Yangon Region under new curriculum

BUSINESS

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Agricultural export earnings cross US\$3.2 bln in 11 months

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Ayeyawady Region achieves significant paddy cultivation milestones

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.

6 special civil appeal cases passed judgements, 2 special criminal appeals, 3 special civil appeal 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, U Thaug Naing, U Thein Ko Ko, Daw Thin Thin Nwet and Daw Pyone Pyone Aye was convened Monday morning at the Supreme Court of the Union and passed judgements for 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).

In addition, two special criminal cases — Nos 8/2023 (Mandalay) and 11/2023 (Taninthayi), and three special civil appeal cases — Nos 32/2023 (Kayin), 44/2023 (Shan) and 1/2024 (Mandalay) were heard. — MNA

Mann Shwesettaw Pagoda Festival draws large crowds in March



A breathtaking aerial view of the Mann Shwesettaw Pagoda Festival.

THE Mann Shwesettaw Pagoda, located in Minbu (Sagu) Township, Magway Region, hosted large numbers of visitors beginning March, according to U Thein Hlaing, vice chair of the pagoda board of trustees.

Although the pagoda festival takes place for many days, it does not include Anyeint, theatrical dramas and entertainment programmes. But the pagoda is crowded with

pilgrims daily.

Minbu boasts many well-known places like Shinpin Sekkainte pagoda, Nagabwet Hill, Mann Chaung elephant resort, Shwesettaw Wildlife Sanctuary with gold deer and star tortoises, and many famous pagodas.

The security measures are fully provided during the pagoda festival. The guesthouse costs K35,000 per day, while K50,000 for the waterfront one. The standard guesthouses

Nammada 1, Nammada 2, and Nammada 3 cost K100,000 per day for the first class, K80,000 per day for the second class, and K50,000 per day for the third class. The special rooms are prepared for monks.

Over 900 stalls have been built. There are over 7,000 pilgrims to Mann Shwesettaw pagoda daily in March, according to the pagoda board of trustees. — Zeyar Htet (Minbu)/KTZH



Electric vehicles arrive at Yangon port

WITH the permission of the National Electric Vehicle and Related Industries Development Steering Committee, MG, MG4 electric vehicles imported from

China via NPK Motors Co Ltd arrived at Yangon port yesterday. They were allowed to claim the consignment according to the procedure. — MNA/MKKS



An exciting glimpse of the latest arrivals in battery electric vehicles.

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.

NATIONAL

Production manufacture directly reflects State GDP: Vice-Senior General

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trainee allowances, cost to be spent under the People's Military Service Law, and finance for socioeconomic development and infrastructure development of the nation.

He explained that if the country faces a more considerable budget deficiency, the foreign debt amount may in-

crease, adding that it is necessary to keep the budget deficiency in an appropriate amount in order to control debt resilience and inflation rate.

The Vice-Senior General revealed that the government of the State Administration Council is systematically managing the budget of the State under the public finance management ways in order to rem-

edy the State economy, which declined due to the outbreak of COVID-19 and the re-surge of the State economy.

The Chairman of the Union and Region and State Budget Scrutiny Committee SAC member explained the committee's inspection of the accounts of the Union, regions, and states in the 2024-25 FY.

Secretary of the Commis-

sion Union Minister U Win Shein and Deputy Minister U Maung Maung Win reported on the budget accounts of the Union level departments and organizations for 2024-25 FY and explained the budget of the Union for the 2024-25 FY.

Union Auditor-General Dr Khin Naing Oo reported on auditing the accounts. Union-level dignitaries and Union

ministers discussed the budgets of relevant organizations and departments.

Also present at the meeting were SAC member Lt-Gen Nyo Saw, the Chairman of the Union Civil Service Board, the Nay Pyi Taw Council Chairman, the Governor of the Central Bank of Myanmar and officials. — MNA/TTA



Winners receive the championship trophy at yesterday's event in Nay Pyi Taw.

SAC members attend final match, awarding ceremony of 2024 State/Region Wushu Competition

STATE Administration Council Members Daw Dwe Bu, Porel Aung Thein, Mahn Nyein Maung, Dr Hmu Thang, Dr Ba Shwe, Khun San Lwin, U Shwe Kyein and U Yan Kyaw, Union ministers, deputy ministers, departmental officials and relevant officials attended the final

match and awarding ceremony of the 2024 Inter-State and Region Wushu Competition, held at Wunna Theikdi Gymnasium B in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

After the final match, the SAC members, Union ministers and guests presented trophies, medals and cash prizes to the

first, second and third prize winners. The purpose of holding the competition is to bring out a new generation of athletes and improve the Wushu sports sector, with 14 men's teams and 14 women's teams. It was held from 7 to 11 March. — MNA/KTZH

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(World Consumer Rights Day 2024)

မျှတအလေးမူ တာဝန်ယူ၊ စားသုံးသူအကျိုးပြု ညှစ်ရည်တူ
(Fair and Responsible AI for Consumers)

၂၀၂၄ ခုနှစ်၊ မတ်လ ၁၅ ရက် (သောကြာနေ့)

U Chan Aye presents Credentials to Amir of State of Kuwait

U Chan Aye, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the State of Kuwait, presented his Credentials to His

Highness Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Amir of the State of Kuwait, on 10 March 2024 at the Bayan Palace in Kuwait. — MNA



NATIONAL

MoE Union Minister inspects 2024 matric exam

UNION Minister for Education Dr Nyunt Pe, together with Permanent Secretary Dr Soe Win and relevant officials, visited No 6 BEHS in Zabuthiri Township, Nay Pyi Taw, yesterday. They inspected students sitting for the first-day Matriculation Examination in Myanmar Subject.

The Union minister instructed relevant officials to take care of students who take the matriculation exam with peace of mind and to abide by the disciplines in holding the Grade 12 exam.

He then went to No 7 BEHS and Nay Pyi Taw Gen-



Union Education Minister Dr Nyunt Pe views round the examination room yesterday.

eral Hospital (1000-bed) and inspected the exam centres.

Similarly, Deputy Minister for Education Dr Moe Zaw Tun and relevant officials visited No 3 BEHS, No 20 BEHS and

Yezin BEHS to inspect the exam centres.

On the first day of the matriculation examination, students took the Myanmar language Exam at 830 internal examination centres throughout Myanmar and 11 foreign examination centres. A total of 146,523 students registered to take the exam at 841 examination centres, and 128,801 students took the exam.

A total of 8,676 students registered to take the exam at 47 exam centres in Nay Pyi Taw, and 8,428 students took the exam. — MNA/KTZH

Over 120,000 students take 2024 matriculation exam debut

AS the new system of matriculation examination for 2024 commenced yesterday morning, a total of 128,801 students sat for the Myanmar exam across the nation including foreign exam centres.

