

The Global **NEW LIGHT** of MYANMAR



State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing offers the Abhidhaja Maha Rattha Guru title and insignia to Sayadaw Bhaddanta Sumana of Buddha Sasana Theikpan Monastery and Sein Ma Ma Pali University in Mawlamyine in Nay Pyi Taw on 24 March 2024.

Religious titles for 2024 offered to title recipient Sayadaws, nuns along with rice donation

Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and his wife Daw Kyu Kyu Hla attended the ceremony to offer religious titles for 2024 in conjunction with rice donation at Agga Dhipati Sasana Beikman in the precinct of Maravijaya Buddha Park in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

The Senior General offered Abhidhaja Maha Rattha Guru title and insignia to Sayadaw Bhaddanta Sumana of the Buddha Sasana Theikpan Monastery and Sein Ma Ma Pali University in Mawlamyine.

SAC Vice-Chairman Deputy Prime Minister Vice-Senior General Soe Win offered Abhidhaja Maha Rattha Guru title and insignia to Meiktila Monastery Sayadaw Bhaddanta Sujanapiya

of Maha Dhammikarama Monastery in Mandalay.

Secretary Lt-Gen Aung Lin Dwe presented Abhidhaja Maha Rattha Guru title and insignia to Sayadaw Bhaddanta Vasava, Maha Patron of the Mahasi Sasana Yeiktha in Bahan Township.

Joint Secretary Lt-Gen Ye Win Oo offered Abhidhaja Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotika title and insignia to Zeyathiri Athawka Monastery Sayadaw Bhaddanta Sirinda in Bago.

SAC members, Union-level officials, Union ministers, senior military officers from the Office of the Commander-in-Chief and officials offered Abhidhaja Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotika, Abhidhaja Maha Rattha Guru, Agga Maha Pandita, Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja, Agga Maha Ganthavacaka

Pandita and Agga Maha Kammathanacariya titles and insignia to relevant recipient Sayadaws.

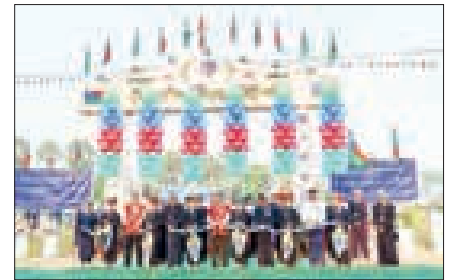
Subsequently, the wife of the Senior General presented Agga Maha Ganthavacaka Pandita title and insignia to Nun Daw Gunavati of the Zayyatheingi Nunnery in Sagaing, and Nun Daw Dhammesi of the Ayethuwady Nunnery in Monywa.

The Senior General also presented Agga Maha Thiri Thudhamma Mani Jotadhara title and insignia to Dr Maung Maung Oo, and Thiri Thudhamma Mani Jotadhara title and insignia to U Mann Sein and U Wam Shin Shwe.

The Vice-Senior General presented Thiri Thudhamma Mani Jotadhara title and insignia to U Aung Ko Zaw.

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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.

MP to sell K200 worth new Butterfly Stamp on 27 March



New stamp worth K200 depicting Common Bluebottle butterfly.

STARTING from 9:30 am on 27 March 2024, Myanma Post under the Ministry of Transport and Communications will start selling new stamp worth K200 depicting Common Bluebottle butterfly.

The Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation recognized Common Bluebottle butterfly as the species native only to Myanmar. It will be sold simultaneously in general post offices in Nay Pyi Taw, Yangon and Mandalay and post offices in other regions and states. As a special plan, it is known that the dates will be sealed on the stamps at the central post offices of Nay Pyi Taw, Yangon and Mandalay on 27 March. — MNA/TRKM

Entertainment performed for parade columns participating in 79th Anniversary of Armed Forces Day Parade



Union Minister for Information U Maung Maung Ohn presents gift to an artiste who performed entertainment for parade columns through the draw-lot system.

U Maung Maung Ohn, Union Minister for Information, attended an entertainment honouring the parade columns participating in the 79th Anniversary of Armed Forces Day parade held at the No 3 Transit Centre in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

U Ye Tint, Deputy Minister for Information, Tatmadaw members from parade columns and invitees attended the entertainment.

At the entertainment, artistes from the mo-

bile public relations unit and MRTV presented songs and jokes to the audiences.

Then, the Union Minister participated in singing along with the artistes, and Tatmadaw members from the parade columns applauded it.

The Union Minister and the Deputy Minister gave 10 sets of MRTV DTH receivers and 200 sets of DVB T2 Set Top Boxes to Tatmadaw members of parade columns through the draw-lot system. — MNA/TKO

75th Anniversary (Diamond Jubilee) of Pa-O National Day celebrated in Taunggyi



The 75th Anniversary (Diamond Jubilee) of Pa-O National Day is celebrated on 24 March at the Pa-O National Comprehensive Development Ground in Kangyi Ward, Taunggyi.

THE 75th Anniversary (Diamond Jubilee) of Pa-O National Day was marked on 24 March at the Pa-O National Comprehensive Development Ground in Kangyi Ward, Taunggyi.

At the ceremony, the Pa-O national flag and the

flag of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar were raised and saluted, and martyr leaders were saluted.

Pa-O national leader Phyarantsinpha Aung Hkam Hti gave an opening speech and Shan State Chief Minister U Aung Aung also

gave a speech, saying that the Pa-O ethnic people mostly live in Shan State (South) and are honest, upright and open, and they have special devotion to religion. Since the successive governments have paid the special emphasis, the state government will continue to cooperate with local ethnics to implement wishes and desires of the Pa-O ethnic group. In addition, and the people of Pa-O region should cooperate in peace, stability and security of the region.

After that, U Hti from Hsihseng Township Pa-O Literary and Cultural Association reported on the situation of the Pa-O people, and the Chief Minister presented K10 million for marking the ceremony. Phyar Khun Win Ko accepted the cash donations. — Maung Maung Than (Taunggyi)/TKO

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NATIONAL



Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, his wife Daw Kyu Kyu Hla and congregation listen to a sermon delivered by Thanlyin Minkyaung Sayadaw.

Religious titles for 2024 offered to title recipient Sayadaws, nuns along with rice donation

FROM PAGE-1

The wife of the Senior General presented Agga Maha Thiri Thudhamma Theingi title and insignia to Daw San San Wai and Daw Nu Nu Nge, and Thiri Thudhamma Theingi title and insignia to Daw Tin Nyunt, Daw Mya Win and Daw Ni Ni Kyaw.

The wife of the Vice-Senior General presented Thiri Thud-

hamma Theingi title and insignia to Daw Maw Maw Nyunt, Daw Htay Htay Yin and Daw Khaing Pyae Sone Kyaing.

In 2024, the State Administration Council offered religious titles to 421 members of the Sangha, 41 nuns, and 47 laypeople at home and abroad.

At the ceremony, titles were offered to five Abhidhaja Maha Rattha Guru Sayadaws, six Abhidhaja Agga Maha Sad-



Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and wife offer alms to a title recipient Sayadaw.



Vice-Senior General Soe Win and wife offer alms to a title recipient Sayadaw.

ddhamma Jotika Sayadaws, 21 Agga Maha Pandita Sayadaws, 45 Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Sayadaws, 23 Agga Maha Ganthavacaka Pandita Sayadaws, eight Agga Maha Kammathanacariya Sayadaws, two Agga Maha Ganthavacaka Pandita nuns and 12 Sasana Nuggaha title winner laypeople. Chief Ministers and officials presented titles to remaining recipient Sayadaws, nuns and laypeople in respective regions and states.

The Senior General and wife, the Vice-Senior General and wife, and officials donated rice and offertories to recipient

Sayadaws and nuns at pavilions in the Buddha Park.

Also present were Chairman of the State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee Agga Maha Pandita Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Thanlyin Minkyaung Sayadaw Dr Bhaddanta Candima Bhivamsa, Secretary of the SSMNC Mandalay's Masoeyein Taikthit Maha Patron Sayadaw Dhamma Thameik-di Monastery Sayadaw Agga Maha Pandita Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Maha Dhammakathika Bahujana Hitadhara Bhaddanta Vasettha Bhivamsa and laypersons. — MNA/NT

NATIONAL

Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing receives ITAR-TASS Media of Russian Federation

The following is an interview given by Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing to ITAR-TASS Media of the Russian Federation on the morning of 18 March on sectoral cooperation between Russia and Myanmar.

Q: Your Excellency, Prime Minister. First and foremost, I would like to express my gratitude to the Prime Minister for giving an interview to our ITAR-TASS Media. Russia and Myanmar have been prolonging relations for many years in the history. In the previous year, Russia-Myanmar diplomatic relations turned 75 years. I want to recount my childhood related to this relations. In my childhood, I saw an event which Prime Minister U Nu from Myanmar paid a visit to the Soviet Union for the first time. From then on, I has been interesting in Myanmar. Now, I have a chance to interview the Prime Minister. What I want to ask a question today is: what is the successful cooperation between Myanmar and Russia? And do you have any cooperation sectors?

