

The GlobalNEW LIGHT of MYANMAR

Myanmar's coconut shell creations command significant market shares across Asia, EU, and Dubai

Myanmar's coconut shell sector continues to make remarkable strides, painting an optimistic future for this unique craftsmanship

Myanmar's burgeoning coconut shell industry has captivated the attention of discerning buyers throughout Asian nations, the European Union, and Dubai of the United Arab Emirates, resulting in substantial market dominance. The artistry of coconut carving has led to heightened demand from a diverse range of locations including Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Japan, the UK, and the US.

Ko Phoe Zaw, a visionary producer within the coconut shell product realm, expressed, "Orders for our exquisite coconut shell crafts pour in from Singapore, Japan, Malaysia, and Thailand. Notably, even Dubai has recognized the value of our creations, displaying a keen interest and offering favourable terms. Moreover, the allure extends to the UK and the US. Online platforms have facilitated networking opportunities, nurturing connections between coconut craft artists hailing from Sri Lanka, India, Bangladesh, and other global business partners."



SEE PAGE-2 A glimpse of the products of exquisite coconut shell crafts for exportation.

CURRENT AFFAIRS PAGE-6



Palm oil wholesale market price dips below K8,000 per viss on 3 Aug

1st Farmer's Forum held in Nay Pyi Taw

Nurturing strong bonds: Encouraging robust connections between farmers, experts, and officials

A Farmer's Forum was held at the Department of Agricultural Research in Yezin, Zeyathiri Township in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

Addressing the gathering, Deputy Minister for Agriculture, Livestock, and Irrigation

Dr Tin Htut emphasized the need for researchers, experts, and officials to foster robust connections between farmers and experts. He highlighted the significance of innovative approaches, advocating for the seamless exchange of agricul-

tural insights through platforms like the Farmer Channel and various social media avenues. Dr Tin Htut underscored the forum's role as a collaborative "Smart Movement", uniting researchers, experts,

SEE PAGE-2

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NATIONAL



Myanmar's coconut shell creations command ...

FROM PAGE-1

This versatile coconut carving technique yields a plethora of artisanal offerings, ranging from elegant lamps and stylish kettles to charming cups, spoons, buttons, earrings, necklaces, and even chic handbags. Among these, the demand for coconut shell buttons has reached its pinnacle, prominently sought after by both local and international apparel manufacturers.

While the popularity of coconut-based products flourishes in foreign markets, the industry grapples with challenges stemming from exorbitant transport fees, limited investor engagement, and a scarcity of skilled labour. These hurdles notwithstanding, Myanmar's coconut shell sector continues to make remarkable strides, painting an optimistic future for this unique craftsmanship. — TC/KTZH

(See also the news article on page 5)

1st Farmer's Forum held in Nay Pyi Taw



The First Farmer's Forum in progress at the Department of Agricultural Research in Yezin, Zeyathiri Township in Nay Pyi Taw on 5 August 2023.

FROM PAGE-1

and officials in their shared mission to enhance the well-being of farmers and drive agricultural prosperity.

Subsequently, Deputy Minister U Bo Bo Kyaw urged the Water User

Groups (WUG) to unite and translate their collaboration into tangible actions. He emphasized the WUG's potential to evolve into a formidable organization that spans the entire production chain, enabling the cul-

tivation of crops requiring minimal water yet yielding substantial profits.

Attendees then coordinated the discussion. The Farmer's Forum will be held every Saturday. – MNA/KTZH

Six new cases of COVID-19 reported on 5 August, total figure registers 641,088

MYANMAR'S COVID-19-positive cases rose to **641,088** after **six** new cases were reported on 5 August 2023 according to the Ministry of Health. Therefore, a total of **11,049,685** laboratory samples were examined to date and the confirmed COVID-19 cases reached **641,088**. The total number of patients who have recovered from COVID-19 in the country reached **619,878** including **six** new recoveries. The death toll from COVID-19 in the country registered **19,494** on 5-8-2023 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. — GNL

Visitors thronged to second day of 2023 Rainy Season Expo



Crowds are seen at the 2023 Monsoon Market Fair showcasing industrial products and electric vehicles (EVs) at People's Square in Yangon yesterday. **PHOTO : SAN KYAW OO (IPRD)**

PEOPLE flocked to the second day of 2023 Rainy Season Expo, Industrial Product Exhibition and Electric Vehicle (EV) Exhibition held in the People's Square, Dagon Township, Yangon Region on 5 August.

Visitors showed special interest in booths exhibiting household items, agricultural produce, construction materials, clothes, footwear, vehicle tyres, perfumes and spices produced by 29 industrial zones of the Yangon Region. They were also passionate about food stalls opened by the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry, natural fertilizers and fresh vegetables exhibited by the Yangon City Development Committee, Yangon Region Investment Committee's industrial product booths, and MSME booths representing Bago Region, Mandalay Region, Shan State and Ayeyawady Region.

Besides, the Myanmar Edible Oil Traders and Edible Oil Manufacturers Association sold one viss of edible oil per person in a queue system at a low price.

Famous national singers and dancers gave performances to the visitors who came to the expo, and the restaurant booths were crowded with consumers. – San Kyaw Oo (IPRD)/KZL

NATIONAL

Myanmar Cyber Security Challenge 2023 held for IT safety

THE Myanmar Cyber Security Challenge 2023 (open Level) competition was held at the Ministry of Transport and Communications in Nay Pyi Taw from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm yesterday, graced by Union Transport & Communications Minister General Mya Tun Oo and dignitaries.

A total of 25 teams including 75 participants from the Defence Services Technological Academy, Technological Universities, Universities of Computer Studies and Government Technological Colleges and Technical Institutes from various states and regions

joined the championship.

After the games, UI\$ Team won first place while 00b_779082 grabbed the second and U_SH3LL Team earned the third.

In Myanmar, the Myanmar Cyber Security Challenge has been held every year since 2015 but was unable to be held in 2020 and 2021 due to the limitations of COVID-19. However, the tourney appeared again in 2022, and now in 2023, it has been held for the seventh time.

The winners of the competition are sent to compete in cyber security competitions held in ASEAN countries.

— MNA/KZL



Union Minister for Transport and Communications General Mya Tun Oo views the contest among competitors who take part in the Myanmar Cyber Security Challenge 2023 on 5 August 2023 in Nay Pyi Taw.

Rapid acceleration of development initiatives in Rakhine State



Chief Minister of Rakhine State U Htein Lin views round the progress of the soft crab farming at TMP soft crab farm in Abay Village of Taungup Township yesterday.

CHIEF Minister of Rakhine State U Htein Lin who is in the capacity of Chairman of Rakhine State

Natural Disaster Management Committee made an inspection tour of Thandwe and Taungup

districts to inspect development measures and expansion of agriculture and livestock farms.

The Rakhine State Chief Minister viewed a demonstration on the cultivation of high-yield GW-11 and Sinthukha paddy strains to yield 100 baskets of paddy in Aleywa Village of Thandwe Township yesterday morning.

He viewed round progress of the soft crab farming at TMP soft crab farm in Abay Village of Taungup Township, the processing of soft crabs in the cold storage in Thandwe and the export process as well as plans to extend the farming tasks. The Chief Minister also looked into arrangements made for the production of edible bird nests near the soft crab farm.

He also observed the 15 acres of thriving Hsinthwelat paddy seed production farm of the Agriculture Department in Thetkaepyin Village of Taungup Township. He also visited Basic Education Primary School in Moke Village.

In the afternoon, he attended

the respect-paying and fresher welcoming ceremony of the Zoology Department of Taungup University and inspected the progress of building the convocation hall of the university.

The chief minister met district and township-level departmental officials at the hall of Taungup Township. On the occasion, he said that an emphasis must be placed on peace and stability for the development of the region. He urged departmental officials to pour out greater efforts in serving their duties. As high-yield monsoon paddy strains have been distributed to local farmers, officials need to provide agricultural techniques and necessary measures for those farmers in order to boost the per-acre yield of crops. He underscored that departmental officials have to lend a helping hand to each other focusing on the development of the district.

