

The Global **NEW LIGHT** of MYANMAR

Tatmadaw education schools, Tatmadaw BEHSs turn out 392 distinction winners in matric exam 2024

Tatmadaw has been providing stipends to 787 university students from 2013-14 to 2023-24 academic years, 38 students who have become medical doctors, 35 engineers, and 41 other graduates.

AT the ceremony to honour outstanding students, Senior General Min Aung Hlaing revealed that the State Administration Council is implementing the KG+9 education scheme for all school-age children so as to improve education standards.

A ceremony to present prizes to Tatmadaw members from Tatmadaw (Army, Navy and Air), offspring from in-service Tatmadaw members, war veterans and Tatmadaw member-substituted service personnel for passing the matriculation examination in 2023-24 academic year with flying colours and overall outstanding students took place at Zeyathiri Beikman in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday afternoon, with an address by Chairman of the State Administration Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing.

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State Administration Council Chairman Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing awards the Grade-12 outstanding student Maung Aung Phone Pyae at yesterday's event in Nay Pyi Taw.

Salient points from the speech delivered by the Senior General at the awarding of outstanding students

1. Tatmadaw members from relevant Tatmadaw education schools passed the 2024 matriculation examination with 24.58 per cent and Tatmadaw BEHS, 60.94 per cent, turning out 392 distinction winners.
2. Tatmadaw has been providing stipends to 787 university students from 2013-14 to 2023-24 academic years.
3. A total of 85 basic education high schools in 84 districts have initiated learning opportunities for students to study industrial, agriculture and livestock subjects after passing grade 9.

Article

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By **THAN HTUN**
(GEOSCIENCE MYANMAR)

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Six ministries to launch 12 forest conservation projects with Mekong-Lancang fund

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Yangon realty market slows at start of Lent

NATIONAL

Strand Road Night Market opens in Magway

ACCORDING to the Magway Region government, the Strand Road Night Market, constructed at a cost of K1.5 billion, was inaugurated in Magway on 21 July.

The market features gardens and plantations, supermarkets, container bars, beverage shops, restaurants, and general stores, providing job opportunities for residents.

Visitors can shop, dine, and relax while enjoying the fresh air from the Ayeyawady River.

— ASH/MKKS



Pictures capture officials inspecting the newly built Night Market (L) and the park along the Strand Road in Magway.

Myanmar to participate in 36th VECONAC, 23rd General Assembly in Singapore



The Myanmar War Veterans Organization delegation seen at Yangon airport yesterday before leaving for Singapore.

A Myanmar delegation led by Vice-Chair (1) Lt-Gen Ye Aung (Retd) of the Myanmar War Veterans Organization left Yangon for Singapore yesterday to attend the 36th Executive Board Meeting of Veterans Confederation of ASEAN Countries (VECONAC) and the 23rd General Assembly to be held from 24 to 28 July at Swissotel The Stamford Hotel in Singapore. — MNA/KTZH

MNHRC inspects Yamethin Prison, Kintha 1 & 2 Production Camp

THE inspection team, led by U Kyaw Myint, a member of the Myanmar National Human Rights Commission, inspected Yamethin Prison on 23 July 2024 in Yamethin Township, Mandalay Region, and Kintha 1 and 2 Production Camp on 24 July 2024 in Tatkon Township, Naypyidaw Union Territory, in accordance with Sections 43 and 44 of the Commission Law.

The inspection team inspected the mentioned prison and production camp under the MNHRC Law and pro-

cedures to see whether the prisoners and detainees enjoy fundamental rights, including appropriate food supply, access to healthcare and provision of adequate purified water and court detention centre. The inspection team enquired about prisoners and whether they received their personal items and items sent by families, whether family visits were made, and whether there were human rights violations and torture cases. The inspection team also privately

interviewed the prisoners who wanted to meet the team freely and privately.

The inspection team also inspected the dormitories, clinic, library, kitchen, food storage, water purifier, and water sanitation system of the Yamethin Prison and Kintha 1 and 2 Production Camp.

MNHRC will send recommendations to the relevant departments for necessary action based on the findings during inspections under the MNHRC Law. — MNHRC

Myanmar ambassador to Japan engages with Kumamoto officials, business leaders

ACCORDING to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Myanmar Ambassador to Japan U Soe Han met a Kumamoto regional parliamentarian on 19 July.

The ambassador also engaged with members of the Kyushu-Myanmar Friendship Association, Japanese business

owners who host Myanmar intern workers, and founders of Japanese elderly care homes.

During these meetings, the ambassador discussed ways to enhance bilateral cooperation and explore opportunities for sending Myanmar workers to Kumamoto. — ASH/TMT



Myanmar Ambassador to Japan U Soe Han meets the Kumamoto regional parliamentarian and other officials.

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NATIONAL

Tatmadaw education schools, Tatmadaw BEHSs turn out 392 distinction winners in matric exam 2024

FROM PAGE 1

Speaking on the occasion, the Senior General said that Tatmadaw members from relevant Tatmadaw education schools passed the 2024 matriculation examination with 24.58 per cent and Tatmadaw BEHS, 60.94 per cent, turning out 392 distinction winners.

He continued that No 2 Tatmadaw Education School secured 66.67 per cent of the pass rate, whereas No 6 BSHS (Sittway) and No 2 BSHS (Mingaladon), 95 per cent.

He disclosed that as offspring of Tatmadaw members, they relied on basic education schools of the government and became outstanding students in the matriculation examination.

In this regard, he added that a total of 85 basic education high schools in 84 districts have initiated learning opportunities for students to study industrial, ag-

riculture and livestock subjects after passing grade 9.

The Senior General recounted that deserved prizes will be presented to officials from Tatmadaw education schools and Tatmadaw BEHSs for securing the highest pass rate in the matriculation examination in turning out 69 six-distinction winners, 80 five-distinction winners, one three-distinction winner Tatmadaw member, seven two-distinction winner Tatmadaw members and 13 one-distinction winner Tatmadaw members, and 34 outstanding students.

He added that distinction winners and scholarship award winners will be honoured at relevant military command headquarters.

He noted that Tatmadaw has been providing stipends to 787 university students from 2013-14 to 2023-24 academic

years. Of them, 38 students became medical doctors, 35 were engineers, and 41 were other graduates. Moreover, 257 outstanding students have sent on excursion trips abroad, he added.

He expressed his belief that those outstanding students from the excursion trips will apply experiences from trips in nation-building endeavours.

Adjutant-General Lt-Gen Soe Min Oo reported on more than five-distinction winners, the highest pass rate winning schools and prizes for outstanding students.

The Senior General presented prizes and certificates of honour to officers-in-charge of the outstanding Tatmadaw education schools and Tatmadaw BEHSs under the Directorate of Public Relations and Psychological Warfare for the 2023-24 AY matriculation examination.

The Senior General also gave medals, prizes and certificates of honour to five outstanding students and students with six distinctions, respectively.

Daw Kyu Kyu Hla, wife of the Senior General, also presented medals, prizes and certificates of honour to five outstanding students and six-distinction winners.

SAC Vice-Chairman Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Soe Win presented first, second and third prizes and certificates of honour to headmasters of Tatmadaw education schools for the 2023-24 matric exam.

The Vice-Senior General also handed medals, prizes and certificates of honour to five outstanding students and two six-distinction winners.

Council member Chief of the General Staff (Army, Navy

and Air) General Maung Maung Aye and his wife, Council Secretary Lt-Gen Aung Lin Dwe and his wife, Joint Secretary Lt-Gen Ye Win Oo and his wife, council member Union Minister for Defence Admiral Tin Aung San and his wife, Commander-in-Chief (Navy) Rear-Admiral Htein Win and his wife, Commander-in-Chief (Air) General Tun Aung, Lt-Gen Thet Pon and Lt-Gen Phone Myat of the Office of the Commander-in-Chief (Army), Chairman of the Central Executive Committee of the Myanmar War Veterans Organization Lt-Gen Sein Win (Retired) and Adjutant-General Lt-Gen Soe Min Oo presented medals, prizes and certificates of honour to distinction winners.

After the ceremony, the Senior General, his wife and party cordially greeted the prize-winning Tatmadaw members, students and parents. — MNA/TTA



State Administration Council Member Deputy Prime Minister Union Minister for Defence Admiral Tin Aung San is seen off at Yangon International Airport before departing for Vietnam yesterday.

DPM MoD Union Minister leaves for Vietnam to attend state funeral

A delegation led by State Administration Council Member Deputy Prime Minister Union Minister for Defence Admiral Tin Aung San left Yangon for the Socialist Republic of Vietnam yesterday

evening to attend the state funeral service of the General Secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam and former President Nguyen Phu Quoc.

The state funeral service of the General Secretary of

the Communist Party of Vietnam and former President Nguyen Phu Quoc will be held on 25 and 26 July at the National Funeral Hall in Hanoi in 2024. — MNA/TS

MoE Union Minister receives Ambassador of India

UNION Minister for Energy U Ko Ko Lwin received Mr Abhay Thakur, Ambassador of India to Myanmar, at the ministry reception hall in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday evening.