This year, a total of 841 exam centres including 11 overseas exam centres and 830 more centres at home are opened for the students. A total of 146,523 students enlisted to join the examination. For the first day, 128,801 students sat for the Myanmar subject with 17,722 absentees. The Ministry of Education stated that number of students sitting for the examination accounted for 87.90 per cent. — MNA/TTA

Successful start: Matriculation exam begins in Yangon Region under new curriculum

STUDENTS from 73 examination centres in the Yangon Region took the matriculation exam for the 2024 Academic Year at 9 am on the morning of 11 March with peace of mind and joy.

The 2024 matriculation exam marks the first under the new KG+12 education system curriculum, and both students and their parents expressed satisfaction with the students' enthusiasm. The Yangon Region Chief Minister, members of the regional government, university and college rectors, school heads, regional/district education officers, and departmental officials visited the examination centres in Yangon Region to encourage students to calmly answer their questions.

A total of 8,609 male students and 10,343 female students registered to take the



Students undergoing examinations yesterday. PHOTO: KANU

exam in the 73 examination centres in Yangon Region. On 11 March, 8,148 male students and 9,908 female students, totalling 18,056 students and representing 95.27 per cent of the students, completed the Myanmar Subject test.

A 62-year-old man sat for the Grade 12 examination at the exam centre of Botahtaung Township No. 6 Basic Education High School, and a student at the examination centre of Sangyoung Township No 2 Basic Educa-

tion High School took the Optional Myanmar Subject test.

Among the 73 exam centres in Yangon Region, one student suffering from anaemia, two physically disabled individuals, three visually impaired individuals, three hearing impaired individuals, and seven prisoners from Insein Prison calmly sat for the Myanmar subject.

The 2024 matriculation exam will be held from 11 to 19 March from 9 am to 12 pm. To ensure students can answer the new curriculum subjects without difficulty, a matriculation exam subject discussion course was conducted under the supervision of the regional government for 3,393 teachers from basic education schools and private schools in the region in early January. — Nyein Thu(MNA)/TKO

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NATIONAL

2024 matriculation examination begins nationwide



Students seen undergoing examinations yesterday. PHOTO: KO KO AYE



U Win Khine

THE 2024 matriculation examination started in different regions and states, including Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

A total of 8,428 students sat for the exam at 47 exam centres in eight townships of Nay Pyi Taw Council Area.

Daw Aye Aye Thant, deputy director of Nay Pyi Taw Education Office, said the security measures for the students during the exam period, including transport and healthcare ser-

vices, are provided by cooperating with the relevant township organizations.

Headmaster U Win Khine, head of the exam centre of No 7 BEHS, said there are six exam centres in Zabuthiri Township. A total of 296 students sat for the exam at the school where I served duty. Sixteen were absent, while 280 took the exam in real-life situations. We had to work with the relevant officials to make preparations one week in

advance. It is the very first exam of Grade 12, so the teachers and parents have to do it systematically.

The respective township general administrative department, healthcare workers, members of the fire brigade and security forces, and traffic police force provided security measures.

The 2024 matriculation examination will take place from 11 to 19 March. — Aung Ye Thwin/KTZH



Daw Aye Aye Thant

Matriculation exam commences with high participation rate in Mandalay Region

THE matriculation exam for the academic year 2023-24 commenced yesterday in Mandalay Region, with 19,442 out of 20,216 students who applied to take the exam, representing a participation rate of 96.17 per cent.

Excitement is high this year due to the introduction of the new Grade-12 system. The region has organized 74 exam centres, each staffed with a supervisor and assistant supervisors. Each exam room accommodates 30 examinees, and additional centres are set up at Mandalay General Hospital and Mandalay Central Prison.

Daw Su Su Wai, headmistress of No 25 Basic Education High School, stated, "I will oversee the exam centre at No 8 Basic Education High School, alongside 54 assistant supervisors. We are managing



Students undergoing examinations and studying before examinations yesterday.

454 examinees spread across 16 rooms." She emphasized the importance of supervisors ensuring accurate matching between registered names and those listed on exam cards.

A parent expressed, "As this year marks the beginning of the new curriculum, I've been paying extra attention to my child's studies. I've noticed that the subjects have become

more advanced and diverse. It would bring me great joy if my child were to pass the exam."

The exam will take place from 9 am to 12 pm, starting from 11th to 19th March, covering

one subject per day. Mandalay Region is home to 4,198 public schools, 235 private schools, and 311 monastic schools this academic year. — Maung Aye Chan/NT



NATIONAL

2024 matriculation examination begins nationwide



Labutta



Myitkyina



Chipwe



Momauk



Myawady



Taungup



Thayawady



Pwintbyu



Minbu (Sagu)



Mongphyat



Thaboung



Muse



Katha

Myanmar exports value-added cashew nuts from Ayeyawady Region

VALUE-ADDED cashew nuts from Ayeyawady Region are conveyed to domestic and international markets, according to Ayeyawady Region's Consumer Affairs Department.

Traders from Pathein, Thaboung, Myaungmya, and Yekyi purchase raw cashew nuts from the Ayeyawady Region. They are sent to Yangon. The value-added cashew nuts are produced in Pathein and Yekyi cities and are exported to China, the Republic of Korea, Singapore and Malaysia beyond domestic markets.

Cashew nuts are utilized in ice cream, traditional Myanmar snacks (Htoe mont), cakes, jam, and biryani. Cashew nut oil is rich in Vitamin E, so it is also used as an ingredient in cosmetic, hair, and skin treatments. Cashew nut shells are used as industrial raw material.

At present, raw cashew nut fetches K4,800-K5,000 per viss, which rose from K4,200 per viss recorded last year. The figures indicated an increase of K600-K800 per viss.

The cashew nut season starts in the last week of February. They are plentiful in March.

The cashew nut market is bustling before the monsoon season. The season ends in May and June when there is heavy rainfall.

There are 65,933 acres of perennial cashew plants in the Ayeyawady Region, mainly in the Pathein, Hinthada and Myaungmya districts. The cashew trees can be cultivated in different soil types. The farming thrives in Rakhine,

Taninthayi and western coastal areas, delta regions and sea areas.

The cashew seeds from Pathein and Thaboung townships are just big. The ones from Yekyi Township are medium in size. Those from Myaungmya Township are tiny seeds. It takes five years from cultivation to harvest. As they are perennial, it is a long-term profitable business. Rain can affect the physical quality of the cashew nut, and the nuts may become unmarketable.

On 27 February 2024, the Consumers Affairs Department (Ayeyawady Region) held a workshop to enhance the cashew industry, with the presence of officials concerned from the relevant departments, associations, cashew planters and producers from the region.

The workshop highlighted the market condition, technology, capital, market flow and needs raised by the suppliers. There is vacant, fallow and virgin land in the related areas in the region. They thrive in tropical climates. The attendees discussed matters related to value-added production and private sector development, the formation of the regional cashew association in line with articles of association, connecting with the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI) beyond the Ayeyawady Region Chambers of Commerce and Industry, making efforts to penetrate export markets as the One Village One Product movement and future activities. — NN/EM



The figures plunged from \$3.53 billion recorded in the corresponding period last FY, showing a drop of \$247 million.