—Tin Tun (IPRD)/TTA

Affordable essentials offered in Cyclone-hit Sittway

LOCAL battalions from the Western Command and officials have come together to support the community in Sittway affected by Cyclone Mocha. They are offering essential food items and utensils at reduced prices to aid residents and departmental staff during this challenging time.

A variety of foodstuffs, including rice, edible oil, salt, meat,

fish, eggs, dairy products, vegetables, onions, and garlic, along with products from Tatmadaw Factories and Myanmar Economic Corporation, such as instant noodles, biscuits, canned food, electrical goods, and private entrepreneurs' building materials, were made available at prices lower than the standard market rates yesterday.

Residents, as well as the families of departmental staff, expressed their gratitude for the opportunity to purchase essential items at more affordable prices during these trying circumstances.

— MNA/KZL

Sittway residents and departmental staff are seen buying foodstuffs and utensils at fairer prices yesterday.



NATIONAL

70 pig-raising farms set to emerge in Nay Pyi Taw with loan support



The MoALI deputy minister and officials seen inspecting a private-owned pig breeding farm on 4 August.

THE Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation is initiating a project to establish 70 pig farming units in Nay Pyi

Taw Union Territory, each accommodating 100 pigs. Deputy Minister Dr Aung Gyi unveiled this effort during a meeting on

livestock and fishery development on 4 August. The ministry plans to provide financial assistance to pig farmers through

loans, along with technical assistance, support, quality piglet breeds, and disease prevention measures.

Key officials, including directors-general from the Livestock Breeding & Veterinary Department and Department of Fisheries, discussed their roles in the meeting, which highlighted ongoing projects, annual goals, and top priorities crucial for the growth of the livestock industry.

The deputy minister and officials demonstrated their commitment by visiting Dagon International's organic farming and fish farm in Shwekheinn village, Dekkhinathiri Township. They also inspected pig farming process by farmer U Phone Myint Aung in Taungnyo village, Ottarathiri Township, offering encouragement and assistance to these farmers.

In further excursions, the deputy minister explored the Yezin fishery site in Kyitaungkan village, Zeyathiri Township, managed by the Department of Fisheries. He also assessed dairy cattle farming and Napier grass cultivation at the pedigree distribution farm near Office No 36. Discussions among officials emphasized enhancing collaboration between veterinarians and livestock enterprises, addressing technical challenges in livestock breeding.

The overarching goals of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation include ensuring food security, generating surplus production, and providing extensive support to the meat and fishery sectors, as well as promoting the growth of privately-owned livestock businesses. — MNA/TH

Illegal timbers, consumer goods, industrial materials and vehicles confiscated

THE on-duty teams supervised by the Customs Department conducted inspections on 3 August and impounded a Nissan Diesel (approximately K35 million), headed to Mandalay from Chinshwehaw, carrying 1,300 kilogrammes of various sizes of men's socks worth K5.85 million that were not declared in the Import Declaration (ID) at the Yepu permanent checkpoint, 4,300 kilogrammes of white powder worth K1,896,300 that were not declared

in the ID from a container at the MITT Port, 16 kinds of goods worth K27,060,668 including 10 sets of Lubi monoblock pump that was different from ID and 44 kinds of goods worth K390,488,868 including the LG parking management computer that exceeded the 60 days of VPA from two containers at the Myanmar Industrial Port Terminal and 50 lady handbags worth K1.75 million without official documents from luggage at the Yangon Interna-



tional Airport (Import Desk). The action was taken under Customs procedures.

Additionally, a total of 7.053 tonnes of illegal teak, 0.562 tonne of illegal hardwood and 3.575 tonnes of other illegal timbers worth K2,003,690 were seized in

Bago district on 5 August. The action was taken under the Forest Law. A total of seven arrests were made on 3 and 5 August, with an estimated value of K464,049,526, as reported by the Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee. — MNA/ MKKS

Officials check illegal teak and hardwood (top) and confiscated illegal items (above and far left photos).



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ARTICLE

The view of coconut palm and betel trees alongside the roads and the riverbank is enchanting when one visits the delta regions. The palm and tamarind trees can be considered as the significant feature of some central Myanmar Regions, while coconut, nipa palm, betel tree and habitual mangrove give prominent images of the delta region.

The coconut palm is commonly found in the delta region. We can see the coconut and betel tree-lined roads across the country. Nipa palm and mangroves can be found in the areas close to the sea, U Aung from Hlinebon village of Mawgyun Township told the Global New Light of Myanmar.

The palm tree climbing business used to thrive in the central Myanmar Region. Now, some palm trees were cut down. Additionally, mangrove forests in the delta region are also suffering from overexploitation. Naturally grown mangroves can prevent coastal erosion.

Lucrative coconut palm

The commercially valued coconut



The photo shows coconut plantation flourishing in the delta region of the country.

Cultivating Coconut Palms:
Exploring the Lucrative Realm of Perennial Crops

By Linn Htet



A refreshing coconut juice shop in Tamway Township, Yangon City.

Coconut water market trends

Coconut is widely used in Myanmar’s traditional snack delicacies and some recipes. It’s also utilized in the coconut extract business. It is highly demanded and used in charity feasts during the Myanmar New Year Festival.

Moreover, coconut consumption among Yangonites has risen on account of health benefits. Coconut juice contains 200-1,000 millilitres water and it’s natural juice with low cholesterol. Fresh coconut juice provides a good source of nutrients (such as vitamin C, potassium, iron, calcium, magnesium, vitamin B, amino acid, copper and other minerals) rather than dried coconut.

Nutrients and vitamins in coconut

palm is mostly found in the delta region. The total yield rate is over 400 million nuts per annum and the delta region accounts for the production of 130 million nuts. Half of the production is designated for local consumption and the remaining is sent to other regions.

Myanmar exported 206 tonnes of coconut worth US\$0.082 million to China, Bangladesh and other foreign countries in the 2021-2022 financial year. The ex-

Amid a thriving coconut export industry, the State is driving an ambitious expansion of coconut palm cultivation. The escalating year-on-year coconut exports to Bangladesh have spurred a rapid momentum in both the Ayeyawady Region and Rakhine State coconut markets, exerting a considerable influence on the domestic market.

port volume climbed to 319 tonnes with an estimated value of \$0.128 million in the 2022-2023 FY, as per the official statistics released by the institution concerned.

With coconut export booming, the State pushed forward to the expansion of coconut palm cultivation. As the coconut export to Bangladesh has increased year over year, the coconut market in Ayeyawady Region and Rakhine State has accelerated its momentum and has affected the domestic market.

water boost the immune system and coconut juice containing cytokinin, plant hormones, is believed to have anti-ageing and anti-cancer properties, nutritionists said.

Health benefits in coconut water treat dehydration due to mild diarrhoea, vomiting and electrolytes loss from sweating heavily. It helps boost energy levels. Thanks to health benefits, the coconut juice market has become a trend in Yangon Region. The vendors sell them in the quarters of the city.

CURRENT
AFFAIRS



The World Breastfeeding Week and Nutrition Promotion Week event in progress.

Financial assistance allocated for pregnant women, under-2 children

ELIGIBLE pregnant women and mothers of children under the age of two will receive cash assistance for three successive months through the social protection programme, according to the Social Welfare Department under the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement.

The task will enable pregnant women and children under two years from seven regions to access adequate nutrition, brain and body development. Starting 2023-2024FY, the data collection was conducted and they will receive K15,000 for three successive months in August and

September.

The cash assistance will be provided to seven regions – Chin State, Rakhine State, Naga Self-administered Zone, Kayin State, Kayah State, Shan State and Ayeyawady Region by the region and state Social Welfare Departments.

The remaining eligible people can register at their respective townships' and wards' administrative offices and can contact Hot Line 1566.

