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The Republic of the Union of Myanmar State Administration Council: Five-Point Road Map

1. Priority will be given to fully realizing peace, stability and rule of law throughout the Union to safeguard the socioeconomic life of the people.
2. People-centred development work that enhances socioeconomic well-being will be undertaken to ensure the country's prosperity and food security.
3. Processes will further continue to consolidate a genuine, disciplined multiparty democratic system and build a Union based on democracy and federalism.
4. Priority will be accorded to work aligned with the agreements set out in the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement, in order to achieve enduring peace for the entire nation.
5. Upon accomplishing the provisions of the state of emergency, free and fair multiparty democratic elections will be held in line with the 2008 Constitution, and further work will be undertaken to hand over State duties to the winning party in accordance with democratic standards.

Daw Kyu Kyu Hla, wife of SAC Chairman Prime Minister, enjoys Myanmar dressing and costume show

DAW KYU KYU HLA, wife of the State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister, attended the Myanmar dressing and costume show at the Myanmar International Convention Centre-II in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday afternoon to mark the Myanmar Women's Day which falls on 3 July.

During the show, the performances were presented with songs including Myanmar Women's Day song, the Dressing Fair with the theme of "wedding reception" created by famous national designers, the Dressing event with theme of "calmly and beautifully cute, never boring Myanmar traditional dressing", theatrical performances and musical performances by famous singers.

Afterwards, Myanmar Women's Affairs Federation-MWAF Honorary Patron Daw Kyu Kyu Hla and other honorary patrons presented a flower basket to president and secretary of MWAF.

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Photo shows scenes of Sangha in alms round processions in Nyaungshwe, southern Shan State. **PHOTO: ACT**

Scenes of Sangha in alms round processions rarely observed in urban area

By Linn Htet

ONCE, people in individuals came out from their home and cleared debris in the streets. It was a significant scene of the morning of a day on a weekly basis.

At the same time, kitchens from

every house were run with cooking and food processing. Some families had completed their cooking process last night.

At 8 am, small tables were displayed along the roadside in front of each residence. Warm and delicious meals ded-

icating to the alms for members of the Sangha were ready to be donated while well-wishers were waiting for members of the Sangha from alms round procession.

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Myanmar-Russia sign MoU on cooperation in anti-corruption



Anti-Corruption Commission Chairman Dr Htay Aung and Russian Prosecutor-General Mr Igor Krasnov seen after signing MoU on 29 June.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on anti-corruption cooperation between Myanmar's Anti-Corruption Commission and Prosecutor-General Office of Russian Federation was inked on 29 June.

Chairman of ACC Dr Htay Aung arriving in Russia and

Prosecutor-General Mr Igor Krasnov signed the MoU and discussed the cooperation in anti-corruption frankly.

During the meeting, ACC Chairman highlighted the 75th anniversary (Diamond Jubilee) of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Myanmar and Russia in 2023, bilateral cooperation in anti-corruption in such special occasion, efforts of Myanmar in fight corruption as per the Anti-Corruption Law enacted in 2013, advice of Prosecutor-General Office to revive the law and technical assistance in awareness programmes for students and youth integrity promotion programmes of the commission.

The MoU included holding of international discussion, conference and workshop to exchange information, good practices and experiences in anti-corruption activities, exchange of goodwill visit between two countries, legal advices, cooperation in asset recovery efforts, training courses, educating programmes for youths and anti-corruption research.

—GNLM/KTZH

Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 7:00 pm Saturday 1 July 2023)

BAY INFERENCE: Monsoon is strong over the Andaman Sea and South Bay and moderate elsewhere over the Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL NOON OF THE 2 July 2023: Rain or thundershowers will be isolated in Nay Pyi Taw, Magway Region and Kayah State, scattered in Upper Sagaing and Mandalay regions and Rakhine State, fairly widespread in Lower Sagaing and Bago regions and Kachin, Northern Shan, Chin and Kayin states and widespread in the remaining regions and states with likelihood of isolated heavyfalls in Taninthayi Region and Mon State. Degree of certainty is (100%).

STATE OF THE SEA: Squalls with rough seas are likely at times in Deltaic, Gulf of Mottama, off and along Mon-Taninthayi Coasts. Surface wind speed in squall may reach (35-40) mph. Sea will be moderate elsewhere in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about (8-10) feet in Deltaic, Gulf of Mottama, off and along Mon-Taninthayi Coasts and (5-7) feet off and along Rakhine Coast.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Increase of rain in Upper Sagaing, Bago, Yangon and Taninthayi regions and Kachin, Kayin and Mon states.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 2 July 2023: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

Announcement for local and foreign well-wishers to donate cash to cyclonic storm Mocha victims

1. AN announcement has been issued that well-wishers wishing to make donations for people who fell victim to the extremely severe cyclonic storm Mocha which hit Myanmar on 14-5-2023 can donate cash to Myanmar account OA-011834 and foreign account 1DA-0300086.

2. In this announcement, it is duly mentioned that our commitment to receiving donations extends to additional electronic payment systems and mobile payment systems. Further updates and notifications will be made in due course.

3. It has been announced that dona-
- tions can be made to the previously announced phone number and to the account that was opened, and since it can be confusing to donate with a phone number, we have already made it possible to donate with a QR code instead of the phone number.

4. Donations can be made through KBZ Pay or Wave Money. If you wish to donate, please scan the QR codes provided by both KBZ Pay and Wave Money. To contribute, enter the code included within the respective QR codes.

5. People make donations through CB Pay, AYA Pay, OK \$, UAB pay and
- Citizens Pay which are widely used to enhance convenience for donors. To donate, please scan the QR code and enter the code provided within it.

6. The well-wishers can contact the following persons for further information: -
-
- | Nay Pyi Taw | Yangon | Mandalay |
|---|---|--|
| Daw Lei Lei Aye
Director-General
Department of Disaster Management
067-3404050
09-2021491 | U Than Soe
Director
Department of Disaster Management
Office of Yangon Region Department
09-250123885 | U Aye Min Thu
Director
Department of Disaster Management
Office of Mandalay Region Department
09-420708827 |
| U Win Shwe
Deputy Director-General
Department of Disaster Management
067-3404048
09-254170011 | Daw Than Than Win
Deputy Director
Department of Disaster Management
Office of Yangon Region Department
09-420740160 | |
| Daw Phyu Phyu Win
Director
Department of Disaster Management
067-3404316
09-43054844 | | |
- National Disaster Management Committee

Country's current situation – only our internal affairs

IN democracy, Hluttaw is the highest political stage. Ethnic groups for their part must represent the Hluttaw on a larger scale in the political stage. The current situation in the country is only our internal affairs. The forthcoming election is just our nation's election, not a world election. It is just necessary to ensure that the election will be free and fair for our citizens.

(Excerpts from the speech delivered by State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at the SAC meeting 2/2023 on 23 February 2023)

Daw Kyu Kyu Hla, wife of SAC Chairman Prime Minister, enjoys Myanmar dressing and costume show



Daw Kyu Kyu Hla, wife of the SAC Chairman Prime Minister, enjoys Myanmar dressing and costume show at Myanmar International Convention Centre-II in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

FROM PAGE-1

The patron, the chairs and the secretary of Myanmar National Committee for Women's Affairs and MWAFF presented flower baskets to artistes who performed entertainments. Later, artistes entertained all with performances of Anyeint, songs and dramas. Honorary patrons Daw Khin Thet Haty and Daw Than Than Nwe, the wife of SAC Secretary Lt-Gen Aung Lin Dwe, the wife of SAC Joint Secretary Lt-Gen Ye Win Oo, SAC members and their wives, Union ministers and their wives, officials and invited persons also enjoyed the show. — MNA/MKKS



Deputy Minister for Science and Technology Dr Aung Zeya encourages the students from University of Technology and University of Computer Studies who visited Nuclear Technology Information Centre on 30 June.

Science Festival 2023 continues third and final day

THE third and final day of the Science Festival 2023 organized by the Ministry of Science and Technology and ROSATOM of Russian Federation continued at Yangon Technological University on 30 June.

First, Deputy Minister for Science and Technology Dr Aung Zeya viewed round the displays of the Department of Atomic Energy, the Department of Research and Innovation, the University of Technology and the University of Computer Studies.

Afterwards, the Deputy Minister encouraged the students from the University of Technology and the University of Computer Studies who visited the Nuclear Technology Information Centre.

In the afternoon, the Deputy Minister and party attended the closing ceremony of the Science Festival 2023 at the Nuclear Technology Information Centre. In the ceremony, “Nuclear Now” film was presented and the professors from MEPhI (Moscow Engineering Physics Institute) replied to queries raised by attendees. — MNA/MKKS

31 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 1 July, total figure registers 640,474

MYANMAR'S COVID-19-positive cases rose to 640,474 after 31 new cases were reported on 1 July 2023 according to the Ministry of Health. Therefore, a total of 10,861,508 laboratory samples were examined to date and the confirmed COVID-19 cases reached 640,474.