Agricultural export earnings cross US\$3.2 bln in 11 months

MYANMAR'S agricultural exports totalled US\$3.2 billion in the past 11 months of the current financial year 2023-2024, the Ministry of Commerce's statistics indicated.

The figures plunged from \$3.53 billion recorded in the corresponding period last FY, showing a drop of \$247 million.

Myanmar carries out international trade through land

borders and maritime routes land. It exports agricultural produce, animal products, minerals, forest products, and finished industrial goods, while it imports capital goods, intermediate goods, raw materials imported by the CMP enterprises and consumer goods.

Myanmar has been implementing the National Export Strategy (NES) 2020-2025 in

order to boost exports. The priority sectors of the NES consist of agricultural production, garment and apparel, industrial and electronic device, fishery business, forest product, digital manufacturing and service, logistic service, quality management, trade information service, innovation and entrepreneurship sectors. — NN/EM

YGN palm oil wholesale reference price remains unchanged this week

THE wholesale reference rate of palm oil for the Yangon market stayed the same this week, ending 17 March, like that of the past week, 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 transport costs, tariffs and banking services to decide the wholesale market reference rate for edible oil on a weekly basis.

Nonetheless, 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 the call centre's hotline in late August. The Department urged consumers not to buy palm oil at high prices.

The Department is making concerted efforts to steer the high volatility in palm oil prices in the retail market and offer fairer prices to consumers in coordination with the 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. About 700,000 tonnes of palm oil are yearly imported through Malaysia and Indonesia to meet domestic demands. — NN/EM



OPINION

Embrace dos and don'ts for a flourishing life

IN the face of daunting challenges, the present times demand a collective effort from individuals to navigate the complexities of daily life. Issues such as soaring commodity prices, scarce job opportunities, the lingering threat of the COVID-19 pandemic, the aftermath of armed conflicts, and the depreciation of Myanmar's currency against foreign counterparts loom large on the horizon.

While these challenges may seem ubiquitous, they are not unique to Myanmar alone; many developing and underdeveloped nations grapple with similar issues on a daily basis. Despite concerted efforts to address these challenges, it is imperative for the people of Myanmar not to succumb to disappointment and recognize that they share these struggles with a global community facing analogous predicaments.

The government, irrespective of its political, military, economic, or social stance, is actively engaged in addressing these issues. Although the approaches may vary, governments in successive eras elected or not consistently strive for the overall development of Myanmar.

In the midst of these collective efforts, it is crucial for individuals to heed the wisdom of a popular Myanmar saying: "Self-half is the first". This underscores the importance of hard work in all spheres of life, not just within personal businesses but also as employees contributing to the larger workforce. In cases where incomes fall short of sustaining a decent livelihood, doubling efforts and committing to hard work becomes imperative.

Even Myanmar nationals working abroad demonstrate an unwavering work ethic by engaging in multiple jobs concurrently, maximizing their productivity during rare spare moments. By channelling relentless efforts into their work, these individuals witness an increase in their incomes, a

testament to the correlation between hard work and financial stability. Those at home must emulate this dedication, recognizing that idle hands lead to diminished opportunities.

Engaging in any form of employment is honourable and reflects positively on one's character, highlighting honesty and industriousness. Simultaneously, individuals must steer clear of detrimental activities such as gambling. By adhering to these dos and don'ts, a promising future awaits, marked by improved socioeconomic conditions.

The cumulative impact of such individual efforts fosters the enhancement of societies, ultimately contributing to the prosperity of the entire nation of Myanmar. As individuals strive to better their circumstances, the collective aspirations of the people for a prosperous future become attainable. As such, individuals have to embrace dos and don'ts for their lives.

Nine significant points of advice preached by the Lord Buddha

By Aung Kyaw Thant

SUTTANTA, Vinaya and Abhidhamma treatises are based on the preaching of the Lord Buddha more than 2,600 years ago. In fact, all sorts of Lord Buddha's preachings are the best way to live in society, the best way to cease the vicious cycle, and the best way to discard misdeeds to be able to dodge and prevent dangers in all forms. Actually, the Lord Buddha preached His teachings aimed at saving the living beings and celestial beings from the unavoidable vicious circles.

Although Lord Buddha left

cannot avoid their effects. It is because all the things that they did will reflect them one day.

If they thoroughly understand such a process, they will not follow ways similar to that of other persons who are wealthy in operating inappropriate businesses. Consequently, those individuals will have to settle themselves to steadfastly do all things in the ways that they have chosen. As such, the point on faith in the effects of Kamma can be defined as taking responsibility for themselves.

the attributes of Lord Buddha. They themselves have to strive to change the systems. In fact, they have to contribute to something that is basic to changing the system.

On the other hand, if one asks fortune tellers for the time of lucky fortunes, in keeping with an astrologer's advice to avert impending misfortune or put reliance on deeply undefined regalia or spiritual beings, they will not have a chance to claim themselves as authentic Buddhists.

has overconfidence to secure success, they may commit wrong ways to ensure victory because of too much emphasis on achieving success by applying fair and unfair ways.

As such, some remarks that a balanced diet, balanced life, and work-life balance should be maintained throughout their lifespans to avoid malpractices and misdeeds they may commit.

Making endeavours

Lord Buddha places a special emphasis on endeavours. The Desana on eight right paths

Consideration

It is an important matter in Buddhism, but most of the Buddhists are weak in this regard. This is because consideration is directly concerned with the education system. The education system Myanmar youths had passed had primarily emphasized noting down some points in learning, following the teaching, and just learning rather than culturing the practices of critical thinking. Student youths apply their brains in following the teaching and advice of teachers without any creation and criti-

prehensively understand the theme of the teachings of Lord Buddha, why He gave advice, why He prohibited and why He urged, they will have meaningful thoughts about believing in Buddhism.

Initiation of empathy

Building a prosperous society needs those who have empathy. Actually, the Five Precepts that Buddhists exercise daily are based on empathy and consideration. Hence, it is a practice of physical behaviours and mental practices not to harm others, so such a practice can be defined as a great sacrifice.

As such, everybody, regardless of religion, should not focus on just gaining merit but on keeping empathy in their minds. For example, prohibition on smoking near non-smokers is not involved in the Five Precepts preached by the Lord Buddha. However, if individuals consider whether smoking should be done near non-smokers, from an empathy point of view, they can see a clear answer. Actually, it is based on the public ethics.

Dispersing compassion and loving-kindness

Such a point can often be mentioned by the preaching of members of the Sangha. Compassion, defined as Metta in Pali, emphasizes the attitude of a friend who aspires to the flourishing of interests for one person. Metta, called compassion, can cover others with aspirations for them generally to have good things, all in convenience, happiness, peace and prosperity. Keeping compassion in mind, they lend a helping hand to others, comfort and encourage others. In fact, compassion is based on sympathy, empathy and consideration to look after and help those who embrace plights and poverty. These actions and behaviours are essential for building a peaceful and prosperous society.