In Myanmar, August, Nutrition Promotion Month is composed of a specific theme each week: World Breastfeeding Week; Under-five children and

school children nutrition promotion week; Pregnant mother and lactating mother nutrition promotion week and Iodine deficiency disorders (IDD) elimination week.

“Breast milk is the best food for the newborn. It is also the best nutrition for babies for the first six months of life. They should be given nutritious complementary foods and continue breastfeeding up to the age of two years,” said Union Minister Dr Thet Khaing Win at the ceremony to mark the World Breastfeeding Week and Nutrition Promotion Week held on 4 August. — TWA/KTZH

Palm oil wholesale market price dips below K8,000 per viss on 3 Aug

THE wholesale price of palm oil declined to K7,800 per viss in the Yangon market on 3 August from above K8,000 recorded in early August.

Some oil traders sold approximately 30 barrels of palm oil to buyers from other regions at K7,500 per viss on 1 August. Then, they resold the palm oil at the door-to-door price of K7,800 per viss, U Ko Lay, a buyer, told the Global New Light of Myanmar.

The reference wholesale price for Yangon is set at K4,295 per viss for a week from 31 July to 6 August, which was an increase of K65 from last week's rate.

International palm oil price sank to US\$870 in the evening from \$880 per tonne on 3 August.

The palm oil wholesale prices stood at K9,000 per viss on 25

July, K8,950 on 29 July, K8,500 on 2 August and K8,300 on 3 August in Mandalay market.

Some loyal customers could buy palm oil at K7,700 per viss these days.

The opening price of palm oil rebounded to K8,000-8,100 per viss on 5 August at Nyaungpinlay market in Lanmadaw Township, Yangon, the traders from other regions who came to buy them in Yangon, stressed.

The market price hit K8,500 per viss at the end of July. About 11,000 tonnes of imported palm oil flowed into the domestic market in recent days. The market price is two times higher than the reference price despite a decline in international prices and palm oil's bulk import, a seller highlighted. — TWA/EM



Capturing commerce: A glimpse of a palm oil retail shop in the Yangon market.

Reporting businesses omitting vouchers with tax stamps encouraged

INTERNAL Revenue Department, under the Ministry of Planning and Finance, is encouraging the public to report any restaurants, hotels and guest houses, broadcast media, gold shops and phone shops that fail to stick tax stamps on vouchers.

Those who want to report must submit documents or audio files as evidence to support their complaints against the above businesses for their failure of providing tax stamps, according to the press release

by the ministry.

Those who report any restaurants, hotels and guest houses, broadcast media, and gold shops will be rewarded with 30 per cent of the fine and those reporting phone shops will receive 20 per cent of the fine, the release said.

Additionally, the press release urged businesses to issue stamped vouchers whether or not customers request them and urged consumers to request them when making payments. — TWA/TH

Myanmar's mineral exports cross US\$116 mln over last 4 months



The photo shows gem merchants appraising uncut jade stones.

MYANMAR'S mineral exports amounted to US\$116.017 million from 1 April 2022 and 28 July 2023 in the current finan-

cial year 2023-2024, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

The public sector performed mineral exports worth over \$20 million whereas the private sector saw mineral exports worth over \$95 million in the past four months.

Myanmar earned \$123.665 million from mineral exports in the corresponding period last FY. So, the mineral exports shrunk by over \$7 million this FY.

The value of min-

eral exports stood at \$895.611 million in the 2020-2021 FY and \$288.599 million in the 2021-2022 FY. The gems and jewellery, gold, jade, pearl, diamond, lead, tin, tungsten, silver, copper, zinc, coal and other minerals are included.

The exploration and production of minerals are commonly found in Kayah State, Taninthayi, Mandalay and Sagiang regions. — TWA/EM

LOCAL BUSINESS

Myanmar to participate in 7th China-South Asia Expo, 27th China Kunming Import & Export Fair

MYANMAR will showcase its products at the 7th China-South Asia Expo and the 27th China (Kunming) Import and Export Fair, according to the Myanmar Trade Promotion Organization under the Ministry of Commerce.

The 27th China (Kunming) Import and Export Fair will be held at Dianchi International Convention and Exhibition Centre in Kunming from 16 to 20 August.

Myanmar will join the expo as the Country of Honour for the second time. The country participated in the 5th China-South Asia Expo held in June 2018 as the Country of Honour for the first time.

This year, over 10 forums

will be held simultaneously. Union Minister for Commerce U Aung Naing Oo will take the role of alternate chairman who serves in turn at the China-South Asia Cooperation Forum.

Moreover, a delegation led by the Union Minister for Investment and Foreign Economics Relations Dr Kan Zaw, accompanied by the region and state chief ministers, will attend the 2023 GMS Economic Corridors Forum (regional-level).

More than 100 Myanmar businesspersons and merchants will display local products such as agricultural products, food products, handicrafts and precious gems and jewellery and attend the related forums. — NN/EM



This photo taken on 19 November 2022 shows a view of Kunming Dianchi International Convention and Exhibition Centre, the venue for the 6th China-South Asia Exposition in Kunming, southwest China's Yunnan Province. PHOTO: XINHUA

Sugar Co to purchase sugarcane at K110,000/tonne in 2023-2024 season



The prices of sugarcane remain upward trend on the back of strong demand and high price of sugar in the market. The photo shows the harvest of sugarcane.

NGWAY Yi Pale Sugar Co Ltd notified the sugarcane growers in early August that it will offer K110,000 per tonne of sugarcane in the upcoming 2023-2024 sugarcane season.

Therefore, the company enticed the growers to ramp up production and expand the cultivation acres.

The company set the sugarcane floor price at K90,000-100,000 per

tonne last season. This year, in addition to the price rise of sugar, the company offers higher prices to deal with high cultivation input costs of the growers and encourage them to increase production, sugarcane and sugar businesspersons shared information.

However, the sugarcane growers called for the sugar mills to raise the offering prices amid the rocketing fuel prices

and fertilizer prices this year.

This year, sugar prices hit the highest owing to the low stocks and lack of imports from foreign countries. The price jumped to K3,400 per viss this year up from K1,000 per viss in the 2019-2020 FY.

Following the soaring sugar price, intending to facilitate sugarcane growers, Ngway Yi Pale Sugar Company has

informed the growers to subsidize K200,000 per acre in advance for the 2023-2024 season if they add new acres of sugarcane plantation.

Myanmar's annual sugar production is estimated at 450,000 tonnes. Myanmar earlier sent sugar to China and Viet Nam with surplus volume. At present, it is delivered to Viet Nam only, said U Win Htay, vice chair of the association.

Sugarcane is commonly found in the upper Sagaing Region, followed by the northern Shan State. It is also found in the western and eastern Bago Region, Yangon Region and Mandalay Region.

The sugarcane is grown in December-January. It can be harvested from November to February of the following years. The sugarcane growing rotation cycle lasts three years in Myanmar. — NN/EM

Myanmar's foreign trade slumps to over US\$11 bln last four months

MYANMAR'S external trade sank to over US\$11 billion in the past four months (April to July) of the current Financial Year 2023-2024, indicating a decrease of \$35.067 million compared to the corresponding period last FY, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

Myanmar's export was worth over \$5.094 billion whereas the country's import was valued at \$5.907 billion in the past three months.

Myanmar's seaborne trade value crossed over \$7.55 billion this FY, while border trade was valued at \$3.446 billion.

The trade figure in the past four months increased from \$11.036 billion recorded in the year-ago period.

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

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

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Promote ethical trade and curb corruption

ILLEGAL trade thrives in an environment in which normal trade faces excessive restrictions. Some traders and businesspersons prioritize their selfish interests, resorting to various means to secure profits, regardless of whether their methods are proper or improper.

Such greed-driven acts not only jeopardize their business reputation but also hinder growth and prosperity. Emphasizing correct trade practices is essential for sustained success. Unfortunately, some traders deviate from the right path, opting for deceitful tactics against authorities and competitors, inevitably inviting legal consequences for their improper actions.