The total number of patients who have recovered from COVID-19 in the country reached 619,400 including 40 new recoveries.

The death toll from COVID-19 in the country registered 19,494 on 1-7-2023 with no new death reported from the pandemic. COVID-19 information can be browsed on the internet page moh.gov.mm of the Ministry of Health. — GNLM

MIFER Union Minister receives Vice-President of Russia-Myanmar Association for Friendship and Cooperation

UNION Minister for Investment and Foreign Economic Relations Dr Kan Zaw received the delegation led by Mr Solonetsky Vitaly, Vice-President of Russia-Myanmar Association for Friendship and Cooperation at the ministry in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

At the meeting, they frankly held discussions on further improvement in payment methods for investment and bilateral trade, cooperation to promote investment of private companies in information and technology sectors, holding of business matching, exports of Myanmar foodstuff and beverages to support MSMEs of Myanmar, market status and awareness campaigns regarding Myanmar Investment and Companies Law and procedures for Russian business people. — MNA/KTZH

Union Minister Dr Kan Zaw holds talks with Mr Solonetsky Vitaly, Vice-President of Russia-Myanmar Association for Friendship and Cooperation on 1 July.



Cooperative Department provides socioeconomic development, creates job opportunities



Union Minister U Hla Moe visits booths displayed at the ceremony to mark International Day of Cooperatives yesterday.

THE Cooperative Department works to promote socioeconomic status and create job opportunities for the public by laying down effective vision, mission, policies, procedures and nine action plans, said Union Minister for Cooperatives and Rural Development U Hla Moe during the ceremony to mark the International Day of Cooperatives yesterday.

The Union Minister added that a total of 38,709 co-operative societies were formed to date and the ministry also supported in agriculture, livestock and manageable scale

manufacturing businesses to increase individual income and also to promote the income and social status of rural people under the guidance of the government.

This 1st July marks the 101st International Day of Cooperatives and this year's theme is "Cooperatives: Partners for accelerated sustainable development".

Then, the Union Minister called on the department and co-operatives associations to work together in accelerating the regional development programmes as the authorities supervise to promote the im-

age of cooperatives and international cooperatives make effort to follow the basic principles based on shared values of human dignity.

The International Cooperative Alliance (ICA) was founded in London, England on 19 August 1895. Currently, more than 310 organizations from 107 countries are members of the International Cooperative Alliance. There are also more than three million cooperatives and more than 1,000 million members. The cooperatives created job opportunities for over 280 million people. — GNLM/KTZH

Rakhine State CM discusses to accelerate preventive measures against DHF, inspects rehabilitation tasks

RAKHINE State Chief Minister U Htein Lin, in his capacity as Chairman of Rakhine State Disaster Management Committee, attended a ceremony to accelerate preventive measures against Dengue Hemorrhagic Fever yesterday. He also inspected the proper flow of water in Khawathe creek, distribution of relief and rehabilitation materials and collective measures to fight DHF.

At the ceremony to accelerate preventive and control measures against DHF held at Lawkananda Sasana Beikman, the Chief Minister talked about the public health care system in the aftermath of Mocha in Rakhine State, preventive measures against DHF at schools and wards, medical supplies of township hospitals and dispensaries and community awareness activities.

Then, Dr Kyi Lwin, Head of Rakhine State Public Health and Medical Services Department

clarified the DHF related matters, and health workers demonstrated the preventive measures.

The Chief Minister and Deputy Ministers then handed over the kits of Abate pills to the relevant officials and observed the displayed booths.

The Chief Minister and party also inspected proper flow of water in Khawathe creek, and distribution of relief and rehabilitation materials from Mercury Force ship at Sittway port and loading processed of rice seed bags onto Kaladan-2 ship for Rathedaung Township.

They watched the preventive measures against DHF at No 5 BEHS, Tayatheesu ward and Thuseiktayama Dhammayon.

At noon, they attended the coordination meeting on rehabilitation processes held at Rakhine State government office and discussed the rehabilitation processes, completed work and future work plans.—MNA/KTZH

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ARTICLE



Residents of suburban area donating alms to members of the Sangha in alms round processions in Yangon.

FROM PAGE-1

Now, they came to the streets.

A layperson shouted, “Hello all well-wishers! Members of the Sangha from Thabawa meditation centre in Thanlyin Township of Yangon Region come here to accept alms donations. Members of the Sangha led by the abbot of Dhamma Alinyaung Monastery in Mingaladon Township come here to accept day meals donations. Members of the Sangha from Linlunbin Buddhist Learning Centre of Sangyoung Township are coming here to accept alms from well-wishers. Members of the Sangha from Salin Monastery in Kyimyindine Township arrive here to accept dawn alms.” Just a few minutes later, members of the Sangha in alms round procession came into the streets. For the time being, all well-wishers happily donated alms to all members of the Sangha from the procession. It was a cliché scene in the public residential wards.

Currently, the lifestyle of city dwellers in Yangon has already changed. Their daily routines are so different from that of people from single houses in the public residential wards. Moreover, donations for the alms round procession of members of the Sangha are gradually disappearing in city Yangon.

“Most of the people residing at apartments are very busy for their relevant jobs from the morning to the evening. In fact,

Scenes of Sangha in alms round processions rarely observed in urban area

By Linn Htet

their generosity does not fade out. Restricted timetables for their jobs become a root cause to be absent for donating alms to members of the Sangha. Some people make donations in other arenas as they are absent in donating members of the Sangha from the alms round procession. In fact, the tradition of alms donation gradually disappears in Yangon,” U Khin Aung Myint from South Okkalapa Township, a retired staff of the Industry Ministry, remarked.

The scene on members of the Sangha from the alms round procession to accept alms donated by each family is a lovely one of Myanmar. Such a fine tradition of alms round processions can be seen in countryside till today. The images of members of the Sangha go alms round procession at dawn in some towns where Buddhist Learning Centres are established. It can be said that such a meritorious act is a fine tradition of Myanmar people to be handed down to posterities.

“Buddhist monks from Thabawa meditation centre go alms round procession to relevant residences on regular

timetables. Some monasteries dispatch monks in individuals for accepting alms. Generally, most of the members of the Sangha face difficulties of alms. Thabawa meditation centre accommodates a large number of laypersons, members of the Sangha, nuns and Yogis, some of who are suffering from ailing. Every night, I have a chance to view the discussions of the abbot from the centre on sufficiency of meals and alms through social network page of the centre. So, it pushes me to make more donations,” said Daw Aye Win from Thingangyun Township.

At present, donations of meals and alms decline and quality of alms was low due to high prices of commodities.

“In the past, we had separately cooked meals as alms for members of the Sangha. Then, we cooked all meals for our family including alms for members of the Sangha. Currently, as duck egg is priced at K300 and a small bundle of water convolvulus K500, number of meat and fish meals declines due to family incomes. Whenever meals are not attractive, we cannot be satisfied with donating them to

members of the Sangha. Some days, we unavoidably refuse to donate alms to monks,” Daw San Kyi from Dagon Myothit (Seikkan) Township recounted her experiences.

As the civilization with apartment residence is booming, although some monks and novices step up to the apartments to accept alms donations, such a number of monks does not increase similar to that of single housings. As such, local communities set up alms donation teams in their relevant residences for the sake of Buddhist monks to overcome difficulties of alms during and after the Buddhist Lent. Weekly alms donations of the residences are contributed by people to ease alms difficulties of some monasteries.

“In fact, only when well-wishers make donations can Buddhist monks consume alms. If people make meritorious deeds, members of the Sangha can accept donations. Some well-wishers from residential wards send alms to monasteries on schedules. When they do not make donations, we have to cook meals for alms at the monasteries,” said an abbot from South

Okkalapa Township.

Many novices and members of the Sangha from some monasteries in suburban areas of Yangon go alms round processions to relevant public residences at dawn and in the morning and some of them are dispatched by car to accept alms donations.

“The monastery from the public residential ward arranges the monks in alms round processions at 9:30 am every day. Similar procession is arranged by Thabawa meditation centre on Thursday. On these days, we cook meals with surplus for them. In the past we donated meat and fish meals to the monks in processions from Thabawa meditation centre but we change the type of donations with vegetable meals for consumption of all people from the centre,” Auntie Cho from South Okkalapa Township clarified.

Whatever it may be, Myanmar Buddhist people still donate alms with generosity to members of the Sangha in alms round processions along the streets amid challenges of high prices of commodities.

