

Unveiling Myanmar’s rich culinary and handcrafted heritage

Myanmar showcases traditional food and handicrafts at Asian Food and Culture Bazaar in Brazil.

MYANMAR’S traditional food and handicrafts were promoted at the Asian Food and Culture Bazaar held at the Arts Museum in Brasilia, Brazil, according to the Myanmar Embassy in Brazil.

The event was organized by AOLA — Asian-Oceania Ladies Spouses of Diplomats Association of Brasilia — and a total of seven foreign embassies including four ASEAN embassies of Indonesia, Myanmar, Singapore and Viet Nam joined the event showing off their traditional food and handicrafts.

The Myanmar ambassador, his wife and embassy staff showcased and sold traditional food and handicrafts and explained the culture of Myanmar to the visitors. The Asian food and culture bazaar was held in the third week of August at the Arts Museum in Brasilia.

The AOLA will donate the funds to orphanages, nursing homes for elderly citizens, the disabled and poor communities in Brazil via the philanthropic organizations. — ASH/KTZH



Enthusiastic visitors are seen exploring Myanmar’s traditional food and handcrafted treasures at the Asian Food and Culture Bazaar in Brazil in the third week of August.

70% Completion: Myawady-Kawkareik Bailey bridge nears passage restoration



Efficient machinery and skilled manpower combine to restore Myawady-Kawkareik Road’s damaged section.

AFTER heavy rains triggered a landslide on the Myawady-Kawkareik section on Asian Highway in Kayin State on 7 August, disrupting traffic, swift action was taken. The Kayin State government and the State Highways Department initiated the construction of a temporary Bailey bridge on 10 August. Currently, the bridge is 70 per cent complete.

Overseen by Assistant Engineer U Moe Kyaw from the Kawkareik Highways Department, the bridge’s construction utilized six backhoes, two loaders, and one bulldozer.

SEE PAGE-3

CURRENT AFFAIRS **PAGE-6**



Fluctuations surge within real estate market, signalling high volatility

LOCAL BUSINESS **PAGE-7**



Canton Fair welcomes Myanmar entrepreneurs in October

NATIONAL

Wahnet Elephant Camp: Your serene retreat awaits

DURING the coming domestic tourism season, the Wahnet elephant camp has been prepared by planting shade trees and flowers so that the visitors can have a joyful rest, said the elephant camp in charge.

The elephant camp is situated next to the road near Yeywa Dam between Mandalay City and PyinOoLwin Township.

The elephant camp provides services for visitors to enjoy the beauty of the natural forest landscape and elephant rides.

“While maintaining the beauty of the natural forest landscape, we have expanded the planting of shade plants this year. Flower trees have also been planted during the rainy season this year. In addition, on the advice of visitors, bushes have been cleared at the entrance of the camp and trees and shade plants have been planted. The natural en-



vironment must also be beautiful. It must also be able to withstand the damage of elephants. Of course, we grew plants that would be edible for elephant herders like us,” In charge of the elephant camp added.

At present, the number of visitors to the Wahnet elephant camp is larger during holidays. Eight elephants including three males and five females are entertaining the visitors with elephant dances. Services such as riding elephants and seeing the beauty of the natural forest and mountain scenery are available. Visitors can also feed the elephants.

The entrance fee to the elephant camp is set at K1,000 per person, K3,000 for the short journey, K5,000 for the long journey, K10,000 for foreigners and K10,000 for short and long journey for elephant riding service. Free entry is set for children, monks and nuns. — Maung Aye Chan/KZL



Wahnet elephant camp completes its preparations to welcome visitors who come to have joyful and relaxing experience during the upcoming domestic tourism season (top and above photos). **PHOTO: MAUNG AYE CHAN**

Upcoming article contest to celebrate World Tourism Day on 27 Sept



PHOTO: UNWTO

AN article competition will be held to commemorate World Tourism Day on 27 September. As a result, the Directorate of Hotels and Tourism under the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism has extended an invitation for manuscripts to be submitted for the competition.

The theme of the article competition to be held to mark World Tourism Day is “To promote green investments in tourism development”. Contestants are expected to write articles

that align with this theme.

The contestant who secures the first prize in the competition will be awarded K300,000. The second prize winner will receive K200,000, the third prize winner will receive K100,000, and the consolation prize will be fifty thousand Kyats.

