



SAC Member Chief of General Staff (Army, Navy and Air) pays tributes to martyrs marking 77th Anniversary of Martyrs' Day

Member of the State Administration Council Chief of the General Staff (Army, Navy and Air) General Maung Maung Aye attended the ceremony to mark the 77th Anniversary of Martyrs' Day at the Martyrs' Mausoleum in Bahan Township of Yangon yesterday morning.

Also present at the ceremony were SAC Members Mahn Nyein Maung and Dr Hmu Thang, Chief Justice of the Union U Thar Htay, Chairman of the Leading Committee on Organizing the 77th Anniversary of Martyrs' Day Union Minister for Religious Affairs and Culture U Tin Oo Lwin, Union Ministers U Maung Maung Ohn, U Myint Naung and Dr Thet Khaing Win, Organizing Committee Chairman Yangon Region Chief Minister U Soe Thein, senior Tatmadaw officers from the Office of the Commander-in-Chief, the commander of the Yangon Command, deputy ministers, regional ministers, officials, families of martyr leaders and guests.

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State Administration Council Member Chief of the General Staff (Army, Navy and Air) General Maung Maung Aye and attendees pay tributes to martyr leaders in the commemoration of the 77th Anniversary of Martyrs' Day yesterday in Yangon.

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A heartfelt journey of
friendship and understanding

By Ko Ko
(Sethmu Tekkatho)

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More visitors throng to Bogyoke Aung San Museum on Martyrs' Day

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Govt employees in Thailand seek removal from blocklists at Myanmar Embassy

NATIONAL

Merits shared for martyr leaders in Nay Pyi Taw



The merit-sharing ceremony to mark the 77th Anniversary of Martyrs' Day in progress yesterday.

ON the 77th Anniversary of Martyrs' Day, the ceremony of giving merits to great martyrs who sacrificed their lives for the nation was held yesterday morning at the Zabuthiri Hall of the Nay Pyi Taw Council office in Nay Pyi Taw Union Territory.

Monks led by Presiding Sayadaw of Mingala Zeyon Pali Tekkatho Monastery Aggamaha Pandita Aggamaha Saddhammajotikadhaja Bhaddanta Vimala Buddhi and Nay Pyi Taw Sangha Nayaka Committee Chairman Presiding Sayadaw of Thukha Vihara Thayetgone Monastery Dr Bhaddanta Munikumara, Nay Pyi Taw Council Chairman U Than Tun Oo, Commander of

Nay Pyi Taw Command Maj-Gen Soe Min and relevant officials attended the event.

All those present on the occasion first took Five Precepts from Presiding Sayadaw of Mingala Zeyon Pali Tekkatho Monastery, and they donated offerings to Sayadaw and monks.

They then listened to sermons delivered by Nay Pyi Taw Sangha Nayaka Committee Chairman Presiding Sayadaw of Thukha Vihara Thayetgone Monastery and shared merits.

They took a one-minute silence marking sorrow for the fallen heroes and offered a day meal to Sayadaws. — MNA/KTZH

VISITORS, including monks, people and students, visited the Bogyoke Aung San Museum located in Bahan township, Yangon, on the 77th Martyrs' Day that falls on 19 July 2024.

The Bogyoke Aung San Museum was open as a special show on 77th Martyrs' Day from 7 am to 5 pm. At the Digital Exhibition, visitors were crowded as they could get prizes for answering 25 questions related to Bogyoke Aung San. The museum is open to the public daily from 9:30 am to 4:30 pm daily except Mondays and public holidays.

Daw Thi Thi Thaug, deputy director of the National Museum (Yangon), said, "On 77th Martyrs' Day, it included regular and digital exhibitions. The normal exhibition is just the displays at the museum. The digital exhibition provides 3D photographs, and visitors can watch speeches and materials displayed at the museum and have an outside view of the mu-

More visitors throng to Bogyoke Aung San Museum on Martyrs' Day



Visitors explore the displays at the Bogyoke Aung San Museum (above and left) yesterday.



seum. We placed screen boards so that visitors could search for speeches and the history of Bogyoke on their own. We also conduct quizzes regarding Bogyoke and museum history and award those who give correct answers. We exhibited Bogyoke's clothes, which contained A S (initials of his name) and leather luggage,

in Bogyoke's bedroom. This year, we provided technical and visitors might be satisfied with it. We open the museum so that visitors can remember a historic person and stimulate their patriotism. Bogyoke is good at reading, and he read 239 books in English, so he communicated with the international and

fought for independence. The young people should consider the behaviours of the leader and emulate him".

The bed, the dressing table, the wooden cupboard, and the General's appliances exist in the bedroom. The General and his spouse are in the upper storey of the museum. Next to the bedhead, the picture of the Dekkhina Thakha Buddha Image and the shrine where the General and his family worshipped are displayed. The wall of the bedroom of the General is poised with a portrait picture of the General, a picture of him and his wife, and his clothes and luggage. Three bedsteads, a wardrobe, and a dressing table are exhibited in the children's bedroom.

In the special meeting room next to the children's bedroom, a set of settees and excerpts from the speeches by the General are displayed. When people go downstairs from the corridor near the back door of the children's bedroom, they can see the statute of the General growing crops in the yard. The 3D photographic and digital exhibition can be seen near the entrance to the museum, and the people participate in the quiz session.

The museum was more crowded with visitors on the 77th Martyrs' Day than in previous years for unique displays. — MNA/KTZH

NATIONAL

SAC Member Chief of General Staff (Army, Navy and Air) pays tributes to martyrs marking 77th Anniversary of Martyrs' Day

FROM PAGE 1

The General cordially greeted families of martyr leaders.

The General, together with SAC Members Mahn Nyein Maung and Dr Hmu Thang, Chief Justice of the Union U Thar Htay and Chairman of the Leading Committee Union Minister U Tin Oo Lwin, laid the wreath of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar at the Mausoleum in memory of General Aung San and martyr leaders to pay tributes to them.

The flag of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar was lowered to half-mast while the Guard

of Honour and the bugle troops observed a two-minute silence.

U Aung San Oo, the eldest son of General Aung San, family members of martyr leaders and representatives laid a wreath to pay tributes at the Mausoleum and dispersed Metta.

The Yangon Region government, representatives from registered political parties based in Yangon, heads of missions of foreign embassies to Myanmar, charges d'affaires ai, and resident representatives of UN agencies also laid wreaths at the Mausoleum to pay tributes.

Civil society organizations

including Myanmar Women's Affairs Federation, Myanmar Music Association (Central), Myanmar Red Cross Society, Myanmar Press Council, Myanmar Architects Council, Interfaith Dialogue Group of Myanmar, Myanmar Catholic Bishops Conference of Myanmar, Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA), Noble Heart Association, Myanmar Medical Association, Myanmar-India Friendship and Development Association, Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association, Myanmar Scouts Federation, Myanmar Muslim National Affairs Federation

(MMNAF), Myanmar War Veterans Organization, Myanmar Writers' Association, Myanmar Publishers and Distributors Association, Myanmar Journalists Association, Myanmar Hindu Federation, Myanmar Artists Association (Central), Myanmar Theatrical Association (Central), Myanmar Engineering Council, Young Men's Buddhist Association (YMBA) and Myanmar Motion Pictures Organization laid wreaths at the Mausoleum in memory of General Aung San and martyr leaders to pay tributes to them.