A: Russia and Myanmar have been cementing relations for many years. I will show you a document later. We initiated the diplomatic relations on 18 February 1948. Now, it was more than 76 years. Bilateral relations are focused on many sectors. Since the post-independence era of Myanmar, both countries have been cooperating in all sectors. But, we can see much cooperation in defence sector. With regard to defence sector, one is concerned with armed forces and another one is in technology and techniques. Russia provided assistance for modernizing the Myanmar armed forces while giving science, technology and military techniques to many officers from Myanmar armed forces. It is a great sector. Moreover, cooperation focuses on agriculture, medical, energy, metallurgical and other sectors. Now, we are implementing the small-scale atomic energy plant in cooperation with Atomic Energy Composer of Rosatom of Russia. In the agriculture sector, fertilizer is being produced in Russian technology by establishing a fertilizer plant. Such a fertilizer is properly useful in Myanmar. So, we have a plan to extend it. Moreover, we conduct mining, wind mill, generating electricity from solar energy, and manufacturing of pharmaceuticals. So, we have plans



SAC Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing shakes hand with an official of ITAR-TASS Media of Russian Federation on 18 March.

to continue these sectors.

Q: Your Excellency Prime Minister. May I know accomplished projects and future projects after you have taken the responsibilities of Head of Government.

A: We took State responsibilities depending on the situations that although voting frauds were committed in the 2020 election, it was not solved. But, they attempted to illegally grasp the State power. Hence, we declared the State of Emergency to the nation and took the State responsibilities. So, we had to solve the voting fraud problem at first.

After we had verified the voting frauds, we reconstituted the Union Election Commission. Then, we ordered UEC to scrutinize the past event. The previous UEC announced more than 38 million of voters in the 2020 election. In scrutiny, voting frauds became 11.3 million of voters. I mean some 30 per cent of voter numbers were involved in the voting frauds. Number of vote rigging numbers from the hundreds to the tens of thousands were happened all 315 townships where the election was held. I sincerely and politically tell it was voting fraud. It was an ugly event. When such event has been exposed, I took action against all responsible persons at first.

As far as you know, such a time was a critical point of Myanmar which faced outbreak of Covid-19 in the second wave. More than 600,000 people suffered from infection of the pandemic. Many civilians lost lives. I led all to prevent the pandemic, facing unprecedented difficulties. For the first one, we don't have vaccine for Covid-19. So, neighbouring countries gave a helping hand to us. Friendly countries including your Russia provided vaccines to us. So, these vaccines saved a large number of lives of Myanmar. Although the pandemic was occurred infection in the third wave in Myanmar, we quickly controlled it. So, I can say we could overcome it. It is the second point.

For the third point, at that time, Myanmar suffered economic crisis like infection of Covid-19. But, since 2018, Myanmar has been facing economic downward trend due to weak management. As we could strive for recovering our economy, we could do so. To do so, we had experienced struggling in economic sector. Then, our country is on the upward trend of economy from 2021 to 2023.

One more point is forging the internal peace and stability. With regard to peace and stability, some persons in different attitudes staged protests and unrests after declaration of the state of

emergency. So, we strived for stabilize the nation. One more point means since regaining independence in 1948, Myanmar has been facing internal armed conflicts and it happens till today. In this regard, we vitalized the peace process. In 2015, we had an agreement in the Union Peace Conference. It is the nationwide ceasefire agreement-NCA. It was signed there. We are striving for restoration of peace and stability based on NCA till today. Less development of Myanmar depends on lack of peace and stability. So, we are striving for ensuring stability of the nation.

As another point, the emergence of the State Administration Council was a consequence of the voting frauds. So, it was a consequence of the election rigging process. So, we have an ultimatum aim to hold a free and fair election. At a time when the process of the State of Emergency period, we will hold the election. At that time, we will hand over the State power to the National Defence and Security Council. Then, we will hold the election within six months under the leadership of the National Defence and Security Council. To do so, we will primarily emphasize correctness of the voter list not to cause voting errors. So, we will manage correctness of the voter list this year as much as possible. If the State is peaceful and stable, we have a plan to hold the election in relevant sections as much as we can even if the election is not held nationwide under the law.

Q: I know the Prime Minister have visited Russian Federation many times. On your arrivals, I know you paid visits to the landmarks of Russia. So, I want to ask a question. May I know your opinion over Russia and tell me please some points about Russia.

A: Despite far distance between the two countries, Russia and Myanmar are close to each other in morale due to similar past events. Russia was called Soviet in the past. In the Soviet era, Russia was a world's leadership country to manage the balance of world power. After the Soviet Union had disintegrated, Russian struggled much. At that time, due to morale of Russian people, leadership of the government and cooperation of Russian Armed Forces, Russia becomes a world's leader country till today. I believe Russia is controlling a balance situation of the world. In my view, Russia is developing.

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As a significant point, Russia is located in the northern part of the world with cold areas. Moreover, Russia is located in the western and the eastern part of the world. So, I review that Russia plays a crucial role worldwide due to national condition. Furthermore, I firmly believe Russia would continuously take a leading role in the important sectors of the world.

Q: Thank you for your expressions about Russia. I on my part have experiences of visiting Myanmar many times. Myanmar is very beautiful and pleasant country. I know more than one million foreign travellers visited Myanmar last year. Tell me please your rough plan how do you manage a large number of travellers from Russia to Myanmar and how do you serve Russian tourists to enjoy scenic beauties of Myanmar.

A: All countries are interested in tourism industry. It can earn incomes. Some amounts of international tourists pay visits to Myanmar. But, due to political situation, we saw number of visits of international tourists do not reach the deserved amount. With regard to Russia, we have made many preparations for Russian travellers. For example, we arrange visa exemption for them and direct flights to Yangon, Mandalay and Nay Pyi Taw. Moreover, we repair airports for landing of passenger flights from Russia and manage tourism sector. A large number of destinations can be seen in Myanmar from the south to the north of the country. So, we have so different characters, cultures and natural beauties. They can enjoy them. And, we have one more advantage. It is because there are many Myanmar officers who had taken learning in Russia. Knowledge, trust over Russia and attachment are spread from them. As there are many persons who are fluent in Russian language and culture, I believe it will contribute much to tourism promotion between Myanmar and Russia. On the other hand, we hold workshops on tourism promotion between Russian and Myanmar delegations. Currently, Myanmar Airways International runs tourism flights between Myanmar and Russia twice a week. If tourism industry booms between them, flights will be extended, I think.

Q: Thank you for your comprehensive clarification. I have experiences of visiting Yangon, Mandalay, Nay Pyi Taw and other cities. In this regard, please, give me advice on proper tourist destinations for Russian travellers in Myanmar.

A: I have said so. There are many diverse features from the south to the north of Myanmar. Coastal areas can be seen in the south of Myanmar. Significant-

ly, Myanmar possesses many beaches such as Ngapali and some others in Ayeyawady Region. Furthermore, travellers can visit a large number of ancient cities and religious edifices concerning the cultural heritages in the central part of Myanmar. In the northern part, they can enjoy the taste of high mountains and cold season depending on the geographical conditions. We have many different cultural and climatic conditions. For example, southern part of Myanmar receives many rainfalls, the central Myanmar is seen with hotness and northern part of the country is cold. Moreover, we have cultural heritage at some areas like Inlay Lake. It is a rare scene of the world due to rowing the boat by leg. If travellers observe it, they can see it. In addition, landmarks such as prominent pagodas are located in Yangon and Nay Pyi Taw. Last year, Maravijaya Buddha Image was built in Nay Pyi Taw. It is the world highest marble-carved Buddha image. Its weight was set a record worldwide. It is a good site for the visit of Russian travellers.

Q: I listen to your clarification about the southern part of Myanmar. I know your native Dawei is located there. May I know significant points and beauties of Dawei.

A: A large number of islands are located in the southern part of Myanmar. Myanmar is endowed with islands and underwater beauties. Maungmakan beach is famous in Dawei region. Moreover, we have future prospects to build a deep sea port. We are implementing such project to enable vessels of more than 200,000 tonnes of weight dock the port. We are holding discussions with Russia for the project. There can be seen in southern part of the nation. For the first point, we have islands, beaches and pearl production. The world best pearl is produced there. Yearly, we hold the pearl sale. Myanmar's pearl is the best across the world, comprising farming pearl and natural pearl. We have many items of underwater natural projects. So, I will give you a documentary for such processes.

Q: In your tenure of the Head of State, Your Excellency Prime Minister is serving State responsibilities. But I believe everybody would have spare time. I have felt you shook my hands strongly when we greeted. So, I want to know how do you efficiently spend your spare time.

A: As I am taking duties of the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services as well as the Chairman of the State Administration Council, I have less spare time. It is true. But, I take care of my health. I take walking exercise in the morning daily. If I have more spare time, I play

golf sports on Saturday and Sunday. And, I read. I try to take spare time to read some topics. To do so, I take 15 minutes or half an hour. And then, I note down remarks after reviewing some items to accumulate my knowledge. I take walking and playing golf for relaxation. It may be daily. Moreover, I try to build a warm family life.

Q: As I know your family life, I would like to raise one more question. I know you are a good husband and a good father as well. Please, briefly explain what lessons are important for life of your offspring and how to hand over heritage to them.

A: Importantly, offspring must be capable of widening knowledge and techniques to stand on own. It is their individual character. Moreover, the Buddhism advices avoiding malpractices and keeping good practices while practising good mindedness. Let me clarify it. It means not to do wrong thing and do good thing. Mindset must be clean. So, I always advise my offspring. Really, I was serving military personnel in countryside. I have not much time to closely join my family. So, offspring tried hard on a self-reliant basis under the guidance of their mother. Furthermore, I uphold honesty in livelihood. My offspring accumulate knowledge based on their experiences. Such experiences may come from others in addition to their parents. They have experiences in associating others. So, I always tell them to apply experiences for development of their lives. I see they are accumulating experiences.