During the meeting, both sides cordially exchanged views on the energy sector, increasing cooperation in the

energy sector between Myanmar and India and sending trainees to study oil exploration and production and oil refining techniques.

Managing directors and officials under the Ministry of Energy and officials from the Indian Embassy were also present at the meeting. — MNA/TS



Union Minister U Ko Ko Lwin and Indian Ambassador Mr Abhay Thakur discuss energy cooperation in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

NATIONAL

DPM MoFA Union Minister attends China-South Asia Expo opening

THE Ministry of Commerce of China and the People's Government of Yunnan Province jointly held an opening ceremony for the 8th China-South Asia Expo and the 28th China Kunming Export & Import Fair on 23 July 2024 at the Dianchi International Convention and Exhibition Centre in Kunming.

At the ceremony, Deputy Prime Minister and Union Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Than Swe delivered an opening speech together with Mr Ding Zhongli, Vice-Chairman of the Standing Committee of the 14th National People's Congress of China, Speaker of the Parliament of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, Deputy Prime Minister of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Deputy Speaker of the People's Majlis of the Republic of Maldives and Vice-Chairperson of the National Assembly of Nepal.

In his speech, the Deputy Prime Minister and the Union Minister for Foreign Affairs first congratulated the Chinese Ministry of Commerce and the People's Government of Yunnan Province for their initiatives



Deputy Prime Minister Union Minister for Foreign Affairs U Than Swe delivers an opening speech at the China-South Asia Expo in Kunming, China, on 23 July 2024.

to hold the annual Expo and Trade Fair successfully. He also mentioned that Myanmar is surrounded by five immediate neighbours, where over 3.2 billion people reside, and Myanmar's strategic geographical location, together with abundant natural resources and human resources, provides the country with the potential to become a huge investment opportunity. He also highlighted the investment opportunities and encouraged business communities from China and South Asia

countries to do more business with Myanmar.

This year, the Expo will be held from 23 to 28 July 2024, and it will be attended by high-level government officials from 10 Southeast Asian countries and 8 South Asian countries. More than 800 booths from 2,000 companies from 82 countries have been participating in the Expo.

During the occasion, a Myanmar delegation led by the Deputy Prime Minister and Union Minister for Foreign Affairs, together with the Union Minis-

ter for Commerce, explored the International Pavilions, which were showcased by 82 countries. The delegation visited Myanmar booths set up by the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chamber of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI) and Myanmar business communities. Under the collaboration between the Ministry of Commerce and related business associations, over 88 representatives from Myanmar business communities, including 37 representatives from UMFCCI led by their

President U Aye Win, reportedly participated in the Expo by organizing 26 booths that display Myanmar products.

The China-South Asia Expo has been held since 2013 in Kunming, Yunnan Province, with the purpose of further enhancing trade cooperation and fostering people-to-people exchanges between China and South Asian and Southeast Asian countries. The current Expo is being held under the theme of "Solidarity and Coordination for Common Development".

On the afternoon of 24 July 2024, the Myanmar delegation led by U Than Swe, Deputy Prime Minister and Union Minister for Foreign Affairs, together with U Htun Ohn, Union Minister for Commerce, left Kunming Changshui International Airport for Myanmar. The delegation was welcomed at the Mandalay International Airport by officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Commerce and Mr Zhang Wei, acting Consul-General of the Consulate-General of the People's Republic of China in Mandalay at the Mandalay International Airport. — MNA

Myanmar, India to enhance cooperation in e-ID system

UNION Minister for Immigration and Population U Myint Kyaing received Mr Abhay Thakur, Indian Ambassador to Myanmar, in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

During the meeting, they cordially exchanged views on facilitating entry visas and residential permits for entry and

exit of people between the two countries, the reopening of international border camps, especially the Tamu-Moreh border post, transfer of Indians without taking action as a sign of bilateral relations as per the lists of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, implementation of an e-ID system

based on India's Aadhaar system, discussion on the e-ID system made by experts from the External Affairs and National Institute of Smart Government (NISG), immigration-related measures between Myanmar and India and further cooperation in the e-ID system. — MNA/KTZH



Union Minister U Myint Kyaing and Indian Ambassador Mr Abhay Thakur discuss matters related to immigration and border affairs in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

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

NATIONAL

Union Health Minister receives WHO Resident Representative to Myanmar

UNION Minister for Health Dr Thet Khaing Win met Dr Thushara Fernando, WHO Resident Representative to Myanmar, at the minister's office yesterday.

Both sides discussed the current cooperation between the Ministry of Health and the World Health Organization on the expansion of healthcare activities, provision of diarrhoea vaccines, capacity building of health workers, cooperation of healthcare services at general hospitals and future agendas. — MNA/KZL



Union Minister Dr Thet Khaing Win meets WHO Resident Representative to Myanmar Dr Thushara Fernando in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.



Union Minister Dr Thet Khaing Win meets Indian Ambassador Mr Abhay Thakur in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

Indian Ambassador calls on MoHT Union Minister

UNION Minister for Hotels and Tourism Dr Thet Khaing Win met Mr Abhay Thakur, Indian Ambassador to Myanmar, in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

They cordially discussed public-private tourism promotion cooperation between the two countries in order to know more about Myanmar's destinations, India-Myanmar bilateral tourism promotion plans and invitational plans of

tourists from India as well as international tourists, promoting Myanmar's destinations and tourist attractions through social media by recording tourism promotion videos, plans to invite individuals from India's tourism industry to Myanmar for familiarization trips (FAM-Trip) and cooperation matters for the convenience of currency exchange for tourists. — MNA/KZL

Joint Statement of 27 Political Parties

4th Wanning of Waso 1386 ME
24 July 2024

1. The government has announced that they are preparing to hold a free and fair multiparty democratic general election in 2025. It is a firm decision of the State Administration Council to implement the five-point roadmap.
2. According to the current situation, the armed organizations, some armed groups that break NCA and the people residing in local and foreign countries and organizations, including NUG/CRPH/PDF/MNDAA/TNLA/AA that started attack, expanded their area of control and conducted operations aiming at deteriorating the stability of the county are the ones who break Our Three Main National Causes, and committing the following acts:
 - (a) They detain, kidnap and kill monks, innocent civilians, government employees, teachers, students and children.
 - (b) They destroy the state-owned and private buildings in various ways.
 - (c) They attack using innocent civilians as human shields.
 - (d) They launch attacks on big cities and wards/village tracts using heavy weapons/drones.
 - (e) They arrest youths and make them participate in fights with arms by force.
 - (f) They drive away other ethnic tribes who have been living in the same land for many years by force.
 - (g) They intentionally break the 2008 Constitution and existing laws of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and international laws.
3. Such terrorist acts bring huge impacts to innocent people, like losses of employment and possessions, facing hardships in daily life, loss of learning opportunities, abandoning their native places, and loss of future hopes. Therefore, it seems to block the original rights of people, and they should be able to escape as quickly as possible.
4. We, political parties, strongly agree with the preparations for the 2025 multiparty general election made by the government on behalf of millions of people who oppose terrorism. The political parties will continue making political efforts to ensure the state's stability and eradicate terrorist acts in the country.
5. Therefore, the message that the government is preparing to hold an election in 2025 is intended for the emergence of a public-elected democratic government. It is not an escape for defence and security organizations, and we accept it as the best escape for all people, including political parties.

Flood Warning

(Issued at 19:00 hrs MST on 24-7-2024)

ACCORDING to the (18:30) hrs MST observation today, the water level of Thaungyin River at Myawady is observed as about three feet (86 centimetres) below its

danger level 31.59 feet (963 cm). It may reach its danger level during the next 1 day. It is especially advised to the people who settle near the river banks and low lying areas at Myawady Township, to take precaution measure.

According to the (15:30) hrs MST observation today, the water level of Shwegyin River at Shwegyin is

observed as about more than 31/2 feet (110 cm) below its danger level 22.97 feet (700 cm). It may reach its danger level during the next one day. It is especially advised to the people who settle near the river banks and low Eying areas at Shwegyin Township, to take precaution measure. — DMH

NATIONAL

Ceremony to award certificates to recognized skilful workers held in Yangon



AS of July this year, 267 labour skills testing and evaluation centres, 857 examiners, and 102 inspectors have been recognized, according to the Ministry of Labour.

A ceremony to award certificates to those recognized as skilled workers was held on 22 July at the Skills Training Centre (Yankin) in Yangon Region. The ceremony was attended by Union Minister for Labour U Myint Naung, officials from the Yangon Region government, members of the Assessment and Certification Committee (ACC) and the Employment Skills Training Committee, UMFCCI officials, and guests. — TWA/MKKS

This photo shows Union Labour Minister U Myint Naung giving the speech at the certification ceremony.

Six ministries to launch 12 forest conservation projects with Mekong-Lancang fund

ACCORDING to the Forest Department, six ministries will implement a total of 12 projects for the protection and conservation of forest resources this year (2024) with support from the Mekong-Lancang Special Fund.

These 12 projects, which will receive over US\$400,000 in the current financial year, will focus on various sectors, including agriculture, livestock, and forestry resource conservation. They will also address the promotion of environmentally friendly practices and innovations in small and me-

dium enterprises, village-level poverty reduction, information technology advancements, and cultural sector enhancement.