As an act in memory of

gratitude of the martyrs, people including Buddhist monks and students paid tribute to martyrs queue following COVID-19 protocols issued by the Ministry of Health.

People from the entire country hoisted the flag of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar at half-mast, and MRTV sounded a siren in memory of the martyrs at 10:37 am when those martyrs fell.

A large number of people visited the Martyrs' Mausoleum, the Bogyoke Aung San Museum and the Secretariat (former Ministers' Office). — MNA/TTA

State Flag lowered to half-mast at Secretariat for 77th Anniversary of Martyrs' Day

A ceremony of lowering the State Flag to half-mast was held at the Secretariat (former Ministers' Office), where General Aung San and leaders were assassinated, to mark the 77th Anniversary of Martyrs' Day on the morning of 19 July 2024.

Yangon City Development Committee Chairman Yangon Mayor U Bo Htay and members, departmental staff and the Guard of Honour attended the event. They saluted General Aung San and the fallen leaders. Then, they lowered the National Flag to half-mast and stood in silence for two minutes.

People visited the meeting hall where the leaders fell and the parliamentary building, located in the Secretariat (former Ministers' Office), as a special exhibition only for yesterday, between 9 am and 5 pm.

Visitors, including students, thronged to the meeting hall where martyrs were assassinated, 28 types of exhibits that remained of martyred leaders and other historical records in the parliament building, which is more than a hundred years old yesterday. — MNA/KZL



The ceremony of lowering the State Flag to half-mast in progress at the Secretariat (Former Ministers' Office) in Yangon yesterday. **PHOTO: KANU**

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NATIONAL

Merit shared for martyr leaders at Yangon City Hall



ON the 77th Anniversary of Martyrs' Day, a merit-sharing ceremony for the leaders who sacrificed their lives for the country was held at the meeting room of the Yangon City Hall yesterday morning.

All those present on the occasion first took the Five Precepts

Union Minister U Tin Oo Lwin and the congregation observe the Five Precepts at the merit-sharing event yesterday.

from State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee Chairman Aggamaha Pandita Agga Maha Saddhammajotikadhaja Thanlyan Minkyaung Monastery Sayadaw Dr Bhaddanta Candima Bhivamsa and listened to Metta Sutta recited by members of the Sangha. Guests then offered a day meal and donated offerings to members of the Sangha. They heard the sermon from Minkyaung Monastery Sayadaw Dr Bhaddanta Candima Bhivamsa, followed by sharing merit to the martyrs. — MNA/KZL

Natmauk's Bogyoke Aung San residence museum packed with visitors

PHOTO records concerning Bogyoke Aung San were displayed at the residence museum of Bogyoke Aung San in Natmauk, Magway Region, on the 77th Martyrs' Day. The photos recorded the young life of the General and the politician.

"Unlike previous years, we exhibited photo records that depict the young life of the General and politician on the 77th Martyrs' Day at the residence museum of Bogyoke Aung San. We intended to expand the knowledge of young students, and we also exhibited the life history of nine heroes," said U Ye Lin, staff officer of the Department of Archaeology and National Museum (Magway Branch).

At the residence museum of Bogyoke Aung San, photo records such as the old garage used by the General's mother, looms of the General's sister, the young life and politician life of the General, and a silicon statue of the General marking over 100 years.

Bogyoke Aung San Museum (Natmauk) is open daily from 9 am to 4 pm for the public except on Mondays and gazetted holidays. Moreover, the museum was open from 7 am to 5 pm on the 77th Martyrs' Day. The department conducted a quiz session regarding Martyrs' Day, and the department also awarded students and visitors who raised correct answers. — Theint Theint Moe/KTZH



Visitors seen viewing the displays (top and above) at the Bogyoke Aung San residence museum in Natmauk. **PHOTOS: HLA WIN (NATMAUK)**

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NATIONAL



SAC Member Chief of the General Staff (Army, Navy and Air) General Maung Maung Aye cordially greets family members of martyr leaders yesterday.



Heads of missions of foreign embassies to Myanmar and charges d'affaires ai lay wreaths at Martyrs' Mausoleum yesterday.



Heads of missions of foreign embassies to Myanmar and charges d'affaires ai lay wreaths at Martyrs' Mausoleum yesterday.



Representatives from civil society organizations lay wreaths at the mausoleum of General Aung San and martyr leaders to pay tributes to them yesterday.

NATIONAL

Regions, states to produce over 100,000 fingerlings



This photo shows the Ministry of Border Affairs' fish-releasing ceremony at a dam in Nay Pyi Taw in 2023.

ACCORDING to the Department of Fisheries, more than 100,000 fingerlings will be produced in regions and states.

From the beginning of this financial year until the end of June, 113,950,000 fingerlings were released into rivers and natural waters, and a total of

78,729,000 fish were sold. Approximately 101,600,000 fish hatchlings will be produced, with 40 per cent intended for various fish releasing and 60 per cent for sale.

The Department of Fisheries aims to meet targets for fish release and sales. Addi-

tionally, the department will release fish species such as Mrigal carp, rohu, and swamp barb into waters nationwide. These efforts are part of the department's strategy to enhance fish food security and support the development of rural fish farming. — TWA/MKKS

UDE Yangon to offer LLM online programme

THE University of Distance Education (Yangon) will offer an online Master of Laws (LLM) degree programme starting from the 2024-2025 academic year, according to the Department of Human Resource Development at the university.

For this postgraduate programme, applicants are required to submit the original certificate of passing the university entrance exam and the LLB degree, as well as the final year mark sheet of the LLB degree.

Applicants need to register for the course at the Training

Affairs Department of the University of Distance Education (Yangon), after which student IDs and passwords will be sent to each applicant's email address.

This two-year programme is provided for a limited number of students and will commence on 1 August. Application forms will be accepted at the department from 22 to 26 July. For further information about the programme, students can contact the university's training supervision committee during office hours. — TWA/TRKM



The photo depicts Yangon University for Distance Education.

Kampaiti border trade achieves 44% of trade target in mid-July

THE trade value at the Kampaiti border between Myanmar and China as of 13 July has reached 44.008 per cent of the overall trade target for July, the Ministry of Commerce's statistics showed.

The Kampaiti border is expected to meet a target of US\$5 million in July 2024, comprising exports worth \$4 million and imports worth \$1 million, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

The actual trade value between 1 and 13 July was \$2.2 million, comprising exports worth \$0.659 million and imports worth \$1.54 million, performing over 44.008 per cent of the trade target.