Teaching based on mindset

The preaching of Lord Buddha can be called Mind-Centred teaching. The Lord Buddha preached the most detailed analysis of the mind of humans

among all religions. Lord Buddha said that all living beings are formed with physical and mental structures. He conducted more analyses on four sorts of minds. He explained that such four kinds of mind are combined with one physical structure to be five aggregates embodying a being. On the one hand, it analyzes the mind.

Lord Buddha preached the Metta Suttanta in detail about the significant points of becoming a person who can really disperse compassion and loving-kindness to all. Waste of mind is not only defied as jealousy and wickedness but also mentioned as malpractice and movements of mind that move to the present, the past, and the future. Moreover, jealousy is a dirty mind. Likewise, lacking shame and fear can be defined as a waste of mind.

Practising meditation or Vipassana actually leads to studying, analyzing, and curing self-consciousness. As such, only when individuals have something special in endeavours related to the mind and any practice over the mind will they have the chance to enjoy enough of the advantages of Buddhists.

Cutting off obsession

Buddhism accepts the vicious circle. Anyone is in a series of life, one after another, before attaining the Nibbana. In fact, being alive means plights. It is because of instability, no ownership, and no right to manage themselves. So, it is no preference. In Buddhism, Nibbana is not an abode, but means it is not renewable and resumption again. Exactly, it means no circling the life. To have such freedom, everybody needs to cut the obsession called excessive carving. So, the Lord Buddha expounded the important teachings, such as the Four Noble Truths and the Law of Cause and Effect, in summary or in detail.

Even though somebody does not wish for the attainment of Nibbana or does not believe in the vicious cycle, they can consider their current life. They can see that calm of mind and mental obsession are in a reverse ratio. They can see that the more obsessive they are, the hotter their minds they have. Everybody can feel nothing when hearing that K100,000 was stolen. But they will lose peace of mind in hearing the information that his K100,000 was stolen. Everybody may obsess about living beings, property and assets, money, ranks and prestige. Whatever they embrace obsession with anything, it is sure that they will face frats. So, those who are willing to have peace of mind need to reduce their obsessions.

Individuals rely on each other to implement some missions and achieve accomplishments. For every mission to be implemented by more than one person, trust must be built between them. If one of the participants violates trust among them, they will face the impacts of disunity and not accomplishing missions. Likewise, violation of trust will fail to missions. Hence, individuals need to avoid violating people's trust and reliance even though nobody knows their actions. As such, they have to follow prescribed rules and regulations, especially public ethics and religious advice. Nobody should violate religious precepts. If they violate the rule of lie mentioned in the Five Precepts in Buddhism, it will be a crack of collapsing the prestigious structure of life built along the lifespan. Consequently, they never achieve success in any missions.

Everybody can hear or read such ten points, especially expounded by Lord Buddha. Additionally, there may remain something special. But only when the aforesaid points should be exercised in daily routine will they be identified as authentic Buddhists. Regardless of religion and nationality, if everybody can follow the prescription of points described above, human society can enjoy peace and prosperity without fail. ■



The picture portrays people wishing to enjoy peace and prosperity along their vicious circle. PHOTO: FREEPIK



The picture depicts a symbol of peace, essential for the society. PHOTO: FREEPIK

His preaching for the sake of humans escaping from the secular world, these preaching items are very useful for human beings in all aspects of society, and these Dhamma items are still modern today.

As such, the most significant points among the teachings of Lord Buddha are chosen for readers to analyze how to utilize and how to follow these points in society as well as in the life cycle of each living being.

Faith in the effects of Kamma

Individuals have to take responsibility and accountability for their acts of doing everything. They do not need to boast about any good deeds that they did, and if they do all misdeeds, they

Accepting the relationship between causes and effects

For more than 2,600 years, Lord Buddha has preached that no one happens without any causes. All things emerge depending on causes and effects. As such, if individuals wish to secure the effects, they shall have to initiate the measures of cause.

For example, individuals who are willing to have computer technologies need to attend computer science courses. If they wish to be wealthy, they have to try hard to earn income. After doing complicated measures, they should not shout aloud if they wish to enjoy peace of mind. If one desires to see a change in any system, one should not just count the beads to pray for

Not upholding extremism

The concept of exercising the middle path does not mean that it does not keep anything on the middle path. Actually, such a concept does not uphold extremism. For example, if individuals encounter plights unnecessarily, it means exercising extremism. Somebody who neglects everything except enjoying sensuality can be identified as an extremist. So, individuals need to avoid these two sides of extremism and live in the middle path.

If individuals carefully consider such a concept, it is useful in all parts of life. For example, if somebody eagerly wishes to be successful, they will not need to embrace anything. If someone

to Nibbana He had preached comprises the Right effort. Those who take responsibility and accept the relationship between causes and effects shall have to make utmost efforts.

In the secular world, everybody needs to try hard to enjoy wealth, fulfil all needs, be healthy, and do meritorious deeds. Even if individuals wish to take meditation, they have to study ways from instructors on how to do it, and they themselves have to do it. If they are inconvenient in the process of meditation, they need to seek the best ways from experienced persons. If so, their method of meditation will gradually be smooth and eased.

cal thinking to do any tests on how to make something, what happens, why it occurs, when it will happen, where it happens and for what it happens. In fact, such a learning system derives from the preaching and teaching of Lord Buddha.

During His term, Lord Buddha preached a large number of Desana and Kalama Suttanta, which was very significant and considerably profound. The theme of such a Suttanta emphasizes that individuals need to accept right and wrong things based on their own critical thinking rather than the urging and talks of others. Everybody needs to criticize, analyze and take anything into consideration before accepting it. If individuals com-

NATIONAL

Ayeyawady Region achieves significant paddy cultivation milestones

A total of 3,757,805 acres of monsoon paddy cultivation and 1,457,288 acres of summer paddy plantations have been completed in Ayeyawady Region. There are 17 million acres of paddy plantations nationwide.

The amount planted in Ayeyawady Region is reportedly almost 30 per cent of the paddy cultivation across the country.

Among the eight districts in the Ayeyawady Region,



The harvesting of monsoon paddy with a combine harvester in Ayeyawady Region.

Pyapon district, which includes four townships, is the largest in the cultivation of both monsoon and summer paddy. There are 5,200,000 acres of monsoon and summer paddy, and about 24 per cent of monsoon and summer paddy is planted in Pyapon district. A total of 878,325 acres of monsoon paddy and 411,027 acres of summer paddy were grown in Pyapon district in 2023.

In addition to summer paddy, beans and chilli are grown in this region as summer crop after monsoon paddy. In Ayeyawady Region, crops are cultivated mainly by rivers and rainwater. There are some dams that supply agricultural water in the upper part of the region, and dams have been built to prevent the flow seawater into the Labutta and Pyapon districts. — TWA/MKKS

Myanmar participates in International Fair held in Kunming

THE Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) reported that Myanmar took part in the International Fair held at the Kunming International Academy on 9 March in Kunming, the People's Republic of China.

The fair aimed to showcase the exchange of traditional culture with a total of 16 countries, including Myanmar.