Recently, during a meeting on the promotion of manufacturing basic foodstuffs, the Prime Minister emphasized the need for officials in relevant regions and states to monitor the performance of assigned staff at security gates along the roads. This measure aims to enable businesspersons to transport commodities without incurring unacceptable costs.

The individuals serving in these positions hold a responsibility to be loyal to the State and the people. They are tasked by the government and officials to inspect cargo trucks and ensure they are not carrying illegal or smuggled goods. It is vital for these staff members to maintain the trust of the authorities and remain righteous and honest, regardless of the dubious intentions of some businesspersons.

To combat corruption effectively, specialized task forces dedicated to eradicating illegal trade must supervise trade camps, checkpoints, and security gates in various regions and states. This includes addressing issues of unacceptable delays and exposing bribery cases for thorough verification. Severe actions should be taken against officials found engaging in corrupt practices to deter future occurrences.

Businesspersons attempting to tarnish the images of service personnel at checkpoints by offering bribes must be met with strong resistance. These personnel need to be equipped to withstand improper acts and hold their ground against such deceptive tactics. Additionally, measures must be taken against traders who try to evade set charges at gates by using illegal routes to transport goods.

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It is crucial to address both the deceitful actions of illegal traders and the unfaithful behaviour of assigned staff along legal trade routes. Authorities must implement a carrot-and-stick approach to ensure compliance with the laws. By providing incentives for ethical behaviour and imposing strict consequences for corruption, we can foster an environment conducive to honest trade practices.

Paving the way for traders and staff to avoid corruption is essential for building a prosperous and ethical business environment. As such, everybody should not only curb illegal trade but also promote legitimate trade for the benefit of the economy and society as a whole.

IN A world filled with fad diets and crazy workout routines, there’s a new duo stealing the spotlight in Tinseltown — the sensational weight-loss wonders, Ozempic and Wegovy! Originally designed to tackle Type 2 diabetes, these super-pills have now become the hottest topic from Hollywood to Silicon Valley, leaving everyone wondering, “Where have you been all our lives?”

Picture this: Ozempic, the superhero of injectable drugs, with its secret weapon — semaglutide. Approved by the FDA back in 2017 for adults with type 2 diabetes, this little powerhouse mimics the body’s natural hormone GLP-1, taking insulin secretion and blood sugar production to a whole new level of awesomeness. But wait, there’s more! Ozempic also slows down food movement from the stomach to the intestines, making you feel fuller and knocking out those pesky hunger pangs like a champion! It’s like having

a personal trainer, nutritionist, and chef all rolled into one — now that’s what we call a Hollywood makeover!

But hold on to your popcorn, folks — here comes the sequel! Meet Wegovy, the bigger, bolder sibling of Ozempic, with its eye-popping higher-dose version, specially crafted for weight loss. Hey, who doesn’t want a superhero that packs a punch? Even Elon Musk, the real-life Tony Stark, can’t stop raving about it, using Wegovy to power up his incredible 30-pound weight loss. Move over, Iron Man, there’s a new hero in town!

Of course, with all the hype, you knew there had to be a Hollywood-style twist — shortage alert! The demand for these weight loss marvels has soared faster than a rocket launch. But hey, no worries — super-pills to the rescue! The oral versions are gearing up to hit the shelves, making weight loss as easy as bingeing on your favourite Netflix show. Grab your popcorn,

The Hollywood Superheroes of Weight Loss — Unveiling the Secrets to Shedding Pounds with Panache!

By Dots



In this photo illustration, boxes of the diabetes drug Ozempic rest on a pharmacy counter on 17 April 2023 in Los Angeles, California. (L); It’s important to remember that these medications are not a shortcut to weight loss and that a healthy lifestyle is still important. PHOTO: AFP

folks — it’s showtime!

Now, let’s address the not-so-glamorous side of this blockbuster — potential side effects. We’re talking about gastrointestinal troubles such as nausea, vomiting and diarrhoea, headaches, and a sprinkle of anxiety. But hey, nothing says “glamour” like a Hollywood diva who can handle anything that comes her way! Who needs paparazzi drama when you can rock a weight loss journey like a star?

And while the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) in the UK reviews safety data for GLP-1 receptor agonists, including Ozempic and Wegovy, following reports of suicidal or self-harming thoughts, experts remind us that these super-pills are not a shortcut to Hollywood-level fame. They emphasize the importance of adopting a healthy lifestyle to complement the wonders of Ozempic and Wegovy.

Currently, both Ozempic and Wegovy are administered through once-weekly injections, but hold your breath — the oral versions are on the horizon, offering more options and convenience than a red-carpet wardrobe! However, their high cost poses a significant barrier to widespread access, with prices ranging from \$900 to \$1,400 per month. Let’s face it, unless you have the bank account of a superstar, these super-pills might require a Hollywood-sized budget.

But fear not, fitness enthusiasts! There’s a parade of exciting developments in the weight loss world that promises to set the stage on fire! Meet Mounjaro, the weight loss rockstar approved for treating type 2 diabetes, activating two gut hormones for enhanced weight loss. And that’s not all — get ready for the new oral pill that’s causing a buzz! It’s designed for obesity treatment and flaunts a 15% weight loss effect.

SEE PAGE-10 >>



Book Title	-	Hmay Hmein Lar Thaw American Yazuhnit (The Shadow of the American Century)
Translator	-	Minn Aung Minn
Publishing House	-	Yin Myo
Publication Date	-	June 2023
Price	-	K8,000

Hmay Hmein Lar Thaw American Yazuhnit

In the Shadows of the American Century: The Rise and Decline of the US Global Power Alfred by W McCoy

IN a completely original analysis, prize-winning historian Alfred W. McCoy explores America’s rise as a world power – from the 1890s through the Cold War – and its bid to extend its hegemony deep into the twenty-first century through a fusion of cyberwar, space warfare, trade pacts and military alliances. McCoy then analyzes the marquee instruments of US hegemony – covert intervention, client elites, psychological torture and worldwide surveillance.

Peeling back layers of secrecy, McCoy exposes a military and economic battle for global

domination fought in the shadows, largely unknown to those outside the rungs of power. Can the United States extend the “American Century” or will China guide the Globe for the next hundred years? McCoy devotes his final chapter to these questions, boldly laying out a series of scenarios that could lead to the end of Washington’s world domination by 2030.

This book has four hundred pages with three parts. Part one deals with an understanding of the American Empire while Part Two is about America and dictato-

rial governments and Part Three is concerned with the secretly concocted lower hemisphere of the world. Part Two has a chapter which focuses on the revitalization of America’s strategies. Chapter 3 is about the downfall of the US while Chapter 7 has its focus on the grandmasters in the great game. In Chapter 8, the readers will know the five possibilities that can happen at the end of the American century.

The review of Viet Thanh Nguyen, a Pulitzer Prize-winning author, is as follows: “In the Shadows of the American Cen-

tury persuasively argues for the inevitable decline of the American empire and the rise of China. Whether or not one is a believer in American power, the case that Alfred McCoy makes – that much of America’s decline is due to its own contradictions and failures – is a sad one. He provides a glimmer of hope that America can ease into the role of a more generous, more collaborative, if less powerful, world player. Let’s hope that Americans will listen to his powerful arguments.”

“(A) brilliant and deeply informed must-read for anyone seriously interested in geopolitics, the history of Empire, and the shape of the future.” – New York Journal of Books.

“What is the character of this American empire? Alred McCoy asks at the outset of this provocative study. His answer not only limns the contours of the American imperium as it evolved during the 20th century but explains why its days are quite likely numbered. This is history with profound relevance to events that are unfolding before our eyes.” –Andrew J Bacevich, author of America’s War for the Greater Middle East: A Military History.