The main export items at the Kampaiti border were tis-



This photo shows trucks entering the Kampaiti border crossing in 2023.

sue-cultured bananas, dried chillies, onions, dried mango slices, fresh areca nuts, black cardamom, various pulses, tamarind with seeds and aluminium scrap. Meanwhile, Myanmar imports capital goods, intermediate goods, construction materials, consumer goods, fruits and fuel oil.

There is a regular trade flow on the Kampaiti-Waingmaw-Myitkyina trade route without transport hurdles such as mountain road collapse and road blockage. A combined team, including one-stop service agencies and departments concerned, is making efforts to ensure smooth trade flow and bolster exports. — TWA/KK

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News and Periodicals Enterprise



FMGEA urged to supervise gold dealers' reports to FIU

GOLD dealers failed to submit reports to the Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU) in June 2024. Therefore, the Federation of Myanmar Gold Entrepreneurs Association (FMGEA) was asked to monitor and supervise them, according to the directive dated 10 July 2024 issued by Real Property Dealers and Precious Gem Dealers Regulatory Authority of the General Administration Department, the Ministry of Home Affairs.

Under Chapter 8 of the Anti-Money Laundering Law, tipping-off agencies must submit reports regularly to the authorities.

According to Chapter IV,

Stanza VII (E) and VIII (D) of the directive 2/2022 of the regulatory authority, a suspicious transaction report (STR) for any suspicious transactions detected and a threshold transaction report (TTR) for transactions that exceed a threshold amount defined must be reported to FIU.

Tipping-off agencies submitted 42 reports of the realtors to the FIU in June 2024, but gold dealers failed to do so.

FMGEA was asked to supervise relevant tipping-off organizations (gold dealers) to submit TTR and STR to FIU regularly without fail. — NN/KK



A display of gold jewellery is seen at the gold outlet in Yangon.

RTAD to conduct vehicle inspections before registration, renewal



The Vehicle Inspection Section of the Road Transport Administration Department.

THE Road Transport Administration Department (RTAD) released an announcement that safety checks and vehicle inspections must be done prior to renewing registration of taxis, school buses and rental vehicles of above two tonnes.

To ensure road safety, RTAD renewed vehicle registration for public transport vehicles after checking vehicle types and vehicle specifications (bodies, parts). RTAD renewed other cars and motorcycles without inspections.

Starting from 22 July, taxis, school buses and vehicles of above two tonnes will undergo vehicle inspections while renewing.

Additionally, post-trip vehicle inspections can be undertaken at RTAD's respective of-

fices except for those in Yangon and southern and northern Mandalay.

However, Loikaw, Lashio, Kyaukme, Muse and Kawkaik offices will not process post-trip vehicle inspections for those vehicles registered at other offices.

Furthermore, private vehicles and commercial vehicles of below two tonnes, motorcycles, three-wheel cycles and trailers will be exempted from vehicle inspections. They can proceed to renewal processes according to their registration documents until 30 September 2024.

Owners of motorcycles, three-wheel cycles, and trailers can apply for vehicle entry permits in certain areas without vehicle inspections. — NN/KK

Asia Medical Tourism Conference & Expo invites Myanmar businesses

ASIA Medical Tourism Conference & Expo that is scheduled to take place on 25-27 September 2024 at the Penang Marriott Hotel, Penang, Malaysia, welcomes participation from Myanmar, organized by the Commonwealth Medical Association (CMA) with members from 56 countries, according to the Myanmar Trade Promotion Organization.

This expo is the biggest pharma market platform for Asia to explore medical care, technological advancements and wellness tourism. It is expected that Australia, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Brunei, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, the Republic of Korea, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Macau SAR, Ma-

laysia, Maldives, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Qatar, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Chinese Taipei, Thailand, Turkiye, the United Arab Emirates and Uzbekistan will participate in it.

Myanmar healthcare providers (hospitals and medical centres), medical device and equipment manufacturers and those engaged in the industry are cordially invited to join this expo.

Individuals can visit the website <http://www.asiamtce.com> and enquire about further details through direct contact number +60 198851559 or the Myanmar Trade Promotion Organization via phone number 067 408622 and email event.td.myantrade@gmail.com. — NN/KK

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OPINION

Seek good and faithful friends for relationships

EXCELLENT and genuine friends prioritize their friends' interests through their actions. Regardless of changes in living standards or age, these friends maintain consistent mindsets, always valuing mutual support. Whether living near or far, their commitment to helping one another remains unwavering.

The renowned poet and Buddhist monk Manle Sayadaw once wrote that while clothes should be new and stylish, long-lasting friends are invaluable. People change clothes daily to enhance their appearance, but friends who have maintained a mutual relationship over time display loyalty, friendliness, and sincerity. True friends will not hesitate to advise against actions that may lead one astray.

In today's world, not all friendships are based on enduring connections. New acquaintances cannot always be fully trusted.

This common ground fosters a deeper connection. Friends should encourage each other to grow and improve. By cultivating these qualities in friendships, everybody can build lasting and meaningful relationships. It is essential to surround ourselves with friends who inspire and uplift us, helping us navigate life's challenges with grace and resilience.

Thus, it is crucial to evaluate the mindsets and behaviours of friends. Assessing human intentions and actions is more challenging than appraising jewellery. Genuine friends are those who offer assistance without hesitation, particularly during difficult times. This is when true friends can be distinguished from pretenders.

Pretended friends can be worse than enemies, as they are close but deceitful. Faithful friends who can be relied upon in times of trouble are rare. In society, individuals driven by greed, anger, selfishness, and pride do not make suitable friends. Everyone should strive to find their best friends while also improving their own reliability and trustworthiness. One must consider the interests of one's friends alongside one's own.

The Lord Buddha preached the Mangala Sutta over 2,600 years ago, emphasizing the importance of avoiding harmful individuals and associating with the wise to gain knowledge and skills. There are many societal examples of people who have

strayed from good paths due to a lack of good and faithful friends. It is particularly important for young people today to seek out and maintain relationships with trustworthy and loyal friends.

Friends should support each other through thick and thin, offering a shoulder to lean on during tough times. A good friendship is built on trust and loyalty. Friends should be able to rely on each other without hesitation. Friends are honest with each other. They offer constructive criticism and guide their friends away from harmful behaviours. Friendships are stronger when friends share similar values and beliefs.

This common ground fosters a deeper connection. Friends should encourage each other to grow and improve. By cultivating these qualities in friendships, everybody can build lasting and meaningful relationships. It is essential to surround ourselves with friends who inspire and uplift us, helping us navigate life's challenges with grace and resilience.



A group documentary photo of special guests, State representatives, and SCO senior officials at the Green Development Forum of SCO Countries in Qingdao.

FLAGS from various countries flutter on the building's main facade, swaying gently in Shanghai's summer breeze.

The building houses the China National Institute for SCO International Exchange and Judicial Cooperation (CNISCO), where SCO countries exchange knowledge and friendship and share a united future together.

"It is crucial for SCO countries to enhance people-to-people contacts, and we have been actively working towards this goal. Awareness about the SCO is the cornerstone of its develop-

ment," said Ms Zheng Wei, Secretary-General of the Good-Neighbourliness, Friendship, and Cooperation Commission of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (GNFCC SCO). She is also the Minister-Counsellor of the Department of European-Central Asian Affairs at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, China.