These awards will be presented during the World Tourism Day ceremony scheduled to take place in Nay Pyi Taw on 27 September. —ASH/KZW

MoPF Union Minister proposes strategies for ensuring price stability

DEPUTY Prime Minister Union Minister for Planning and Finance U Win Shein, in his capacity as Chairman of the Union Price Stability Committee, presided over the 1/2023 committee meeting yesterday.

During the meeting, the Union minister highlighted the duties of the committee to stabilize the prices of basic foodstuffs, explore effective methods through collaborative efforts of respective committees, departmental and private organizations, and set suitable policies considering the local needs and production rate of each of the basic foodstuffs.

He also called for cooperation to find solutions to address rising fuel prices and transits that cause high transportation charges, inspect entry and exit of goods and price manipulation, supervise the destructive actions to price stability in accord with the law and make preparations in case of natural disaster.

He then urged the relevant committees and organizations to provide the farming and livestock sectors, support the manageable scale industry and work together with region/state departmental organizations to ensure price stability. — MNA/KTZH



Deputy Premier and Union Planning & Finance Minister U Win Shein chairs Union Price Stability Committee's 1/2023 meeting yesterday.

70% Completion: Myawady-Kawkareik ...

FROM PAGE-1

In addition, temporary bypass dirt roads were established on the north and south sides of the damaged route. The Mun Myint Hein Company was entrusted with laying rough and smooth stones, covering a 200-foot-long, 30-foot-wide area for rough stone paving, and a 300-foot-long section for smooth stone paving, also 30 feet wide. The Kawkareik high-

ways Department confirmed the completion of the one-foot-thick stone paving.

The temporary bailey bridge, measuring 70 feet in length and 13 feet in width, has been developed from the Myawady side. By 22 August, the installation of the bridge frame and the placement of iron floor slabs had reached the 70 per cent milestone.

The next phase will allow

goods vehicles to resume passage as construction advances. Concurrently, the efficient construction of the bridge approach and the temporary Bailey bridge's pavement on the Myawady-Kawkareik section on Asian Highway is ongoing. To ensure smooth operations, a security team led by a lieutenant-colonel from the Kawkareik station is providing tight security. — IPRD/KZW



Progress underway: Construction of Bailey bridge in full swing.

MoH UM heads to Indonesia for ASEAN Finance & Health Ministers Meetings



Union Minister Dr Thet Khaing Win and his delegation are seen before departing for Indonesia.

AT the invitation of the Republic of Indonesia, the ASEAN Alternate Chairman, the Myanmar delegation led by the Union Minister for Health Dr Thet Khaing Win embarked on a flight from Yangon to Indonesia yesterday morning to attend the ASEAN Finance and Health Ministers Joint Meeting and the ASEAN Health Ministers Meeting to be held in Jakarta, Indonesia, on 24-25 August.

The meetings will focus on

the collaboration between the financial and health sectors in establishing responsive health systems capable of effectively countering global epidemics in the ASEAN region. Additionally, discussions will revolve around developing robust health systems for long-term prevention, control, and treatment, including emergency measures in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. — MNA/TS

COVID-19 report, 23 August 2023	NEW TESTS	NEW CASES	CASUALTIES
	4,677	3	0

NATIONAL

MoL Union Minister receives IOM Myanmar Chief

U Myint Naung, Union Minister for Labour, received Mr Dragan Aleksoski, Chief of Mission of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) Myanmar, at the Ministry of Labour in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

During the courtesy call, they shared their views on matters pertaining to ongoing