Translated.

Daily newspapers
available online

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CURRENT
AFFAIRS



Yangon-Mandalay-Manshi-Mandalay-Yangon trip starts by Myanmar National Airlines

MYANMAR National Airlines (MNA) has already started operating the Yangon-Mandalay-Manshi-Mandalay-Yangon route, and it will be operated three days a week as a four-way route.

By enabling flights on

the Yangon-Mandalay-Manshi-Mandalay-Yangon route, the friendship between Myanmar and China is expected to grow, leading to an increase in economic ties between Myanmar and Dehong Dai. Officials stated during a ceremony held at

Manshi Airport in China that his development would facilitate greater cooperation in various areas, including trade, tourism and cultural exchange.

The flight commencement ceremony for the trip took place in Dehong Dai. It was held at Manshi Airport in Manshi City at 6:30 pm on 29 June, and the Boeing 737-800 NG aircraft began its maiden flight.

The trip will also run on every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday a week. —TWA/KZW

Passenger from maiden flight of Yangon-Mandalay-Manshi-Mandalay-Yangon route being welcomed at the airport.



Opening of the 52nd Aung Bar Lay lottery held

THE opening of the 52nd Aung Bar Lay lottery was held at the hall of the Aung Bar Lay Lottery Directorate in Kyauktada township at 8 am on 1 July (Saturday).

At the opening of lottery, 70 per cent of the proceeds from the sale of lottery tickets were allocated to K5,176.703 million and totally prize amount was K3,623.692 million.

The prizes included one K500 million prize, one K200 million prize, one K100 million prize, three K50 million prizes, seven K20 million prizes, seven K10 million

prizes, 10 of K5 million prizes, 15 of K2 million prizes and 14 of K1 million prizes.

In Wai Wai Sar Sar Padetha's prizes, a total of 30 of K300,000 prizes, 300 of K200,000 prizes, 8,000 of K100,000 prizes, 10,000 of K50,000 prizes and 100,000 of K10,000 prizes were also awarded.

In the 52nd Aung bar Lay lottery, the E-454817 lottery ticket won K500 million prize, E-803634 secured K200 million prize and F-248380 bagged K100 million prize.—TWA/MKKS



The top prize K500 million lottery ticket was seen at the 52nd Aung bar Lay lottery opening ceremony.

789 Myanmar workers leave for Thailand under MoU for second time

A total of 789 labour were sent to Thailand under the memorandum of understanding through the Myanmar-Thai Friendship Bridge No 2 for the second time in June, it is reported.

A total of 174 Myanmar migrant workers were sent by Shwe Lwin Lwin overseas employment agency, 80 workers by Zin Htun Win 999 agency, 20 by Shwe Taw Win Mandalay agency, 97 by Ngwe Pyi Gyi agency, 13 by May Myat Noe agency, 130 by Moe Thit Yan agency, 100 by Pyae Paing Hmu agency, 50 by Sit Thway Nyi agency, one by Human Wave agency, seven by Htet Nay Lin agency, 66 by VDM agency and 60 by Arbourfield International agency.— TWA/MKKS

Myanmar Embassy in Tokyo: Japanese companies to recruit more than 400 Myanmar workers



A photo shows a construction site in Japan where Myanmar workers are working.

JAPANESE companies will employ over 400 Myanmar workers, the Myanmar Embassy in Tokyo, Japan, released a notification on 30 June 2023.

The notification said the Myanmar Embassy in Tokyo had verified 293 demand letters between 16 and 30 June.

The Myanmar Embassy to Japan is verifying, with a labour inspection company, whether the companies and factories recruiting Myanmar workers are legally established or not. The remarks and findings on those verifications will be returned to the Ministry of Labour.

Over 350 demand letters for over 1,000 Myanmar workers on 15 June and over 550 demand letters for 1,800 Myanmar workers

in May were sent to the related institutions, Myanmar Embassy to Japan released the notifications.

Recruitment agencies need to raise awareness about labour laws, rules, regulations and labour rights. The majority of the Myanmar workers are employed in agriculture, construction, food industries and caregiving service. However, there were cases of fleeing jobs.

Workers need to comply with the laws and rules. Some violate the rules and some flee from the jobs. Such cases might destroy the trust of other workers and add some strict rules. Some even cannot hire Myanmar workers, according to a recruitment agency offering jobs in Japan. — TWA/EM

LOCAL BUSINESS

53 container vessels slated to arrive at Yangon port in July

A total of 53 container vessels are scheduled to call in July at Yangon Port, according to the Myanmar Port Authority.

In July, nine container vessels run by Sealand Maersk Asia, seven by Samudera Shipping Line, six by RCL Line, five by New Golden Sea (COSCO), four each by MSC Line, ONE line and SITC line and one by BLPL Line are slated to dock at the Yangon Port.

This year, 52 container vessels each in January and February, 55 in March, 50 in April, 56 in May and 57 in June arrived at Yangon Port.

Yangon Port handled 620 container vessels this year. Following the draft extension, the international ocean liners can access the inner port for now, according to the Myanmar Port Authority's statement on 22 June.

After the new navigation channel (Kings Bank Channel) accessing the inner Yangon River was found, the draft extension



Container vessels are seen at Yangon Port along the Yangon River.

work was accelerated. After that, the port can now handle larger ships. The container vessel (185.99-m L.O.A, 35.25-m beam, 29.32 GRT and 2,698 TEU) Hong-Kong based SITC Shipping Line docked at Asia World Port Termi-

nal for the first time on 22 June. That vessel is the largest ship that AWPT Port handled.

From May 2021, the arrival of the ships at terminals in Yangon has increased again. To fulfill the seaborne trade require-

ments, three new container vessels by Maersk Line Myanmar (Sea Land Maersk) started to run in 2021.

Earlier, the larger ships had draft problems preventing their sailing on the Yangon River. The

draft was extended up to 10 metres, the larger ocean liners can enter the Thilawa Port.

The coast of Myanmar is 2,228 kilometers (1,260 nautical miles) including Rakhine coastline (713 kilometers), delta region (437 kilometers) and Taninthayi coastline (1,078 kilometers), stretching from northern Bangladesh's border to southern Thailand's border area.

There are 10 sea ports along the coastline, including Yangon Port, Thilawa deep sea port, Kyaukpyu deep sea Port, Sittway Port, Thandwe Port, Patheingyi Port, Mawlamyine Port, Dawei deep sea port, Myeik Port and Kawthoung Port.

Seaborne trade accounts for 75 per cent of foreign trade. However, international ports of Yangon including Thilawa terminals are the only international port and the remaining ports in eight cities are designated for the domestic way only. — NN/EM

Over 480 companies, rice mills, warehouses apply for GACC in H1 2023

THIS year, 145 companies, 161 rice mills and 182 warehouses submitted proposals to the General Administration of Customs of the People's Republic of China (GACC), according to the Ministry of Commerce.

Last year, 62 companies, 79 rice mills and 19 warehouses also sent proposals to the GACC in 2022.

The task force calls for Expression of Interest (EOI) to apply for a GACC certificate. After the screening process, the documents of the applicants are forwarded to GACC.

The Sanitary and Phytosanitary Protocol (SPS Protocol) workshop was held on 14 June at the Mingala Hall of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI).

The SPS protocol is a must for legitimate rice export to foreign countries including China. Over 300 stakeholders in the rice industry including officials of the Myanmar Rice Federation (MRF), rice millers and exporters were present at the workshop.

Rice is a driven force of

Myanmar's export sector. MRF organized that workshop with a view to make awareness of the SPS protocol measures for biosecurity, rules laid down by the trade partners, increase export earnings from rice exports and availability of rice that ensures food safety in the domestic markets, U Ye Min Aung, president of the MRF emphasized.

He also urged the employers and those in-charge of the rice millers and warehouses to systematically store the rice stocks and to share the export procedures at the event.

The Agriculture Department also discussed matters regarding SPS Protocol inspection, global trading environment, institutions of food safety and the SPS mechanisms, 16 border posts, pest control divisions and procedures to issue the SPS certificates.

Afterwards, officials of the Myanmar Inspection and Testing Service (MITS) also continued discussions about inspection procedures, health, safety and welfare regulations of the warehouses for the workers, wearing protective wears and warehouse

pest control services, basic infrastructure in rice storage to keep rodents out of the warehouses, having light traps in handling warehouse pests, having nets to keep the birds away, keeping the equipment clean, efforts to meet criteria set by China, integrated pest management in rice, forger release to kill the pests prior to export to China and checking marking of packages for complete and correct labelling.

The Consumer Affairs Department also highlighted inspections for rice milling units, MITS's inspection on warehousing and logistics for rice exports and requirements in seeking Pre-shipment inspection (PSI) certificate.