Book Title	-	Sagalone Sailone Ne Yu Hua Pyawde Tayokepyi (China in Ten Words by Yu Hua)
Translator	-	Bo Bo Han
Publishing House	-	Hnit Karla Myar
Publication Date	-	June 2023
Price	-	K9,000

Sagalone Sailone Ne Yu Hua Pyawde Tayokepyi

(China in Ten Words by Yu Hua)

STRUCTURED around ten two-character words, Yu Hua’s essay collection narrates a personal account of momentous events, such as the Great Leap Forward, the Chinese Cultural Revolution and the Tiananmen Square Protest, while accentuating the proliferation of graduate unemployment, social inequality and political corruption in accompaniment with China’s rapid change into a modernized nation. Following Yu Hua’s journey through his childhood days, during the Mao Era, to contemporary China, he also unveils the beginning and esca-

lation of China’s ‘copycat’ and ‘bamboozle’ culture, terms that one may associate with counterfeiting, infringement, imitation, dishonesty and fraud. The ten words are people, leader, reading, writing, Lu Xun, revolution, disparity, grassroots, copycat and bamboozle.

Yu Hua has written world-famous novels. He has compared his miserable early childhood when China was stricken by poverty with contemporary China which is now witnessing economic growth and development. Yu Hua said that if he has to elaborate on China of today

in many aspects, his book can be longer than the novel, “One Thousand and One Nights” and that he would, therefore, limit his book to only ten words, which are all two-character Chinese words. The rationale behind his book is to make China move towards a better future.

In his episode titled ‘Copycat’, he overemphasized the Chinese imitating of things. He has gone so far as to mention the imitation by a brothel house of the organogram of the China Communist Party. It is rather ironic to compare the organizational structure of a brothel

house to that of the China Communist Party.

In the episode titled, ‘Grassroots’, the readers will be able to learn about the blood smuggling gang. A poor Chinese will not mind travelling for about 300 miles to sell his blood to the blood smugglers, he wrote. The Chinese would not think of their personal dignity if they can make money; they do not mind violating business ethics or social ethics. For them, what counts is to make money. And this mentality seems to have played a vital role in the effectuation of the economy and development of China.

In a nutshell, this book reflects the Chinese traditions and cultural mores, their mindset and mentality. We ought to be grateful to the translator for his choice of this book for translation into Myanmar. If he has not selected this book for translation, we will be unable to know the insights of China. He has also translated a book which reflects the mentality of the Japanese. A million thanks, Saya Bo Bo Han, the translator.

ARTICLE/TECH
WORLD



An official tests the water from the Seine for pollution. PHOTO: BERTRAND GUAY / AFP

Pollution risk for Olympic open water test in Seine

PERSISTENT heavy rain in Paris has threatened the pre-Olympic swimming open water test events in the Seine this weekend with concerns over pollution from the overflow of sewage.

Unseasonal downpours have seen nearly 104 millimetres of rain falling on the French capital in the last three weeks, sometimes in tropical storm mode, resulting in the cancellation of Friday's training session.

"Following recent heavy rains in Paris, the quality of the water in the Seine is currently below acceptable standards for safeguarding the health of swimmers," a spokesperson for the French Swimming Federation (FFN) said after deciding along with World Aquatics and French health authorities to scrap Friday's practice session.

The World Cup events, Saturday for men and Sunday for

women, in a 10-kilometre loop between the Pont Alexandre III and the Pont de l'Alma, are above all a test for the Paris Olympics in a year's time. But summer rains wash dirt from paths and roads into the water with the overflow of sewage causing bacterial pollution in particular from the potentially-deadly E.coli, which can also cause serious intestinal infections. — AFP

The Hollywood Superheroes of Weight Loss – Unveiling the Secrets to Shedding Pounds with Panache!

>> FROM PAGE-9

Plus, retatrutide, the three-gut-hormone-activating wonder, has even more impressive results, with patients losing an average of 24 per cent of their body weight over 48 weeks. Now that's a Hollywood transformation!

But wait, before you audition for the role of Ozempic or Wegovy's newest devotee, remember that not everyone can join the weight loss blockbuster. To get a prescription, you'll need to undergo a comprehensive medical evaluation, and these drugs are not recommended for individuals with specific medical histories. Not to worry, though — you're still the star of your weight loss journey, and there's a role for everyone in the supporting cast of healthy living!

In conclusion, the allure of Ozempic and Wegovy as weight-loss miracles has captivated Hollywood and TikTok, prompting a frenzy of interest and demand. As the industry evolves with new developments, experts urge individuals to be informed, cautious and prioritize overall well-being when considering these medications.

In a world where trends come and go faster than a red-carpet appearance, Ozempic and Wegovy have captured the hearts and waistlines of Hollywood's elite. But before you jump on the bandwagon, take a moment to ponder — what's the real secret to being a weight loss superhero? It's embracing a healthy lifestyle with a sprinkle of humour! After all, nothing's sexier than a confident and happy you, rocking life like a true Hollywood star!

So, whether you choose to team up with Ozempic, go bold with Wegovy, or simply embrace the wonders of a healthy lifestyle, remember this: You're the leading star of your weight loss journey, and you've got the power to make it a blockbuster hit! Cue the applause!

Cultivating Coconut Palms: ...

FROM PAGE-5

With the coconut water market growing, it's priced at K700-1,200 per nut.

Coconut prices surge on high demand

The price of coconut jumped to K1,500 per nut from K500-600 in the Thingyan Festival this year. The mature coconut with stem designated for rituals and spiritual offerings fetched K2,500 per nut on 23 July, Daw Thazin, a buyer from South Okkalapa Township, told the GNLM.

There are coconut depots at Kyimyintdine's jetty where coconut is distributed in the city. Before 2010, there were a large number of coconut and banana depots at Lanmadaw jetty when the water transport to the delta region developed. At present, ferry trips to some towns have declined. The number of businesses of coconut, banana and duck egg has decreased at that jetty accordingly.



A bustling coconut market at Bagaya Jetty in Yangon City.

A mature coconut is offered at a good price of K1,500-2,000 per nut in the southern Shan State. The dried coconut is priced at K500-1,000 per nut depending on the size. The coconut for juice is worth K1,500 per nut. Yangon City is the supplier of coconut for the Taunggyi market. Bayintnaung

Wholesale Commodity Centre has only a handful of coconut and Areca nut depots from which they are sent to upper Myanmar regions. Coconuts from the Patheingyi area are supplied to Bayintnaung through land transport.

Dried coconut meat is sent to coconut

oil processing factories. Coconut rope is made from dried coconut husks. Some residents from the Patheingyi area made coconut shells into charcoal briquettes and sent them to the Yangon market. Coconut branches can be used as broomsticks. Moreover, the coconut shell stepping exercise delivers health benefits.

The perennial plant creates job opportunities and generates income

There are two types of coconut trees; tall and dwarf species. Bogale Township located in the Ayeyawady Delta relies on agriculture (paddy) and offshore fishing.

Coconut planting is also thriving in the township, covering 10,749 acres with the production of over 20 million nuts. Masein, Talpin (3), Phoneshwelone, Kansu, Haingsi, Kunthichaung and Sinchaung villages are the leading producers of coconut in the region. This article is written to mark the coconut as a perennial crop plant that creates jobs in delta regions and bags foreign income.

Translated/EM

No public event for anniversary of Queen Elizabeth II's death

BRITAIN'S King Charles will mark the first anniversary of the death of his mother Queen Elizabeth II privately, British media reported Friday.

Charles and his wife Queen Camilla will not hold a private family gathering to commemorate her passing and no public event is planned, according to the BBC and the PA news agen-

cy. Queen Elizabeth II died at the royal family's private Scottish Highland retreat, Balmoral, in September last year aged 96.

She had reigned for 70 years, longer than any British monarch.

Elizabeth II's eldest son Charles succeeded her on the throne and was coronated alongside Camilla on 6 May in a cer-

emony at Westminster Abbey.

Charles and Camilla are not expected to attend commemorative events during the week of the anniversary, the BBC reported.