Twenty-six journalists from SCO countries listened attentively to the Secretary-General during a roundtable meeting of SCO media delegations. Chinese scholars and experts also participated alongside the media representatives at this event.

SCO MEDIA TRIP IN CHINA: A HEARTFELT JOURNEY OF FRIENDSHIP AND UNDERSTANDING

By Ko Ko (Sethmu Tekkatho)

"We in the SCO are firmly against sanctions, as they have resulted in the deaths of many

children, women, and the elderly," stated Professor Pan Guang, Senior Researcher at the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences and Chief Expert of CNISCO, speaking distinctly in Mandarin.

Professor Liu Jun, Vice President of the China National Association for International Studies (CNAIS), stated that numerous countries are expressing interest in joining the SCO, predicting its rapid growth. All meeting participants are optimistic about SCO's promising future.

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization, founded on 15 June 2001, in Shanghai, has now celebrated its 23rd anniversary. Initially, it was founded by six nations: Kazakhstan, the People's Republic of China, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. Since then, the SCO has expanded to include 26 countries, comprising two observer states and 14 dialogue partners. Myan-

mar became a dialogue partner in May 2023.

It has been noted that the SCO is actively pursuing four major goals: fostering mutual trust, friendship, and good-neighbourliness among its Member States; promoting effective cooperation across diverse fields including politics, trade, economy, science and technology, culture, education, energy, transport, tourism, and environmental protection; jointly ensuring peace, security, and stability in the region; and advocating for a new democratic, fair, and rational international political and economic order.

At the invitation of the GNFCC, I, as a media representative from Myanmar, joined other SCO country media representatives to observe firsthand the effective operations of the SCO. That encompassed attending events and visiting compelling locations organized by the host.



A group photo of SCO media delegations with host officials at the International Exchange and Judicial Cooperation (CNISCO).

We started our nine-day program in Shanghai and spent four days there. The main event was a media roundtable meeting on 4 July, where we also visited some of Shanghai's most renowned businesses.

During our tour, we visited four prominent companies: Lazas Network Technology, China's second-largest food delivery service provider operating the Ele.me platform; Hozon New Energy Auto Company, known for producing Neta electric vehicles; Yangshan Port, the world's largest deep-sea port; and concluded our visit at Shanghai Tunnel Engineering, a manufacturer of tunnelling machines.

We departed for Beijing on 4 July, travelling by high-speed train. This was my first inter-province journey by train in China, as all my previous travels involved flying from one province to another. The six-hour train trip provided a wonderful experience. I found train travel to be more comfortable than flying, allowing for more freedom to walk, talk, and move about. The sense of relaxation made this journey particularly memorable.

In Beijing, we witnessed the realization of China's ambitious dream of a grand transportation hub in their capital. The Comprehensive Transportation Hub, located in the heart of the city, is now 80 per cent complete. Engineers and workers diligently work to meet the project schedule on time. This monumental project is a testament to China's capabili-



SCO media delegations visit the Comprehensive Transportation Hub in Beijing.



SCO media delegations attending the Green Development Forum in Qingdao.

ties and a source of national pride.

The media delegation also had the opportunity to attend and experience a daily national press conference held by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA). The following day, a Saturday, we had the chance to explore and shop at one of Beijing's renowned shopping malls. We are grateful to the young ladies from the organizer who meticulously arranged the day-to-day programme, ensuring a seamless and enriching experience.

We travelled from Beijing to Qingdao, our final destination, once again via express train. The train ride was remarkably stable and smooth, allowing me to type my story on my MacBook while in transit comfortably.

In the beautiful coastal city of Qingdao, the SCO media group visited Hisense Information Park, the fully automated container terminal at Qingdao Port, and the Haier Sci-Tech and Innovation

Ecological Park. These visits preceded our main and most significant event of the entire trip: attending the Green Development Forum of SCO countries.

On the eve of the forum, I had the opportunity to cover the meeting between Myanmar's visiting Vice-Senior General Soe Win, Vice-Chairman of the State Administration Council and Deputy Prime Minister, and Ms Shen Yueyue, Vice-Chairperson of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference and Chairperson of the GNFFCC SCO.

They engaged in a candid exchange of views on enhancing the Swenyo Pauk-Phaw relations, grounded in the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence. Their discussions focused on promoting cooperation within their partnership and advancing multi-strategic collaboration between the two countries.

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ARTICLE

NATIONAL



Tourism development plan announced for Yangon Region

A Yangon Regional tourism development plan will be implemented, according to U Zeya Myo Aung, Deputy Director General of the Directorate of Hotels and Tourism.

In order to develop the plan, the regional tourism committee, the Destination Management Organization (DMO) and all private tourism organizations in Yangon Region will cooperate with one another. The discussion results will be implemented through the Yangon Regional Tourism Development Forum.

For the development of tourism based on Yangon Region's tourist attraction resources, the Regional Tourism Committee, DMOs and all private tourism organizations will participate in developing practical and systematic plans for the development of Yangon Region's destinations. — ASH/KZL



Photos (top and above) depict some tourist spots in Yangon Region.

Depression No 02/2024

Issued at (19:00) hours MST on 19-7-2024

Depression Condition

According to the observations at (17:30) hrs MST today, the depression Northwest and adjoining Westcentral Bay of Bengal off Odisha and adjoining North Andhra Pradesh Coasts (India) and has moved Northwestwards. It is centred at about 430 nautical miles West of Kyaukpyu, 395 nautical miles West-Southwest of Sittway (Myanmar), 25 nautical miles South-Southeast of Puri, 65 nautical miles East-Northeast of Gopalpur and 65 nautical miles South-Southwest of Paradip (India).

It is not moving towards Myanmar coasts, the present stage of the depression is coded yellow stage.

Position of depression, centre pressure and wind

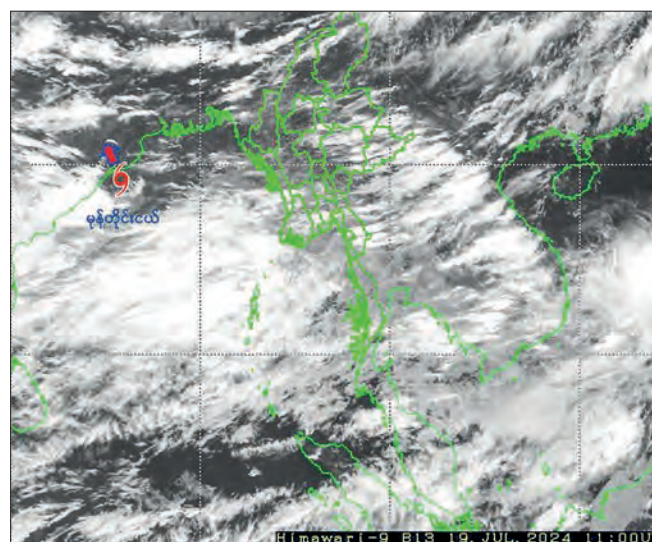
The depression is located at latitude 19.4 degree North and longitude 86.0 degree East, centre pressure of depression is 992 hPa and maximum wind speed near the center is 30-35 miles per hour at (17:30) hrs MST today.