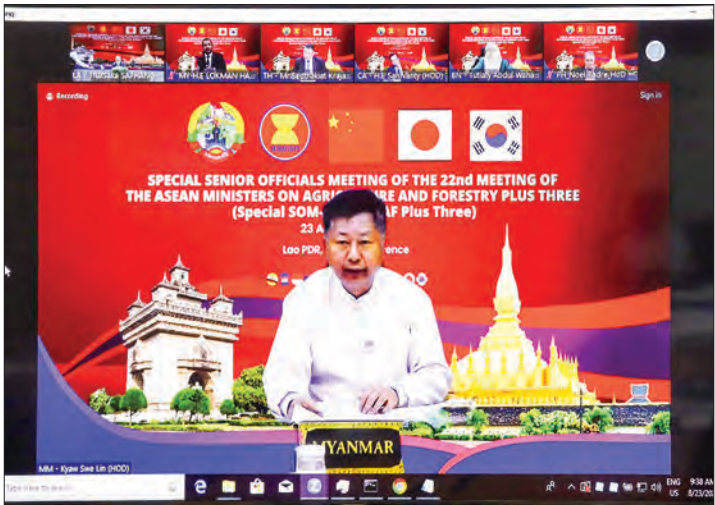
processes under the MoU between the Department of Labour and IOM as well as MoU between the ministry and the IOM. Their discussion also included opportunities to cooperate between them and the support of the IOM to the people of Myanmar in the field of migration and cooperation between the two sides.



Union Minister for Labour U Myint Naung receives Chief of Mission of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) Myanmar Mr Dragan Aleksoski at the Ministry of Labour, Nay Pyi Taw on 23 August 2023.

Myanmar became the 147th member country of the IOM in November 2012 and is cooperating in matters of migrant workers management. — MNA/TH

Laos hosts 22nd Special Meeting of Senior Officials of Agriculture & Forestry



The 22nd Special Senior Officials Meeting of the 44th Meeting of the ASEAN Ministers on Agriculture and Forestry Plus Three in progress through videoconferencing.

THE 22nd Special Senior Officials Meeting of the 44th Meeting of the ASEAN Ministers on Agriculture and Forestry Plus Three took place through videoconferencing on 22-23 August. The event was hosted by the Laos People's Democratic Republic.

During the high-level officials' meeting on agriculture and forestry, Dr Thet-

saka Saphangthong, Director-General of the Policy and Legal Department under the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry of Laos, chaired the session. Discussions included insights from the 40th and 41st ASEAN Summits, the 29th ASEAN Economic Minister's Coordination Meeting, and the 42nd ASEAN Summit.

Attention then turned to

the review of 16 major initiatives undertaken in 2023 and the presentation of six proposed significant projects for implementation in 2024.

Additionally, the 22nd All-ASEAN Agriculture and Forestry Ministers' Meeting held a special session with high-ranking officials from Laos, China, Japan, and South Korea acting as co-chairs. Discussions focused on enhancing cooperation in the agricultural and forestry sectors between ASEAN and these countries. Key topics included the ASEAN emergency rice reserve and the food security information system.

The 8th ASEAN-Russia Agriculture and Forestry High-Level Officials Meeting emphasized collaborative efforts in the food sector and the advancement of agricultural and forestry projects. The meeting entailed discussions and negotiations about future processes. — MNA/KZW

MNHRC pays field visits to Women Development and Vocational Training Centres

THE inspection team, led by Commissioners U Kyaw Myint and Dr Than Myint from the Myanmar National Human Rights Commission, inspected the Vocational Training Centre for Women and Mann Taung Chay Home For the Aged in Aung Myay Thar San Township Mandalay Region on 22 August 2023 and Women Development Centre in Chan Aye Thar San Township, Mandalay Region on 23 August 2023.

The inspection team inspected the Women Development Centre and Vocational Training Centre for Women under the MNHRC's Law and procedures whether the women who are detained in the centres can get fundamental rights including healthcare services, food supply, adequate dormitories, availability status of National Registration Card, provision of purified drinking water, a support programme

for physical and mental development, right to education, right to learn vocational training courses, right to communicate with their families, right to reintegration, and right to freedom of religion.

Thereafter, the inspection team inspected the Mann Taung Chay Home For the Aged to examine whether the old aged persons can get fundamental rights including healthcare services, food supply, provision of purified drinking water, right to freedom of religion, adequate dormitories and arrangements for leisure.

MNHRC will send recommendations to the relevant department for necessary action based on the findings during inspection visits to the Vocational Training Centre for Women, Mann Taung Chay Home For Aged and Women Development Centre. — MNHRC

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NATIONAL

New online registration system for sellers, details to be unveiled in Sept

ONLINE sellers can soon register and receive certificates through the Internet. Registration details will be disclosed in September, as stated by the Ministry of Commerce's Consumer Affairs Department.

If your business involves local products needing FDA approval (like cosmetics, food, consumer goods, and medicine), the Small-Scale Industries Department's registration certificate must be submitted during the FDA application.