The late queen used to mark the passing of her father, King George VI, on 6 February, 1952 in private at the Sandringham estate in eastern England. — AFP



Britain's King Charles III with Queen Camilla. PHOTO: AFP/ FILE

Gaza open-air cinema a breath of fresh air for Palestinians



Palestinian children watch a movie at a pop-up open-air cinema at the beach in Gaza city on 28 July. PHOTO: AFP

GAZA residents took their seats in front of a large projector screen set up on a sandy beach, a rare event in the Islamist-ruled blockaded enclave that has no operating cinemas.

Over two weeks in summer, the "Cinema of the Sea" festival

which ended Monday screened some 15 films, many of them with Palestinian actors or producers.

Providing a respite from the heat, the waterfront "is the only outlet for the residents" in the impoverished territory, said

Ali Muhanna, a theatre director involved in the initiative.

Around 2.3 million Palestinians live in the Gaza Strip, which has been under a crippling Israeli-led blockade since the Islamist group Hamas seized power in 2007. — AFP

14 peaks record climbers get heroes' welcome in Nepal

RECORD-BREAKING mountaineering duo Kristin Harila and Tenjin "Lama" Sherpa were greeted with a heroes' welcome in Nepal on Saturday after the pair successfully conquered the

world's highest peaks.

The Norwegian climber and her Nepali guide set the record last month for the fastest summit of all 14 of the world's 8,000-metre (26,000-foot) mountains, complet-

ing the feat in only 92 days.

The pair surpassed Nepal-born British adventurer Nirmal Purja's 2019 record of six months and six days. — AFP

Stargazers in Brazil head to rural areas to see the stars

AWESTRUCK by the oranges and blues of the Jewel Box star cluster, part of the Southern Cross constellation, Pedro Froes manages to get out a few words: "It's incredible."

Froes is viewing the stars from a telescope in Desengano State Park, a rural patch of Brazil largely spared from light pollution, located some 260 kilometres north of Rio de Janeiro.

Desengano is Latin America's first "International Dark Sky Park", as designated by the global light pollution tracker DarkSky. And Froes is one of the park's growing number of "astro-tourists", drawn there by its isolation from cities and the light they spew into the night sky.

"From here you can see 3,000 stars a year with the na-

ked eye, without the help of an instrument," says astronomer Daniel Mello, from the Valongo Observatory at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro.

"In cities like Rio or Sao Paulo, at most, you can see 200 a year." In the front garden of the park's headquarters, located in the small town of Santa Maria Madalena, Mello conducts a public observation session in front of about 20 people, pointing with a laser to the Southern Cross, Scorpio and Centaurus constellations.

The evening is part of a project created by Mello and a group of specialists in tourism, ecology and photography.

The nearest big city is 120 kilometres away, protecting the park – replete with vegetation, forest and mountains – from artificial light. — AFP



Mello using a laser light to show the Milky Way at the Desengano State Natural Park. PHOTO: AFP

Egypt’s Suez Canal Economic Zone authorized to set up company to manage investments

THE Egyptian government on Thursday authorized the General Authority for Suez Canal Economic Zone (SCZone) to set up a joint-stock company called “SCZone Istithmar” to manage investments.

According to a decision published by the official gazette, Egyptian Prime Minister Mostafa Madbouly has approved the move to establish the company, which is tasked with formulating strategic plans to manage the SCZone’s current and future investments and set up joint development enterprises with the private sector.

The company will also seek cooperation and establish partnerships with both local and international companies to operate the infrastructure of the SCZone.



The MV Ever Given container ship sailing along Egypt’s Suez Canal, pictured here on 7 July 2022. PHOTO: AFP

Established in August 2015, 461 square kilometres along the banks of the Suez Canal, is home to six ports and four development areas. — Xinhua

Maersk sees weaker demand for shipping

MAERSK, the world’s second-largest container shipping firm, said Friday it expects shipping volumes to fall this year as companies continue to reduce inventories.

The Danish firm had previously expected shipping volumes to be flat or dip slightly this year, but now sees them down one to four per cent.

“The inventory correction observed since (the fourth quarter of) 2022 appears to be prolonged and is now expected to last through year end,” it said, adding it expected its volumes to evolve in line with the market. It said market demand would likely remain subdued as long as companies reduce their inventories. — AFP

Brazil’s Petrobras tallies 47% drop in Q2 net profit

BRAZILIAN oil company Petrobras announced on Thursday a 47 per cent year-on-year fall in second-quarter profits to \$5.8 billion, citing lower oil prices.

Last year, this profit had risen to \$11 billion over the same period, in the midst of a surge in energy prices that benefited the sector, due to the post-pandemic recovery in demand and the war in Ukraine. Second-quarter net income was also down 20.6 per cent at \$7.3 billion in the second quarter. The company explained

in a statement that revenues fell 14 per cent quarter-on-quarter, due in particular to a four per cent drop in the price of Brent crude.

Adjusted earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization for the second quarter came to \$11.4 billion, down 42.7 per cent year-on-year.

The state-owned oil giant “delivered a consistent financial and operating performance in the second quarter”, Petrobras president Jean Paul Prates said in a statement. — AFP



Aerial view of the Petrobras Research Centre in Rio de Janeiro. PHOTO: VANDERLEI ALMEIDA/AFP

Kuwait top diplomat invited to Iran as gas dispute flares

KUWAIT’S top diplomat has been invited to visit Iran, state media said, amid a dispute over a gas field to which Kuwait and Saudi Arabia say they have exclusive rights.

The dispute over the field — known as Arash in Iran and Dorra in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia — dates back to the 1960s when Iran and Kuwait awarded overlapping offshore concessions.

Last year Kuwait and Saudi Arabia signed an agreement to develop the field, despite objections from Iran which in July said it was preparing to start drilling there.

On Thursday, Kuwait’s official KUNA news agency said Foreign Minister Salem al-Sabah had “received a letter from his Iranian counterpart... which included an invitation for an official visit to Iran”.

It did not say if the invitation had been accepted.

The dispute over the field — whose recoverable reserves



A picture taken on 13 October 2021, shows Kuwait’s largest oil refinery at the Al-Ahmadi complex, about 40 kilometres (25 miles) south of the capital, Kuwait City. PHOTO: AFP

are estimated at some 220 billion cubic metres (seven trillion cubic feet) — has long been a bone of contention between the three countries.

Iran and Kuwait have held unsuccessful talks for many years over their disputed maritime border area, which is rich in natural gas.

Recent attempts to revive

negotiations have failed, and Iran’s oil minister on Sunday said Tehran may pursue work at the field even without an agreement.

The Kuwaiti and Saudi authorities said in a joint statement published on Thursday that “they alone have full sovereign rights to exploit the wealth in that area”. — AFP

Over 100 mln kilowatts: Southern China’s new energy boom

THE total installed capacity of new energy in south China’s five provincial-level areas reached 103.32 million kilowatts (kW) at the end of July, accounting for 25 per cent of their total installed capacity, according to China Southern Power Grid Co Ltd.

From January to July this year, the five provincial-level areas, namely Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, and the provinces of Guangdong, Yunnan, Guizhou, and Hainan, generated

87.5 billion kWh of new energy, up 37.4 per cent year on year, and the utilization rate of new energy exceeded 99.9 per cent.

Since the beginning of this year, the five areas have accelerated the development of new energy. Indeed, new energy has become the second largest power supply source in Yunnan and Guangxi, according to Tang Bao, manager of China Southern Power Grid planning department. — Xinhua



This aerial photo taken on 16 May 2023 shows wind turbines of Honghe Yongning wind power plant in Honghe Hani and Yi Autonomous Prefecture, southwest China’s Yunnan Province. **PHOTO: YUNNAN PROVINCIAL ENERGY INVESTMENT GROUP/HANDOUT VIA XINHUA**

Belgium canal city of Bruges hits ‘red line’ with tourist crowds

INHABITANTS of Belgium’s cobblestone-and-canal city of Bruges are clear: summertime tourism has hit capacity.