The MRF aims to achieve a rice export target of 2.5 million tonnes in the current financial year 2023-2024, generating an income of US\$1 billion.

Myanmar exported 2,261,203 tonnes of rice and broken rice to foreign trade partners in the past 2022-2023 FY (April-March), bagging \$853.472 million. China topped the list with over 775,000 tonnes. — NN/EM

AYA Bank to offer K2 billion MSME loans in five regions and states

AYA Bank will offer MSME loan in five regions and states, including Yangon Region, U Min Win Oo, managing director of AYA Bank, said at the Panel Talk "From Business Approach to Effective Implementation" and AYA-UMFCCI MSME Loan Launch Ceremony held on 30 June 2023.

The initial loan plan worth K2 billion will start in Yangon, Mandalay and Ayeyawady regions and Mon and Shan states, according to the panel talk.

Those entrepreneurs holding the business licence for at least more than a year and working on micro and small enterprises are eligible to AYA Micro Loan scheme.

Loan tenure is up to two years for those who take out loans with collateral. The interest rate is 9.5 per cent per annum (0.79 per cent per month). For two-year loans, the interest rate is set at 8.5 per cent per annum (0.7 per cent per month). The maximum loan amount is K30 million and collateral assets are vehicles, apartments and shops with ownership certificates.

For the unsecured loan, the loan term is up to one year at an interest rate of 10.5 per cent per annum (0.87 per cent) and nine per cent per annum for two years (0.75 per cent). The maximum loan amount is set at K10 million. — TWA/EM



The photo is Panel Talk titled "From Business Approach to Effective Implementation" and AYA - UMFCCI MSME Loan Launch Ceremony held on 30 June 2023.

OPINION

Benefit Myanmar society with cooperative movements

COOPERATIVE measures play a significant role in benefiting Myanmar society and promoting sustainable development. The International Day of Cooperatives, observed on the first Saturday of July each year, highlights the importance of cooperatives as partners for accelerated sustainable development. This year, it marks the 29th International Day of Cooperatives recognized by the United Nations and the 101st International Cooperative Day.

Cooperatives are characterized as autonomous associations of individuals who voluntarily come together to fulfill their common economic, social, and cultural needs. These enterprises are jointly owned and democratically controlled, with the aim of improving the lives of their members. The United Nations recognizes and emphasizes the role of cooperatives in economic, social, and cultural development, as well as their contribution to achieving social policy objectives.

These cooperatives play a vital role in improving the socioeconomic conditions of their members and making significant contributions to the national economy. Although some cooperative societies may face challenges and undergo liquidation, new ones continue to emerge, reflecting the growing interest in utilizing cooperative measures to serve the interests of the people.

their incomes and improve their standard of living.

Many of the cooperative societies in Myanmar can be classified as micro-, small-, and medium-sized enterprises that have proliferated across the country. The government actively supports the development of these enterprises, both for domestic consumption and international trade. By fostering the growth of micro-, small-, and medium-sized enterprises and encouraging cooperation through cooperative societies, individual businesses can thrive, contributing to the overall progress of society.

Currently, there are over 38,000 cooperative societies operating at different levels throughout Myanmar. These cooperatives play a vital role in improving the socioeconomic conditions of their members and making significant contributions to the national economy. Although some cooperative societies may face challenges and undergo liquidation, new ones continue to emerge, reflecting the growing interest in utilizing cooperative measures to serve the interests of the people.

The people of Myanmar, along with the global community, eagerly anticipate the further development of cooperative societies in various sectors. These cooperative measures not only promote economic growth but also foster a more equitable and prosperous society. By harnessing the power of cooperation, Myanmar can achieve sustainable development and ensure the well-being of its citizens.

THE medical industry, one of the top services prized in the United States, is caught between technical bliss and policy predicament as emerging artificial intelligence (AI) is liberating more doctors from chore and labour, and contracted migrant support is driving hospitals and senior centres to close doors over shortage of foreign nurses.

AI BOOST

“ChatGPT-style artificial intelligence is coming to health care, and the grand vision of what it could bring is inspiring. Every doctor, enthusiasts predict, will have a superintelligent sidekick, dispensing suggestions to improve care,” it said The New York Times on Monday in its report titled “AI May Someday Work Medical Miracles. For Now, It Helps Do Paperwork.”

First will come more mundane applications of artificial intel-

US medical industry has mixed landscape amid AI heat, nurse shortage

US hospitals, nursing homes and home health-aide companies were contending with a severe staffing crisis.

ligence. A prime target will be to ease the crushing burden of digital paperwork that physicians must produce, typing lengthy notes into electronic medical records required for treatment, billing and administrative purposes, according to the report.

“For now, the new AI in health care is going to be less a genius partner than a tireless scribe,” it noted, emphasizing that “medicine is not a wide open terrain of experimentation. AI’s tendency to occasionally create fabrications, or so-called hallucinations, can be amusing, but not in the high-

stakes realm of health care.”

That makes generative AI very different from AI algorithms, already approved by the Food and Drug Administration, for specific applications, like scanning medical images for cell clusters or subtle patterns that suggest the presence of lung or breast cancer, it said.

“Physicians and medical researchers say regulatory uncertainty, and concerns about patient safety and litigation, will slow the acceptance of generative AI in health care, especially its use in diagnosis and treatment plans,”

it added.

NURSE SHORTAGE

“Foreign nurses can’t get green cards to work in the U.S., alarming hospitals, nursing homes and other medical providers who have relied on them to help alleviate staffing shortages,” reported The Wall Street Journal on Monday in its report titled “Green-Card Backlog Fuels Shortage of Nurses at Hospitals, Nursing Homes.”

Some nursing-home associations say facilities already operating on thin margins could be

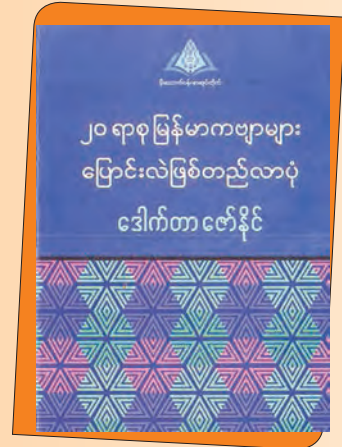
forced to close or be unable to accept seniors transitioning to care following hospitalizations. Hospitals say the shortage triggered by the backlog could undermine patient care, according to the report.

“Foreign nurses are important to the medical industry,” noted the report. Hospitals, nursing homes and home health-aide companies were contending with a severe staffing crisis even before the COVID-19 pandemic, when companies often supplemented full-time domestic nursing hires with traveling nurses and a small



A healthcare worker takes a blood sample from a woman at a New York State Department of Health COVID-19 antibody testing centre at Steve's 9th Street Market in Brooklyn, New York, the United States, on 25 April 2020. PHOTO: MICHAEL NAGLE/XINHUA

SOURCE: Xinhua



Book Title	-	Hnahseyazu Myanmar Gabyamya Pyaung Lei Phytit Ti Lar Bon
Writer	-	Dr Zaw Naing
Publishing House	-	Moe Thauk Pan
Publication Date	-	2019 July
Price	-	K 3,000

Hnahseyazu Myanmar Gabyamya Pyaung Lei Phytit Ti Lar Bon

THIS is a good book for those interested in Myanmar poems, researchers and those who need to write theses. The book is written by Dr Zaw Naing under the title Hnahseyazu Myanmar Gabyamya Pyaung Lei Phytit Ti Lar Bon. The author wrote this book which he submitted to the Myanmar Language Department of the University of Mandalay as partial fulfillment of his doctorate's degree. This doctorate dissertation was written in 2007. Professor Dr Nu Nu Kyi, the then dean of Myanmar Language Department of Mandalay University, has made the following remarks in her capacity as

a member of the examination board: “The author of this thesis is quite optimistic, not blaming any poets whatsoever for their way of composition of the poems, not giving any comments whatsoever. He has made objective analyses of the changes in the trend of poem composition. He is unbiased in his analyses.”

Sayagyi Maung Khin Min [Danubyu], a professor-cum-writer, remarked that the author sees the whole forest, ignoring the individual trees, that he has made his studies, dividing his period of study into four periods and that his area of study is concerned with the

theme, the style of composition and the trend that has changed over time. Last but not least, Sayagyi Maung Khin Min [Danubyu] also stressed that the author has exerted great effort for literature review, having studied a host of references.

This book contains three chapters with Chapter 1 being introduction whereas Chapter 2 and Chapter 3 are dealing with the history of Myanmar poems and their nature and the trend in change of composition respectively.