During the fair, traditional foods, costumes, dances, cul-

tures, handicrafts, and sports from the 16 participating countries were on display.

U Thawdar Aung, Myanmar's Consul-General in Kunming, along with family members of the consulate-general, participated in the event. They showcased Mohinga (Myanma rice noodle soup), Myanma tea, traditional woodcarvings, gemstone paintings, and traditional Myanma dances. — ASH/TMT



The Myanmar booth seen in the Kunming-hosted fair on 9 March 2024.

Lucky Seven's 'Kaway (The Witch)' hits cinemas 22 March



The movie poster for "Kaway (The Witch)".

ACTRESS Sabei Moe, who primarily featured in the movie "Kaway (The Witch)" produced by Lucky Seven Production, will hit high-end cinemas starting on 22 March.

The movie's script was

penned by Htet Myat Zin Nang, based on the story of Thathoe Teza, and the scene script was crafted by Min Ko Soe (Natthankwin). Additionally, academy director Ko Zaw (Aryonoo) helmed the production of

Lucky Seven Production.

Actress Sabei Moe commented, "We worked on this film for the past seven years. Viewers will find answers to questions about the ways of Myanmar's legendary witches in this movie. Moreover, the love story between an inhuman witch, once a soft and tender village girl, and a kind-hearted man, once a cruel fisherman, is featured in this film."

The cast of "Kaway (The Witch)" also includes academy Myint Myat, Sabei Moe, Chue Lay, Zin Myo, Kay Nyi, Nay Lin, Ye Lin Aung, Tinzar Win Pyae, and other artists. — ASH/TRKM

MoALI plans zone-wise oil crop cultivation to ensure edible oil sufficiency



A sunflower plantation.

THE Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation has announced plans to cultivate oil crops (peanut, sesame, and sunflower) in specific zones during the 2024-2025 financial year to ensure an adequate supply of edible oil.

Furthermore, special high-yield zones for edible oil will be established in Up-

per Myanmar regions, with designated zone managers appointed to oversee operations. These zone managers will be responsible for providing seeds and other necessary inputs, educating growers to achieve target yield, facilitating loans from the State economic promotion fund, and developing markets for

the produced oil crops in collaboration with regional and state-level organizations.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation aims to enhance edible oil crop yields and meet domestic oil consumption requirements, commencing from the 2025-2026 financial year. — ASH/MKKS

NATIONAL

Watermelon sales thrive as summer arrives

AS it is summer, the watermelon market has been doing well, according to the market.

“The sale has been good as it is summer. Prices vary from K1,500 to K2,000 and K2,500 per watermelon. It is predicted that the local market will be fine because summer is coming. Watermelon sales have been active in Mandalay’s retail market,” said Ko Khine Zaw, a watermelon trader from Paleik.

More than 100,000 tonnes of watermelon were exported to China in September last year, according to the Fruits Whole-

sale Trading Centre (Muse). Over eight months, from January to the end of August 2023, more than 113,000 tonnes of watermelon were transported to China through the Muse trading zone by more than 7,000 trucks.

Last year, between November and July, watermelon production was abundant, and the price was reasonable in the Chinese market, but prices varied depending on the currency exchange rate. When exporting to China, service and inspection fees cost around 900 Yuan, excluding customs duty. — Thit Taw/ZS



A watermelon stall at a fruit market.

Tokyo ME warns of ongoing overpayment discrepancies in consular services

DESPITE advice from the Myanmar Embassy in Tokyo to take great care to avoid discrepancies in deposits to the embassy’s account, such errors have still been found, and no refunds will be made. The Myanmar Embassy in Tokyo warned again on 11 March.

For consular services for Myanmar nationals and Japanese in Japan, including visa, passport renewal, reapplication for losses, payment of income tax, and the issuance of endorsement letters, all customers were advised to pay the exact amount of fees and to avoid any overpayment as it was difficult to refund, the embassy initially said on 22 February.

However, since there have been repeated cases of extra payments to the embas-



Myanmar Embassy in Tokyo, Japan.

sy’s account, the embassy has had to reissue the warning.

According to the procedure, the embassy will receive the direct payment into the embassy account

at Ummitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation (Gotanada Branch) (non-resident current account) for passport fee, fine for loss, income tax and visa fees, it said. — MT/ZN

Extension applications for 2022 EPS-TOPIK manufacturing exam to open this month

FOR those who passed the 2022 EPS-TOPIK for the manufacturing industry first batch exam held in 2022 and have not yet received a job offer, an extension application will be open, announced by the government Public Overseas Employment Agency (POEA-EPS).

An extension application will be issued on 12 March.

Applications can be submitted from 9 am to 3 pm on 15-16 March at Pinlon Hall, Ward 43 in Dagon Myothit (North) Township in Yangon. Only those who haven’t received a job offer are eligible to submit, POEA warned.

Of more than 10,000 who took the EPS test for the manufacturing industry (first batch) held in 2022, near-

ly 6,400 passed, according to POEA’s previous announcements.

In the 16th TOPIK Test, the 7th marking employment system, which will be held in 2024, recruitment of Myanmar workers will be extended in the Republic of Korea’s service industry, and both males and females are eligible to join the test. — MT/ZS



Applicants for the EPS TOPIK test at the EPS TOPIK Centre in 2022.

BKK’s ME launches mobile teams for PJ passport issuance to CI holders on 9 March

THE Myanmar Embassy in Bangkok has launched the issuance of PJ passports to Myanmar nationals with Certificate of Identity (CI) cards at Thailand’s factories and worksites through mobile teams since 9 March.

Applicants are required to submit an original CI booklet to convert to a PJ passport, an issued stay permit (visa), a work permit, an original citizenship scrutiny card and a copy of the household register.

With all these five complete documents, Myanmar workers can obtain PJ passports even in Thailand, and the Labour Attaché Office will coordinate with the respective factories and workplaces for these PJ passport holders to be included in the list of MOU workers, the embassy announced.

PJ passports will be issued to approved applicants within 45 days from the date of data col-

lection, as the embassy needs to communicate with relevant departments in Nay Pyi Taw to verify the collected data according to the procedures.

Passports will not be issued to those who have provided false particulars, including citizenship scrutiny card numbers. Therefore, interested factories and worksites can fill in the prescribed forms and discuss them with the consular section of the Myanmar Embassy. — MT/ZN



Processing to issue PJ passports at the Myanmar Embassy (Photo-Myanmar Embassy in Bangkok)

NATIONAL

Two Grade-12 students wounded in AA attack in Sittway

AA terrorists launched attacks using heavy weapons in Padalate village in Sittway Township of Rakhine State, and two innocent students (one boy and one girl) were wounded when the heavy weapon shells hit the school.

AA terrorists opened fire using heavy weapons from 5,000 metres northwest of Padalate village at 12:15 pm yesterday, and the heavy weapon shells hit No (7) BEHS. Due to the explosion, one boy and one girl who sat for the first day of the 2023-2024 academic year matriculation examination were wounded. They were taken to the local Tatmad-



The location map of attacks committed by AA terrorists.

aw hospital by security forces members, and Rakhine State Chief Minister U Htein Lin and officials comforted them.