Q: As you told me Buddhism, I would like to ask questions about Buddhism. As far as I know, the majority of Myanmar people believe Buddhism. Likewise, I see Buddhism is flourishing in Myanmar. Shwedagon Pagoda in Yangon is a great prominent of Buddhist people. I myself pay homage to Shwedagon Pagoda many times. I want to know your attitude and concept over the Buddhism.

A: There are many religions across the world namely Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, Hindu and so on. They are upholding a common concept on peace and stability. They lead to peace. But, the Lord Buddha preached a significant point. It is Dhamma. Dhamma means precept, concentration and wisdom. Such things cannot be found in other religions. But, the Lord Buddha preached one more thing of Dhamma. The Lord Buddha told us to uphold the precept not to commit rude talks and behaviors. Concentration is concerned with moral. It emphasizes culturing the good moral and not to commit wrong thoughts. So, moral must be clear. With regard wisdom, it needs to make efforts to

know in-depth knowledge. Those who know many topics in in-depth knowledge will be professionals. Those who become experts depend on their learning knowledge. These three points are most significant in the preaching of the Lord Buddha. So, I think these advices should be followed by all regardless of nationalities. I value these significant points of Buddhism. I accept it is the highest in the preaching of the Lord Buddha.

Q: Thank you so much for your clarification on the Buddhism. I thank you as I know new topics. Today's our interview title is 'Formula of Power'. I have made interviews with State leaders, prominent members of the Sangha in many countries during the 25-year period. Number of interviews may be more than 400. As a usual process, I would like to ask you how to define the wording 'power'. I would like to know your attitude over the power.

A: Power is building strength or force. Since time immemorial, those who were weak in strength have been trying to build their strength to dominate opponents. From then on, they become individuals, groups and regions and then countries. It is the portion of building the strength. I have a concept for the might. What is might? Political or economic might? If not, defence might? Power is equal to might. I mean strength of the nation lies within. If the country is powerful, it shows firm consolidation and strengthening. But, political power will not be same in countries. So, it cannot be fully defined. However, strength of the nation is same in the country. So, political power will be strong. Moreover, those who have economic power can be called wealthy person. If so, they can apply their power as well as their money in the country or in the region. If a country is wealthy, it can apply its power. So also, if the country is powerful in defence force, for example they have stockpiles of arms and ammunition, other groups do not dare to provoke it. It is nature. So, a country is powerful in defence power and might, it is powerful in the region. You see the world. Globally, wealthy countries can influence the countries with lesser monetary power. Likewise, the countries with military might can impose pressure on other countries. So, I assume we have to consider these three powers. Hence, if a country wish to be strong, it has to build might and power and consider how to build the strength and power.

Russia: Thank you so much. I thank you so much for your discussions and clarifications.

Prime Minister: Well. It's OK.

NATIONAL

CNG cylinder licence renewal, strength inspections offered during office hours



The CNG Department of MOGE seen with taxis for inspection.

ACCORDING to the CNG Department under the Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise (MOGE) of the Ministry of Energy (MoE), the licence renewal of Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) tanks in CNG-powered vehicles and strength checks are being

processed during office hours. CNG inspection activities are being conducted by the department in Insein Township,

Yangon Region, in order to ensure the safety of the CNG vehicles.

The department continually conducts inspections on CNG-powered vehicles in Yangon Region to ensure their safe travel.

The department has informed that YBS buses, taxis, and other vehicles used in public transportation activities require an annual check to prevent accidents caused by CNG.

Annual licence renewal of CNG gas cylinders, replacement of expired CNG gas cylinders with new ones, and in-

stallation work are carried out from 9 am to 3 pm daily except on public holidays. Documents prescribed by the department, such as the CNG book, CNG card (red card), wheel tax (original + copy), owner book (original + copy), business part (1/2) (original + copy), vehicle inspection pass (original + copy), applicant's Citizenship Scrutiny Card or driver's licence (original + copy) are to be submitted by the applicants. If the applicants can submit all necessary documents, the department will provide all the above services on the same day. — TWA/TKO

Realty body to host Real Estate & AML/CFT Financial Awareness Course

REAL Estate and AML/CFT Financial Awareness Course No 29 will be opened in Yangon on 29 March, according to the Myanmar Real Property Development Association (MRPDA).

The MRPDA has informed that members who have not yet attended the training can do so free of charge. Additionally, real estate brokers who have not yet joined the association can become members in time to participate in the training.

The course will be held at the Sky Star Hotel in Tamway Township, Yangon Region, from 8:30 am to 5 pm. The course will cover lectures on five major subjects: AML/CFT Financial Awareness (FIU), Registration of Agents (General Administration Department), Urban Land Laws and Procedures (Yangon City Development Committee), Tax Information (Internal Revenue Department), and Urban/Village and Contract Laws (Natmauk U Zaw Min).

The previous real estate awareness training course No 28/2024 was held on 17 February at the Myanmar Convention Centre (MCC) Hall in Mandalay. — TWA/TKO

Veteran actor Myinsaingthar Aung Aung passes away at 74

ACCORDING to U Aye Kyu Lay, Vice-Chairperson of the Myanmar Motion Pictures Organization (MMPO), senior actor Myinsaingthar Aung Aung, who achieved fame with the movie "Myinsaingthar", has passed away. He was 74 years old at the time of his passing. He died due to heart disease at his home in Thingangyun township on the morning of 24 March. "We offer our deepest condolences as we have been together since he was a novice actor, and he became quite famous. He had a lengthy hospital treatment," said U Aye Kyu Lay.

Myinsaingthar Aung Aung gained recognition through the movie "Myinsaingthar" and appeared in numerous films and MRTV-4 series as a supporting actor. Many colleagues in the acting industry mourn his passing, and his daughter Hay Marn Aung Aung expressed on her Facebook, "I am comforted knowing he can finally reunite with my mum in the afterlife."

It is reported that his body will be cremated at Yayway Cemetery in North Okkalapa township. — ASH/TWA/TRKM



Photo of senior actor academy Myinsaingthar Aung Aung.

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.

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Pulses and beans prices fluctuated in Yangon market

THE prices of black gram and red pigeon pea have turned upward while the prices of green gram, chickpea and exported beans and pulses are falling in the market.

From 18 to 20 March, within three days, the prices of black gram and red pigeon pea were continuously decreasing; however, the prices of pulses and beans trending up from 21 to 23 March in the Yangon market.

Prices of green gram, chickpea and exported beans with FOB prices have been trending down within this week. On 16 March, black gram RC price was K3.02 million per tonne, red pigeon pea was K3.863 million per tonne. However, the prices were falling during three consecutive days from 18 to 20 March, it was priced at K2.877 million on 20 March. On the following



Pulses and beans seen in the domestic market.

days, the prices returned up and thus, on 23 March, it was K2.935 million.

The price of red pigeon pea was K3.863 million per tonne on 16 March; K3.65 million on 20 March; and K3.73 million on 23 March. However, the prices did not reach over K 3.8 mil-

lion. The prices of green gram were K4,000 per viss and black gram K5,900-6,200 per viss in Yangon market on 16 March. On 23 March, the green gram was K3,880 per viss and gram between K5,725 and K6,000 per viss on 23 March.

Exported black gram,

pigeon pea and green gram prices are also falling. From 14 to 16 March, exported bean prices were black gram FAQ US\$965-085 per tonne; SQ/RC US\$1,045-1,065; red pigeon pea US\$1,220-1,240; pigeon pea from central Myanmar US\$730-760; and Shwe Wah big size was

US\$830-860. However, on 21-23 March, black gram FAQ was US\$740-760, SQ/RC US\$1,030-1,050, red pigeon pea US\$1,180-1,200, green gram from central Myanmar US\$690-720 and Shwe Wah big size US\$800-830.

From 18 to 23 March, 90 containers of black gram RC (2,160 tonnes) and pigeon pea 25 containers (60 tonnes) were transacted.

On 24 March, black gram price was K90,000 per 20 visses and red pigeon pea K118,800 in Aunglan market. According to the market information from other towns and cities, the prices of pigeon pea are forecasted to be downward due to decreasing demands.

It is reported that pulses and beans prices in domestic market and India market are required to control the price manipulations. — TWA/TMT

Thailand to ban corn import from stubble burning countries

THAILAND'S government agreed to restrict corn imports from neighbouring countries that paddy farmers burn off their fields starting from this year with a view to reducing yearly smoke-induced air pollution issues.

The Thai's cabinet instructed the Ministry of Commerce to issue a directive stating corn import ban from stubble burning countries. This action is to address the government's worry about the air pollution which poses a threat to health. They will compare the corn cultivation areas against the satellite images to check whether the corn are from burning areas or not, Chai Wacharonke, Thailand's government spokesperson said.

The import ban will comply with the rules of the World Trade Organization and wait for a legal framework from the Clean Air Act that is expected to enter into force this year. Thailand's yearly corn

purchase is about 8.9 million tonnes and its output is estimated at 4.9 million tonnes.

At present, Thailand brings in 1.6 million tonnes of corn from its neighbouring countries, with 600,000-700,000 tonnes from Myanmar, 300,000-400,000 tonnes from Laos and 100,000 tonnes from Cambodia, and 2 million tonnes from other countries, primarily from Brazil.

Prime Minister Srettha Thavisin emphasized at the cabinet meeting that the corn import ban must be backed up by evidence of crop that links to field burning.