The Mekong-Lancang cooperation fund will support forest conservation projects in Kengtung and Tachilek in Shan State (East) and other areas related to the Mekong River basin. These projects will include educational initiatives on controlling pathogens and pests in natural forests and plantations and raising awareness about the dangers of chemical drugs. — TWA/TKO



This photo shows two staff members from the Forest Department conducting a forest conservation activity.

MSWRR issues warning: Common landslides expected from June to August



The file photo shows the riverbank collapsing due to erosion of the Ayeyawady River in Ngasekyun Village, Hinthada Township, Ayeyawady Region, in 2023.

THE Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement has announced that there is a need for people to be careful because landslides are common during June, July and August.

The statement says landslides cause very little loss of property, but the loss of human life and injuries are high. There were 26 landslides nationwide,

36 residential buildings were damaged, and 44 people lost their lives during the 2023-2024 financial year. Landslides are common from June to August and occur occasionally during the rest of the period.

Therefore, the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement is working to protect the people with the participation

of the public in order to reduce the damage caused by the landslides.

In addition, the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement has announced that people can request assistance regarding natural disasters by contacting the 24-hour hotline numbers 067 3404 666 and 067 3404777. — TWA/KZL

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.

Yangon realty market slows at start of Lent

YANGON'S property market, where rental was more active than sales, is now cold at the beginning of Lent, according to the agents.

As Buddhists, Myanmar people avoid moving houses as much as possible during Lent, the market is now slow.

“Since the Lent period has arrived, the real estate market has been inactive. Before the Lent, rents and sales from other cities coming to Yangon were plenty. I have to showrooms almost every day. Some house-owners also had to show theirs. Now, the purchase is sparse. As for rent, there were some, but sparse. Those who have rented don't move out during the Lent. Some will move only after the Lent. So, they extended the rent,”



A panoramic view of the Yangon skyline with its diverse architectural backdrop.

said a real estate agent.

Only when the Thadingyut comes will people move home, and the Yangon property market will be active again.

In Yangon, cheap apartments are now rare and expensive ones are easy to rent out, said an agent from Kyimyindine township.

“Compared to the previous year, the real estate price and the rental price are a little higher this year. Previously, apartments with cheap rates were plenty, but now their prices have gone up. Cheap rental units are now rare. There are more and more expensive rental units,” he said.

In the real estate rental market in Yangon, there are more six-month contracts and deposit rentals, according to the real estate market. — MT/ZN

Manufacturing product exports exceed US\$2 bln by 12 July

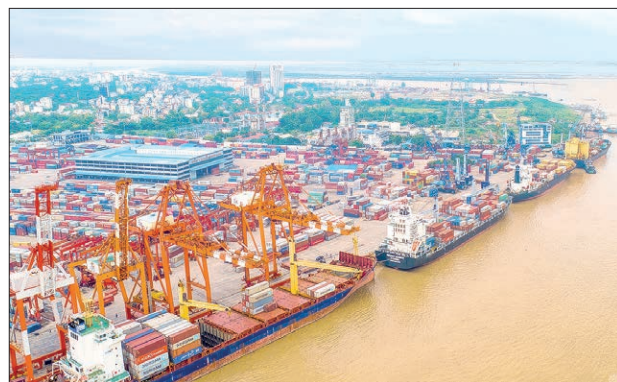
THE exports from the manufacturing sector have amounted to US\$2.236 billion as of 12 July of the current financial year 2024-2025 beginning 1 April 2024, indicating a significant drop of \$312.86 million compared with that of the FY 2023-2024, the Ministry of Commerce's statistics showed.

The finished industrial goods export dropped from \$2.54 billion, as recorded in the corresponding period last FY 2023-2024.

Myanmar transports manufacturing goods to foreign markets through two modes of transportation (sea and land border).

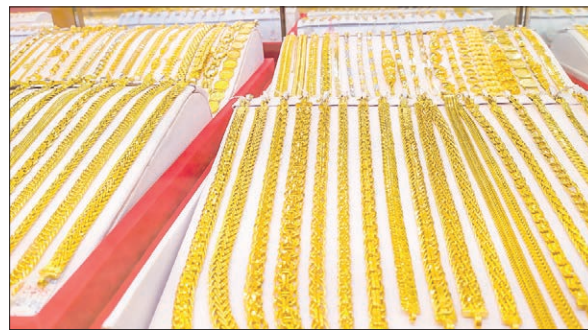
Myanmar exports agricultural products, livestock products, fisheries, minerals, forest products, finished industrial goods, and other goods, while it imports capital goods, intermediate goods, raw materials from CMP garment factories, and consumer goods.

Myanmar has been implementing the National Export Strategy (NES) 2020-2025 in order to bolster exports. The priority sectors of the NES comprise agricultural production, garment and apparel, industrial and electronic device, fishery business, forest product, digital manufacturing and service, logistic service, quality management, trade information service, innovation and entrepreneurship sectors. — NN/KK



A bird's-eye view of the Yangon Port on the Yangon River.

YGEA opens 33rd free gold training on 1 Aug



Gold jewellery seen being displayed for sales at one of the jewellery outlets in Yangon.

YANGON Region Gold Entrepreneurs Association (YGEA) will conduct a gold training course for free at its office located at No 42/50 on Shwebontha Street, Pabedan Township, between 1 and 7 August.

YGEA will also provide an awareness course

(16th Batch) on anti-money laundering and combating the financing of terrorism (AML/CFT course).

The respective experts will disseminate education and knowledge about gold mining, gold refining, gold trading, basic calculations to run a gold shop, goldsmith, gold mortgage, gold rate calculation, gold/silver coins and jewellery.

Those enthusiastic can take out enrolment forms for free at the association office. As the number of trainees is limited, they can contact YGEA's contact numbers at 09 450049282 and 09 251992727 for further details.

The precious metal dealers' licences can be sought only with the completion certificate of the AML/CFT course, according to Chapter 2 Section 3 (G) of the directive 2/2022 issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs' Central Body on Anti-Money Laundering. — NN/KK

Basic Sewing Machine Operator Training Course Batch 241 opens in Aug

MYANMAR Garment Manufacturers Association (MGMA) will offer a Basic Sewing Machine Operator Training Course (Batch 240) from 5 to 23 August 2024 at the Myanmar Garment Human Resources Development Training Centre (MGHRDC).

The course will provide practical and technical approaches to sewing machines, different sewing methods, labour laws and practices.

This training will also help those hunting jobs from regions beyond Yangon connect with the garment factories with a view to fostering job opportunities.

Those who wish to attend the training can enrol through the contact numbers of MGHRDC at 09 940858350, 09 450723262, 09 9403912570, 09 784085794 and 09952802635. — NN/KK



Training session underway during the Advanced Sewing Machine Operator Training (Batch 4).

OPINION

Strictly avoid vaping among young people

VAPING, also known as e-cigarette use, has become popular among youths globally, including in Myanmar. Despite its widespread appeal, many young people overlook the significant health risks associated with vaping.

E-cigarettes use a solution that includes hazardous elements like nickel, chromium, and lead. Experts and scientists caution that these elements can easily enter the lungs through the respiratory tract when vaping, leading to severe health risks. A study by the Canada Health Centre revealed that vape solutions contain arsenic, mercury, and cadmium in acceptable amounts but also higher levels of other harmful chemicals. Unapproved vape solutions may have over 100 times the lead content compared to approved ones. Additionally, unsafe vape equipment can exacerbate the dangers due to chemical reactions induced by heat.

That is why all youths in Myanmar need to avoid test-smoking and vaping in their lives. As scientists have found findings about the disadvantages of vaping, youths should not spend their precious time vaping. They need to pay their young age in other work processes beneficial for society.

volage to enhance the nicotine hit.

Vaping, like cigarette smoking, offers no benefits to the body's organs and poses risks to both users and those exposed to second-hand smoke. Vaping and smoking harm everyone in the vicinity, contributing to a decline in overall health and socioeconomic conditions due to the costs of these habits and their adverse health effects.

Given these facts, it is crucial to strictly avoid vaping among young people to protect their health and well-being. The popularity of vaping among youths is alarming, and the misconceptions about its safety need to be addressed. Awareness campaigns and stricter regulations on e-cigarettes could help mitigate the growing public health issue. By understanding the dangers and acting accordingly, communities can safeguard the health of their young members and promote healthier lifestyles.

That is why all youths in Myanmar need to avoid test-smoking and vaping in their lives. As scientists have found findings about the disadvantages of vaping, youths should not spend their precious time vaping. They need to pay their young age in other work processes beneficial for society.

ones. Additionally, unsafe vape equipment can exacerbate the dangers due to chemical reactions induced by heat.

E-cigarettes function by heating nicotine extracted from tobacco, along with flavourings and other chemicals, to create an inhalable aerosol. Traditional cigarettes contain around 7,000 chemicals, many of which are toxic. The use of e-cigarettes has been linked to a significant number of lung injuries and deaths. In February 2020, the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported 2,807 cases of e-cigarette or vaping use-associated lung injury (EVALI) and 68 deaths related to this condition.