During next (36) hrs forecast

The depression is likely to move Northwestwards and cross Odisha Coast near Puri (India) next 18 hrs. Thereafter it is likely to move West-Northwestwards and may recatch to Odisha and Chhattisgarh (India) gradually weaken.

General caution

Under the influence of depression, rain or thundershowers will be widespread in Bago, Yangon and Ayeyawady Regions



and Rakhine State with likelihood of regionally and isolated heavyfalls in some regions and states along with strong winds from tonight to 21-7-2024. Occasional squalls with rough to very rough seas will be experienced in off and along Myanmar Coasts. Surface wind speed in squall may reach 40-45 mph and wave height will be about 9-14 feet.

Advisory

Under the influence of depression, people should be aware heavy rain with strong wind, flash flood and landslide in the hilly areas and near small rivers and also domestic flight, trawlers, vessels and ships off and along Myanmar Coasts. — DMH

Illegal item confiscations: Timbers, business equipment, foodstuffs and vehicles

UNDER the supervision and control of the Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee, illegal trade is effectively prevented and prosecuted in accordance with the law. On 16 July, during the inspections by the combined teams under the management of the Customs Department, nine kinds of goods (estimated value of K56,158,000) — 113 Kargo dry-charged batteries and 62 Daewoo cut-off saws — which could not be presented with legal documents, were found at the Ywathagyi Dry Port. Two Isuzu vans carrying these items (an estimated value of K96,000,000 and a total estimated value of K152,158,000) were also seized. The action was taken under Customs procedures.

Similarly, on 17 July, a combined team under the management of the Mandalay Region Illegal Trade Eradication Special Task Force conducted an inspection at the Kwetatson checkpoint and found 1,000 bags of 10-kilogramme garlic from China (estimated value of K20,000,000) and one Mitsubishi Fuso truck (estimated value of K25,000,000) loaded with these items. A total estimated value of K45,000,000 was seized, and action was taken according to Customs procedures. In addition, on 17 July, a combined team under the management of the Shan State Illegal Trade Eradication Special Task Force conducted inspections. It seized a total of seven products (estimated value of K3,170,000), including 200 cycle tubes, which were piled up on the side of the road near the Sinphyu border post in Muse, and the action was taken under Customs procedures.

Also, on 17 July, a combined team under the management of the Ayeyawady Region Illegal Trade Eradication Special Task Force conducted inspections in Myanaung District, a total of one set of sawmills and related equipment (estimated value of K2,000,000) used in illegal logging was seized in Kyangin Township. The action was executed under the Forest Law.

Again, on 18 July, a combined team under the management of the Bago Region Illegal Trade Eradication Special Task Force conducted inspections. It compounded 1.336 tonnes (estimated value of K320,688) of illegal timbers in Toungoo District. The action was carried out under the Forest Law.

Therefore, on 16, 17, and 18 July, nine cases (estimated value of K202,648,688) were reported, according to the Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee. — MNA/TKO

NATIONAL

Recreation of Konbaung, early colonial attire attracts many

RE-INTRODUCING the ancient costumes of the late Konbaung and early colonial era has attracted interest from many people, Myat Thinkha Nge, the founder of Myat Taw Win Myanmar Royal Dress, told The Global New Light of Myanmar (GNLM).

“The main thing is that we had to rediscover what Myanmar people’s own clothes were and how they wore, based on the documents. A foreign country has shown Myanmar costumes for decades. Then, some voices appeared among the Myanmar people only when others showed their own dresses, instead of saying that it’s better to show our own traditional culture after wearing it by ourselves. I got an idea that it is the best to conserve our culture and rediscovered them, made ancient

clothes and filmed it,” he said.

More and more people now wear traditional clothes for wedding ceremonies and birthday celebrations and take beautiful pictures, he added.

“It’s called the late Konbaung era, the dress of the Yadanabon era, or the early colonial dress. The late Konbaung era costume includes an upper garment of cotton cloth, double-length men’s longyi, and hip-length jacket and sarong (Htamein) for women. The early colonial dress code is a baggy overlapping-front Chinese jacket, double-length men’s longyi, and half-shoes or slippers,” he explained on dresses. — Thit Taw/ZN

Yangon major buyer of Kyaukpadaung tamarind

POPA tamarind, produced in Kyaukpadaung Township, Mandalay Region, has earned a reputation among consumers, especially since it is one of the marketable items in Yangon Region, according to local traders.

“We transport it to Yangon’s Bayintnaung Commodity Wholesale Centre, and from there, it is distributed to other areas. The tamarind season is from January to April. Kyaukpadaung is the biggest tamarind producer. Kyaukpadaung-produced tamarinds are supplied to Yangon and Mandalay, and the majority of orders go to Yangon,” said a spokesperson from Thukha Aung wholesale trading centre in Kyaukpadaung Township.

From the start of the season throughout the year, Popa tamarind is transported from Kyaukpadaung to Yangon’s Bayintnaung and from there, it is distributed to the whole lower Myanmar.

Kyaukpadaung-produced tamarind has gained popularity in Yangon and is a best-selling product. Its quality is the best, and the price is the highest in the country, according to traders. — Thit Taw/ZS

Vacationers increase over three-day holiday

OVER three consecutive public holidays, many Yangon residents have been on vacation in Mandalay, Bagan, NyaungU and Mount Popa.

In addition to short trips to recreation places near Yangon Region, people have made preparations to go on pilgrimage tours in Mandalay, Bagan-NyaungU and Mount Popa, as well as Bago and Pyay, for two days and three nights, on 19 to 21 July.

“We have a three-day holiday this week, so my co-workers and I will go on pilgrimage tours in Bagan. It is fine to visit Bagan because the rain level is low there. We will depart Yangon on Thursday night and return on 21 July at night. Some families will go on vacation on their own plans during this holiday. Some go on pilgrimage tours in Bago and Pyay,” said a company employee.



This photo shows visitors at the Taungthaman Lake on 17 July 2024.

Visitor arrival to Bagan has still been on the rise even during monsoon season as its rain level is low, and it is even more prominent, especially on public holidays, according to Bagan residents. Rather than going on visits during the massive influx in the dry season, which is the peak period for travelling, domestic visitors have now taken trips during the rainy season, and there are still visitors on beaches until this month. — MT/ZS

Govt employees in Thailand seek removal from blocklists at Myanmar Embassy

THE Myanmar Embassy to Thailand has announced that the government employees who have arrived in Thailand are applying to be excluded from the blocklists.

The Information Team of the State Administration Council announced that, based on their reasons for absence, the Government would ease the delisting of some government employees of Union-level organizations and ministries who have been blocklisted for abandoning their workplaces without permission, resulting in human resource losses and adversely affecting their social lives, and help them reintegrate within the framework of the law.