Most importantly, those measures must adhere to the international trade agreement of the WTO and be covered under the Ministry of Commerce's Exports and Imports Act designated to tackle haze pollution at the peak time of agricultural burning.

The transboundary haze pollution caused by stubble

burnings will affect Thailand negatively. The PM stated that he no longer wants to import corn from countries where field burning happens. Some cabinet members objected to the corn import ban.

Before the Clean Air Act takes into effect, the import ban might violate the rules and regulations of the WTO. Thailand itself must stop burning off the fields as it wants to persuade neighbouring countries to curb burning the agricultural land, Napintorn Srisanpang, deputy minister for the Commerce suggested.

Thailand is raising concerns over the PM 2.5 air pollution issues and considers transboundary haze pollution problems triggered by the neighbouring countries involved in field burning. Consequently, they attempted to mull the import ban from stubble burning countries to combat the air pollution crisis. — NN/KK



The photo shows trucks at the Kampaiti border.

Tissue-cultured banana exports flourish in Kachin State

TISSUE-CULTURED banana exports to China through the Kampaiti border in Kachin State have been surging, according to U Htay Lwin, head of the Kachin State Department of Agriculture.

The state hosts 32 companies operating over 50,000 acres of plantation. The tissue-cultured banana has no local consumption and is grown mainly for exports.

The officer said: "Since the second week of March, 300 twenty-two-wheeler trucks loaded with bananas have been travelling to China through the Kampaiti every day."

Myitkyina, Waingmaw and Bhamo are the primary cultivation areas in Kachin State, while Sagaing Region and certain outskirts of Kachin State also contribute to banana cultivation.

Bananas reach peak ripeness for picking between November and March. Before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, Kachin boasted 70,000 acres dedicated to tissue-cultured bananas. However, due to the pandemic's impact, this number has decreased to 50,000 acres. Each acre still holds the potential to generate revenue of US\$6,000, so companies are considering expansion opportunities in the region.

The Kampaiti border facilitates the export of various commodities, including tissue-cultured bananas, green grams, cashew nuts, rice, sugarcane, cane, broken rice, chilli, rubber and butter beans. Additionally, it oversees the import of electronic devices, medicines, auto parts and foodstuffs. — ASH/NT

OPINION

Seek best ways to completely control TB threats

Tuberculosis (TB) is a major threat to people's health conditions similar to two others, malaria and HIV, claiming millions of lives annually and expediting concerted efforts to eliminate such an epidemic. Although health professionals have been striving to control TB for hundreds of years, ultimately, the TB virus continues to exact a devastating toll, evading complete eradication.

Efforts to eliminate infection of TB across the world have achieved slight success, although medical experts invest their valuable lifespans in doing research and treatment to cure TB patients in any way. However, TB remains a formidable adversary, its lethal impact sparing no corner of the globe.

Whatever it may be, global governments assist in combating the disease under strategic plans. Public awareness

campaigns played a crucial role in sharing knowledge about the dangers of TB and promoting practices to mitigate its spread. These efforts have contributed to a gradual decline in the infection rate worldwide.

However, the fight against TB requires a collective effort from all nations. World TB Day 2024, we themed 'Yes! We can end TB!', seeks to inspire hope and mobilize high-level leadership, increase investments, and accelerate action to combat the epidemic. Through innovation, collaboration, and sustained commitment, the global community can strive towards a TB-free future.

In fact, authorities need to emphasize public awareness to prevent the TB virus from spreading. In this regard, it is necessary to initiate the first step of TB control at the basic education schools where most of the children gather. By raising awareness of the health, social, and economic consequences of TB, the day aims to galvanize global action to end the epidemic once and for all.

Additionally, preventive treatment for TB among individuals living with HIV surpassed global targets, and countries increasingly embraced WHO recommendations, leading to improved outcomes. Practically, volunteers and medical surgeons join hands with the government in Myanmar to combat TB threats in society. Private clinics have been actively participating in TB preventive measures for many years, focusing on the interests of the patients.

In Myanmar, GeneEpt has 100 machines installed at 86 TB control units to conduct rapid diagnostic tests on TB patients. Meanwhile, BPaLM/BPaL therapies are being used to treat TB-resistant patients. In 2023, 93 per cent of TB patients were examined where they had HIV. Among 7,936 patients with HIV were provided with ART medicine.

However, the fight against TB requires a collective effort from all nations. World TB Day 2024, we themed 'Yes! We can end TB!', seeks to inspire hope and mobilize high-level leadership, increase investments, and accelerate action to combat the epidemic. Through innovation, collaboration, and sustained commitment, the global community can strive towards a TB-free future.

After a recent trip to Delhi, India, I was pleasantly surprised to feel how wrong I was on the image of India. I was expecting to see elephants, cows, and monkeys walking along the dirty streets of Delhi, which are full of rubbish and deprived of proper sanitary facilities. How wrong was I! Delhi is a modern city now. The streets are reasonably clean. People and drivers are well behaved, despite occasional honking. India has moved on towards the 21st century. It expects to overtake Germany to become 4th largest economy on earth in the near future.

China has already become the second-largest economy in the world and the world's largest

manufacturing base. Its infrastructure is unparalleled in this world. It is fighting for the global south and becoming its de facto leader.

Thailand, a former vessel state of the kingdom of Burma, is the top tourism earner in the region. Its industries, from seafood, rice and fruits (primary) to cars, motorcycles, and equipment manufacturing (secondary) to banking, medical, and tourism services (tertiary) services, are well developed now that it is acting as a hub

for these sectors in the region.

In between these three lies a hidden gem. The resources are so infinite in this sparsely populated land that people who do not want to work can walk to the back of the village and eat papayas, mangoes, jackfruits, and bananas growing in the wild and not starved. Its mineral resources are rich enough that it can fund a well-equipped army within separate regions of the country, such as KIA, SAA, WA, or MNDA. Its forests grew precious trees, and the sale of

A Frog in the Well

By U AC

logs could fund the rebel leaders living in luxury, e.g., KNU. More than seventy years of wars would have made many other countries bankrupt. Yet many millionaires still exist within Myanmar. Despite income and asset inequalities, we do not get into starvation like some African countries.

Yet by a twist of fate, Myanmar people are caught between

the dictators of the present and the past or the incompetencies and corruption of the leaders abusing the power entrusted to them. Think of General Ne Win and Aung San Suu Kyi.

Leaders who are short on communication skills here and abroad, who are timid at the international level yet loud at oppressing people, who are quaking and shaking to challenge international reporters and hide behind the curtains to keep on issuing rebuttals, refusals, denials and statements, are aplenty in Myanmar. This scaredy-cat approach has rippled and trickled down to civil servants, making them impotent in every sense of the word.

Some spoke of not having to excel or compete internationally. Some give up upon facing the slightest pressure from abroad. Some deter subordinates to shine just to show off their own superfluous power base.

Just like a frog in the well, hanging tight onto their desk of power within their pigmy world may seem like a good scheme of self-preservation. Still, holistically, the culmination of years of substandard performances and behaviours would only lead to one thing - Myanmar will remain the poorest in ASEAN for many decades to come.

African countries urged to take actions to end TB by 2030

Tuberculosis (TB) is a leading cause of death in Africa, with African Union (AU) officials highlighting its disproportionate impact on the continent during the 2024 World Tuberculosis Day event at the AU headquarters, emphasizing the urgent need for increased funding and awareness to combat the disease.



African nations must tackle poverty, inequality, limited healthcare access, and raise awareness about TB, as these factors significantly contribute to its prevalence on the continent. PHOTO: ILLUSTRATIVE IMAGE/PUNIT PARANJPE/AFP/FILE

Tuberculosis (TB) is one of the major causes of death in Africa, killing hundreds of thousands of people every year, African Union (AU) officials have said.

The officials made the remarks at an event to mark the 2024 World Tuberculosis Day, which falls on 24 March every year to raise people's awareness of the deadly disease, at the AU headquarters here, on the theme of 'Yes! We can end TB.'

"The statistics are sobering with Africa bearing a disproportionate burden, accounting for 23 per cent of the global TB burden and over 33 per cent of TB deaths," said Sheila Shawa, a senior technical specialist of the African Union Commission (AUC). Referring to a WHO report that reveals an estimated 2.5 million people fell ill with TB in Africa, resulting in around 424,000 deaths in 2022, Shawa said TB topped the leading causes of death in the continent in the following year. She said vulnerable populations such as children and adolescents can be at much higher risk of developing active TB especially when their immune systems are compromised by malnutrition, HIV or other chronic diseases. Sabelo Mbokazi, head of division of labour, employment and migration at the AUC, said TB response by member states is shockingly underfunded.

"African countries need to address the social determinants of health including poverty, inequality, lack of access to health care and awareness about the disease. They are the drivers of TB prevalence in the continent," said Mbokazi, adding that the disease is challenging the continent's health security.