Nicotine, the main component in both regular cigarettes and e-cigarettes, is highly addictive. E-cigarette users can sometimes intake even more nicotine than those using traditional tobacco products. This is because users can purchase extra-strength cartridges with higher nicotine concentrations or increase the e-cigarette's

The Burma Circle of the Geological Survey of India and their Contributions to the Geology of Myanmar

Episode:39

The Geology of the Mergui District

This article is the continuation of the previous Episode 38, extracted from the Geology of Mergui District, reported by Sethu Rama Rau in 1930.

Geological Formation

The rocks of this series are phyllites, argillites, shales, conglomerates, sandstones, quartzites, tuffs, and agglomerates. The shales that predominate are indurated into phyllites and argillites and are dark grey. On weathering, they give rise to variously coloured clays, from buff yellow to brownish red, according to the proportion of iron and the degree of decomposition which they have undergone. The hills, rising to heights of from 2,000 to 2,500 feet, are situated west of the Tenasserim Valley, and their continuation southwards up to the source of the Klong Yung, Klong Banhuni, and Klong Ngan tributaries of the Pakchan River, consist of quartzite. The rivers flowing westwards, such as the Lenya, have a few waterfalls and rapids along their courses. The angular turn taken by the river and the islands in its bed are caused by the resistance of the quartzites to denuding agencies. The northerly continuation of the quartzites is visible in the Palauk, Palaw, Dathwe, and other rivers which have a westerly course.

Impure limestones, weathering into brownish-red soil, occur near the sources of easterly tributaries of the Pabyi Chaung and west of Sinlauk Taung.

Carboniferous shales have a graphitic appearance and occur in many localities. The best sections of these rocks are to be found near Tharabwin, Mawton, and Tagu. Similar shales occur in the Tavoy district as almost continuous beds at the 11th mile on the Tavoy-Myitta road and at Onbinkwin near Kanbauk.

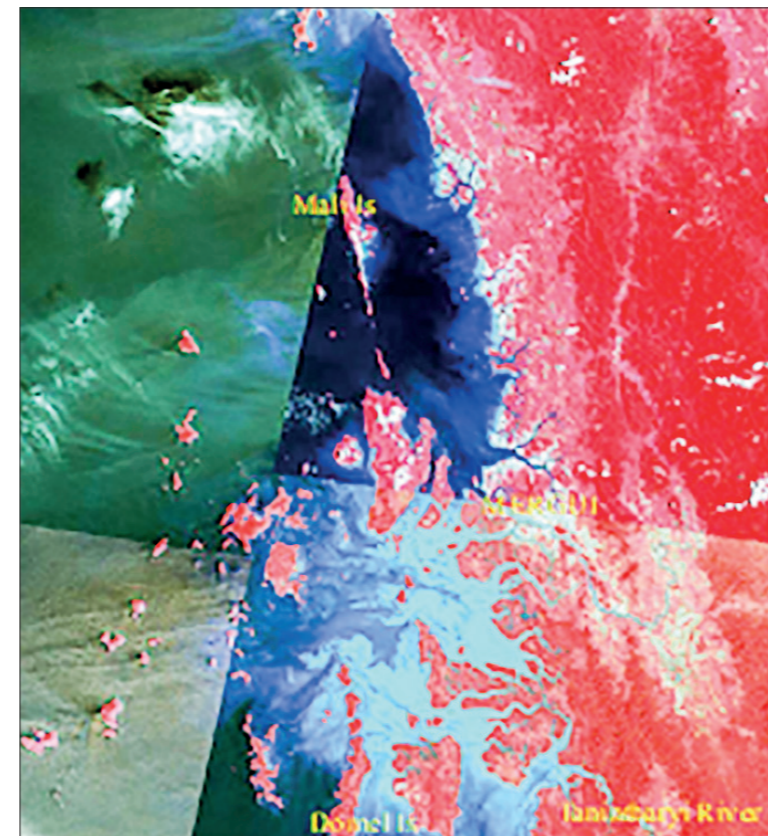
The 'pseudo-porphyrific grits and conglomerates described by Dr Oldham are represented in the district by volcanic tuffs and agglomerates in many of the islands of the Archipelago.

Sedimentary rocks, which are partly of volcanic origin, were observed by Dr A M Heron in some of the islands of the Archipelago. In his examination of Maingay and Elphinstone Islands, Dr Heron has mapped the foci of eruptions, which have distributed their debris widely through the rocks of the Mergui series on Maingay Island. A significant development of volcanic agglomerates, composed of quartz, felspar, and biotite fragments, with chips of glass and quartzite, evidently the product of paroxysmal eruptions of a magma corresponding in composition with granite and rhyolite occurs on Maingay Island, etc.

The author has observed similar rocks, resembling ash beds, weathering to a grey colour, on Singu Island, north of Kyaukpeik, which island forms the southerly continuation of the Elphinstone Island rocks. Another easterly band of hard, tough, indurated, volcanic tuffs, with angular fragments of felspar and subangular pebbles of slates of various sizes, occurs on the easterly slopes of Manoron taung at the source of the Pong chaung, one of the tributaries of the Manoron chaung, N N W of Thetke.

Hard, fine-grained, finely laminated argillites of a bluish-grey and black colour occur in many parts of the district and are abundant in the chain of islands extending from Tavoy Island, southwards through King, Maingay, and Lampi (Sullivan), to "Sir W. James Island. Similar rocks occur east of the Yanngwa, Karathuri, and Maliwun ranges near the source of the Lenya and Pakchan Rivers and extend north and south.

The rocks resemble micaceous slates and break easily along their bedding planes into splinters. Along the peripheries of the granite of the Tagu are many instances in which the argillite is altered to hornstone, as seen on the Sindin-Tagu Road. On the Island of Pulo Kanna (11° 0' 30" and 98° 36' 30"), the argillite is metamorphosed by the adjoining granite.



Landsat map of Mergui District

The fresh rock has the black appearance of basalt but not its specific gravity. A microscopic examination shows brown biotite, magnetite, and garnet. In many localities, the slates under the microscope also display well-developed greenish chlorites due to metamorphism.

On the east coast of Lampi Island, north of Kayang-aw and south of Katyang, the argillites are interbedded with conglomerates. The pebbles consist of granite, quartz, and quartzite, ranging in diameter from one to ten inches. The granite is of the biotite-hornblende variety. From the nature and size of the boulders, it appears that they could not have come from a long distance. On the west coast of Pulo To-ton Islands, a conglomerate band consisting of pebbles of quartz, from a half to one inch in diameter, occurs above high tide level. Beds of conglomerate, passing gradually into slates, also occurred on the easterly slopes of the ridge dividing the drainage areas of the Tenasserim and Kyaukpya Rivers and were traced southwards up to the Sindin-Tagu Road.

The general strike of the sedimentary rocks of the Mergui series is from 10° to 15° west of north, with steep angles of dip. The vast extent to which these rocks are exposed is due to their folding. In the islands of the Archipelago, marine denudation has exposed the structure of the rocks along the coastline to show the different variations in the dip. On Tavoy and King Islands, in the north, Dr A M Heron has marked dips at several places, which proves the folding of the Mergui. The rocks of Tavoy Island dip 70° N E near Malizayatseik; on Rich Island east of Tavoy Island, the dip is from 10° to 20° E. Further east, the angle of dip increases to 30° on Edward Island. On the north coast of King Island, Dr A M Heron has observed strata, which are vertical in some places, sometimes rolling, and at other locations with gentle angles of dip, in a nearly eastern direction. The sedimentaries of Julia Island, situated northeast of King Island, are inclined at angles of 50° to 60° in a roughly northeast direction. But the direction of the dip on Polly Island is from west to west-south-west. This change in the direction of the dip may be explained by an anticlinal fold, whose axis forms the line of weakness. As the longer axis of the granitic boss of this island coincides with the

anticlinal axis, it may be inferred that the granite has been intruded along this line of weakness, etc.

On Lampi and adjoining Islands in the south, which lie on a line coinciding with the general strike of the sedimentary rocks of the district, the author observed several opposing dips that prove folding. Near the landing place of Mr Ahmed's mine, on the east coast, a small island in the bay of Kayaung-aw exposes strata at low tide, which dip inwards at a low angle and mark the position of a syncline, followed by an anticline. Other islands that dip in opposing directions are well exposed, such as Pulo Kamat and Pulo Pyindaung, Sir Charles Forbes Islands, etc.

Mr J J A Page examined many of the islands of the Archipelago and has adduced additional evidence of folding. He observed the crossing of two anticlines in Hayes Island (12° 30'; 98° 10") and noticed steeply inclined folds on an island near the southwest corner of Elphinstone Island. All these folds are more or less parallel to one another. The overlying limestones also show evidence of folding in Kyauktaung Hill. The crustal movements just have been in part after the deposition of the Moulmein series, i.e. post-Permo-Carboniferous, but earlier folding also antedated, in all probability, the Moulmein series. In their memoir on the Tavoy district, Drs J Coggin Brown and A M Heron have observed that the Mergui series is repeated several times in an east-to-west section, in closely pressed folds.