AA terrorists launched attacks in townships, villages, and wards, attempted to start fighting, and successively conducted destructive actions in real situations, saying it was for the sake of the region. Their doings affect the education of children and state stability. Security forces will conduct security measures and anti-terrorism activities so that the students can take the exam conveniently. — MNA/KTZH

Counter-argument to false information

Fake news spread by Khit Thit media accuses Tatmadaw of forced conscription



The screenshot validates misinformation.

THE malicious Khit Thit media has been spreading fake news on social media, falsely accusing Tatmadaw of forcibly conscripting a 13-year-old child, Maung Aung Thet Paing, in Taungdwingyi

Township, Magway Region, on 7 March.

A responsible official rebutted the report, reassuring the public that the Tatmadaw did not conscript anyone. Tatmadaw has adhered strictly to laws and regulations prohibiting the use of child soldiers. Consequently, the United Nations removed Myanmar from the list of nations documented for recruiting and deploying underage soldiers in the annexe of the UN Secretary-General's report on children and armed conflict as of 15 June 2020. Similarly, the Khit Thit media alleged that around 25 young people, including 23-year-old Ko Win Htet Naing, were seized in Danubyu Township, Ayeyawady Region, and sent to military encampments. However, a local clarified that such incidents never occurred.

Malicious media outlets are deliberately fabricating reports via social media platforms, aiming to instil fear among the populace and create discord regarding security forces. — MNA/NT

False claims circulated by Khit Thit media on clashes in Shan State (South)

THE Khit Thit malicious media is spreading fake news alleging that on 10 March, intense clashes resulted in at least 16 houses being burnt to ashes due to bombing by Tatmadaw fighter jets, heavy weapons firing, and incendiary bombs dropped by drones in Hsihseng Township and Hopong Township, Southern Shan State.

In January, KNDF, PNLA, and PDF terrorists attacked security forces working to stabilize and secure the area in Hsihseng Township. Terrorist activities are openly taking place in Hsihseng Township. In this incident, terrorists deliberately fired heavy weapons and dropped drone bombs into Hsihseng Township and Hopong

Township, resulting in houses being burned and destroyed, according to a security official.

Local people who oppose such terrorist acts are protesting against them, but illegal subversive media is only disseminating fake news and false information through social networking sites to conceal the terrorist acts. — MNA/TKO

Confiscations of illegal items: Timbers, fuel oil, foodstuffs and vehicles

THE combined teams under the Nay Pyi Taw Council Illegal Trade Eradication Special Task Force confiscated illegal teak weighing 0.268 tonne and illegal timbers weighing 42.856 tonnes worth K1,931,752 in Tatkon township on 8 March. This enforcement was carried out under the Forest Law.

During inspections on 8 and 9 March, joint teams impounded a total of 0.899 tonne of illegal teak worth K1.7 million in Htaukkyant and a Chenglong tractor head with a trailer (estimated value of K71 million) travelling from Myitkyina to Mandalay carrying 1,280 bags (each bag weighing 25 kilograms) of garlic worth K64 million without official documents at the Sagaing bridge. The action was conducted under the Forest Law and Customs procedures.

On 9 March, a combined team captured three kinds of goods valued at K40 million, including 12,000 bottles of Carabao energy drink that were piled up by the side of the road in Tachilek township. The action was taken under Customs procedures.

A combined team seized

illegal hardwood weighing 1.274 tonnes valued at K318,500 in Pyay district, two kinds of goods worth K8.32 million without official documents from a Yutong bus (approximate value of K40 million) travelling from Hpa-an to Yangon near the Shwethanlwin tollgate in Phayagyi on 9 March and illegal teak weighing 0.543 tonne valued at K358,908 in Toungoo district on 10 March. The action was taken under Customs procedures and the Forest Law.

A combined team confiscated a total of 24,000 gallons of illegal premium diesel worth K288 million at the Yadabon combined checkpoint in Sagaing township and an unregistered Honda fit (approximate value of K6.5 million) in Kalay township on 10 March. The action was taken under the Petroleum and Petroleum Products Law and the Export and Import Law.

The Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee reported that 13 arrests were made on three consecutive days from 8 to 10 March, with an estimated value of more than K522.129 million. — MNA/MKKS



A seafood-processing machine is displayed at the 2024 Seafood Expo North America in Boston, Massachusetts, the United States, 10 March 2024. North America's largest seafood exposition Seafood Expo North America kicked off in Boston on Sunday, drawing participants from over 45 countries and regions. Going hand in hand with Seafood Processing North America, the three-day event highlights innovations around sustainability and aquaculture from emerging startups and legacy brands on both the processing and seafood side. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

EAC experts urge member states to promote digital entrepreneurship

EXPERTS from the East African Community (EAC) have called on member states of the regional bloc to develop and implement regulations that promote digital entrepreneurship.

The appeal, issued on Sunday by the EAC headquarters in Tanzania's northern city of Arusha, followed discussions at the 3rd EAC Regional Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) Confer-

ence in Nairobi, Kenya. The experts emphasized the need for governments to create a conducive environment for digital startups by waiving taxes and levies for a specified period, allowing these businesses to establish themselves. They also encouraged universities and training institutions to introduce digital literacy programmes targeting both rural and urban populations. — Xinhua

Over 22,000 businesses newly established in Viet Nam in first 2 months of 2024

ABOUT 22,128 new enterprises were established in Viet Nam in the first two months of 2024, a year-on-year increase of 12.4 per cent, according to the Ministry of Planning and Investment's Business Registration Management Agency.

The combined registered capital of those businesses reached nearly 219 trillion Vietnamese

dong (8.88 billion US dollars), rising 32.8 per cent year on year, Vietnam News Agency reported Monday.

The number of newly founded businesses increased sharply in the mining industry (up 28.8 per cent), followed by transportation and warehousing (26.5 per cent), and other services (21.5 per cent). — Xinhua

Philippines aims to produce nearly 130,000 semiconductor talents by 2028

THE Philippines is poised to produce a "robust talent pool" of 128,000 semiconductor professionals, including engineers and technicians, by 2028, the country's President Ferdinand Romualdez Marcos said Monday.

The Philippines is "ready to meet the

expanding needs of high-technology industries", Marcos said in his address during the courtesy call of the US government and Presidential Trade and Investment Mission delegation led by US Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo at the presidential

palace. The semiconductor and electronics sector is the top performer in the Philippines' merchandise exports, accounting for about 60 per cent of the total merchandise exports. The country is recognized as a critical player in the global sem-

iconductor value chain, particularly in assembly and packaging.