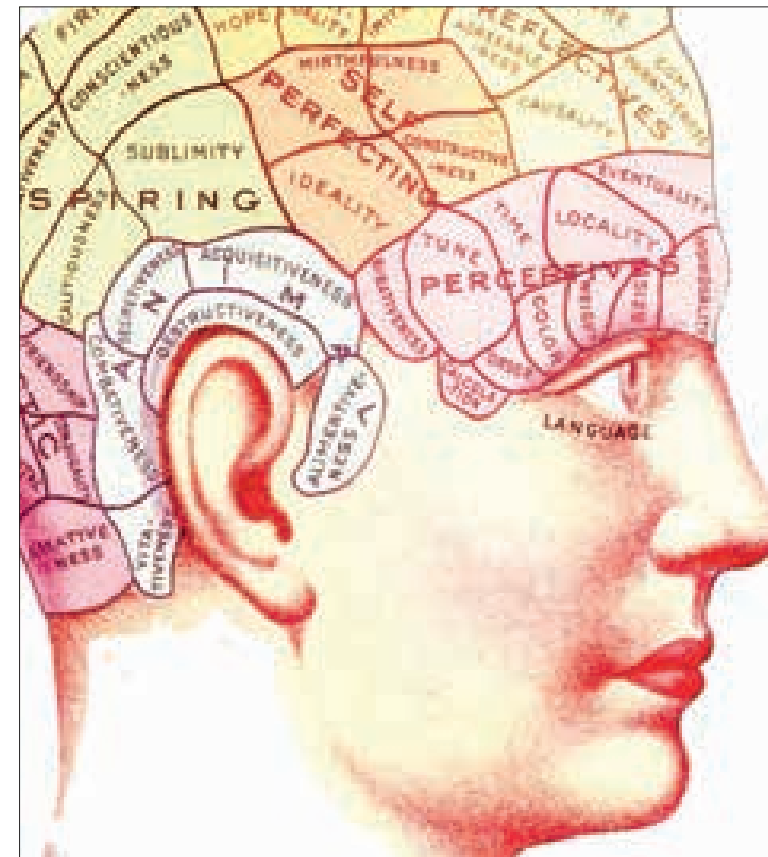
Noting domestic investment for TB programmes has been a perennial challenge across the continent, he urged for mobilizing additional resources to deal with TB in children and adolescents particularly following the setbacks due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Francis Chisaka Kasolo, director of WHO liaison office at the AU and United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, expressed concern over slow progress in addressing childhood TB in Africa, with 60 per cent of children (0-14 years) with TB not diagnosed.

Source : Xinhua

ENGLISH PROBLEM WORDS (2)

Better English (Series II)

By U Khin Maung (A retired diplomat)



"English problems words" could refer to words or phrases in the English language that pose difficulties for learners or speakers due to various reasons such as pronunciation, spelling, meaning, or usage. ILLUSTRATION: VISUAL PURPOSE IMAGE/PIXABAY

In my first article on this topic, I mentioned that this article is very delicate, difficult, dedicated and long. I intend to explain my ordinary, simple, basic and layman's views. As intended, this is my second humble and honest attempt in alphabetical order.

A (continued)

Acquaintance and friend

An acquaintance of my father once met Stalin.

The noun acquaintance means a person known slightly. She has been a friend of my mother since her school days.

The noun friend means a person known well.

Acute and chronic

I have an acute pain in my left ear.

The adjective acute means sharp or short duration.

I have a chronic pain in my left ear.

The adjective chronic means of long duration.

In a time sense, the two adjectives are opposites.

AD and BC

The battle of Hastings took place in the year AD 1066.

AD means anno Domini (Latin for in the year of our lord).

The abbreviation should be

placed before the date.

The battle of Zama took place in the year 202 BC.

BC means before Christ. The abbreviation should be placed after the date.

Adapt and adopt

Can you adapt the skirt length

to follow this year's fashion?

Adapt means to modify. The couple decided to adopt an orphan child.

Adopt means to choose as one's own.

Adapter and adaptor

She is a good adapter of old

ideas.

Adapter, with "e", means a person who modifies something. You will need to use an electrical adaptor.

Adaptor, with "o", means a tool that modifies something.

Addenda and addendum

The report has three addenda.

Addenda means things to be added. It is plural.

The addendum is missing from this report.

Addendum is the singular form of addenda.

Admit and admit of

He refused to admit his crime.

Admit means to confess or acknowledge.

The letters from the bank manager admit of two possibilities regarding your overdraft.

Admit of means allow room for.

Admittance and admission

No admittance without a ticket.

The noun admittance means right to enter.

Admission to the concert is US\$5.

The noun admission means

a charge for admittance.

Adverse and averse

My request for a bank loan met with an adverse reaction from the manager.

The adjective adverse, with "d", implies opposition.

My bank manager is not averse to lending money if you have plenty.

The adjective averse, without "d", implies unwillingness rather than opposition.

Advice and advise

I will give you one piece of advice: never drink if you intend to drive.

Advice, ending "ce", is a noun meaning suggestion.

We wish to advise you that...

Advise, ending "se", is a verb derived from advice.

Affect and effect

The hot weather started to affect the runners.

The verb affect means to cause a change in or to influence.

The effect of the hot weather was a drought.

The noun effect means consequence.

Affection and affection

She has a great affection for

her dog.

The noun affection means love.

She dressed with too much affectation for my liking.

The noun affectation means conscious display.

Affectation gives us the adjective affected, meaning full of affectation as in:

an affected way of speaking.

Afflict and inflict

The disease can afflict the hearing of elderly people.

The verb afflict, beginning "off", means trouble or pain.

Even though he smiles all the time, he seems to be the type of person who would inflict

great pain on his enemies.

The verb inflict, beginning "in", means to impose. It has a sense of punishment.

Aggravate and irritate

That new medicine seems to aggravate his illness.

Aggravate means to make something already bad worse.

Smoking can irritate the lungs.

Irritate means to inflame or to annoy.

Reference:
English Problem Words, by
George Jerking, London.

NATIONAL

Amarapura ancient city, Konbaung-era architecture maintained annually

AMARAPURA ancient city and architectural works from the Konbaung era are repaired and maintained annually to facilitate study at the same location, according to U Aye Lwin, Assistance Director of the Department of Archaeology and National Museum.

“The Mandalay Region Archaeology and National Museum Department has been conducting small-scale maintenance annually on the ancient cultural heritage of Konbaung-era architectural buildings. A compilation of historical information and buildings associated with the former capital of Amarapura has been gathered and documented to assist in identifying new destinations for the development of the tourism



Nan Myint Tower.

sector in the area,” U Aye Lwin explained.

Bodaw (King Badon) founded and ruled the first royal city in Amarapura Township, Man-

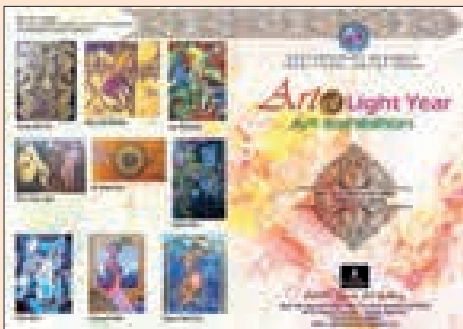
dalay Region, in 1144 ME. The cultural heritage of Amarapura Palace, where seven dynasties were enthroned, can be observed on Tamatan Street, adjacent to

the Yangon-Mandalay Highway. There, people will be able to learn about an indigo factory with six brick tanks, 20 feet in diameter and 40 feet in depth, and an old

furnace, which was the first built by Prince Kanaung in Myanmar.

Near the factory, there is the Nan Myint Tower; approximately six feet long, 40 feet wide, and 45 feet high, believed to have been constructed during the reign of Bodaw (King Badon). Additionally, there is the ancient treasury building, measuring 50 feet in length, 40 feet in width, and 35 feet in height.

Visitors can explore and learn about the cultural treasures of the Tombs of Kings Bodaw (King Badon), King Ba Gyi Daw, King Thayawady, and U Paw Oo Pagoda, as well as the Boe Boe Aung Pagoda, Shwe Sanka Myodaunt Pagoda, and Myapakhet Pagoda around the ancient city. — ASH/KZL



Catalogue of “Art of Light Year” exhibition.



Art of Light Year Exhibition to be held

THE “Art of Light Year” exhibition conducted by the Contemporary Myanmar Traditional Artistic Group will be held at the Artistic Space Art Gallery in Botahtaung Township, Yangon Region.

“It will be on display from 10 am to 5 pm between 23 and 26 March. It is planned that visitors will be able to visit the gallery in person or online

and buy the paintings. Colourful paintings of 29 artists will be displayed,” said Shan Lay, an artist who will be participating in the art exhibition.

The exhibition will showcase and sell a total of 150 beautiful paintings with various themes of the artists from the Contemporary Myanmar Traditional Artistic Group. — ASH/MKKS

Myanmar, S Korea vow to boost forestry development efforts



Attendees at the International Day of Forests 2024.

MYANMAR and South Korea agreed to enhance cooperation in the development of the forestry sector, according to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Myanmar Ambassador to South Korea U Thant Sin said so during his remark at the International Day of Forests 2024 event held at the National Institute of Forest Science in Seoul on 21 March.

He recognized the collab-

oration between the Korean Forest Service and the Asian Forest Cooperation Organization (AFoCO) for the conservation of Korean forests. The ambassador reaffirmed Myanmar’s commitment to forestry development through a bilateral initiative, the Regional Education and Training Centre under the AFoCO.

As a member of AFoCO, Myanmar pledged to follow the

UN and AFoCO’s directives for the development of the forestry sector.

The International Day of Forests 2024 saw the attendance of ambassadors from AFoCO member countries as well as many distinguished guests, including Korea Forest Service Minister Mr Nam Sung-hyun and Deputy Minister Ms Kim Hyo-Eun, who delivered their opening remarks. — ASH/NT

NATIONAL

Yangon Govt allows Myanmar citizen investments in hotels and industrial sectors

ACCORDING to secretary of Yangon Region Government Office U Nyi Nyi Min, the Yangon Region government has allowed ten new investments of Myanmar citizen businesspersons in hotel services and industrial product manufacturing sectors in 2024.