Age of Mergui Series

A careful search for fossils in the rocks which underlie the Moulmein series was unsuccessful. The age of the Moulmein series has been fixed as Carboniferous from an examination of the fossils collected by Mr P N Bose. All that can be stated, therefore, is that the Merguis are older than the Carboniferous. From their lithology characters, they may be tentatively correlated with the Chaung Magyi series of Upper Burma - Pre-Cambrian and, possibly in part, older Palaeozoic.

Mr W R Jones ascribes a Carboniferous age to the limestones and a Permo-Carboniferous age to a part of the Mergui series. The limestones referred to by Mr Jones as forming the bed of the Kanbauk Valley are not the characteristic limestones of the Moulmein series. In the rocks of the Mergui series, there are many grades of calcareous shales and sandstones with varying quantities of lime in them; the limestones of the Kanbauk valley are possibly such limestones interbedded with the quartzites and shales. Limestones of this kind were mapped on the hill ranges situated west of the Tenasserim River at the foot of Sinlauk Taung in the Mergui district and near the source of the Ban Chaung in the Tavoy district. Similar limestones of a blackish or red colour, sometimes crystalline, with field relationships to the Merguis leaving little doubt that they form part of them, were examined by Dr A M Heron between Yapu and Migyaung Laung on the Tavoy River.

Older intrusives in the Merguis

Near Talobusa, there are many bands of acid and basic rocks with gently folded ridges that intrude into the slates and quartzites of the Mergui series. The junction is obscure and it is difficult to state whether it is conformable or not. The acid bands are composed of quartz approaching a quartzite with little biotite, while the basic rocks are rich in hornblende, pyrite, and biotite with very little quartz. The rocks are undulating and gently folded, and the axis of the folds corresponds with the strike of the sedimentary rocks of the district, i.e. 20° W of N to 20° E of S. Pegmatitic veins traverse them and branch irregularly in various directions. Quartz veins of a later age, having an N E - S W direction, have cut across the pegmatites.

It is difficult to fix the age of these acids and basic rocks. The original minerals have been altered by metamorphism, and they have been subjected to severe crustal movements, including the folding of the Merguis. Their general appearance resembles that of gneiss. They were either intruded into the Merguis before the latter were folded or are older than the Merguis.

The Moulmein limestones

The Moulmein limestones are coarse-grained and crystalline, some of the crystals being ¼ to ½ inch in width. The rocks form ridges and hills with precipitous sides, rugged and bare of vegetation, standing like fortresses, and are surrounded by alluvium. They are easily removed by solution, producing caves of various dimensions, ranging from 50 to 150 feet in breadth and from 60 to 250 feet in length, resembling enormous halls. The infiltration of calcium carbonate from surface drainage has produced many stalactitic growths. Thick deposits of the excrement of bats occur on the floors of the caves; this was at one time collected and used for the manufacture of saltpetre. The limestone islands of the Mergui Archipelago are the habitation of small swifts (little rock martin), the mo-swe-angst and ziwaso of the Burmans (Hirundo sp. and Hirundo collacalia), which make their nests out of gelatinous saliva and form the delicacy known as 'edible birds' nests'. At present, the right to collect nests is leased out by the Government. The Chinese value them highly and purchase them at about their weight in silver.

One of the chief outcrops of the limestone of the Moulmein series is the Thampra hill (Khao Thampra, 11° 14'; 99° 11'), and a range of precipitous hills to the south situated near the source of the eastern tributary Klong Thampra, of the Lenya River. This outcrop forms, with others, a limestone chain from the source of the Ngawun Chaung, the southern tributary of the Little Tenasserim River. This chain crosses the Great Tenasserim and continues west of the river to the well-known limestone hills of Kyauktaung and Tharabwin. The north and south of these hills are covered in some places with thick alluvium, and other areas are covered by lakes or lowlands that are submerged during the rains. The bottoms of some of the lakes, when dried up, show limestone in situ. Further northwards, this chain is represented by another outcrop of coarsely crystalline limestone near the source of the Peinchaung River, which continues to Kyauktaung Hill, west of Pawut. This central chain is the longest and best exposed. The westerly line of the limestones is exposed in isolated islands situated some distance apart. The 'High Black Rocks' (12° 58'; 98° 15') and 'High Rocks' (12° 52'; 98° 15') islands are situated west of Tavoy Island and to the east of Middle Moscos, which are visible from Maungmagan, is the northernmost outcrop of this line. These groups and another, east of Domel Island, named Elephant Island or 'Marble Rocks' were examined by Dr A M Heron. Mr J J A Page examined the southernmost group forming St. Matthew's Island. The author mapped the central group of the Turret Islands east of Sir William James Island. The island of Pulo Ampat (Marble Rocks) 11° 10'; 98° 37', situated along this line, is made up of white quartzites and not of limestones.

The limestone collected by the author from the Turret Islands was analyzed in 1926 in the laboratory, and the following results were obtained. Rock Register No 34-729. Sp Gr 2.764: -

Insoluble residue.	0.10%
Oxide of iron and alumina.	0.27%
Calcium oxide.	55.51%
Magnesium oxide.	1.00%
Loss on ignition (CO ₂ and H ₂ O)	43.72%

The above-quoted analyses show that limestones, with their low percentage of magnesia, would be suitable material for the manufacture of Portland cement. From fossil evidence, Dr Noetling thinks the age of the limestones of the Tenasserim Valley tends to be an Upper Carboniferous period.

To be continued.

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NATIONAL

Myanmar National Human Rights Commission on status of its handling of complaints and inspections of prisons, jails, lockups and detention centres from January to June 2024

Statement No 8/2024

1. The Myanmar National Human Rights Commission (MNHRC) is performing its primary responsibilities of promoting and protecting human rights in accordance with the duties and powers provided in Chapter 5 of the Commission Law.
2. The Commission drew up annual plans for its human rights protection works and carrying out activities in accordance with the mandate provided in Subsection (c) of Section 22: verifying and conducting inquiries in respect of complaints and allegations of human rights violations; Subsection (d) of Section 22: visiting the scene of human rights violations and conducting inquiries, on receipt of a complaint or allegation or information; and Subsection (e) of Section 22: inspecting the scene of human rights violations and, after prior notice, prisons, jails, detention centres and public or private places of confinement.
3. From January to June 2024, the Myanmar National Human Rights Commission received 135 complaints and held 25 complaint screening meetings by the complaint investigation team to examine these complaints. Of these, 31 were referred to relevant government departments and organizations for necessary actions. Additionally, in 18 cases, the complainants were advised to utilize more appropriate remedies and other channels for their complaints, while 85 cases were put on record. One case was closed with the consent of the complainant.
4. Among the 85 recorded complaints, some are still appearing before the courts, pending appeal or revision of court judgments, or have been finalized by the courts. Additionally, cases that do not conform to the nature of the complaint and some that have been processed according to the Commission's procedures are included. Since these complaints do not require further action under the MNHRC law, they are kept in an orderly manner as records.
5. The Commission informed the complainants about the status of the response from related Union Ministries, Union-level organizations, Nay Pyi Taw Council, and state and regional governments. Complaints are also being accepted at the Commission's branch offices in Nay Pyi Taw, Mandalay, Sittway, and Patheingyi.
6. The Myanmar National Human Rights Commission (MNHRC) undertakes visits and inspections of prisons and detention centres as mandated under Article 43 of the Commission Law to ensure that persons imprisoned, detained or confined are treated humanely and in accordance with international and national human rights laws.
7. From January to June 2024, the Commission Inspection Team of the Myanmar National Human Rights Commission (MNHRC) conducted inspection visits to five prisons, two jails, seven labour camps, 12 police lockups, 13 court detention centres, three youth centres, and ten homes for the aged under the Commission Law.
8. From January to June 2024, during inspections of jails, prison camps, and police stations, the Myanmar National Human Rights Commission (MNHRC) met prisoners and detainees and enquired whether they complied with the United Nations' minimum standards for the treatment of prisoners as outlined in Article 41 of the MNHRC's legal procedures, the condition of prisoner dormitories, access to essential facilities, living conditions and food and healthcare provisions for the prisoners, and availability of drinking water. The team also checked for any instances of torture and confirmed whether materials provided by their families were fully received while meeting the prisoners in their dormitories. During these inspections, the team interviewed and recorded statements from a total of 33 detainees freely and privately.
9. The Myanmar National Human Rights Commission carefully investigates any human rights violations while verifying complaints and inspecting prisons, labour camps, detention centres, and places of confinement. The Commission also ensures that complainants are not subjected to reprisal while sending its recommendations to the relevant Ministry.
10. An individual may lodge a complaint with the Myanmar National Human Rights Commission on their own, on behalf of another person, or on behalf of a group of persons with a similar cause of complaint concerning any alleged violation of human rights contained in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and international human rights conventions to which Myanmar is a state party, as well as the fundamental rights of citizens provided in the Myanmar Constitution 2008. To lodge complaints or allegations of human rights violations, a written complaint addressed to the Chairman of the Myanmar National Human Rights Commission may be sent in person or by registered mail and express mail to No 27, Pyay Road, Hlaing Township, Yangon. Complaints may also be lodged by fax or email to 01 654678, email: protection@mnhrc.org.mm and Commission's website: <https://mnhrc.org.mm>. A copy of the Citizenship Scrutiny Card (CSC) must be attached to the complaint.
11. Since there is cooperation from the relevant government departments and organizations regarding the complaints and the obtaining due remedies for the victim of the violation of human rights, if someone is facing human rights violations, they can send complaints to the Myanmar National Human Rights Commission for assistance.