All individuals, organizations, or companies aiming to sell online must register. Individuals enjoy a reduced fee and speedy registration confirma-

tion. The online registration process is underway and will launch in September, shared an official from the Consumer Affairs Department.

Due to growing issues on platforms like Facebook and TikTok, where online businesses often face quality problems, scams, and copyright violations, the online registration system was introduced. This trend is observed globally.

The Ministry of Commerce has mandated that online merchants secure a registration certificate within six months, and unregistered operations will face consequences. — ASH/CT

Compensation provided to 4 families of Myanmar sailors killed in oil tanker explosion



Families of Myanmar seamen are seen receiving compensation.

ACCORDING to the labour attache's office, compensation has been granted to four out of the seven families of Myanmar seamen affected by the oil tanker explosion during maintenance in a Mekong River tributary in Samut Sakhon Province, Thailand.

On 22 August, the Samut Sakhon Province social security office disbursed compensation to four families who possessed complete personal details among the seven Myanmar workers who tragically lost their lives in the explosion.

The incident occurred on 17 January around 10 am, involving an explosion caused by residual oil in a pipeline while nearly 30

workers were welding oil pipelines of the maintenance-docked tanker named Smoosh Sea C22.

To facilitate compensation for the deceased's families, the labour attache's office, in conjunction with the Samut Sakhon Province Social Security Office, established contact with family members in both Myanmar and Thailand. This effort included verifying necessary documents at the Samut Sakhon Province Social Security Office on 9 February and 27 March, as well as the Mae Sot Social Security Office on 6 June. Arrangements are in progress to expedite the compensation process for the remaining three victims' families. — TWA/CT

MoL to condense duration of regional orientation course



Myanmar migrant workers are seen going for work abroad at the airport.

THE Ministry of Labour plans to reduce the duration of a course on regional knowledge of a certain country being provided to locals who are about to work abroad, according to the ministry.

The two-day training is provided to the workers at Skill Training School in North

Dagon township, Yangon Region. Under the new scheme to be started in September this year, the training will last only two hours, an official from the training school said.

"The training is to share the knowledge of the country where they are going to work. The rules and regulations of

the country including do's and don'ts while living and working there are shared in the two-day training.

The newly arranged training programme will take two hours instead of two days. The workers will have more time to prepare other necessary things," he said. — ASH/TH

CRIME NEWS

Confiscation of illegal items: Consumer goods, industrial materials and vehicles

AN on-duty team under the Shan State Illegal Trade Eradication Task Force confiscated an unregistered Toyota Mark II car (worth about K8 million) that was parked at the Sunny Hotel in Lashio township on 22 August. The action was taken under Customs procedures.

A combined team conducted inspections of a warehouse in Chanmyathazi township on the same day and seized 10,000 warm clothes worth K30 million without official documents. The action was taken under Customs procedures.

Similarly, the combined on-duty teams under the supervision of the Customs Department nabbed a Drone X Pro (drone with battery) worth K300,000 without official documents sent from Australia to Yangon at the EMS inter-

national express, four kinds of goods worth K204,521,436 including 24,398.14 metres of 100 per cent polyester that were different from the Import Declaration (ID) from a container at the Myanmar Industrial Port and six kinds of goods worth K5,063,167 including 4.04 kilogrammes of super grap-synthetic grip wrap without Import Licence and 425 kilogrammes of remote-con-

trolled toys with battery pad worth K2.499 million without official documents from the containers at the Asia World Port Terminal container checkpoint. The action was taken under Customs procedures.

A total of six arrests were made on 22 August, with an estimated value of K250,383,603, as reported by the Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee. — MNA/MKKS



Smuggled Drone X Pro (drone with battery) worth K300,000 without official documents seized at the EMS international express on – 22 August 2023.

CURRENT
AFFAIRS

Fluctuations surge within real estate market, signalling high volatility

ALONG with the automobile market booming in the third week of August, some apartment prices in Yangon's immovable property market hit new highs yet the property transaction volume has risen unexpectedly, realtors pointed out.

The 12x50 feet apartment on the top floor of a high-rise building near Chinatown in Latha Township was valued at only K35 million in late 2022. The apartment on the fourth floor was worth K70 million per unit and the one on the fifth floor with some partitions was valued at K65 million per unit then.