U Nyi Nyi Min said, "During the Yangon Region Investment Committee meeting 3/2024 held on 22 March, we have approved four projects of full Myanmar citizen investments, four projects of full foreign investments, and two joint venture projects in hotel services and industrial product manufacturing sectors."

Total investment values of those ten new investments amounted to US\$9.046 million and K8,036.659 million and it will create 2,843 job opportunities for local people.

The report states that in the meeting 3/2024 of Investment Committee, varieties of matters proposed by the companies were also discussed. In addition, the meeting discussed expanding of investment amount of the ongoing investment projects and increasing the labour forces.

Yangon Region Investment Committee reportedly allows new investments of Myanmar citizens and foreigners every month in order to create new job opportunities. — ASH/ TMT



Flocks of foreign visitors seen in destinations of Myanmar.

Myanmar welcomes 40,000+ foreign visitors in two months

IN January and February 2024, Myanmar welcomed over 40,000 foreign travellers, according to the Yangon Region Directorate of Hotels and Tourism.

This indicates an increase of 4,000 visitors compared to the same period last year, with Thailand leading the list of visitor origins.

The country boasts 14 destinations, along

with 2,000 hotels, motels, and guesthouses, as well as 500 tour companies and 2,000 licensed tour guides.

U Nanda Aung, director of the directorate, said, "Most visitors were from Thailand, China, and Viet Nam. The most visited destinations include Yangon, Bago, Kyauktiyo, Bagan, NyaungU, Mandalay, and the beaches." — ASH/NT



Ngapali beach sees moderate crowds this year

A beautiful scene on Ngapali beach.

NGAPALI beach in Rakhine State that used to be overcrowded near Thingyan is now seeing only a considerable number of visitors despite some local and foreign travellers, according to locals and tour operators.

Ngapali beach was usually congested with visitors from all around the country from March before Thingyan and during the summer holidays, but there were only a few this March.

"Because the only way to get to Ngapali is by air, visitor arrival is low. Some come by plane, but the plane can take only a few compared to the capacity of the rooms in Ngapali. Travelling in Rakhine is difficult. Some hotels are organizing package tours, such as a 2-night trips including airfare.

Foreigners arriving in Myanmar also travel to Ngapali, but the number is small. It also

depends on the availability of air seats due to air restrictions. Visitor arrival is small because of some difficulties," said Myanmar Tourism Entrepreneurs Association chair U Naung Naung Han.

With fewer visitors, the income of local food vendors and restaurants has dropped.

"This time last year after matriculation exam, we saw many beachgoers. Some came in Thingyan and some in March.

"Ngapali beach in Thingyan used to be very crowded. Local food vendors and restaurants made a lot of money from many shoppers. This year, visitor arrival is low," said local.

Many domestic travellers go to beaches like Chaungtha and Ngwehsaung, and some have already booked for Thingyan holidays.

— MT/ZN

Construction-used iron shortage leads to higher price

AS construction-used iron supply has been low, price has been good and it is expected the sale will be active in next months, according to construction materials shops. Before the monsoon, the sale of construction-used hollow irons is expected to be bigger and currently, prices have risen due to supply shortage.

"At present, hollow iron prices have climbed up as the supply has been low. The supply has been short in the market. Even manufacturing companies have opened higher prices so we have to resell it correspondingly. The sale has been good. In April, May and June, building repairs such as repair roofs are usually done before monsoon. And in the

monsoon, marble flooring and interior polishing are made. Iron sale is usually good this period only. The sale is expected to increase more in about next two months, and will decline back slightly in the monsoon. The iron sale is usually slow in monsoon," said an official from a hollow iron wholesale shop in Dagon Myothit (South) Township. The supply of irons has currently been short but they have continued operating their business depending on the situation.

"I'm not sure about big construction projects but small construction projects have been operating regularly and they haven't stopped," a businessman told GNLm. — Thit Taw/ZS



Cast iron used in construction.

ECONOMY WORLD

Marco Polo continues to be an inspiration in China, Italy 700 years after passing

SEVEN hundred years after his death, legendary Italian traveler Marco Polo remains an inspiration for those passionate about the cultures of China and Italy, and a symbol of the ties between the two countries.

A Chinese-language book that brings together the two classics about Marco Polo — “The Travels of Marco Polo” and “Invisible Cities” — was released this week in Beijing to commemorate the 700th anniversary of his death in 2024.

The book selects parts of Marco Polo’s travelogues in China and juxtaposes them with imaginative stories told by him in “Invisible Cities,” a novel by Italian writer Italo Calvino. This unique writing style aims to kindle Chinese readers’ interest in classic Italian works.

Italian Ambassador to China Massimo Ambrosetti believes that the significance of the book

extends far beyond the promotion of Italian literature.

“Marco Polo and his works have built a bridge for cultural exchange between Italy and China, and are still inspiring people’s imagination,” Ambrosetti said.

Federico Roberto Antonelli, cultural counselor of the Italian Embassy in China, noted that the book has given new life to the image of Marco Polo.

“For centuries, Marco Polo has made outstanding contributions to the historical and cultural exchanges between the two ancient civilizations of Italy and China,” said the cultural counselor. “Whether in reality or in imagination, Marco Polo’s stories still inspire us to travel today.” Lu Zhizhou, deputy chief editor of Yilin Press, said in the writing of Marco Polo, China’s prosperity and civilization were vividly presented to Europeans. — Xinhua

This innovative approach intertwines Polo’s accounts of China with Calvino’s imaginative tales, aiming to ignite Chinese readers’ interest in classic Italian literature.



This photo taken with a mobile phone shows Italian Ambassador to China Massimo Ambrosetti speaking during an event commemorating the 700th anniversary of Marco Polo’s death at the Italian Embassy to China in Beijing, capital of China, 20 March 2024. **PHOTO: LUO XIN/XINHUA**

Hit by worker shortage, German city gets students to drive trams

Public transport operators, like Nuremberg’s VAG, face a severe manpower shortage and are exploring new avenues to recruit workers.



Benedikt Hanne is one of five student recruits of the Nuremberg public transport service. **PHOTO: AFP**

SEATED before the tram’s control panel, Benedikt Hanne, 24, deftly steered the red and white wagons, hours before heading to Nuremberg university to study for a social work degree.

As an apprentice, Hanne was watched closely by a trainer, and the tram he drove had no

passengers.

But if all goes well, he will soon become a fully-fledged tram driver moving people across Nuremberg in the evenings or at weekends, when he does not have classes to attend.

Squeezed by a serious manpower shortage, public trans-

port operators like Nuremberg’s city service VAG have had to find new sources to expand their pool of workers.

The VAG needs to recruit 160 new drivers annually to run its metro, trams and buses.

For Harald Ruben, who heads the company’s recruitment and training team, it was clear that “we won’t reach this target unless we explore all possible possibilities”.

The transport company put out an advert targeted at university students, offering a part-time job to drive trams outside school hours.

To qualify, they need a regular driver’s licence, be above 21 years of age, and be “reliable and suitable for driving and shift work”. — AFP

Sprinklers and drip irrigation help Iraqis beat drought

AFTER four years of drought, Iraqi farmer Mohammed Sami was about to abandon his father’s parched land, but then a water-saving irrigation system revived his crops and his hopes.

He is among hundreds of farmers in the country battered by heatwaves, scarce rain and depleted rivers to benefit from new water management systems brought by the UN World Food

Programme.

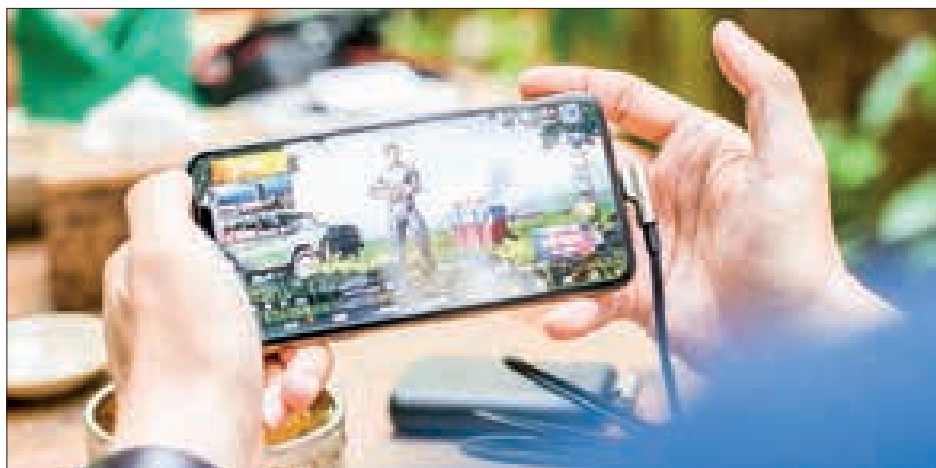
The systems use automated sprinklers and drip irrigation to ensure scarce water is used in the most efficient way and is not lost as run-off or evaporated under the blazing sun. “Since 2019, due to the water scarcity, we have been unable to farm the land,” said 38-year-old Sami in his village of Al-Azrakiya in the central province of Anbar. — AFP



A water-saving irrigation system revived Iraqi farmer Mohammed Sami’s crops — and hopes. **PHOTO: AFP**

China's gaming market sees 15.12% revenue growth in Feb

The domestic mobile gaming sector showed significant growth, with sales revenue reaching 18.26 billion yuan, a remarkable increase of 17.88 per cent year on year.