Myanmar National Human Rights Commission
Date: 24 July 2024

MoFA Deputy Minister receives ICRC Resident Representative

DEPUTY Minister for Foreign Affairs U Lwin Oo received Ms Elena Ajmone Sessera, Resident Representative of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), yesterday at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Nay Pyi Taw.

They exchanged views on matters related to ICRC's activities in Myanmar as well as the provision of humanitarian assistance to people in need in Myanmar.

Also present at the meeting were senior officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Mr Jan Miskoc, Deputy Resident Representative of ICRC. — MNA



A meeting on ICRC's activities in Myanmar in progress between Deputy Minister U Lwin Oo and Resident Representative of the ICRC Ms Elena Ajmone Sessera in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

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NATIONAL

Myanmar attends ASEAN Forum on Freedom of Peaceful Assembly in Indonesia

U Zaw Zaw Soe, Charge d'Affaires and Minister of the Embassy of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to Singapore, attended the ASEAN Forum on Freedom of Peaceful Assembly, held on 15-16 July 2024 in Banten, Indonesia.

The forum, chaired by the representative of AICHR-In-

donesia, was attended by representatives from the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) from ASEAN member states, relevant ASEAN sectoral bodies, the United Nations, AICHR alternates, national human rights institutions, civil society organizations, and think tanks.

The forum aims to provide a platform for sharing measures and building the capacity of relevant actors in implementing Article 24 of the AHRD regarding the right to freedom of peaceful assembly. This consultation is part of the AICHR's Five-Year Work Plan (FYWP) for 2021-2025. — ASH/TH



Forum attendees are seen posing for a commemorative photo.

Counter-argument to false information

Subversive media misrepresents security forces' response to terrorist attack in Mingkon village

SUBVERSIVE media are spreading false claims accusing security forces of setting fire to Mingkon village on the morning of 23 July in Sagaing Township, which allegedly led to damage to residential houses and shops and the arrest of six residents.

In reality, on the morning of 23 July, a resident who opposes violence reported that PDF terrorists were near Mingkon village. Consequently, security forces implemented necessary security measures. PDF terrorists then launched an attack, resulting in clashes during which terrorists suffered heavy casualties and subsequently retreated.

As they withdrew, terrorists destroyed electricity distribution lines causing short circuit that ignited fire to residential houses, and damaging civilian properties. Security forces, in collaboration with local people, responded to control the fire. The blaze destroyed six residential houses and damaged water distribution pipes, according to an official from security forces.

PDF terrorists are deliberately engaging in acts of terrorism to disrupt the peace of Mingkon village, which tourists and pilgrims frequent.

Reports indicate that the malicious media are circulating propaganda to mislead the public by falsely accusing security forces, aiming to cover up their own terrorist attacks. — MNA/TKO



Screenshots from Khit Thit Media exposing their fake claims.

Large-scale seizures in illegal trade crackdown: K169.325 million worth of goods confiscated



Confiscated pain killer tablets at Yangon International Airport.

UNDER the supervision of the Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee, efforts to tackle illegal trade continue effectively in accordance with the law.

On 23 July, combined teams managed by the Customs Department conducted inspections and made several significant seizures: at Yangon International Airport, they confiscated 25 bottles and 1,190 blister packs of painkillers with Korean text, valued at K5.66 million; at the Mayanchaung permanent checkpoint, they seized 5,040 packs of Thai-made Smart deodorant oil, 7,500 kilograms of India-made unbleached woven cotton fabric worth K11.996 million, a Sunlong bus, and a Mitsubishi Fuso truck valued at K65 million; and at Ywathagyi Dry Port, they recovered 200 used Japan-made bicycles worth K4.8 million and a Hino Ranger truck valued at

K35 million. The action was taken in accordance with Customs procedures.

On the same day, combined teams managed by the Mandalay Region Illegal Trade Eradication Special Task Force inspected and seized 15 types of unregistered medicines, including 188 ampoules of Dano Inj tetanus vaccine IP, nine vials of Alburel Inj human normal Albumin IP, and two Samsung handsets valued at K15.499 million in Aungmye Thatha West ward, Chanayethazan Township. Additionally, they confiscated 300 bottles of Pantoprazole for injection, 150 blister packs of Dextro tablets, and four other unregistered medicines worth K823,000 in the Chanayethazan Middle ward. The action was conducted in accordance with the law.

Also, on 23 July, a combined team managed by the

Sagaing Region Illegal Trade Eradication Special Task Force seized an unregistered Honda Fit worth K8 million at Yadanabon Checkpoint, with the action being taken under the Export-Import Law.

A team managed by the Shan State Illegal Trade Eradication Special Task Force inspected and seized eight Forgo maintenance-free batteries, 200 Vivo phone batteries, and two other commodities valued at K3.32 million near the Sinphyu checkpoint in Muse Township. The action was carried out in line with Customs procedures.

On 24 July, combined teams managed by the Bago Region Illegal Trade Eradication Special Task Force made several seizures: 2.328 tonnes of illegal hardwood worth K1.583 million in Taungoo District, an unregistered Mitsubishi Pajero worth K4 million in Thayawady District, 196 five-litre bottles of Thai-made palm oil and four other commodities worth K10.643 million, and a Honda Scoopy 110 motorbike worth K3 million in Waw Township. The action was taken under the Forest Law and Customs procedures.

The Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee reported that 16 arrests were made on 23 and 24 July, leading to the seizure of illegal goods worth approximately K169.325 million. — MNA/TMT

ECONOMY WORLD

Singapore's inflation falls in June

SINGAPORE'S core inflation as measured by the consumer price index (CPI) eased to 2.9 per cent year-on-year in June from 3.1 per cent in May, according to official data released yesterday.

The Ministry of Trade and Industry and the Monetary Authority of Singapore attributed the decline to lower retail and services prices.

The core inflation is expected to moderate over the

rest of the year and step down more discernibly in the fourth quarter as import cost pressures continue to decline and tightness in Singapore's labour market eases further.

The core CPI excludes private transport and accommodation costs to better reflect household expenses.

The all-items inflation in Singapore slowed to 2.4 per cent year-on-year in June from 3.1 per cent in May. — Xinhua



People shop for decorative items at a market in Singapore. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

NEWS IN BRIEF: WORLD

Insect infestation ravages North African prickly pear

AMOR Nouira, a farmer from Chebika village in Tunisia, has lost hope in rescuing his prickly pear cacti, which have been devastated by the cochineal insect's spread across North Africa.

This invasive pest has caused extensive damage to about one-third of Tunisia's cactus crops since its outbreak in 2021.

Originally hopeful to develop his half-hectare of cacti for production, including natural oil sought after internationally, Nouira has abandoned investment plans due to the severe damage inflicted by the cochineal. — AFP

Estonia looks for ways to curb inflation

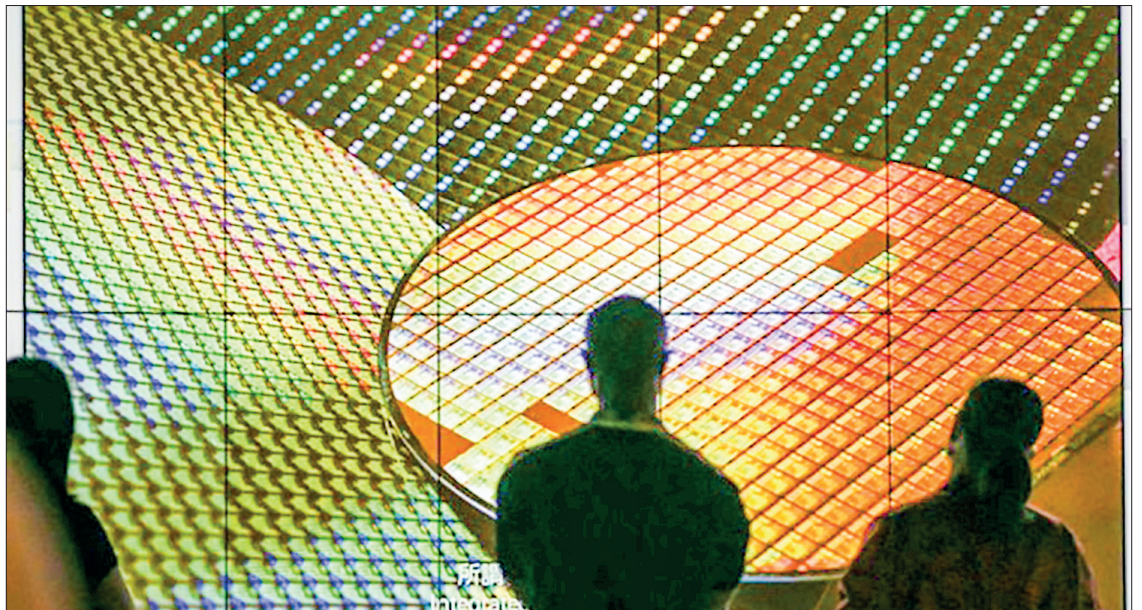
ESTONIA'S newly sworn-in government, led by Kristen Michal, has announced plans to combat inflation through increased and temporary taxes and efforts to stabilize the economy.