That 12x50 feet apartment was put up for sale over the past six months. The buyer nearly reached an agreement with the seller at approximately K55 million. Yet, the seller raised the price to K66 million again, U Aye Thein, a grandson of the land owner, told the Global New Light of Myanmar (GNLM).

"First, the opening price was K55 million. Then, the price jumped to 60 million. The owner of the apartment seems to de-



Capturing Yangon City's Urban Landscape: A glimpse of towering high-rise structures

termine the price depending on the forex market", U Aye Thein highlighted.

Additionally, housing prices are rapidly fluctuating, Ma Wah Wah Swe, a realtor from South Okkalapa Township, told the GNLM.

"The value of the 30x60 feet

house worth below K300 million moved up to K400 million because of the Kyat depreciation in the forex market. Then, the notification about the issuance of the K20,000 note caused the price to go higher to K500 million. The property price fluctuates as they are closely tied

to the currency value and gold price. We realtors are also surprised by the high volatility in the real estate market", Ma Wah Wah Swe stressed.

As the car prices have been soaring, the housing prices also hit fresh new peaks in recent months. The property market

sees an upward trend in prices.

The volatile foreign exchange rate and unofficial market rate of pure gold dealt a blow to the movable and immovable property market as well as the commodity market.

"The price of the vacant plot of land in East Dagon Township was not that high previously. Now, the price is up by K10 million per plot of land. The township has not developed and there are only vacant plots of land with permits there. However, the price is skyrocketing", the GNLM quoted Ko Aung Than Oo from East Dagon Township, as saying.

Nonetheless, the authorities concerned observed and met with those stakeholders in the industry on 19 August.

Along with the Kyat devaluation in the forex market, a crackdown on the illegal money transfer hundi businesses is underway.

Following the price dips of pure gold and the exchange rate, there is speculation about the possible price decline to a small extent in the real estate market. — TWA/EM

MoPF aims for 4.1% economic growth in current Financial Year

ANTICIPATED economic growth is forecasted to reach 4.1 per cent during the 2023-2024 financial year, as highlighted by the deputy minister

for Planning and Finance during the 22nd press conference.

For the 2019-2020 financial year, initial projections placed the budget deficit and GDP

at 5.65 per cent, yet year-end calculations indicated a higher figure of 6.27 per cent. Targeting 5.29 per cent in the 2020-2021 financial year, the outcome surged to 7.56 per cent, predominantly due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The pandemic caused a reduction in Myanmar's revenue, leading to a decline in economic growth to 3.2 per cent for the fiscal year 2019-2020 and a further decrease to -5.9 per cent in the 2020-2021 financial year.

The deputy minister highlighted a growth of 2.4 per cent during the six-month minibudget period, with an additional increase of 3.4 per cent observed in the 2022-2023 financial year. — TWA/CT



Containers at a cargo port.



Two telecom fraud suspects extradited to China

ON 23 August, Myanmar police apprehended and handed over two suspects involved in telecom fraud cases to Chinese authorities at Yangon International Airport.

One of the detainees not only holds a central role within the gambling and fraud syndicate but also serves as a pivotal figure in the realm of telecom fraud.

Through a collaborative effort, a specialized operation was carried out jointly by law enforcement agencies from

China, Myanmar, Thailand, and Laos. This operation aimed to suppress telecom fraud activities and curb online gambling-related crimes, ultimately striving to transform the prevailing environment marred by offences such as human trafficking, kidnapping, and manipulation.

In June, six individuals implicated in telecom fraud cases were similarly repatriated from Myanmar's police force to the Chinese police force. — TWA/MKKS

LOCAL BUSINESS

Canton Fair welcomes Myanmar entrepreneurs in Oct

THE 134th Canton Fair or China Import and Export Fair is scheduled to be held from 15 to 31 October in Guangdong, China. Myanmar entrepreneurs have been invited to join the Canton Fair, according to the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI).

Promotion Conference of the 134th Canton Fair was held at Wyndham Grand Hotel on 22 August. Mr Quyang Daobing, Economic and Commercial Counsellor of the Chinese Embassy to Myanmar and U Aye Tun, vice president of the UMFCCI gave the opening remarks respectively.