Therefore, these employees were urged to report to



This file photo shows the Myanmar Embassy in Bangkok, Thailand.

their respective departments, state administrative bodies, the nearest sub-township, Myanmar embassies, military township, district, region and attaché offices and consulates starting 15 July 2024.

Following this announcement, the government employ-

ees currently in Thailand have started applying for delisting at the Myanmar Embassy in Bangkok, it said.

The embassy continues to process applications for removal from the denylists. Those wishing to apply should address in the letter to their respective ministries, stating that it is to be sent through the ambassador, Myanmar Embassy, Bangkok, together with the reason for leaving the workplace, a recent photo taken within the last six months, full address in Thailand, contact phone number, passport copy, citizenship scrutiny card copy, and other documents. Concerned employees may submit their application in person or by mail to the embassy, it added. — MT/ZN

ARTICLE/SCI/ENVIRON WORLD

SCO Media Trip in China: A Heartfelt Journey of Friendship and Understanding

FROM PAGE 9

On 8 July, the Green Development Forum of SCO countries was held at the Qingdao International Conference Centre. The forum was attended by Vice-Senior General Soe Win, Vice-Chairman of the State Administration Council (SAC) and Deputy Prime Minister of Myanmar, along with state representatives and senior officials from SCO member countries.

At the opening ceremony, Ms Shen Yueyue, Vice-Chairperson of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference and Chairperson of the GNFCC SCO, read President Xi Jinping's message and subsequently delivered a speech. State delegates from SCO member countries, observer countries, and dialogue partner countries also gave

speeches.

President Xi characterized the SCO as a model for a new type of international relations and regional cooperation. In his message, he noted that China has recently assumed the rotating presidency of the SCO. Xi also emphasized the consensus among SCO countries to protect the environment and promote green development.

Myanmar's Vice-Senior General Soe Win stated that Myanmar is prioritizing investment in green development to enhance the natural environment and ecosystem. This approach aims to ensure long-term socioeconomic growth through nature-based solutions.

Vice-Senior General Soe Win also emphasized that Myanmar takes pride in becoming an SCO dialogue partner country in

2023. In his speech, he expressed hopes for further strengthening partnership relations and cooperation among member countries.

Ms Shen Yueyue urged SCO countries to promote the "Shanghai Spirit" and foster international cooperation through joint efforts. She emphasized the importance of strengthening collaboration to support societal and economic development in all countries, as well as advancing the development of human and natural resources.

The phrase "Shanghai Spirit" in her speech captured our attention. What exactly is the "Shanghai Spirit"? It embodies mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality, consultation, respect for the diversity of civilizations, and the pursuit of common development. Externally, it upholds

principles of non-alignment, non-targeting of other countries or regions, and openness.

Its core value lies in promoting peace and prosperity within the region and globally, benefiting all of humanity.

In my view, the SCO represents a significant force in shifting the world from a unipolar to a multi-polar order.

Our trip concluded successfully after the Green Development Forum. Even as the trip came to an end, my reflections continued. Over the nine days, we SCO media representatives grew closer, becoming like old friends. We exchanged contact information, took selfies together, and engaged in heartfelt conversations that lasted for hours.

All the most incredible histories begin with personal interactions.

All successful developments in politics, business, culture, sports, and beyond are built upon trusted and deep friendships.

Heart-to-heart connections form solid foundations for organizations, and our trip exemplifies all of these characteristics.

I believe SCO will contribute to peace and prosperity worldwide, fostering a shared future among humanity by strengthening the foundational interactions among SCO countries.

By nurturing mutual trust, cooperation, and understanding, the SCO lays the groundwork for a brighter future in which nations collaborate towards common goals and shared progress. These efforts not only fortify the organization's foundation but also make substantial contributions to global stability and harmony.

Recycled fish nets and geothermal power: inside Paris Olympic Village

The village is intended to be a model of 21st-century construction techniques.



The Olympic village as seen from a nearby skyscraper. **PHOTO: AFP**

THE Paris Olympics Athletes' Village, set to open this Thursday, is showcasing groundbreaking low-carbon construction innovations, making it a pioneering model of environmental sustainability for future global events.

The athletes' village for the Paris Olympics, which welcomed its first athletes on Thursday, contains a host of innovations intended to make it a model of low-carbon construction.

Faced with concerns

about the vast emissions caused by the Games — from the construction work, the air miles and catering — Paris 2024 organizers set out to make the village as environmentally friendly as possible.

— AFP

Grassroot fossil expert's dedication to fossil science and education

LIU Feng, 55, is the curator of the Fossil Exhibition Hall in Balang Miao Village in Jianhe County. He also serves as a dedicated administrator at the Miaoling National Geopark in Qiongnan Miao and Dong Autonomous Prefecture.

Since 1990, Liu has worked with teams from the paleontological research center of Guizhou University on field scientific ex-

peditions, helping to excavate a large number of fossils. With support from local authorities, he even transformed his home into a fossil exhibition hall, displaying the fossils collected by the research teams. When visitors come to this village, Liu Feng always shares his knowledge of fossils. Locals affectionately call him "the grassroots expert without diploma". — Xinhua



Liu Feng's son Liu Xingyu (1st R) explains geological knowledge to children during the summer vacation at the Miaoling National Geopark in Qiongnan Miao and Dong Autonomous Prefecture, southwest China's Guizhou Province, 15 July 2024. **PHOTO: YANG WENBIN/XINHUA**

Microsoft says taking 'mitigation actions' after service issues

The disruptions affected access to various Microsoft 365 apps and services.

US tech giant Microsoft said Friday it was taking "mitigation actions" after service disruptions.

"Our services are still seeing continuous improvements while we continue to take mitigation actions," the company said in a post on social media platform X.

In a notice titled "Service Degradation", Microsoft said users "may be unable to access various Microsoft 365 apps and services".

The announcement came as Australia reported a large-scale outage of IT systems on Friday,

with the country's national broadcaster, its largest international airport and a major telecommunications company reporting issues.

Australia's National Cyber Security Coordinator said the "large-scale technical outage" was caused by an issue with a "third-party software platform".

Microsoft said access was limited as some users were only able to access Microsoft 365 in read-only mode while it works to fix the problem.

"We remain committed in



Microsoft said access was limited as some users were only able to access Microsoft 365 in read-only mode while it works to fix the problem. **PHOTO: PIXABAY**

treating this event with the highest priority and urgency while

we continue to address the lingering impact for the remaining

Microsoft 365 apps that are in a degraded state," it said. — AFP

NEWS IN BRIEF

Singapore says two oil tankers caught fire, crew rescued

SINGAPOREAN authorities said Friday two oil tankers caught fire off its coast and two crew members were airlifted to a hospital.

The blaze broke out on board Singapore-flagged tanker Hafnia Nile and another vessel about 55 kilometres (34 miles) northeast of Pedra Branca, according to Singapore's Maritime and Port Authority (MPA).

"MPA has requested passing vessels to assist in the search and rescue of the crew," the authority said in a statement, adding that the RSS Supreme and a military helicopter were providing assistance.