The actual sales revenue of domestic mobile gaming market reached 18.26 billion yuan, representing a remarkable surge of 17.88 per cent compared with the same period last year. PHOTO: UNSPLASH

CHINA'S gaming market generated 24.88 billion yuan (3.5 billion US dollars) in revenue last month, up 15.12 per cent

year on year, data from an industry report showed. The figure increased 2.17 per cent from that in January, according to

the report released by research agency CNG. The actual sales revenue of domestic mobile gaming market reached

18.26 billion yuan, representing a remarkable surge of 17.88 per cent compared with the same period last year, the re-

port noted. During the period, China's domestically developed games have raked in 20.31 billion yuan

in sales revenue, indicating a 12.87 per cent year on year increase, according to the report. — Xinhua

Driver shortages a concern for Amao premium strawberry growers

WHEN an overtime cap hits Japan's logistics industry next month, exacerbating an existing shortage of drivers, producers of the premium Amao strawberry will be among those counting the potential cost.

Grown in the southwestern prefecture of Fukuoka, the large, round strawberry is known

for its bright red color and sweet yet slightly tart flavor. About 70 per cent of the crop is currently shipped by truck to areas around Tokyo and Osaka and sold just a few days after being picked.

"My worry is that we may lose out to other areas if our strawberries become less fresh and shipping fees increase,"



Premium "Amao" Japanese strawberries, grown in Fukuoka Prefecture, southwestern Japan, are shown in photo taken on 8 March 2024. PHOTO: KYODO

said Motoki Uehara, who runs a strawberry farm in Oki, Fukuoka. Local agricultural cooperatives are looking at ferry shipping as an alternative to truck delivery as Japan's logis-

tics industry prepares for its so-called 2024 problem when the new limit on the number of overtime hours drivers of trucks, taxis and buses can work takes effect in April. — Kyodo

Apple, Google and Meta set to face probes under new law: source

APPLE, Google and Meta are set to face the EU's wrath next week as Brussels prepares to hit the tech giants with probes into potential violations of a landmark law, sources close to the matter said Friday.

The European Commission, the EU's powerful antitrust regulator, has been in talks in the past months with the titans about complying with the Digital Markets Act

(DMA), which came into force in early March. The DMA demands online platforms open up digital markets to greater competition — and the commission has vowed its impact would be far-reaching.

"Apple has done more with the DMA in 10 days than in 10 years with antitrust," the EU's internal market commissioner, Thierry Breton, told CNN Thursday. — AFP

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Distribution of pesticide registered by Shandong Weifang Rainbow Chemical Co., Ltd is changing from TAW WIN DAR Co., Ltd to RAINBOW AGROSCIENCES CO., LTD. Any objection regarding to this transfer can notify at Co-Secretary, Pesticide Registration Board, Plant Protection Division, West Gyogone, Insein within 2 weeks.

No.	Name	Active Ingredient	Registration Type and No.
1.	Ricesaver 180 EC	Cyhalofop-butyl 180 g/l EC	Provisional 2023-6093
2.	Kobermec 20 EC	Emamectin benzoate 20g/l EC	Provisional 2023-6097
3.	Fesam 250 SL	Fomesafen 250g/l SL	Provisional 2022-6004
4.	Felomina 75 EC	Fenoxaprop-P-ethyl 75g/l EC	Provisional 2023-6094
5.	Imatop 100 SL	Imazethapyr 100g/l SL	Provisional 2023-6095
6.	Eaglefop 100 EC	Quizalofop-P-ethyl 10% EC	Provisional 2023-6096
7.	Hexacore 50 SC	Hexaconazole 50g/l SC	Provisional 2022-5977

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CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V HANSA HARBURG VOY.NO. (410W)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V HANSA HARBURG VOY.NO. (410W)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **25-3-2024** 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.

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ROLLING UPDATES

WORLD

China-Indonesia joint scientific expedition sets Indonesia's highest diving record

The expedition aims to contribute to the development of a blue ocean economy and sustainable growth while nurturing scientific talent in Indonesia.

THE joint scientific expedition conducted by Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS) and Indonesia's National Research and Innovation Agency successfully dived 7,178 metres deep into the Java Trench in the Indian Ocean, setting the deepest dive record for Indonesia, the expedition team has said.

According to the team on Saturday, this joint expedition was successfully conducted from 23 February to 23 March, using the manned deep-sea submersible "Fendouzhe" of the CAS Institute of Deep-sea Science and Engineering.

At the welcome ceremony for the joint expedition held Friday, Chinese Ambassador to Indonesia Lu Kang said China and Indonesia have been deepening research collaboration on marine science in recent years.

"I hope scientists from the two countries will achieve more high-quality research achievements in the future, contributing more to the creation of a blue ocean economy and sustainable development."



This photo taken on 22 March 2024 shows manned deep-sea submersible "Fendouzhe" on Tan Suo Yi Hao (Discovery One) at the Tanjung Priok Port in Jakarta, Indonesia. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

Luhut Binsar Pandjaitan, Indonesia's coordinating minister for maritime affairs and investment, said at the ceremony that this joint expedition has opened a new chapter for the two coun-

tries to strengthen maritime cooperation. He hopes that the two countries will further expand scientific cooperation and cultivate more scientists and engineers for Indonesia. — Xinhua



Labour leader Keir Starmer, likely the UK's next prime minister, with his finance spokeswoman Rachel Reeves. **PHOTO: AFP**

UK Labour party turns to Thatcher in courtship of right

IN a surprising twist of political strategy, the UK's Labour Party, traditionally aligned with the left, is now invoking the legacy of Margaret Thatcher as it seeks to broaden its appeal ahead of this year's pivotal election.

Margaret Thatcher remains despised by many on the left of British politics, but the main Labour opposition seems comfortable citing her as it woos the right before this year's election.

Labour leader Keir Starmer and senior colleagues have recently referenced the Conservative icon, highlighting the party's shift to the centre since Starmer succeeded left-winger Jeremy Corbyn.

In December, Starmer described Thatcher as effecting "meaningful change" in the UK during her controversial 1979-1990 premiership while foreign affairs spokesman David Lammy this week called her "a visionary leader".

Such comments would have been unthinkable under Corbyn.

He also cited Thatcher in the 2019 general election but said her government "waged a war against working class communities in the 1980s" and warned that "Boris Johnson's Tories are more of the same."

Corbyn lost by a landslide to Johnson and then quit as Labour leader.

Citing Thatcher is "a good way to signal that you are a completely changed party," Sophie Stowers, a British politics researcher at the UK in a Changing Europe think-tank, told AFP.

The approach is also reminiscent of former prime minister Tony Blair's "New Labour" party of the 1990s and 2000s which embraced some Thatcherite policies.

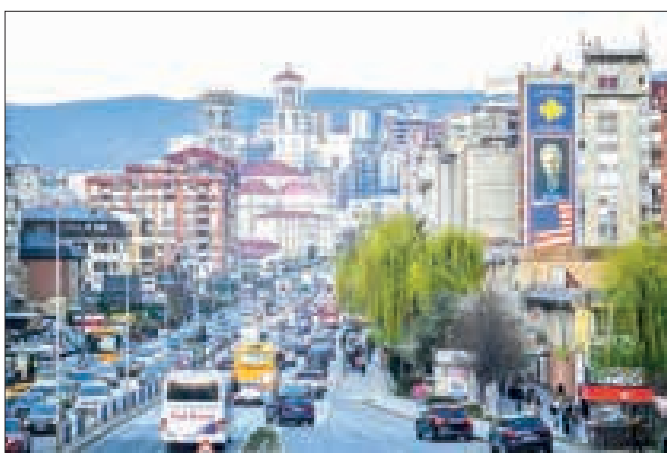
His successor Gordon Brown even welcomed her to Downing Street. — AFP

Serbians angry at Trump family deal for site of NATO bombing

A bombed-out building in Belgrade, which has stood as a national symbol of the 1999 NATO strikes on Serbia, might soon become a luxury hotel financed by Donald Trump's son-in-law — much to the anger of locals.

Jared Kushner, who also served as an adviser to his father-in-law during his US presidency, confirmed in mid-March his plans to invest in luxury real estate in Serbia, including the old site of the Yugoslav army headquarters.

Serbian opposition member of parliament Aleksandar Jovanovic Cuta and an investigation by the New York Times revealed that the Serbian government was going to transfer the building and the surrounding land to a company owned by Kushner.



This photograph taken on 22 March 2024 shows a big banner depicting a portrait of former US president Bill Clinton in Pristina. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

Leaked plans indicated the building will be replaced by three large glass towers a few metres from the Serbian defence and foreign ministries.

The 99-year lease was given to Kushner's company

free of charge, the New York Times said.

The sale of the building is a sensitive issue for Serbians as it has become an emblem of the 1999 US-led NATO aerial bombing campaign that put an end to the

war in Kosovo.

"Leaving it like this for another 200 years isn't really a solution," retired journalist Srdja Nikolic said.

"But I am against the idea of giving it as a gift to anyone — particularly to those who initiated what happened."

Symbol of 'struggle'

The bombing began on 24 March, 1999, without the approval of the UN Security Council. It aimed to end Serbian leader Slobodan Milosevic's bloody crackdown on ethnic Albanian separatists in Kosovo.