Under the new coalition government, comprising the Reform Party, the Social Democratic Party (SDE), and Estonia 200 (Eesti 200), value-added tax (VAT), income tax, and excise taxes on alcohol, tobacco, and gasoline are set to rise according to their new main action plan.

VAT and income tax will increase by two percentage points to 24 per cent, starting July 2025 and early 2026, respectively. A temporary two-per cent corporate income tax, known as the "defense tax", will be introduced in early 2026 and remain in effect until the end of 2028. — Xinhua

Japan PM Kishida eyes legislation to boost domestic chip production

The Economy, Trade and Industry Ministry has already pledged substantial subsidies, totalling 920 billion yen (\$5.9 billion), to Rapidus to enhance critical technologies for Japan's economic security.



Sources indicate potential additional funding and loan guarantees to bolster domestic chip companies. **PHOTO: AFP**

JAPANESE Prime Minister Fumio Kishida vowed Wednesday to craft legislation aimed at supporting the domestic production of advanced semiconductors by helping manufacturers secure enough funding.

"I will be seeking the early submission to parliament of

a bill necessary for the mass production of next-generation chips," which will require heavy investment, Kishida told reporters after inspecting a Rapidus Corp. factory under construction in Hokkaido, northern Japan.

The prime minister said the government will support the

chip industry's investment and research and development programmes "on a large scale and systematically." The government is considering providing additional funding as well as guarantees on loans to companies in the domestic chip industry, government sources said. — Kyodo

Oil price hits 6-week low, sending US crude beneath \$80 per barrel



Oil prices fell sharply to six-week lows as President Joe Biden's announcement not to seek reelection added political uncertainty. **PHOTO: SPUTNIK**

OIL prices continued their downward spiral to six-week lows on Monday, with US crude breaking beneath the \$80 per barrel mark, as President Joe Biden's decision not to run for

reelection added political uncertainty to a market already reeling from weak summer demand for fuel.

US West Texas Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude's front-

month contract, August, settled at \$79.78 per barrel - down 35 cents, or 0.44%. WTI lost 4% over the course of two prior weeks. In Monday's session, it fell to \$77.58 per barrel, a low not seen since early June.

UK-origin Brent crude for September settled at \$82.40 per barrel, down 23 cents, or 0.3%. The global crude benchmark fell 4.5% over two prior weeks, hitting a six-week low of \$81.61 in the latest session.

Monday's swoon in oil came amid heightened political uncertainty caused by Biden's exit from the reelection race and his decision to endorse Vice-President Kamala Harris as the standard bearer for the Democratic Party. — SPUTNIK

Unilever to slash some 3,000 office jobs in Europe by end of 2025

THE London-based consumer goods giant Unilever plans to lay off 3,000 to 3,200 workers in Europe by the end of 2025, the Financial Times has reported.

Constantina Tribou, a chief human resources officer at Unilever, said that the layoffs will mainly target office positions rather than factory jobs. The company currently employs approximately 10,000 to 11,000 office workers in Europe.

Hein Schumacher, who became Unilever's CEO last year, has been under pressure from major shareholders to reform the company's sluggish business performance. According to a press release issued by Unilever in March, the layoffs are part of the company's "productivity enhancement project", which aims to save about 800 million euros (around US\$867 million) in costs over the next three years.

The project is expected to impact around 7,500 office positions globally. The company is also spinning off its ice cream business, which includes well-known brands such as Wall's and Magnum, and the process is expected to be completed by the end of 2025. — Xinhua

Japan logs record 3.14 mln foreign visitors in June

For the first half of the year, Japan recorded approximately 17.78 million inbound tourists, also setting a new record high. This number exceeded the figure for the first half of 2019 by a million visitors.

JAPAN logged 3,135,600 foreign visitors in June, the highest number ever recorded for a single month, government data has showed.

The figure, crossing the three-million mark for the fourth straight month, represented a 51.2 per cent increase compared to the same month 2023 and an 8.9 per cent rise from June 2019, according to the latest data from the Japan National Tourism Organization. In the first half of the year, the cumulative number of inbound tourists came to around 17.78 million, also a record high, which was one million more



Photo taken on 17 April 2024, shows the area around Kiyomizu temple in Kyoto bustling with foreign tourists. **PHOTO: KYODO**

than the figure recorded for the first half of 2019.

The organization at-


tributed the surge to increasing travel demand during consecutive holi-

days including school vacations across the globe. — Xinhua

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Notice for Change of Distributor

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CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V MSC ANDREA F VOY.NO. (SB428A)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V MSC ANDREA F VOY.NO. (SB428A)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **25-7-2024** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **AWPT** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S MEDITERRANEAN SHIPPING COMPANY S.A

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V ALVAN VOY.NO. (SCY1171)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V ALVAN VOY.NO. (SCY1171)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **25-7-2024** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MITT** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S LAND AND SEA INTERMODAL LOGISTICS SDN BHD LINE

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V CAPE FELTON VOY.NO. (910N)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V CAPE FELTON VOY.NO. (910N)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **25-7-2024** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MIP** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

(ONE) OCEAN NETWORK EXPRESS LINE

ROLLING UPDATES

WORLD



South Korean officials clean up the contents of a trash-carrying balloon sent by North Korea after it landed on a street in Seoul on 24 July 2024. **PHOTO: YONHAP VIA AFP**

Trash balloons from N Korea hit South's presidential compound

This incident marks the first direct hit on the compound, which is heavily guarded with soldiers and a no-fly zone.

TRASH-CARRYING balloons sent by North Korea hit the South Korean presidential compound Wednesday, security officials told AFP, prompting Seoul to mobilize chemical response teams in the escalating tit-for-tat propaganda war.

It is the first time the South Korean leader's office in downtown Seoul, which is protected by scores of soldiers and a no-fly zone, has been directly hit by any of the thousands of trash-carrying

balloons launched by Pyongyang since May.

"The chemical, biological and radiological (warfare) response team has safely collected the trash balloons," the presidential security service told AFP.

"After investigation, results have confirmed that there was no danger or contamination of the object," it said.

South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff had earlier confirmed the

North was once again sending the trash-carrying balloons, while Seoul city authorities also issued an alert Wednesday morning.

"If you find any fallen balloons do not touch them, and report them to the nearest military unit or police station," it said.

According to the Yonhap news agency, the presidential office had been monitoring the balloon in real time, and was aware of exactly where it would land. — AFP

BRIEFS: WORLD

Thailand's upper house elects new Senate speaker

THAILAND'S newly elected Senate convened for its inaugural session on Tuesday, voting for a Senate speaker and two deputies after a swearing-in ceremony.

With an overwhelming 159 votes in favour, the 200-member parliament's upper house elected former Director-General of the Department of Provincial Administration Mongkol Surasajja as president of the Senate, a position that doubles as vice-president of the National Assembly. The Senate's first official working meeting will commence after the royal endorsement of the speaker and deputies. The Election Commission of Thailand earlier certified the list of 200 senators and 99 reserve candidates following the multi-level Senate elections that wrapped up last month. — Xinhua

Plane crashes in Nepal with 18 dead

A passenger plane crashed on take-off in Kathmandu on Wednesday, with the pilot rescued from the flaming wreckage but all 18 others aboard killed, police in the Nepali capital told AFP.

Nepal has a woeful track record on aviation safety and the Himalayan republic has seen a spate of deadly light plane and helicopter crashes over the decades.

The Saurya Airlines flight was carrying two crew and 17 of the company's staff members, Nepali police spokesman Dan Bahadur Karki told AFP. — AFP

Harris edges out Trump in new poll

US Vice-President Kamala Harris, who has garnered wide support to become the Democratic presidential nominee, holds a two-percentage-point lead over Republican nominee Donald Trump, according to the latest poll.

In a Reuters/Ipsos survey conducted on Monday and Tuesday, one of the first following incumbent President Joe Biden's exit from the race on Sunday, Harris leads Trump by 44 per cent to 42 per cent, a margin within the poll's error range.

Harris, 59, is viewed as "mentally sharp and capable of handling challenges" by 56 per cent of registered voters, compared to 49 per cent for Trump, 78. — Xinhua

US secret service director resigns following attempted assassination of Trump

US Secret Service Director Kimberly Cheatle resigned on Tuesday after widespread outrage over the agency's failure to prevent the recent assassination attempt on former President Donald Trump at a campaign rally in Pennsylvania earlier this month.

Cheatle's resignation came one day after she was grilled at a congressional hearing by lawmakers, who said she failed to answer basic questions and demanded that she

step down immediately.

At the hearing held by the House Committee on Oversight and Accountability, Cheatle acknowledged that it was "the most significant operational failure at the Secret Service in decades".