Mr Zhang Sihong, vice president of the Chinese Foreign Trade Centre, welcomed the participation of Myanmar companies as the RCEP mem-



Canton Fair 2023 - The 133rd International Trade Fair in progress.

bers and developed countries will join the Canton Fair.

Additionally, a series of

forums, product launches and trade talks will be included as well.

This Canton Fair will help

bolster Myanmar-China trade and create business opportu-

nities.

Central executive Dr Aung Thein of the UMFCCI also shared his experiences of the Canton Fair at the conference.

Moreover, the Online Canton Fair Platform is open to manufacturers and international buyers. This fair serves as a great platform linking international suppliers with buyers and an important channel for China's foreign trade and open policy. It is the largest trade fair in China.

The 134th Canton Fair will be held on online and offline platforms, featuring quality products with 74,000 booths. In particular, EVs, agricultural products, machines and electrical appliances, household devices and technological gadgets will be showcased. For further details, please visit www.canton-fair.org.cn. — NN/EM



General view of the office of the Central Bank of Myanmar (Yangon branch).

CBM to adjust interest rate on macroeconomics

THE Central Bank of Myanmar (CBM) will adjust the interest rates to manage the macro economy, Dr Lin Aung, Deputy Governor 2 of the CBM addressed at the 22nd SAC's press conference.

"The developed and developing countries have been controlling the interest rates to reduce the inflation from May 2022. Inflation is rising in the country. The consumer prices went up not because of the minimum wage increase and high demand, but because of Kyat depreciation in the forex market, high import value, widening trade deficit, foreign currency

demand and increasing consumer price index. Higher interest rates tend to negatively affect the economic growth of the State," Deputy Governor 2 Dr Lin Aung emphasized.

The banking operations recovered in late October 2022. With a view to controlling inflation indirectly, the CBM raised the minimum reserve requirement ratio of local currency from 3 to 3.5 per cent in May 2023.

Furthermore, the banks also pay interest on excess reserve balances in October 2022 to facilitate banking operations. — TWA/EM

Corn prices rebound as deadline nears last week of Thailand's Form D benefits

WITH only one week remaining to export Myanmar's corn to Thailand under Form D customs tariff benefit, the corn price has rebounded, traders explained.

Thailand gives the go-ahead to corn imports under zero tariff (with Form-D), between 1 February and 31 August. However, Thailand imposed a maximum tax rate of 73 per cent on corn imports to protect the rights of their growers if the corn is imported during the corn season of Thailand. There is only one week remaining to enjoy that customs benefit.

Additionally, torrential rain on 7 August destroyed some road sections to Myawady, a ma-

jor border point between Myanmar and Thailand. Therefore, landslides blocked the corn's trade route and repair works are being undertaken. As a result of this, the market was sluggish.

The prevailing prices of corn stand at K1,210-1,230 per viss in the domestic market while the FOB corn prices were US\$290-310 per tonne, according to Yangon Region Chambers of Commerce and Industry (Bayintnaung Commodity Depot).

Myanmar conveys corn to China and Thailand through the border and also sends corn to China, India, Viet Nam and the Philippines by maritime ship-

ping currently, Myanmar Corn Industrial Association.

China is purchasing Myanmar's corn through cross-border trade under the opium substitution program. Legitimate corn trade between Myanmar and China commenced at the end of 2022. A total of 112 companies have been given the go-ahead for corn exports.

Myanmar exported more than two million tonnes of corn to foreign trade in the 2022 corn season. The majority of them were sent to Thailand and the remaining went to China, India, the Philippines and Viet Nam.

More than two million tonnes of corn are expected to be shipped to foreign trade partners in the 2023 corn season, said U Min Khaing, chair of the Myanmar Corn Industrial Association. Presently, corn is cultivated in Shan, Kachin, Kayah and Kayin states and Mandalay, Sagaing and Magway regions. Myanmar has three corn seasons- winter, summer and monsoon. The country produces 2.5-3 million tonnes of corn every year. — NN/EM



Systematic storage of corns seen at a residence not to lose quality of fruits.

Promote MSME growth through the “One Region-One Product” initiative

THE “One Region-One Product” scheme has emerged as a catalyst for multiple positive impacts including poverty alleviation, rural advancement, and the promotion of specialized production based on local resources. Focused on bolstering the Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), this initiative seeks to invigorate production processes centred around indigenous raw materials, particularly those sourced from agriculture and livestock.