“It’s really reached a red line now,” says one, 55-year-old architect Arnout Goegebuer, as he sits inside a cafe, peering out a window across a packed outside terrace.

“We don’t need more tourists anymore, it’s enough — maybe a little bit less” is needed, he says.

It’s a sentiment reiterated by other residents of the western city, population 119,000, which each year hosts eight million visitors — most of them concentrated in the summer months, and most of them on day trips.

Residents are not against tourism, which brings money and prestige and provides jobs.

But they say it needs to be



Bruges tourist authorities are encouraging tourists to see beyond the centre of the city, and visit at offpeak times. **PHOTO: ALBERTO PIZZOLI/AFP**

balanced, to stop the city turning into a Disneyfied open-air museum.

With Bruges crowds back to pre-Covid levels, including from

ter, a 62-year-old retiree who lived his whole life in the city.

“People of Bruges say it’s too much, it’s too much — very too much some days,” he says. The situation is not unique to Bruges. Europe’s other top historical canal cities of Venice and Amsterdam have both taken steps to bar cruise ships calling.

Venice received a wake-up call in July when UNESCO recommended the city be put on its endangered list because of over-tourism and other problems. An August 2022 ranking published by an Airbnb competitor called Holidu put Venice, Bruges and the Greek island of Rhodes in equal second place in its list of the most overcrowded European destinations based on the number of tourists versus inhabitants. — AFP

8 killed after freight train hit a pick-up truck crossing railway track

EIGHT people were killed on Friday when a freight train hit a pick-up truck trying to cross the tracks in central Thailand, the kingdom’s railway agency said.

The crash took place around 2:20 am (1920 GMT Thursday) at an unauthorized crossing in Chachoengsao province, east of Bangkok, the State Railway of Thailand said in a statement.

The train driver had sounded his warning horn as he approached the crossing but was unable to stop before hitting the truck, which was transporting fish, the statement said.

“The train driver followed the protocol by sounding the alarm three times, but the close proximity made it difficult for the driver to stop the train in time,” the statement added. — AFP

Apple profits edge higher despite lower iPhone sales

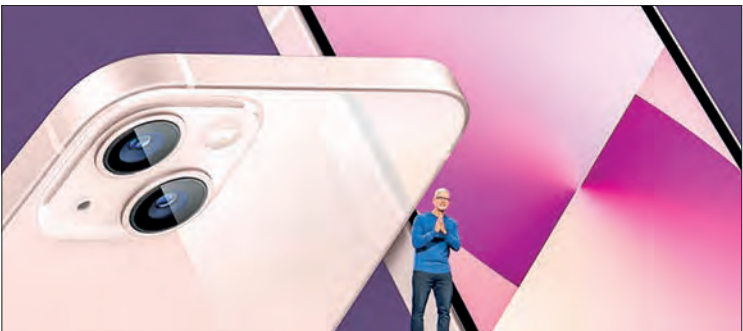
APPLE reported modestly higher quarterly profits Thursday despite another dip in revenues, as a record performance in services offset lower iPhone sales.

Besides services, executives spotlighted increased sales in China and several key emerging markets that helped to compensate for declines in the United States where iPhone sales have ebbed in

a saturated smartphone environment. Overall iPhone sales lagged analyst estimates.

“We did exceptionally well in emerging markets,” said Chief Executive Tim Cook on a conference call, highlighting year-over-year gains in China after the prior quarter had seen a decline in the same comparison. Profits for Apple’s third fiscal quarter were

\$19.9 billion, up 2.3 per cent from the year-ago period. Revenues again declined, this time by 1.4 per cent to \$81.8 billion, the third straight quarter with a year-over-year decline. Bright spots in the quarter for the tech giant included an “all-time high” in services revenue from the App Store, Apple Pay, Apple TV and other subscription services. — AFP



Chief Executive Tim Cook remarked during a conference call that they had performed exceptionally well in emerging markets, pointing out the year-over-year gains in China following a decline in the same comparison during the prior quarter. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

ROLLING UPDATES

WORLD

Saudi dives into Ukraine peace push with Jeddah talks



This handout photograph released by the Russian Defence Ministry’s press service shows Russia’s Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu (L) getting on a captured Swedish armoured vehicle CV90 while inspecting a command post of the Central Military Unit in an undisclosed location in Ukraine. **PHOTO: AFP**

SAUDI Arabia was set to host talks on the Ukraine war on Saturday in the latest flexing of its diplomatic muscle, though expectations are mild for what the gathering might achieve.

The meeting of national security advisers and other officials in the Red Sea coastal city of Jeddah underscores Riyadh’s “readiness to exert its good offices to contribute to reaching a solution that will result in permanent peace”, the official Saudi Press Agency said Friday.

Invitations were sent to around 30 countries, Russia not among them, according to diplomats familiar with the preparations.

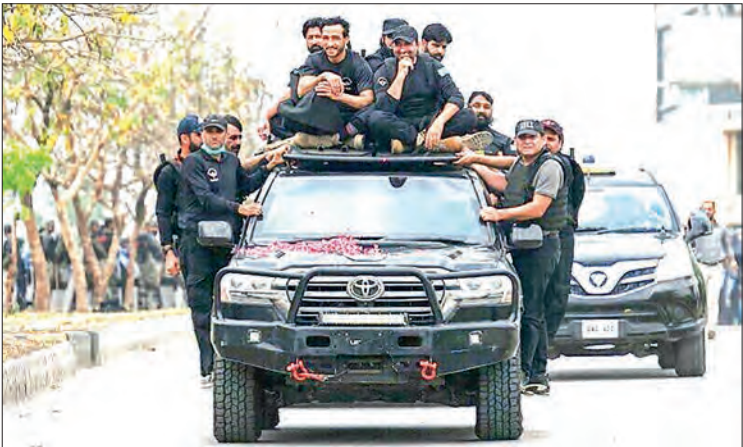
The SPA report said only that “a number of countries” would attend.

It follows Ukraine-organized talks in Copenhagen in June that were designed to be informal and did not yield an official statement.

Instead, diplomats said the sessions were intended to engage a range of countries in debates about a path towards peace, notably members of the BRICS bloc with Russia that have adopted a more neutral stance on the war in contrast to Western powers. — AFP

Pakistan’s former PM Imran Khan arrested after sentenced to 3-year jail term

THE Islamabad police of Pakistan arrested former prime minister Imran Khan on Saturday from his residence in the eastern city of Lahore after a local court sentenced him to three-year imprisonment for hiding his financial assets. The media wing of Khan’s party Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) told Xinhua that the former prime minister was arrested after the court released arrest warrants for Khan. Earlier in the day, Additional District and Sessions Judge in Islamabad Humayun Dilawar announced a short order to sentence Khan in the Toshakhana case (national gift case) and disqualified him for five years from holding any office.



Security personnel escort a vehicle carrying former Pakistan’s prime minister Imran Khan as he arrives to appear before an anti-terrorism court in Islamabad on 23 May 2023. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

The case alleges that Khan had deliberately concealed details of the gifts he bought from the Toshakhana, a repository where presents handed to government officials from foreign officials are kept and then sold to the officials who pay a specific percentage of the actual amount. — Xinhua

NEWS IN BRIEF

Pope heads to Portugal’s Fatima shrine

POPE Francis will make a lightning visit to the shrine of Fatima in central Portugal on Saturday as part of a major Catholic youth festival.

The 86-year-old pontiff, who arrived in Lisbon on Wednesday, will fly by helicopter to the town located 150 kilometres (90 miles) north of the Portuguese capital.

He will recite the rosary with sick and disabled youths at a shrine built on the very spot where the Virgin Mary is said to have appeared to three shepherd children in 1917.