The committee issued a statement following the hearing. "Republican and Democrat members pressed US Secret Service Director Kimberly Cheatle for answers on the egregious security lapses that

led to the attempted assassination of (former) President Trump, the murder of an innocent victim, and harm to others in the crowd at the campaign rally in Butler, Pennsylvania," it said.

"Director Cheatle could not or refused to answer basic questions from Committee members, leading Republican and Democrat members to call for Director Cheatle's immediate resignation," the committee said. — Xinhua



The screenshot taken from the streaming of CNN shows US Secret Service Director Kimberly Cheatle (R) being grilled at a congressional hearing by lawmakers on 22 July 2024. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

SPORTS

Team Myanmar exits AFC U-19 Championship

MYANMAR'S U-19 boys' national football team was eliminated from the AFC U-19 Football Championship with a 0-1 loss against Australia in their final group match played in Indonesia yesterday.

In Group B, Australia sealed the victory over Myanmar, while Vietnam beat Laos 4-1.

The Myanmar team had no hope of advancing to the next round as they had drawn two consecutive group matches before this match, but they played their best against Australia.

Myanmar head coach U Aung Nay made some changes

to the starting line-up to face Australia. The Australian team had already advanced to the next round but was eager to score goals, and Maden scored the only winning goal in the 35th minute.

At the end of the first half, one of the Myanmar team was sent off, so they had to play with one less player in the second half, but they were able to play without conceding another goal.

After the Group B matches, Australia topped the standing table with a total of nine points, while Vietnam followed Australia with four points, advancing to the semifinals. Two-point collector

Myanmar and one-point gainer Laos were eliminated from the group matches of the championship.

The tournament is divided into three groups, and only the top team from each group and the best second-placed team advance to the semifinals. — Ko Nyi Lay/KZL

A Myanmar player (red) vies for the ball with an Australian player (yellow) during the group match of the AFC U-19 Championship in Indonesia on 24 July 2024. PHOTO: MFF



Celtic edge Manchester City 4-3 in US pre-season friendly

NICOLAS Kuhn scored twice and Luis Palma netted the decider in the 68th minute to give Celtic a 4-3 victory over Manchester City in a pre-season friendly on Tuesday.

Norway's Erling Haaland, wearing the City captain's armband for the first time, nodded home an equalizer in the 57th minute only for Honduran international Palma to tap in the winning goal on a breakaway at the University of North Carolina's Kenan Memorial Stadium.

The match was a tuneup for next month's start of the 2024-25 campaigns for Celtic, winner of the past three Scottish Premiership crowns, and four-time defending English Premier League champion Manchester City, which began a US tour.

With several top stars resting from the European Championships, City manager Pep Guardiola used the opportunity to analyze younger talent.

The match marked a Celtic debut for goalkeeper Kasper Schmeichel, the 37-year-old Dane who began his career with City in 2006. He played the first half for the Hoops. German right wing Kuhn netted a first-half brace for Celtic, playing in a fourth pre-season match.

Down 3-1 at half-time, City answered seconds into the second half on just-inserted 21-year-old Argentine substitute Maximo Perrone's goal, a left-footed shot from the right side into the far corner on his first touch of the ball. — AFP

Myanmar club Shan United qualifies for ASEAN Club Championship



Shan United winger Khun Kyaw Zin Hein attempts to score against Kasuka FC. PHOTO: THAW GYI

THE second round of the ASEAN Club Championship 2024-2025 season qualifiers play-off between Myanmar club Shan United and Brunei club Kasuka played on 24 July at Thuwunna Stadium in Yangon. Shan United won three goals to one and

won the qualification.

Shan United team drew the Brunei club one goal each in the first round away match on 17 July, but won the second round home match and won the two rounds in aggregate by 4-2.

Shan team won with the goals of two strikers, Rintaro and Kaung Myat. Shan United head coach U Myo Hlaing Win made changes to the starting lineup due to injuries and sick players. In the first minute of the match, the Shan United team had the opportunity to take a penalty kick, and striker Rintaro made no mistake and scored the opening goal.

After that, only Shan United dominated the match, and in the 27th minute, they had a penalty kick for the second time, but the Kasuka goalkeeper saved Htet Phyto Wai's kick. Near the end of the first half, Shan United made a second goal, and Rintaro scored a header.

In the second half, the Shan United team changed some players but continued to press, and in the 67th minute, Kyung Myat scored the third goal for Shan United. In the 79th minute, the Kasuka team got a goal back, and William touched the ball into the net through a penalty.

Cambodia club Svay Rieng and Lao club Young Elephant played in Cambodia on 24 July. Svay Rieng won five goals to one and won the qualifiers with a total of eight goals to three goals. — Shine Htet Zaw/KZL

IOC awards 2030 Winter Olympics to French Alps, 2034 edition to Salt Lake City

THE French Alps has been awarded as the host of the 2030 Winter Olympic Games pending certain conditions, and Salt Lake City of the United States will stage the 2034 edition after a vote by the International Olympic Committee Session here on Wednesday.

France's hosting rights could be validated only after French government provides financial and organizational guarantees before the dates set by the IOC. "The Games Delivery Guarantee should be received from the Prime Minister at the latest by 1 October 2024 and should be ratified by the French Parliament no later than 1 March 2025," said IOC President Thomas Bach.

French President Emmanuel Macron expressed his commitment to the IOC members prior to the vote.

"I reaffirm to you here this morning the full commitment of the French State to organizing these Games. Paris 2024 will be a success, and the same will be true for the Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games in 2030," said Macron.

"You can trust us - we will be there, and we are proud to support this candidature for the Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games in 2030". Although there was no rival in the 2030 bid, the French Alps received four 'no' votes and seven abstentions among 95 IOC members. — Xinhua



Russia keeps doors open for economic and security dialogue with the West

MOSCOW remains open to dialogue with Western countries on economic cooperation, infrastructure projects, and the creation of a new security architecture in Eurasia, its Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said on Tuesday.

“It is fundamentally important that when the president develops this initiative, he always emphasizes that we do not close the door to any country located on the Eurasian continent. When and if our European colleagues come to their senses, realizing that they are being used to strengthen the US at the expense of weakening Europe, they are welcome, the doors are open. However, they must enter these processes on the basis of equality and full respect for the interests of those who started cooperation earlier,” Lavrov said during a meeting with leaders of Russian NGOs.

He noted that on the material foundation of joint infrastructure projects in Eurasia, “a system of Eurasian security must be built”.

In his statement, Lavrov emphasized the significant role of strengthening ties between various groups such as the Eurasian Economic Union, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) in shaping the Global Economic Partnership (GEP).



Russian President Vladimir Putin attends a meeting with participants of the Supreme Eurasian Economic Council in St Petersburg, Russia, on 25 December, 2023. PHOTO: SPUTNIK/FILE

“It is clear that Euro-Atlantic security, embodied in the linkage between North America and Europe and in structures like NATO and the OSCE, has discredited itself because all its variations boiled down to the US striving to subjugate everyone else. Eurasian security is a pressing issue. And, as with economic cooperation and the development of a system of military-political security, we are convinced that the doors for the western part of our continent should remain open,” the Russian minister added.

At the same time, Moscow intends to involve the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and other alliances of the Eurasian continent in the Greater Eurasian Partnership (GEP) formation process, Russia’s top diplomat noted. — SPUTNIK

AIDS 2024 conference calls on global community to put people first

PARTICIPANTS at the ongoing AIDS 2024, the 25th International AIDS Conference, call on putting people first in global HIV response to end the pandemic that is threatening public health and individual



The brutal bone marrow transplant that can “cure” HIV is only an option for patients who also have leukaemia. PHOTO: CHIP SOMODEVILLA/AFP/FILE

well-being. “Putting people first means that whether in the design of clinical trials or implementing new policies and programmes, people living with and affected by HIV must be not just beneficiaries but actors driving our efforts,” said Sharon Lewin, president of the International AIDS Society (IAS) and AIDS 2024 International Co-Chair.

Lewin highlighted the “incredible breakthroughs” presented at AIDS 2024, including a new case of long-term HIV remission and a promising twice-yearly injection to prevent HIV. “While these advances are cause to celebrate... All around the world, regressive policies, attacks on human rights, the spread of misinformation, cuts to global health funding, and waning trust in international institutions are roadblocks to progress,” she said, adding that an evidence-based HIV response and a political climate that respects science are essential. — Xinhua

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN

US Senate to vote on kids online safety bills

THE US Senate will vote on a pair of bills this week designed to protect children online which would be the first major legislation targeting the tech industry in a generation.

Senate majority leader Chuck Schumer said on Tuesday that he had gathered enough votes to pass the bills that had been drawn up in consultation with parents of teens who had been subject to bullying, sexual exploitation and other harms online.

Schumer, a Democrat, said the Kids Online Safety Act

(KOSA) and Children’s Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA 2.0) would be put to a vote as early as Thursday.

“It has been a long and daunting road to get this bill passed, which can change and save lives, but today, we are one monumental step closer to success,” Schumer said in a statement. While there is widespread agreement in a politically divided US Congress on curbing the impact of social media, there has never been a united path on how to go about it. — AFP