Two crew members were sent to the Singapore General Hospital, according to a separate statement by the air force posted on social media that did not provide details about their injuries. — AFP

Swiss pharma giant Novartis reports soaring profits off drug sales

SWISS pharmaceutical giant Novartis on Thursday reported soaring profits and raised its expectations for 2024 operating income, driven by strong sales for a range of its popular drugs.

The firm's net profits jumped 43 per cent to \$3.2 billion in the second quarter of this year, it said in a statement.

Sales rose by nine per cent to \$12.5 billion, narrowly beating the forecasts of analysts by Swiss financial news service AWP.

"Our performance reflects continued strong momentum of our key growth drivers" both in and outside the United States, CEO Vas Narasimhan said in the statement.

The results were driven in part by sales of drugs including heart failure treatment Entresto, which rose by nearly 30 per cent to \$1.9 billion. — AFP

United to trim US capacity as profits rise

Looking ahead, United Airlines announced plans to reduce its US capacity later this year, starting around mid-August.

UNITED Airlines reported higher quarterly profits Wednesday but announced it would trim US capacity later this year as the industry contends with a seat glut that has pressured fares.

Profits at the major US carrier came in at \$1.3 billion in the second quarter, up 23 per cent from the year-ago period

following a six-per-cent rise in revenues to \$15 billion.

While airlines have described travel demand as still robust, carriers have pointed to an excess number of available seats that have pressured fares in the United States.

United described mid-August as a turning point, with published schedule changes

showing about a three-per-cent decline in the industry capacity growth rate, the company said in its news release.

"We see multiple airlines have begun to cancel loss-making capacity," said Chief Executive Scott Kirby. "United has long been preparing for the moment when industry-wide domestic capacity would adjust — it's now clear that inflection point is just 30 days away."

United, which saw capacity rise 8.3 per cent in the second quarter, now plans to reduce capacity in the fourth quarter compared with its prior plans.

The company projected third-quarter profits of between \$2.75 and \$3.25 per share, below the \$4.14 in the second quarter.

The airline affirmed its full-year profit forecast range, however.

United's shares declined 1.3 per cent in after-hours trading. — AFP



Profits at the major US carrier came in at \$1.3 billion in the second quarter. **PHOTO: PIXABAY**

ROLLING UPDATES: WORLD

UK seeks to tackle illegal migration with European partners at major summit

Hosting 50 European leaders at the fourth EPC meeting signals a united front on migration issues.



Migrants are escorted ashore in Dover, southeast England.
PHOTO: AFP/FILE

THE United Kingdom (UK) is hoping that improved relations with European partners will help it more effectively tackle illegal migration as the country hosted some 50 European leaders for the fourth meeting of the European Political Community (EPC) on Thursday.

At a post-summit press conference at the Blenheim Palace in Oxfordshire, UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer emphasized that addressing critical issues such as illegal migration and national security requires “maturity

and leadership”.

Starmer underscored his government’s commitment to practical solutions aligned with international law, contrasting with previous Conservative approaches such as the “Rwanda Scheme”, which were discontinued upon taking office.

Starmer, who led the Labour Party to a landslide victory in the recent general election, cautioned that “there is no easy silver bullet” to solving illegal migration. His government has expressed hopes for a “reset” in the relations with Euro-

pean partners strained by Brexit.

“We are going to work with our European partners to share intelligence, data, expertise, and put the gangs out of business,” Starmer said, adding that “to stop illegal migration, we must also tackle it at source”.

Earlier in the day, UK Foreign Secretary David Lammy stated that the UK is “nowhere near” renegotiating a trade deal with the EU and reiterated that the country would not re-enter the EU single market or customs union. — Xinhua

NEWS IN BRIEF

Street clashes in Bangladesh leave 702 people injured

At least 104 police officers and 30 journalists were injured in Bangladesh during a day of violent clashes around the country, private broadcaster Independent Television reported. The network said 702 people were injured during Thursday’s confrontations between police and student protesters, with clashes in 26 of the country’s 64 districts.

Protesters set fire to several government buildings as well as vehicles along the streets, a police statement said. — AFP

Spain PM’s wife to testify in graft probe

SPANISH Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez’s wife testifies before a judge Friday as part of a preliminary corruption probe into her business ties, two weeks after the initial hearing was suspended.

The investigation into Begona Gomez over alleged corruption and influence peddling has infuriated Sanchez, who has insisted there is “absolutely nothing” in the allegations which amount to little more than a smear campaign aimed at undermining him and his left-wing government.

Although Gomez attended court on 5 July to testify in a closed session before judge Juan Carlos Peinado, the hearing was suspended within minutes after her lawyer said they had “not been notified” about all the complaints against her and asked for time to study them. — AFP

S Africa’s president to lay out government plans as parliament opens

CABINET ministers and MPs descended on Cape Town Thursday for the opening of the parliament when President Cyril Ramaphosa will lay out plans for South Africa under its new coalition government.

Ramaphosa, 71, is to address a joint sitting of the two Houses at 7 pm (1700 GMT) after a grand ceremony including a display of military pageantry and a 21-gun salute. — AFP

Israel considers handing over control of Rafah Crossing to EU, Palestinians

LAST month, Palestinian Minister of National Economy Mohammed Al-Amour said that the Palestinian government was ready to control the Rafah checkpoint on the border with Egypt in the presence of international observers, subject to the withdrawal of Israeli troops.

Bloomberg, citing people familiar with the matter, reported on Thursday that Israeli authorities are considering handing over management of the Rafah border crossing

with Egypt, to the European Union Border Assistance Mission to Rafah (EUBAM) and Palestinian officials.

While Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has scorned the idea of Israel ceding the crossing, Israeli officials have been in talks with the EU and the US about the proposal, the sources told Bloomberg.

At the same time, the Palestinian Hamas movement denied that a meeting had taken place in Qatar between two prominent members

of the movement and the director of Israel’s Mossad intelligence service, to discuss the possibility of European Union control over the Rafah border crossing.

In turn, White House National Security Communications Adviser John Kirby said the Biden administration could not confirm reports that Israel was considering transferring control of the Rafah crossing to the EU and the Palestinians. — SPUTNIK



Israeli authorities are considering handing over management of the Rafah border crossing with Egypt, to the European Union Border Assistance Mission to Rafah (EUBAM) and Palestinian officials.

SPORTS

Myanmar boxers plan to fight in professional boxing matches abroad

MYANMAR Lethwei Federation, Japan Boxing Commission and MBC Company will hold qualifiers for Myanmar Boxers to compete in WBC and WBO Championships.

Qualifiers will be held on 21 August, and those who want to compete can register by 25 July.

The Myanmar Lethwei Federation and Japan Boxing

Commission will supervise qualifiers. In the qualifiers, the men will compete in three-minute four rounds and the women in two-minute four rounds. The winners of the qualifiers will be sent to training camps and competitions in Japan. Professional boxers will receive a paycheck based on winning the fight. — Arkar Linn/KZL



This photo shows two Myanmar boxers in action.