According to his studies, the first poem in the history of our human beings was composed

in a spoken style. Only when the writing system has been invented, the poems in the written form have come into existence. This being so, the first poem cannot be found in the literature.

One interesting point in his dissertation is the assumption that literature is for the sake of the people. This concept was widely agreed in the period between 1950s and 1970s.

During the period between 1971 and 2000, the trend of composition of Myanmar poems has changed dramatically. This is a period during which modern poets have come into existence. These poets are rather revolutionary in their thoughts and in their style of composition of the poems. And the modern poems were under high criticism. There have arisen two concepts of great poets and authors regarding the modern poems: one concept is known as Zin-Noe-Kyue whereas another one is dubbed as Zaw-Phaw-Maw-Kyaw-Thin.

The book under review is so great that it has been a reference for the M.A. Part I students during the second semester. Additionally, this book won the author the National Literary Award in 2019 in the genre of General Knowledge [Arts].



Title	-	Baihsigo Minn Yauk Nai Lei Hnit My Way articles
Writer	-	Aung Soe Oo
Publishing House	-	Ahlinn Shin
Publication Date	-	December 2019
Price	-	K 3,000

Baihsigo Minn Yauk Nai Lei Hnit My Way articles

NATURALLY, human beings tend to be influenced by their environment. They are forced to select their way of living. In making a choice, people will naturally follow the steps of the people around them. This being so, I have my way of living, imitating the people near me. The book under review has raised questions to the readers. This book is meant to those who are lost in the wilderness, not knowing what to do, who to get associated with, which path to follow etc. This book is meant particularly for the youth who cannot decide to choose the path on which they have

to tread for leading a successful life. The author has shared his own experience to enable the youth to choose the correct path. According to Maung Yint Mar [Kyaunggon], who wrote foreword for this book, said that he had seen the cetana of the writer and that the presentation is quite smooth and persuasive. Although this book is intended for the young people, it is also good for all age groups.

This book includes 23 articles namely Ko Tha Hlyin Ko Bawa Yei Ashin Thakhin, Ahyon Dway Ma Myar Bar Nei, Let Shi Achay Ah Nay Go Lek Khan Bar, La Tha Don Bai Ngin

Ya Aung, Baisigo Minn Yauk Nai Lei, Phyat Than Thwar Lar Gwint, Quality Lanma Gyi Myar, Ah Khu Ah Chein Ga Sa Yway Shauk Hlann Bar, Khayee Lan Hmar Ta Htauk Nar, Chay Oo Tei Yar, Phayay Phayay Phayay Naw Oo Lay, Nin Tet Khe Thaw Hlay Ga Dit Myar, Pan Khin Thaw Lann, Pa Ywet Seik Lay Dwe Shauk Thaw Lann, Ahphay Chay Yar, Kyaung Lein Hlay Gar Hnit Mwe Alanpai Gazar Thu Myar, Khayee Phaw, Lann Phauk Kya Thu Myar and Nauk Hson Pan Daing.

In the article titled ‘Latha Don Baing Ngin’, the writer reminded the youth of the value of

pool of international recruits, typically from the Philippines or Jamaica. After the pandemic, those hires became even more crucial.

The pandemic strained health systems and led to about 100,000 registered nurses leaving the workforce during the past two years due to retirements, stress and burnout, according to a study released in April by the National Council of State Boards of Nursing. More than 600,000 additional nurses reported that they intended to leave by 2027, it said.

“Recruiting nurses from abroad has come to a halt because the type of green card that health-care institutions use to hire nurses has become so oversubscribed that the State Department this month stopped processing applications from anyone who applied after February 2022,” it added.

the time as the saying goes, ‘Procrastination is the thief of time.’ He suggests to the youth that they stay in the present as the saying goes, ‘We belong to the present; future is not for us to see; que sera sera.’

In the article titled, ‘Chay Oo Tei Yar’ he pointed out that we are all going our own way, that in doing so, it is important to set our feet on the correct path and that we need to change our path if we are going the wrong way.

In the article titled, ‘Pa Ywet Seik Lay Dway Shauk Thaw Lann’ he advised the readers to imitate the unity of the ants, laying an emphasis on the esprit de corps, which is essential to the families, organizations and the entire society at large.

In the article titled, ‘Khayee Phaw the writer laid emphasis on the spirit of comrade or camaraderie in French parlance. He remarked that those who are in the same boat to the same destination should be loyal and truthful to each other. In the same vein, the citizens living on the same land, partaking to the same water should be kind to each other.

Orchestra-conducting robot wows audience in S Korean capital

A South Korean-made robot made its debut as an orchestra conductor before a sell-out crowd in Seoul on Friday, wowing the audience with a flawless performance in place of a human maestro.

Named “EveR 6”, the five-foot-ten-inch-tall (1.8m) robot guided more than 60 musicians of the National Orchestra of Korea who were playing traditional Korean instruments.

The robot successfully guided the compositions, both independently and in collaboration with a human maestro who was standing next to it for about half an hour, entertaining the more than 950 audience members who had packed the National Theater of Korea.

The robot was showered with applause when it first appeared from below the stage on a lift and turned to face the audience, bowing in greeting.

Throughout the performance, the robot’s blue eyes stared unblinkingly at the musicians, only nodding its head in time to the music.

While there have been musical performances led by robotic conductors in the past, including a 2017 concert led by the robot YuMi in Italy, this was the first time South Koreans were able to witness a robotic conductor on stage. EveR 6, developed by the state-run Korea Institute of Industrial Technology, was programmed to replicate the movements of a human conductor through motion capture technology. — AFP



Named “EveR 6”, the five-foot-ten-inch-tall (1.8m) robot guided more than 60 musicians of the National Orchestra of Korea who were playing traditional Korean instruments. **PHOTO: AFP**

NEWS IN BRIEF

US accusation of “cybertheft” against China does not hold water

THE “cybertheft” narrative trumped up by US politicians to belittle China’s efforts and achievements in the scientific and technological field does not hold water but betrays their selective blindness and arrogance. Nathaniel Fick, the US ambassador at large for Cyberspace and Digital Policy, has lately urged Washington to prevent China from stealing intellectual property to gain an advantage in artificial intelligence (AI) and other crucial technologies.

Failing to give any specific proof, Fick claimed it’s imperative to form a large coalition to counter the concocted “cybertheft,” an allegation only to expose his arrogance and ignorance.

China’s remarkable scientific and technological development brooks no disparagement given the hard work of generations of Chinese researchers and ever-expanding international cooperation under its long-standing opening-up policy. China has continuously increased investment in scientific research and promoted scientific and technological innovation and intellectual property protection, and has made remarkable achievements. In 2022, China’s total expenditure on research and development (R&D) amounted to nearly 3.09 trillion yuan (456 billion US dollars), up 10.4 per cent year on year, according to the National Bureau of Statistics. —Xinhua

Virgin Galactic finally takes its first paying customers to space

VIRGIN Galactic on Thursday officially commenced commercial spaceflights, a major milestone for the company founded in 2004 by British billionaire Richard Branson.

Dubbed Galactic 01, the 90-minute mission took off from Spaceport America, New Mexico, around 8:30 am local time (1430 GMT), a broadcast feed provided to media by the company showed.

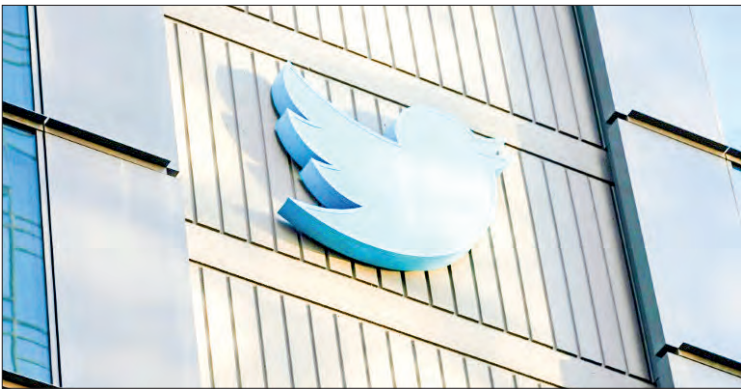
Unlike its competitors, Virgin Galactic uses a piloted “mothership” aircraft that takes off from a runway, gains high altitude, and drops a rocket-powered plane that soars into space at nearly Mach 3 before gliding back to Earth.

Passengers in the space-



Virgin Galactic’s first commercial spaceflight comes almost two years after founder Richard Branson (depicted on the left) soared to the final frontier in a test flight meant to usher in a new era of lucrative space tourism. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

plane’s cabin experience a few minutes of weightlessness and catch a glimpse of the planet’s curvature from more than 50 miles (80 kilometres) above sea level. — AFP



An Indian court has fined Twitter \$61,000 after dismissing its plea challenging orders to remove tweets and accounts critical of Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s government. **PHOTO: CONSTANZA HEVIA/AFP/FILE**

Indian court dismisses Twitter plea on takedown orders

AN Indian court on Friday fined Twitter \$61,000 after dismissing its plea challenging orders to remove tweets and accounts critical of Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s government.