The Philippines looks forward to playing a role in the research and development, advanced assembly, packaging, and test requirements of the semiconductor industry, Marcos said. — Xinhua

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V SITC HUIMING VOY.NO. (2404S)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V SITC HUIMING VOY.NO. (2404S)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **12-3-2024** 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

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V ISEACO GENESIS VOY.NO. (219N/S)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V ISEACO GENESIS VOY.NO. (219N/S)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **12-3-2024** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **AWPT** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S NEW GOLDEN SEA LINES

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V POAVOSA WISDOM III VOY.NO. (104679)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V POAVOSA WISDOM III VOY.NO. (104679)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **12-3-2024** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MITT** 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: **2301928**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S CHUN AN INTERNATIONAL LOGISTICS CO LTD

ROLLING UPDATES

WORLD

China's top political advisory body concludes annual session, pooling strength for modernization

THE Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) National Committee, China's top political advisory body, concluded its annual session on Sunday, calling on political advisors to contribute to great unity and solidarity and pool strength for advancing Chinese modernization.

Chinese leaders Xi Jinping, Li Qiang, Zhao Leji, Cai Qi, Ding Xuexiang, Li Xi, and Han Zheng attended the closing meeting of the second session of the 14th CPPCC National Committee at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, which gathered more than 2,000 political advisors.

The meeting was presided over by Wang Huning, chairman of the CPPCC National Committee.

A resolution on a work report of the Standing Committee of the CPPCC National Committee, a resolution on a report on how the proposals from political advisors had been handled since



The closing meeting of the second session of the 14th National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) is held at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, capital of China, 10 March 2024. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

the previous annual session, a report on the examination of new proposals, and a political resolution on the second session of the 14th CPPCC National Committee were approved at the meeting.

The meeting called on all the participating organizations of the CPPCC, its committees at all levels, and political advisors to rally more closely around the Communist Party of China

(CPC) Central Committee with Comrade Xi Jinping at its core and open up new prospects for the CPPCC's endeavours in the new era.

Over the past year, the

CPC Central Committee with Comrade Xi Jinping at its core united and led the whole Party and the entire nation to work hard and march forward bravely, successfully achieving the main goals for economic and social development, and leading the great ship of China to navigate through waves and move forward courageously, Wang said in his address.

These achievements received high praise from all CPPCC National Committee members, he added.

The year 2024 marks the 75th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China and the CPPCC's establishment. Wang said that over the past 75 years, the CPPCC, under the leadership of the CPC, has traversed a glorious course in its efforts toward founding and developing the People's Republic of China, exploring the path of reform, and realizing the Chinese Dream. — Xinhua

King Charles says will serve 'to best of ability' after cancer diagnosis

KING Charles III said on Monday that he would continue to serve "to the best of my ability" after his cancer diagnosis, saying he had been "deeply touched" by people's wishes for his health.

The 75-year-old monarch, who became king in September 2022 after the death of his mother Elizabeth II, was admitted for surgery for a benign prostate condition in January but was subsequently diagnosed with an unrelated cancer.

He has postponed all public-facing duties while he undergoes treatment, but is continuing with behind-the-scenes work and has been holding some in-person meetings.

"In recent weeks, I have been most deeply touched by your wonderfully kind and thoughtful good wishes for my health," he said in a pre-record-



Britain's King Charles III poses for a photograph as he reads cards and messages, sent by well-wishers following his cancer diagnosis, in the 18th Century Room of the Belgian Suite in Buckingham Palace in central London on 21 February 2024. **PHOTO: AFP**

ed speech to mark the 75th anniversary of the Commonwealth.

"In return, can only continue to serve you, to the best of my ability, throughout the Commonwealth."

Charles's wife, Queen Camilla, 76, and son Prince

William, 41, have taken on most of the royal family's duties in his absence.

William's wife, Princess Kate, 42, has also been absent from public life since undergoing abdominal surgery in January. — AFP

12 hospitalized after technical problem on LATAM flight

TWELVE passengers were hospitalized Monday after a technical problem on a LATAM flight from Sydney to Auckland caused the plane to dip violently, the airline and first responders told AFP Monday.

At least one person was in serious condition after flight LA800 — a Boeing Dreamliner — experienced an unspecified "technical event" over the Tasman Sea.

Passengers told New Zealand media that the plane quickly lost altitude, flinging some towards the ceiling.

A passenger told public broadcaster RNZ that "people flew through the air because they weren't wearing their seatbelts".

"Some people got pretty injured. People were really scared as well," the unidenti-

fied man said, his voice shaking.

A spokesperson for the Chile-based airline said "a technical event during the flight" had "caused a strong movement".

"The plane landed at Auckland Airport as scheduled," the airline said, adding it "deeply regrets any inconvenience and discomfort this situation may have caused".

It was not immediately clear what caused the incident.

Gerard Campbell of the St John New Zealand ambulance service said medics were first made aware of the problem as the plane descended into New Zealand's largest city.

A phalanx of more than a dozen ambulances and other medical vehicles rushed to the scene to treat the wounded. — AFP

SPORTS

MIU wins in play-off final in MFF Futsal League 1

THE play-off final of the MFF Futsal League 1 took place at the MFF Futsal Gymnasium of Youth Training Centre in Thuwunna in Yangon yesterday, and MIU won over VUC in the penalty decision.

VUC and MIU held a 2-2 draw in the ordinary timeframe. In the penalty decision, MIU beat VUC with a 4-3 win, as a 6-5 win in total scores.

If VUC wins this match, it

does not need to play one more match to secure the championship trophy. Now, as MIU has won the game, VUC needs to play one more match.

The second play-off final match between MIU and VUC will take place on 13 March. If MIU wins the game, it will be the champion. If VUC secures a win, both teams will go to the third match. — Ko Nyi Lay/TTA



Players of MIU and VUC vying with each other in play-off final of MFF Futsal League 1. PHOTO: MFF



Manchester City's Belgian midfielder (11) Jeremy Doku (L) kicks Liverpool's Argentinian midfielder (10) Alexis Mac Allister during the English Premier League football match between Liverpool and Manchester City at Anfield in Liverpool, north west England on 10 March 2024. PHOTO: AFP

Arsenal go top of Premier League after Liverpool and Man City draw at Anfield

ARSENAL were the big winners of the weekend in the Premier League as Mikel Arteta's side returned to the top of the table in the wake of the 1-1 draw between Liverpool and Manchester City at Anfield on Sunday afternoon.

John Stones gave City a lead midway through the first half following a corner, but a dreadful backpass from Nathan Ake led to Ederson wiping out Darwin Nunez to allow Alexis Mac Allister to level from the penalty spot five minutes into the second half.

That goal saw Liverpool take control of the game that their rivals had dominated before the break, but City held on for a point to leave the top three in the Premier League separat-

ed by just one point.

On Saturday, Arsenal had a 2-1 triumph at home to Brentford, which was their eighth consecutive league win.

Tottenham claimed a huge 4-0 win away to Aston Villa in a vital game between two sides looking to finish fourth in the table and qualify for next season's Champions League.

Tottenham ran riot in the second half with James Maddison and Brennan Johnson scoring after 50 and 53 minutes.