Photo taken on 4 June 2024 shows the buildings of the Paris 2024 Olympic and Paralympic Village during a press tour in Saint Denis, near Paris, France. PHOTO: GAO JING / XINHUA



Olympic village for Paris 2024 officially opens to welcome athletes

International Olympic Committee (IOC) President Thomas Bach visited the village on its opening day, underscoring the significance of the event in the global sporting calendar.

THE Paris Olympic Village officially opened its doors on Thursday, welcoming athletes from around the world who are ready to embark on their Olympic journey.

International Olympic Committee (IOC) President Thomas Bach visited the village on the opening day.

Around 10,500 athletes from 206 National Olympic Committees and the Refugee Olympic Team will compete at the upcoming Olympic Games, which will start on 26 July. Most

athletes will be housed in the Paris Olympic Village, a 54-hectare site located by the Seine River.

Additionally, athletes will stay in satellite villages in Chateauroux (shooting), Lille (basketball preliminaries and handball), Marseille (sailing), and Tahiti (surfing). Accompanied by Tony Estanguet, president of the Paris 2024 Olympics and Paralympics Organizing Committee, and Pierre-Olivier Beckers-Vieujant, chair of the Paris 2024 Coordination Commission,

Bach welcomed athletes as they moved into the village.

"Finally, we are here," he praised the facilities available to athletes during the Games. "It has been a long journey these seven years, but it has been a hugely rewarding one thanks to our friends at the Organizing Committee under the leadership of Tony Estanguet and his team, who have worked closely with our IOC Coordination Commission under the leadership of Pierre-Olivier Beckers-Vieujant. — Xinhua

Host grounds confirmed in Spain for 2030 World Cup finals

SPANISH sporting authorities have decided on the football grounds to host matches in the 2030 World Cup finals which the country will host alongside Portugal and Morocco.

The complete list of host stadiums has to be officially presented to FIFA by the end of July, and there are two grounds in both the Spanish capital of Madrid and Barcelona, with Real Madrid's Santiago Bernabeu Stadium and Atletico Madrid's Metropolitan Stadium chosen along with FC Barcelona's Camp Nou Stadium and Espanyol's Cornellà-El Prat.

Both the Bernabeu and the Camp Nou are also candidates to host the final, with the Bernabeu the current favourite. The remaining grounds are the Athletic Club Bilbao's San Mames Stadium, Real Sociedad's Reale Arena (in San Sebastian) and Deportivo La Coruna's Riazor Stadium.

The Estadio de la Cartuja

in Seville is another venue, and has been chosen ahead of both Sevilla and Betis' home grounds in the city, while Malaga's La Rosaleda Stadium is another in the south of Spain.

La Romareda in Zaragoza is also among the venues, although that ground will need extensive reforms, as will the Estadio de Gran Canaria, which is the home of Las Palmas and situated in the Canary Islands, almost three hours from Madrid by plane.

Perhaps the surprise among the selection of grounds is that there is no stadium in Valencia, which is one of the biggest cities in Spain.

This is mainly due to the fact that Valencia's Mestalla Stadium also needs extensive reforms, but these are unlikely to happen as work has been halted for 15 years on the partially constructed Nou Mestalla ground that is one day intended to be the club's new home. — Xinhua



Wydad fans wave flags during the FIFA Club World Cup second round football match between Morocco's Wydad AC and Saudi Arabia's Al-Hilal at the Prince Moulay Abdellah stadium in Rabat on 4 February 2023.

PHOTO: FADEL SENNA/AFP/FILE

UK seeks to tackle illegal migration with European partners at major summit
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WORLD



Passengers stand in terminal 4 of Adolfo Suarez Madrid-Barajas Airport in Madrid on 19 July 2024, amid massive global IT outage. Airlines, banks, TV channels and other business across the globe were scrambling to deal with one of the biggest IT crashes in recent years on 19 July 2024 caused by an update to an antivirus program. **PHOTO: OSCAR DEL POZO / AFP**

Massive global IT outage hits airlines, banks, media

The issue was apparently caused by an update to an antivirus programme, specifically affecting Microsoft's Azure cloud platform running CrowdStrike Falcon cybersecurity software.

AIRLINES, banks, TV channels and other business across the globe were scrambling to deal with one of the biggest IT crashes in recent years on Friday, apparently caused by an update to an antivirus programme.

Major US air airlines initially grounded all flights over a communication issue — though American Airlines later said it had reinstated its flights.

Airports across the world said check-in systems were down and services were being handled manually, with delays likely.

Microsoft said in a technical update on its website that the problems began at 1900 GMT on Thursday, affecting users of its Azure cloud platform running cybersecurity software CrowdStrike Falcon.

“We recommend customers that are able to, to restore from a backup from be-

fore this time,” the US software giant said.

CrowdStrike CEO George Kurtz said on social media platform X that customers had been “impacted by a defect found in a single content update for Windows hosts”. “The issue has been identified, isolated and a fix has been deployed,” he said.

Shares in CrowdStrike slumped by 20 per cent in pre-market trading. — AFP

PUBLIC OWNERSHIP INITIATIVE

UK govt launches plans to renationalize railways

THE UK's new Labour government introduced Thursday long-promised draft legislation to renationalize the country's rail services, most of which are privately owned.

“After years of unacceptably low performance, the bill is a landmark change that will allow the Government to bring rail passenger services back into public ownership,” a statement read.

Labour triumphed over the Conservative party in elections on 4 July, re-entering Downing Street after 14 years in opposition with promises to fix the country's ailing transport services.

The proposed legislation aims to bring rail operations under public ownership through “Great British Railways” once current contracts expire by 2027 or earlier due to mismanagement.

This move by the government avoids compensation fees to operators. Privatization occurred in the mid-1990s under PM John Major, though the network remained public via Network Rail. Recent state takeovers of English operators were temporary measures pending privatization returns.

Scotland and Wales manage rail under devolved administrations. — AFP

Vietnam's most powerful Communist Party leader dies

Nguyen Phu Trong, Vietnam's influential leader who spearheaded the nation's largest anti-corruption campaign, passed away at 80, leaving an enduring legacy after 13 years as general secretary and a historic presidency from 2018-2021.

NGUYEN Phu Trong, Vietnam's most powerful contemporary leader and architect of the country's largest anti-corruption campaign, died Friday at the age of 80, state media said.

Trong's 13 years as general secretary of the Communist Party have left

an indelible mark on the nation's political landscape.

Trong was president from 2018-21 and served three consecutive terms as general secretary, the first to do so since the “doi moi” era of economic reform began in 1986. — AFP



This file photo taken on 24 March 2021 shows General Secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam Central Committee (CPVCC) and then Vietnamese President Nguyen Phu Trong delivering a report at the opening session of the 11th session of the 14th National Assembly (NA) of Vietnam in Hanoi, Vietnam. Nguyen Phu Trong passed away at the age of 80, Vietnam News Agency reported on Friday. **PHOTO: VNA VIA XINHUA**