The world’s biggest democracy petitions Twitter for content removals more than almost any other country, and the platform regularly takes down or blocks content at the request of Indian authorities.

Friday’s decision comes weeks after the company’s former chief executive Jack Dorsey said authorities had threatened to “shut down Twitter in India” and raid the homes of its employees if it refused to agree to takedown requests.

The Karnataka state high court in Bengaluru, home to Twitter’s Indian operations, dismissed the case and imposed costs of five million rupees (\$61,000) after a judge deemed it “devoid of merits”, local legal news website LiveLaw reported. — AFP

Welcome to Zuzalu, the pop-up city inhabited by billionaires who don't want to grow old

HUNDREDS of people recently gathered in Montenegro for two months to form a pop-up community called Zuzalu. Their aim was to discuss biotechnological solutions designed to slow down human ageing and live longer. These longevity enthusiasts are even planning to create their own state to achieve this. Is Zuzalu just another example of the elite's obsession with eternal youth? For two months, from March to May, hundreds of hand-picked people — mainly biotech entrepreneurs, cryptocurrency investors and scientific researchers — flocked to Zuzalu, on Montenegro's Adriatic coast. But you won't find this town on any map — it doesn't exist.

This "pop-up city" was created entirely to enable the members of this community to meet up and mingle among themselves. Behind the name Zuzalu lies a community of "longevists" or "life extensionists" ready to

defy death, or at least old age, by investing colossal sums in biomedical research and technological projects that border on science fiction. At the head of this community is Vitalik Buterin, a Russian-Canadian computer programmer, who became a billionaire by inventing the Ethereum protocol, which gave rise to the Ether cryptocurrency, Bitcoin's great rival. For two months, these "longevists" discussed biotech, medical innovation and slowing down the ageing process, during a series of conferences and more informal get-togethers. With ultra-healthy breakfasts, yoga sessions, swimming, saunas, shorts and flip-flops, the atmosphere seemed ultra-relaxed, according to photos posted on social networks. But don't be fooled by this atmosphere of a vacation club for the ultrarich — it's just a pretext. The real aim of this two-month experiment is to find out if this



Montenegro recently welcomed hundreds of "longevists" for two months. PHOTO: AFP

community could live together... permanently.

The "Longevity State"

For these "longevists", in-

vesting millions of dollars in biotechnology to extend life expectancy has its limits: namely, in the law. More specifically, the

regulations governing the pharmaceutical industry, whether in the United States, Europe or elsewhere. — AFP

Living near green space makes you 2.5 years younger: study



Exposure to green spaces has previously been linked with better cardiovascular health and lower rates of mortality. PHOTO: PIX FOR VISUAL PURPOSE/AFP

CITY parks and green spaces help counter heat, boost biodiver-

sity, and instill a sense of calm in the urban jungle.

They also help slow biological aging, with people who have access to green spaces found to be on average 2.5 years biologically younger than those who do not, according to a new study published Wednesday in Science Advances. "Living near more greenness can help you be younger than your actual age," Kyeezu Kim, the study's lead author and a postdoctoral scholar at Northwestern University's Feinberg School of Medicine, told AFP.

"We believe our findings have significant implications for urban planning in terms of expanding green infrastructure to promote public health and reduce health disparities." — AFP

Urban upheaval in Cairo strands both living and dead

IN the decade since President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi seized power, Egypt has built dozens of motorways that zigzag across Cairo — crushing entire neighbourhoods, precious green spaces and historic gravesites. The administration of Sisi,

a former army general who rose to the presidency in 2013 after deposing Mohamed Morsi, has placed a massive premium on construction projects, in what experts call a "bulldozer" development policy. Infrastructure has been

a key source of "legitimacy" for a government whose playbook to "impress the masses is to build big and build quick", said Dalia Wahdan, professor of public policy at the American University in Cairo. — AFP

Seven in ten women play games on their smartphones

SOME Internet users are glued to their smartphones to scroll social networks. Others use them to play games. This is especially the case for women, who are more numerous than men at gaming on their phones.

Seven in ten women say that they play games on their smartphones, according to the YouGov Gaming & Esports Report 2023 report, conducted among more than 19,000 respondents across 18 different

countries. Some 71% of women play games on their smartphones, compared to 59% of men. Women gamers are also more comfortable on their tablets at 26% compared to 21% of men. Men still outnumber women when it comes to computer-based gaming (46% vs. 32%) and console gaming (40% vs. 26%). They're also more likely to use PCs designed especially for gaming (14% vs. 6%). — AFP



Seven out of 10 women play games on their smartphones. PHOTO: AFP

Crippled exports slow Viet Nam’s growth



Viet Nam’s economic growth slowed in the first half of the year as a slump in demand hit exports. PHOTO: AFP

VIET nam’s economic growth slowed in the first half of the year as a slump in demand hit exports, authorities said Thursday.

The Southeast Asian country, a global manufacturing hub for clothing, shoes and electronics, saw an expansion of 3.72 per cent in January-June, down from 6.42 per cent in the same period of 2022.

“The economic growth was not high... in the context of difficulties and challenges from inside and outside the country,” the General Statistics Office said in a statement.

“There was a trend of more employment but the labour and job markets continue to face difficulties and challenges mainly due to enterprises’ lack of orders.”

More than 240,000 people were laid off in the first half of the year, around 80 per cent of them working in foreign-invested businesses, according to the GSO.

Two-thirds were working in the leather and footwear industry. Many of those workers have shifted to the service sector, “accepting less stable jobs”, GSO added.

The country earned more

than \$164 billion from exports in the first half, down 12 per cent on-year.

A serious slump in the real estate market — caused by high land prices, slow approval of projects, and problems securing investment capital — are adding to economic difficulties.

The number of businesses entering real estate was down by 63 per cent in the first quarter compared to the same period last year, the construction ministry said. Nearly a third of real estate businesses were dissolved.

— AFP

German unemployment inches up in June as recession bites



A steel plant of German steel manufacturer “Salzgitter AG” in Salzgitter, northern Germany. PHOTO: PIX FOR VISUAL PURPOSE/AFP

UNEMPLOYMENT unexpectedly rose in Germany in June, official data showed Friday, in the latest sign of weakness in Europe’s biggest economy.

The joblessness rate inched up to 5.7 per cent after staying stable at 5.6 per cent since March, seasonally adjusted figures from the BA federal labour agency

showed. Analysts surveyed by FactSet had expected the rate to remain unchanged.

Germany was “feeling the effects of the more difficult economic conditions on the labour market,” said BA chief Andrea Nahles in a statement.

In absolute terms, less representative of underlying trends but more closely followed in public debate, the number of people out of work climbed by around 11,000 month-on-month, to 2.55 million.

Even without taking into account the arrival of job-seeking Ukrainian refugees, Germany’s unemployment rate would have risen this month, the agency added. — AFP

US high court sets new rule for firms requiring work on religious holidays

THE US Supreme Court set a tougher standard Thursday for companies to be able to claim “undue hardship” when requiring employees to work on religious holidays.

It ruled unanimously in the case of former postal worker Gerald Groff, whose requests to not work on Sundays due to his Christian beliefs were not accommodated by the US Postal Service (USPS).

Groff resigned after not meeting USPS requirements to work some Sundays and sued on the basis of his constitutional right to practice his faith.

Successive lower courts had rejected his complaint, saying USPS made efforts to accommodate him and had proved under the legal standard that it would suffer “undue

hardship” to its business if it had to find other workers to fill his spot.

In their ruling, the high court justices did not focus on Groff’s religious rights.

Instead, the issue was how “undue hardship” was defined — how much difficulty a business would have to incur to justify forcing a worker to work on a religious holiday. A 46-year-old precedent case, *Trans World Airlines v. Hardison*, said “undue hardship” could be defined as anything more than minimal — “de minimis” — cost to the business.

“De minimis” then became a standard that religious rights advocates say essentially allowed businesses to reject any faith-related work request by an employee. — AFP



Former US postal worker Gerald Groff had resigned from his job after not meeting requirements to work some Sundays. PHOTO: AFP/FILE

Number of food items seeing price hikes in 2023 to exceed 2022

PRICE hikes have been decided for over 29,000 food and beverage items in Japan for 2023 so far, with the total number expected to be higher than the previous year at around 35,000, impacting households as they continue to face the adverse effects of inflation, a credit research company said. As an increasing number of stores transfer higher raw material costs to consumers, the number of items subject to price hikes is forecast to be 29,106 by October, exceeding last year’s total of 25,768, a survey by Teikoku Databank Ltd. released

Friday said. The company said the rate that prices have been increasing this year is unusual.