It ended in June that year with the withdrawal of Serbian forces from Kosovo, putting an end to the conflict that killed more than 13,000 people. — AFP

SPORTS

Canada, Costa Rica earn Copa America spots

CANADA and Costa Rica secured berths at this year's Copa America in the United States by winning their respective CONCACAF play-offs on Saturday.

Canada progressed with a 2-0 victory over Trinidad and Tobago, before Costa Rica recovered from a goal down to overcome Honduras 3-1. Both games were played at the Toyota Stadium in Frisco, Texas.

Cyle Larin and Jacob Shaffelburg scored for Canada as Mauro Biello's men earned a spot in the Copa America's Group A alongside Argentina, Peru and Chile. "I'm super-happy for all our fans, that's first and foremost," Biello told reporters. "What this means to all our fans is huge. To be able to be in a Copa America, to play against the world champions. This is what all the soccer fans, the sports fans in this country want to see." — Xinhua

Selected youth men's teams play tune-up matches



Players from Myanmar U-19 men's team and Yangon United FC seen in tune-up match. PHOTO: MFF

MYANMAR selected youth men's team taking training at the camps for participating in the international tournaments held tune-up matches.

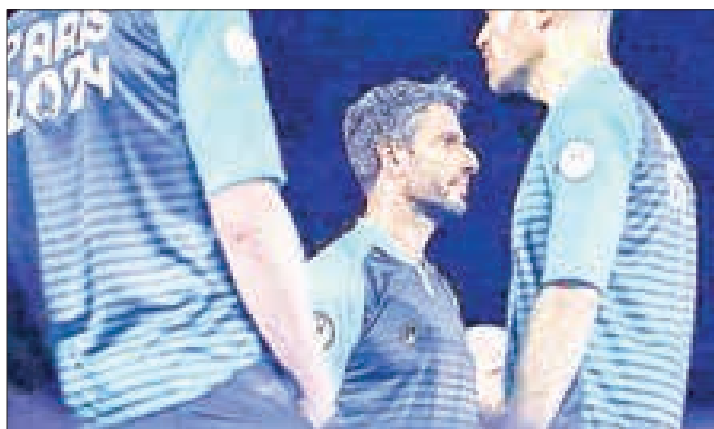
The Myanmar U-19 men's team lost to the MNL club Yangon United 1-2 at the tune-up match in YUSC stadium on 23 March. It was the second tune-up match after facing Hanthawady United FC in recent day.

Despite winning over Hanthawady United with a 2-1 result, the Myanmar U-19 team was defeated by Yangon United. Aung Min Khant scored the first goal for Yangon United at the 40th minute and Nyi Nyi Aung at the 55th minute. Tun Naing Soe scored an equalizer for Myanmar U-19 team at the 81st minute. Myanmar U-19 team is making preparations for taking part in the ASEAN U-19 Football Tournament and the Asian Cup U-20 qualifiers. Currently, the team is under control of Head Coach U Aung Naing.

Myanmar U-16 men's team also played training matches with the Myanmar national women's team on 22 and 23 March. These matches aimed to assess skills and talents of players from both teams. Myanmar U-16 men's team smashed the Myanmar national women's team 3-1 in the first match and trounced 6-0 in the second match.

Myanmar U-16 men's team is handled by Japanese Head Coach Mitami, and the team played trial matches to select preliminary players. — Ko Nyi Lay/TTA

Paris 2024 unveils volunteer uniforms



President of the Paris 2024 Olympic Games Organizing Committee Tony Estanguet © wearing the Paris 2024 volunteer's outfit attends the Games' volunteers convention held at the Paris La Defense Arena in Nanterre, France, 23 March 2024. PHOTO: GAO JING/XINHUA

THE uniforms for the volunteers of the Paris 2024 Olympic and Paralympic Games were officially unveiled on Saturday, while the organizers also announced that 20 per cent of the

approximately 45,000 volunteers hail from overseas, representing around 150 countries and regions.

The uniforms made their appearances at the Volunteer

Convention for the Paris Olympics, held at the Paris La Defense Arena, which will host swimming and water polo final events during the Olympics and para swimming competition during the Paralympics. About 20,000 volunteers for both the Olympic and Paralympic Games attended the event, which marked the first offline activity of the Paris Olympic volunteer programme.

The Paris 2024 Organizing Committee revealed they have received over 300,000 volunteer applications. Of the 45,000 selected volunteers, there is an equal gender split, with more than five per cent being persons with disabilities and 20 per cent from abroad. — Xinhua

Top Americans tumble out at Miami Open, Sinner sails through

TAYLOR Fritz was upset by Brazilian qualifier Thiago Seyboth Wild in straight sets at the Miami Open on Saturday as top ranked US men tumbled out of the tournament.

Three of the top four ranked American players were eliminated during Saturday's opening session with Francis Tiafoe also knocked out and Tommy Paul retiring hurt. Wearing the bright yellow of Brazil, Seyboth Wild, ranked 76th in the world and cheered on by loud support from his compatriots on stadium court, produced some impressive winners and some flamboyant shots on his way to a 6-3, 6-4 victory over 12th-seeded Fritz.

"I played a really solid match today, I barely missed,"

said Seyboth Wild after his win.

"It was exactly the plan with my coach before the match. I held up pretty well on the backhand and used my forehand to win the match," he added.

Fritz's early departure came shortly after Tiafoe went out to another lower-ranked player in Australian Christopher O'Connell. O'Connell, battled to a 7-5, 7-6 (7/5) win over the 21st-seeded Tiafoe after play began following a three-hour rain delay. Paul had to retire with an ankle injury in his match against fellow American, wild card Martin Damm. Paul had won the first set 6-4 and was 2-1 down in the second when he abandoned.

— AFP

China-Indonesia joint scientific expedition sets Indonesia's highest diving record

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WORLD

USING VR TECHNOLOGY

Paris museum takes visitors back 150 years to Impressionism's birth

THE Orsay Museum in Paris is marking 150 years of Impressionism from Tuesday with an unprecedented re-assembling of the masterpieces that launched the movement, and a virtual reality experience that takes visitors back in time.

Using VR technology, visitors to "Paris 1874: Inventing Impressionism" can take a plunge into the streets, salons and beauty spots that marked a revolution in art.

Through VR helmets, they can walk alongside the likes of Claude Monet, Edgar Degas and Paul Cezanne on 15 April 1874, when, tired of being rejected by the conservative gatekeepers of the official art Salon, these rebellious young painters put on their own independent show, later seen as the birth of Impressionism.

The Orsay has brought together 160 paintings from that year, including dozens of masterpieces from that show, including the blood-red sun of Monet's "Impression, Sunrise", credited with giving the movement its name, and his "Boulevard des Capucines" where the exhibition took place. — AFP



A worker is seen at a workshop of a refrigeration equipment company in Jinzhou City, north China's Hebei Province, 19 September 2023. **PHOTO: PIX FOR VISUAL PURPOSE/ YANG SHIYAO/XINHUA/FILE**

Chinese premier delivers keynote speech at China Development Forum 2024

Li emphasized China's robust economic resilience, potential, and vitality, prioritizing market respect and enterprise services in economic planning.

CHINESE Premier Li Qiang attended the opening ceremony of the China Development Forum 2024 on Sunday in Beijing, and delivered a keynote speech.

The China Development Forum 2024 is scheduled for 24 March and 25 March. The theme of this year's forum is "The Continuous Development of China."

This theme reflects the attention and expectations of all sectors for the long-term, steady and high-quality development of the Chinese economy, Li said.

Noting that China successfully accomplished its main targets and tasks for economic and social development in

2023, Li also said the Chinese economy has strong resilience, great potential and vitality, while the fundamentals of its long-term sound growth remain unchanged.

The Chinese government has always regarded respect for the market and services for enterprises as an important focus in planning economic work, and has always been an advocate and a good companion for the development of enterprises, said the premier.

Since last year, the Chinese government has further improved and optimized services and established a

regular communication mechanism with enterprises, he said.

China will take practical and effective actions to promote high-quality development and inject more certainty and positive energy into the recovery and stable development of the world economy, said Li.

The premier pledged efforts to intensify macro-policy adjustments, expand domestic demand, promote a new type of people-centered urbanization, and advance large-scale equipment renewal and trade-ins of durable consumer goods. — Xinhua

Cambodia celebrates 2nd National Day of Science, Technology and Innovation



Workers slice ripe mangoes at the Zhong Bao (Cambodia) Food Science & Technology Co., Ltd. in Kampong Speu province, Cambodia on 7 March 2023. **PHOTO: ILLUSTRATIVE IMAGE /VAN POV/XINHUA**

Prime Minister Hun Manet emphasized the importance of Science, Technology, and Innovation (STI) as the foundation for developing the digital economy and society.

CAMBODIA on Sunday marked the second National Day of Science, Technology and Innovation (STI), aiming at taking maximum advantage of these sectors for socioeconomic development.

Speaking at the event, Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Manet said STI sectors are the key foundation for the development of the digital economy and society.

"This event will inspire people to love science, technology and innovation," he said. "STI sectors play a crucial role in supporting the government's policies towards achieving Cambodia's visions of becoming an upper-middle-income country by 2030

and a high-income nation by 2050."

Regarding the free trade agreements (FTAs) that Cambodia has with China, South Korea, and the United Arab Emirates, as well as the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), the prime minister said the development of STI would help the kingdom reap the maximum benefits from these FTAs, he added. Under the theme of "Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) Go STI," the event, organized by the Ministry of Industry, Science, Technology and Innovation, was held at the Diamond Island Convention and Exhibition Center in Phnom Penh. — Xinhua