Spurs' job was then easier after John McGinn was shown a direct red card for a horrible late challenge and Son Heung-Min and Timo Werner added to the score in injury time. — Xinhua

Lee Kang-in named in South Korea squad following Son bust-up

LEE Kang-in was named in South Korea's squad on Monday for World Cup qualifiers this month despite a bust-up with skipper Son Heung-min at the Asian Cup.

Tottenham star Son was left with a dislocated finger after clashing with Paris Saint-Germain attacker Lee before South Korea's semi-final loss to Jordan last month.

Lee subsequently apologized after Yonhap news agency said the 23-year-old had tried to punch Son. Lee's representatives have denied there was a punch.

Son later posted a picture on social media of the pair smiling and arm in arm, alongside a message urging South Korean fans to forgive Lee.

South Korea's new interim coach Hwang Sun-hong, who took over last month when Jur-



A woman watches a television screen showing a news broadcast with a picture of Son Heung-min (L) and Lee Kang-in (R), at a railway station in Seoul on 21 February 2024. PHOTO: AFP

gen Klinsmann was sacked following the Asian Cup exit, said he had spoken to both players before picking his squad.

"Lee Kang-in wanted an opportunity to apologize to fans and his team-mates from the

bottom of his heart, and Son Heung-min said we should all embrace Kang-in and move forward," Yonhap quoted Hwang as saying. "I don't think this is a problem only between the two of them," he added. — AFP

Sinner, Alcaraz demolish Indian Wells opponents

REIGNING Grand Slam champions Jannik Sinner and Carlos Alcaraz turned in dominating performances on Sunday to roll into the fourth round of the ATP-WTA Indian Wells Masters.

The two hottest young racquets in the sport showed no mercy in quick-fire victories, with Australian Open champion

Sinner overwhelming Jan-Lennard Struff 6-3, 6-4.

"Almost perfect" Alcaraz, the reigning Wimbledon champion, stepped up his Indian Wells title defence with a 6-2, 6-3 victory over Canadian Felix Auger-Aliassime.

The world number two Spaniard allowed his Canadian opponent no room to move,

reaching the fourth round with his eighth match win in a row at the event. A pair of women's veterans showed new life in maternity comebacks.

"It was almost the perfect match for me," said Alcaraz, who broke Auger-Aliassime's serve four times. "I moved well, played aggressive and had less mistakes." — AFP

China's top political advisory body concludes annual session, pooling strength for modernization

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WORLD

US presidential election enters new phase as Biden, Trump ratchet up fight

THE 2024 US presidential election has entered a new phase as both US President Joe Biden, the Democratic incumbent, and former President Donald Trump, the presumptive Republican nominee, held campaign rallies in the swing state of Georgia recently to step up their reelection effort.

The two launched attacks against each other while having deep political grievances. They also have significant differences in their major policy positions. Analysts believe that as the election campaign unfolds, it may further intensify political disputes and public divisions in the country, potentially leading to more chaos.

"Trump and I have a very different value set," Biden told supporters in Atlanta, Georgia, noting that if Trump returns to the White House, the United States will be filled with "resentment, revenge and retribution". Additionally, Biden criticized Trump's positions on issues such as abortion, taxes, and immigration.

On the same day, Trump held a rally in Rome, Georgia, where he attacked Biden on immigration and border security, accusing him of allowing illegal immigration from the southern border,



Former US President Donald Trump speaks at a caucus site in Clive, Iowa, the United States, 15 January 2024. PHOTO: XINHUA

saying Biden's "crime" will never be forgiven. At the rally, Trump also mocked Biden's mannerisms.

Georgia, located in the southeastern United States, was won by Trump in the 2016 presidential election. Four years later, Biden narrowly claimed victory in the state. According to the RealClearPolitics website, Georgia is one of the swing states this year, which typically has a critical impact on the

outcome of the US presidential election.

Before they visited Georgia, two significant milestones occurred in the US presidential election this year: one being the "Super Tuesday" primaries in multiple states, where both Biden and Trump achieved considerable victories in their respective party primaries, thereby expanding their lead and essentially securing their parties' presidential nomination. — Xinhua

Israel-Hamas war rages in besieged Gaza as Ramadan begins

THE Muslim holy month of Ramadan begins Monday in Gaza with no truce in sight, as fighting rages between Israeli forces and Hamas militants and a dire humanitarian crisis grips the besieged Palestinian territory.

A Spanish charity ship with food aid prepared to sail from Cyprus to the coastal Gaza Strip, where the UN has repeatedly warned of famine.

Aid groups say only a fraction of the supplies required to meet basic humanitarian needs have been allowed into Gaza since October, when Israel placed it under near-total siege. About 370 kilometres (230 miles) from Cyprus across the Mediterra-



The Open Arms vessel (C) is pictured in the Cypriot port of Larnaca on 11 March 2024. A Cyprus government spokesman said a Spanish charity ship with food aid was set to sail from the island within hours to the coastal Gaza Strip, where the UN has repeatedly warned of famine. PHOTO: AFP

nean Sea, Mohammed Harara stood on the shores of Gaza, hoping for the aid to arrive.

"I've been waiting since

this morning, because tomorrow is the start of the holy month of Ramadan and the situation is very tragic," he

said. The non-governmental group Open Arms said its boat would tow a barge with 200 tonnes of food, which its partner the US charity World Central Kitchen would then unload on Gaza's shores.

It was expected to depart "within the coming hours", Cypriot government spokesman Konstantinos Letymbiotis told Cyprus News Agency.

Jordanian, US, French, Belgian and Egyptian planes parachuted aid into northern Gaza on Sunday, but the United Nations' aid coordinator for the area has said boosting supply by land is the best way to get assistance to the territory's 2.4 million people. — AFP

Death toll from Indonesia floods, landslides rises to 26

THE death toll from flash flooding and landslides on the Indonesian island of Sumatra has risen to 26, an official said Monday, with at least 11 people still missing.

Torrential rains on Thursday triggered the disaster in West Sumatra province, where rivers overflowed and landslides swallowed homes.

"Eleven people are still missing while 26 others have been found dead," Abdul Muhari, spokesman for the National Disaster Mitigation Agency, said in a statement Monday.

In the district of Pesisir Selatan, 23 people were found dead and six were still missing, according to Fajar Sukma, an official from West Sumatra's disaster mitigation agency.

Three other victims were found dead in Padang Pariaman district, which also suffered heavy damage.



A house is left damaged after heavy rain at Pesisir Selatan Regency in West Sumatra, Indonesia, 10 March 2024. PHOTO: XINHUA

Rescue efforts have been hampered by extreme weather and spotty electricity, Sukma said.

"It is still raining today and rescuers are conducting the rescue operation in the middle of the rain.

"There's a possibility that the number of casualties will continue to rise as we update the report," he said.

Sukma said that as of Sunday, rescuers had managed to open access to the most affected areas and distribute aid to evacuees, including tents, medicines, and instant food.

The disaster has damaged hundreds of houses, bridges, mosques, and other public facilities.

Indonesia is prone to landslides during the rainy season and the problem has been aggravated in some places by deforestation, with prolonged torrential rain causing flooding in some areas of the archipelago nation. — AFP