If the approximately 35,000 items forecast to see price hikes this year do so, aided by a bump in Japanese sake and wine prices in October, the company said.

July will see prices for more than 3,500 items rise, with bread products being the largest proportion at 1,578 items. The rising cost of bread products reflects price increases for raw ingredients such as imported flour and dairy, as well as electricity and gas. — Kyodo

BMW to produce
plug-in hybrid car
in S Africa



Production of the BMW X3 began in 2018 at Plant Rosslyn. PHOTO: BMW

GERMAN automaker BMW said Thursday it will inject millions into its South African plant, making it the second in the world to produce and export its X3 plug-in hybrid model.

BMW will pour around 200 million euros (\$218 million) into the factory at Plant Rosslyn, in Pretoria, which was BMW's first foreign plant outside of Germany.

Starting next year, "we will manufacture the BMW X3 as a plug-in hybrid for global export in South Africa," Milan Nedeljkovic, board member for production, said in a statement.

The investment will make the country the second after the US to manufacture and export

the X3 hybrid.

The continent's most industrialized economy began manufacturing the X3, the firm's best-selling model, in 2018. South Africa boasts a booming automotive industry — the country's largest manufacturing sector — which contributed 4.3 per cent of the gross domestic product in 2021 according to the International Trade Administration. BMW's Pretoria plant has produced over 1.6 million vehicles, the group said, exporting to more than 40 countries globally, including 14 across the continent.

The vast majority of cars assembled in South Africa get exported to other countries.— AFP

China's lottery sales surge 52.7 pct in May

CHINA'S lottery ticket sales surged 52.7 per cent year on year to about 50.02 billion yuan (about 6.92 billion US dollars) in May, data from the Ministry of Finance showed Friday.

Sales of lottery tickets to support the welfare system stood at approximately 16.4 billion yuan last month, an increase of 24.7 per cent or 3.25 billion yuan from a year earlier, the data revealed.

Lottery tickets sold to

support the sports industry surged 71.4 per cent year on year to 33.63 billion yuan, mainly driven by sports events and lottery games promotion, the ministry said. In the first five months, sales of lottery tickets in China reached 225.17 billion yuan, up 50 per cent year on year.

Under China's lottery management rules, funds raised from ticket sales are used for administrative expenses and public welfare projects, and to fund prizes.— Xinhua



A sales office of China Welfare Lottery in Yichang city, central China's Hubei province. PHOTO: IC/CHINA DAILY



Ola Kaellenius, chairman of the board of management of Daimler AG and Mercedes-Benz AG. PHOTO: PIX FOR VISUAL PURPOSE/DAIMLER

Mercedes-Benz to further invest
in China: chairman

MERCEDES-BENZ is planning further investments in China, thus contributing to Sino-German cooperation, Ola Kaellenius, the German carmaker's chairman of the board of management, said recently in an interview with Xinhua. Kaellenius was speaking with appreciation for the opportunity to participate in the China-Germany inter-governmental consultation and to meet

Chinese Premier Li Qiang last week.

During Li's visit, Mercedes-Benz signed a letter of intent with China's National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC) in Berlin to promote corporate and industrial cooperation.

The move "creates a basis for joint support for further projects to develop new energy vehicles (NEV) in China and foster existing

partnerships," Kaellenius said.

Noting that China is the world's largest car market and the most dynamic NEV market, Mercedes-Benz remains committed to its business activities in China and plans to actively contribute to the growth of China's auto industry and to boosting the Sino-German economic partnership, according to the company.— Xinhua

July 4th weekend celebrations to test US travel system

AMERICA'S stressed travel infrastructure faces a major test this weekend as it contends with record turnout expected for the annual July 4th festivities.

The five-day stretch culminates

in Tuesday's Independence Day celebration, a highlight of the US summer calendar, marked by fireworks, barbecues and lazing by the pool.

A record 50.7 million Americans are expected to venture at

least 50 miles (80 kilometres) from home in the period heading into 4 July, eclipsing the prior peak of 49 million in 2019, according to the American Automobile Association.— AFP

The Global New Light of Myanmar
www.gnlm.com.mm

ဆောင်းစာ မှာယူလိုပါက ဆက်သွယ်နိုင်ပါတယ်
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CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
M.V KOTA HAPAS VOY.NO. (KHPS0388N)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V KOTA HAPAS VOY.NO. (KHPS0388N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 2-7-2023 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 PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL LINES

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
M.V CONTRIVIA VOY.NO. (044N/S)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V CONTRIVIA VOY.NO. (044N/S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 2-7-2023 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:

(ONE) OCEAN NETWORK EXPRESS LINE

GLOBAL
AFFAIRS

Dutch king expected to apologize for slavery



Queen Maxima and King Willem-Alexander. **PHOTO: ADAM BERRY/AFP**

KING Willem-Alexander is widely expected to make a royal apology for the Netherlands' involvement in slavery on Saturday at an event marking 150 years since slaves were freed in former colonies.

Thousands of descendants of slaves from the South American nation of Suriname and the Caribbean islands of Aruba, Bonaire and Curacao will attend the celebrations in Amsterdam for "Keti Koti" ("breaking the chains" in Surinamese).

Dutch media reported that the king is expected to make some form of apology on behalf of

the royal family, to follow on from an official government apology in December.

However Willem-Alexander has stopped short of confirming that he will say sorry for a trade that researchers say brought vast riches to his ancestors in the House of Orange. "I think we will have to wait until July 1," the Dutch monarch told journalists when asked on a recent state visit to Belgium whether he would apologize at the ceremony.

"I clearly understand peoples' wishes that I'll do it but I'm asking you to wait until then."

The speech will be broadcast live on national television, and Queen Maxima and Prime Minister Mark Rutte will attend the event at the Oosterpark in the Dutch capital. Descendants of slaves have called for the king to use the occasion to apologize.

Since the Black Lives Matter movement emerged in the United States, the Netherlands has embarked on an often difficult debate about the colonial and slave trading past that turned it into one of the world's richest countries. — AFP

OPEC bans Bloomberg, Reuters and WSJ from Vienna conference

OPEC has once again denied media accreditation to reporters from three major financial news outlets — Bloomberg, Reuters and The Wall Street Journal — to cover next week's conference in Vienna, according to Bloomberg.

The media ban follows a similar move by the Vienna-based Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries, which saw accreditations withdrawn for a June meeting of the 13 OPEC members led by Riyadh and their 10 allies headed by Moscow.

"We are very concerned by the prospect of OPEC excluding certain journalists, including from Bloomberg, from next week's seminar," said a statement by the US news agency consulted by AFP on Thursday.

"For the sake of market

transparency, we strongly advocate for OPEC to allow journalists from relevant global news outlets to attend," it added.

Reuters said it had also been targeted by the ban.

The Wall Street Journal did not receive an invitation either, according to a source close to the matter contacted by AFP.

The July 5-6 conference slated to convene at Vienna's Hofburg Palace will feature prominent speakers, including Saudi Energy Minister Prince Abdulaziz bin Salman, the head of British oil giant BP Bernard Looney and the European Energy Commissioner Kadri Simson. Austria's Foreign Ministry, which plans to attend next week's event, declined to comment on the ban. — AFP

US Supreme Court bans race-based university admission



Supporters of affirmative action protest near the US Supreme Court Building on Capitol Hill on 29 June 2023 in Washington, DC. In a 6-3 vote, Supreme Court Justices ruled that race-conscious admissions programs at Harvard and the University of North Carolina are unconstitutional, setting precedent for affirmative action in other universities and colleges. **PHOTO: ANNA MONEYMAKER/AFP**

THE US Supreme Court on Thursday banned the use of race and ethnicity in university admissions, dealing a major blow to a decades-old practice that boosted educational opportunities for African-Americans and other minorities.

One year after overturning

the guarantee of a woman's right to have an abortion, the court's conservative majority again demonstrated its readiness to scrap liberal policies set in law since the 1960s.

The ruling against "affirmative action," delivered by a court heavily influenced by three jus-

tics appointed by Donald Trump during his presidency, drew cheers from conservatives but was blasted by progressives.

President Joe Biden expressed his "severe disappointment," and criticized the justices as "not a normal court." — AFP

Spain PM in Kyiv to kick off Madrid's EU presidency

SPANISH Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez arrived in Kyiv on Saturday to signal EU support for Ukraine as the country's commander-in-chief said he was frustrated by the slow deliveries

of Western weapons.