Francis is also scheduled to deliver a speech at the shrine before he returns to Lisbon, where on Saturday evening he will lead a vigil at the waterfront Parque Tejo. — AFP

Trump pleads not guilty to new charges in classified docs case

FORMER US president Donald Trump pleaded not guilty on Friday to the new charges filed against him for allegedly mishandling top secret government documents.

The 77-year-old Trump was charged with three additional felonies in a superseding indictment handed down last week by special counsel Jack Smith. In a written notice on Friday to the US district court in Florida handling the case, Trump pleaded not guilty to the new charges. — AFP

Lula to host S American summit on saving the Amazon



How to rally the world to help save the Amazon is proving to be a challenge for Brazilian President Luis Inacio Lula da Silva. **PHOTO: SERGIO LIMA / AFP**

BRAZILIAN President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva will host a regional summit next week with planetary stakes, as leaders of the countries that share the Amazon seek a roadmap to save the world’s biggest rainforest.

The meeting of the eight-nation Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization on Tuesday and Wednesday in Belém, capital of the Amazon state of Para, will serve as something of a dress rehearsal for the COP30 UN climate talks, which the city will also host in 2025. It is the 28-year-old organization’s first summit since 2009, as Lula seeks to deliver on his pledge that “Brazil is back” in the fight against climate change after a period of surging destruction in the Amazon under his far-right predecessor, Jair Bolsonaro.

With its hundreds of billions of carbon-absorbing trees, the Amazon is a key buffer against global warming. — AFP

SPORTS

Whyte's 'adverse' doping test forces cancellation of Joshua bout

DILLIAN Whyte's "adverse analytical findings" from a random anti-doping test have prompted the cancellation of his heavyweight clash with Anthony Joshua. The Voluntary Anti-Doping Association said a "random anti-doping protocol" undertaken by Whyte had returned the adverse findings, leading to the all-British grudge match being called off. Joshua's rematch with Whyte had been due to take place at London's O2

Arena on 12 August. Fight promoter Matchroom said in a statement: "Today, the Voluntary Anti-Doping Association (VADA) informed Matchroom, the Association of Boxing Commissions and the British Boxing Board of Control that Dillian Whyte had returned adverse analytical findings as part of a random anti-doping protocol. "In light of this news, the fight will be cancelled and a full investigation will be conducted." — AFP



Dillian Whyte (L) was stopped by Anthony Joshua (R) at the O2 Arena in 2015 when contesting for the vacant British heavyweight title. PHOTO: AFP



SkyNet officials explain the broadcast of the English Premier League football matches during the press conference. PHOTO: TWA

SkyNet to air live coverage of 380 Premier League matches

ACCORDING to SkyNet, 380 matches of the 2023-2024 English Premier League football season will be shown live exclusively by SkyNet Sports TV channel. The "2023-24 Premier League New Season Welcome Ceremony" will also be held on 11 August at Shwe Htut Tin Park, and the Premier League's debut match, Burnley Vs Manchester City, can be watched on SkyNet Sports 6 and SkyNet Sports HD. The English Premier League, the most popular football tournament of SkyNet had broadcast for the eleventh year including this year. In the Premier League, 10 matches are played at the same time, and the TV Channel will broadcast live so that football fans can watch all 10 matches simultaneously. — TWA/KZL

Brilliant Bonmati emerges as Spain's leader at World Cup

DOUBTS were raised about Spain's ability to go far at the Women's World Cup without a fully fit Alexia Putellas, but Aitana Bonmati's starring role in their 5-1 demolition of Switzerland showed that they are not over-reliant on the current Ballon d'Or. By the time Putellas came off the bench

in the 77th minute on Saturday, the last-16 tie at Eden Park in Auckland was already over, Bonmati having scored two goals and set up two more in a masterful display. Spain are in a Women's World Cup quarter-final for the first time in their history despite the fact Putellas has so far been used sparingly in New Zealand.

Not long back after a long spell out with a ruptured ACL, the current holder of the Ballon d'Or and FIFA's Best Women's Player awards did start the last two group games. However, she did not last more than an hour in those matches and on Saturday was relegated to the bench. — AFP

Man Utd sign Danish striker Hojlund from Atalanta



Denmark forward Rasmus Hojlund is reportedly on his way to Manchester United. PHOTO: AFP

MANCHESTER United sealed their swoop for Denmark striker Rasmus Hojlund from Atalanta for a reported fee of £64 million (\$82 million) on Saturday. Hojlund agreed a five-year contract with the option of a further season as United manager Erik ten Hag finally got his wish to bring in a striker ahead of the new Premier League campaign. — AFP

Team Myanmar leaves for Thailand to compete in Futsal tourney

THE Myanmar national futsal team left for Thailand on the morning of 5 August to engage in the Continental Futsal Championship 2023, which will be hosted by Thailand. Team Myanmar consists of ten members of coaches and 18 futsal players participated in the trip. The Myanmar squad will play the group matches of the Continental Futsal Championship 2023 against the Thai team on 7 August and the Solomon Islands team on 8 August respectively. — TWA/KZL



Myanmar futsal players and coaching staff who will compete in the Continental Futsal Championship 2023 in Thailand are seen posing for the group photo. PHOTO: MFF



WORLD

Cambodia's famed Angkor makes US\$20.3-mln revenue in first 7 months

CAMBODIA'S famed Angkor Archeological Park earned 20.3 million US dollars from ticket sales in the first seven months of 2023, up 502 per cent from 3.37 million dollars in the same period last year, said a report on Friday.

The Angkor attracted 439,365 international tourists during the January-July period this year, up 424 per cent from 83,854 in the same period last year, said the state-owned Angkor Enterprise's report.

The top five source markets to the

ancient site were the United States, Britain, France, South Korea and China, the report added.

Cambodian Ministry of Tourism's Secretary of State and Spokesman Top Sopheak said China's reopening earlier this year has given a boost to the growth

of tourists to the Angkor.

"We hope more international tourists will come to Cambodia, especially to the Angkor, in coming years as many airlines have resumed their flights to the country," he told Xinhua.

Located in northwest Siem Reap

province, the Angkor Archeological Park, inscribed on the World Heritage List of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in 1992, is the most popular tourist destination in the Southeast Asian kingdom. — Xinhua



Chinese travellers flock to Cambodia's Angkor temples. PHOTO: AFP

Dozens evacuated as wildfire spreads on Spain-France border

FIREFIGHTERS said they evacuated more than 130 people as they fought Saturday to control a wildfire at Portbou

on the Spanish border with France on the Mediterranean coast.

Firefighters from Spain's northeast-

ern region of Catalonia teamed up with French colleagues as the blaze ravaged some 435 hectares (1,100 acres) of land, with an estimated 2,500 hectares threatened.

Local people were evacuated overnight from several villages as a precaution hours after the fire was declared to the south of Portbou, whose railway station connects Spain with France.

Catalan forest rangers said on Twitter, rebranded X, that an investigation was under way into the cause of the fire.

In a statement on the Catalan regional government website, they added the blaze "remains active" and that their priority was to prevent it encroaching on the nearby tourist resort of Llanca to the south.

Strong winds had helped the fire to spread overnight and prevented water-bombing planes from taking off to aid a firefighting operation complicated by the hilly terrain affected. — AFP



The fire, boosted by heavy winds, saw more than 130 people evacuated from their homes overnight. PHOTO: RAYMOND ROIG/AFP

Rampant lawlessness looms over Ecuador election

ECUADOR'S spike in crime and drug trafficking has cast a dark shadow over its upcoming election, with presidential candidates vowing to crack down on lawlessness even as they campaign during a state of emergency.

Once a peaceful nation, wedged between major cocaine producers Colombia and Peru, Ecuador has in recent years become a nerve centre for the global drug trade, leading to a boom in brutal gang violence.

This has transformed the electoral terrain as Ecuador prepares for a snap election on 20 August amid rising levels of insecurity.

A mayor and an aspiring lawmaker have been assassinated, a presidential candidate has faced threats, and the latest explosion in prison gang violence left about a dozen inmates brutally murdered last week. — AFP