Sixteen months into Russia's invasion, Kyiv says it is fighting "fierce" battles as part of its counteroffensive launched last month after weeks of anti-

pation. Sanchez, whose country kicked off its presidency of the European Union, was expected to meet with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky later Saturday. — AFP



The 173rd OPEC Conference of Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) in Vienna, on 30 November 2017. **PHOTO: PIX FOR VISUAL PURPOSE/ JOE KLAMAR/AFP/FILE**

ROLLING UPDATES
ASIA

Hong Kong launches series of activities to mark 26th anniversary of its return to motherland

A ceremony to launch a series of events celebrating the 26th anniversary of Hong Kong's return to the motherland was held in Victoria Park of Hong Kong on Friday.

John Lee, chief executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR), said at the ceremony that after experiencing various challenges, Hong Kong has now fully resumed its normal life and moved towards a new stage of stability and prosperity.

Under the double safeguards of the national security law in Hong Kong and the principle of "patriots administering Hong Kong", Hong Kong enjoys social stability and good economic development, Lee said, adding



Photo taken on 30 June 2023 shows the launching ceremony of events celebrating the 26th anniversary of Hong Kong's return to the motherland in Victoria Park of Hong Kong in south China. Hong Kong marks the 26th anniversary of its return to the motherland on 1 July 2023. PHOTO: CHEN DUO/XINHUA

that Hong Kong's business environment is free and convenient, and its attractiveness is increasing.

Over the past year, with the full support of the country and

Hong Kong people, the HKSAR government has introduced a number of policies and measures for the people's well-being and Hong Kong's development, and strived for better economy, development and competitiveness.

Hong Kong marks the 26th anniversary of its return to the motherland on 1 July.

Zheng Yanxiong, director of the Liaison Office of the Central People's Government in the HKSAR, said that over the past year, with the strong support of the central government, Lee and the HKSAR government have fulfilled their duties, united and led all sectors of society to write a new chapter for Hong Kong, and accomplished many practical things. — Xinhua

Political parties in Cambodia launch campaigns for general election

POLITICAL parties in Cambodia began on Saturday a three-week campaign for the general election scheduled to be held on 23 July.

Eighteen political parties will contest in the forthcoming election for the 125-seat National Assembly, which will see more than 9.7 million people cast their ballots, according to the National Election Committee (NEC).

Cambodian Prime Minister Samdech Techo Hun Sen, president of the ruling Cambodian People's Party (CPP), attended a rally held at the Diamond Island in capital Phnom Penh.

Addressing the rally, Hun Sen said the forthcoming election is a historical and important political event for the country, and that the CPP has approved its support for his re-election.

Hun Sen said the party's political program for 2023-2028 was designed to ensure the protection of peace and sustainability on the path of development and improvement of people's livelihood towards realizing Cambodia's vision of becoming an upper middle-income country by 2030 and a high-income country by 2050. —Xinhua



Eighteen political parties will contest in the forthcoming election for the 125-seat National Assembly, which will see more than 9.7 million people cast their ballots. PHOTO: AFP

Suicides in Singapore rise to 22-year high: report



The suicide rates among young people aged 10-29 and elderly people aged 70-79 were particularly concerning, the prevention centre Samaritans of Singapore (SOS) said in its annual press release containing statistics on the issue. PHOTO: AFP

SUICIDES in Singapore rose nearly 26 per cent last year to their highest level in more than two decades, reflecting the "unseen mental distress" in the city-state, according to a local NGO.

The suicide rates among young people aged 10-29 and elderly people aged 70-79 were particularly concerning, the prevention centre Samaritans of Singapore (SOS) said in its annual press release containing statistics on the issue.

A total of 476 individuals killed themselves in 2022, "the highest recorded suicide deaths since 2000", up from 378 the year before, the SOS release said. — AFP

Tokyo area enters power-saving period amid tight supply forecast

HOUSEHOLDS and businesses in the Tokyo area on Saturday began a period of power conservation, spanning from July to August, as the electricity supply is forecast to become tight in the area this summer.

The Japanese government has issued a request based on the projection that the reserve power capacity rate in the region served by Tokyo Electric Power Company Holdings Inc. in July could drop to 3.1 per cent, slightly above the lowest level for maintaining a stable supply, if a once-

in-a-decade level of extreme heat grips the area.

Since electricity demand could swing about three per cent from the anticipated level, it is necessary to secure at least a three per cent reserve, according to the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry.

The rate is projected to improve to 4.8 per cent in the TEPCO-serving region in August, while that in other regions is expected to stay above five per cent in July and August, a ministry official said. — Kyodo

Dutch king expected to apologize for slavery

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SPORT

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar State Administration Council: Twelve Objectives

1. Political affairs

- (a) To build a Union based on democracy and federalism, through a disciplined and genuine multiparty democratic system that is fair and just.
- (b) To prioritize the achievement of enduring peace for the entire nation in line with the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA).
- (c) To continue implementing the principle of peaceful co-existence among countries through an independent, active, and non-aligned foreign policy.
- (d) To ensure peace, stability, rule of law, and the safe and smooth functioning of transport networks across the Union.

2. Economic affairs

- (a) To enhance development based on agriculture and livestock using modern production techniques and to strengthen all-round development in other sectors of the economy.
- (b) To develop a stable market economy and promote international investment in order to enhance the economic development of the entire National people.
- (c) To assure support for the sustainability of Micro-, Small- and Medium-Sized Enterprises (MSMEs) that prioritize import substitution, export production, and the use of domestically produced raw materials, in order to increase domestic production and generate employment opportunities.
- (d) To advance the socioeconomic life of the people, in order to ensure the country's prosperity and food security.

3. Social affairs

- (a) To ensure a strong and dynamic Union spirit, the genuine spirit of patriotism.
- (b) To respect and promote the customs and traditions of all National people and preserve and safeguard their faiths, beliefs, culture, and characteristics of patriotic nationalism.
- (c) To strengthen basic health care in order to achieve the emergence of a health system that enhances the longevity and health of the entire nation.
- (d) To comprehensively promote the education sector to make it capable of producing the human resources necessary for building a modern, developed, and progressive democratic nation.

Ye Htet Aung uplifts title in SINGHA-SAT Nakhon Ratchasima Classic 2023 of Thailand PGA Tour

MYANMAR professional golfer Ye Htet Aung clinched the title in the SINGHA-SAT Nakhon Ratchasima Classic 2023 which is one of the Thailand PGA Tours, taking place at Khao Yai Country Club of Thailand from 28 June to 1 July.

Ye Htet Aung scored 12 under par 261 strokes on four rounds, followed by Sangchai Kaewcharoen of Thailand in the second position and Suttinon Panyo and Thanyakon Khrongpha of Thailand in the joint third position.

Champion Ye Htet Aung secured the trophy and cash award 240,000 baht.

Aung San Myo of Myanmar took the 45th position with six under par 278 strokes on the four rounds.

A total of 132 professional golfers participated in the tournament. Starting time of the final round was adjourned due to heavy rains.

Ye Htet Aung has been taking



SINGHA-SAT Nakhon Ratchasima Classic 2023 champion Ye Htet Aung of Myanmar. Photo: Thailand PGA Tour

part in the Asian Tours and other international golf tours since 2016. His championship title in the SINGHA-SAT Nakhon Ratchasima Classic 2023 was the first-ever championship title in his

career. This year, Ye Htet Aung, Thiha Htay, Aung San Myo and Kyaw Thet Oo are allowed to take part in the All Thailand Golf Tours. — Ko Nyi Lay/TTA

France forward Thuram signs for Inter Milan

FRENCH international striker Marcus Thuram signed for Inter Milan on a free transfer on Saturday, the Serie A club announced.

Son of 1998 World Cup winner Lilian Thuram, the 25-year-old signed a five-year deal with last season's Champions League finalists worth a reported 6.5 million euros (\$7.1 million) a season.

Inter secured his services on the back

of his most successful season for Bundesliga side Borussia Moenchengladbach in which he scored 13 goals — he became a free agent at the end of the campaign.

“Marcus Thuram signs for Inter,” read a statement on the club’s website.

“The forward, who was born in 1997, joins the Nerazzurri following four seasons with Borussia Moenchengladbach.”

Thuram will play up front

alongside Lautaro Martinez after picking the country of his birth rather than Paris Saint-Germain, replacing veteran Edin Dzeko who signed for Turkish giants Fenerbahce last week.

He was born in Parma where his father played for five seasons, winning the UEFA Cup and Italian Cup in 1999 as part of a star-studded outfit which also featured Italian icons Gianluigi Buffon and Fabio Cannavaro. — AFP



Marcus Thuram (R) made an impact as a substitute for France in the World Cup final. PHOTO: AFP/FILE