Key to the success of this strategy is the emphasis on small-scale industries equipped with manageable machinery. Bamboo products, rattan wares, earthenware, traditional textiles, weaving, iron and bronze crafts, and beverage production are exemplars of this approach, carving a niche within the domestic market. Despite their potential, these enterprises face challenges, struggling to contend with imported goods due to issues of quality, pricing, modernity, and production scale.

The socioeconomic transformation of rural communities is intricately linked to the proliferation of MSMEs. The “One Region-One Product” paradigm not only generates employment opportunities but also acts as a mechanism for curbing poverty. The growth of MSMEs in specific regions serves as a catalyst for improved livelihoods, simultaneously enhancing productivity and living standards.

This symbiotic relationship with the tourism sector is crucial. MSMEs, even those engaged in traditional fares like jaggery, tofu, and ethnic cuisine, can captivate consumers and travellers alike by maintaining exceptional quality standards. Business owners must adopt an innovative mindset to devise novel products that resonate effectively within the domestic market.

A persistent challenge for many MSMEs is the cost of raw materials and transportation. Sustaining these businesses necessitates collaborative efforts between local authorities and the Union government to facilitate access to loans, thereby galvanizing these enterprises. Concurrently, business owners must uphold their end of the bargain by diligently repaying debts to financial institutions, ensuring a continuous flow of funds for future ventures.

The socioeconomic transformation of rural communities is intricately linked to the proliferation of MSMEs. The “One Region-One Product” paradigm not only generates employment opportunities but also acts as a mechanism for curbing poverty. The growth of MSMEs in specific regions serves as a catalyst for improved livelihoods, simultaneously enhancing productivity and living standards.

In conclusion, the “One Region-One Product” initiative holds immense potential for fortifying the MSME sector. By channelling efforts toward harnessing local resources and cultivating distinctive products, this scheme becomes a pivotal driver of holistic socioeconomic progress. The dynamic interplay between MSMEs, regional products, and tourism presents an avenue through which both economic growth and community well-being can flourish.

THE Ministry of Legal Affairs (MOLA Office No 25), situated in Nay Pyi Taw, is reformed from the Attorney-General’s office according to Order No 176/2021 of the State Administration Council (SAC). The Union Attorney-General is assigned and appointed as Union Minister for the Ministry of Legal Affairs. The motto for MOLA is *“the legal profession is a noble profession” and the mission is to protect legal rights, to be better functions of MOLA, to participate in the judicial system for promoting public trust and to participate in the justice sector reform.* MOLA is implementing the functions of five departments such as Legislative Draft Vetting Department, Legal Advice Department, Prosecution Department, Administration Department and Legal Advocacy Department.

The Ministry is implementing a strategic plan for 2020-2024: *“Providing legal service for justice”*. MOLA intends to perform functions such as publishing law books yearly in both Myanmar and English in order to conduct legal studies and research by law officers from various levels of law Offices, compiling law journals, English-Myanmar law dictionaries and other legal research, providing services by launching Myanmar Law Information System-MILS in order to access updated laws, rules, procedures, orders and directives.

With the guidance of the SAC chairman and the supervision of the Minister for Legal Affairs, Legal Advocacy Training No 3 was successfully opened on 7 June 2023. We (37 trainees from different ministries) attended Legal Advocacy Training No 3 from 8 June 2023 to 19 August 2023 at the Ministry of Legal Affairs.

The legal advocacy training has provided interesting and valuable topics such as History of MOLA, Criminal Law, Relationship between Myanmar’s Constitution and International Law, Charters of United Nations, ASEAN Charter, State, Sovereignty, Legitimacy and Jurisdiction: An observation from International Political and Legal Perspectives, Transnational organized Crimes, Promotion and Protection of Investment in Myanmar and relating to commercial Contract, Force Majeure, Constitution, Unity State and Federal State, General Legal Advice Subject, Legislative Drafting Practices, Subsidiary or Secondary Legislation or Indirect Legislation, Law, Act, Code, Regulations, By-Law, Notification, order, Directive, Procedures, Drafting of amended Laws, Introduction to an art of reading as well as an art of thinking and art of writing, Legislature Institution and Power, Law is a living thing, Civil Service Regulations, Anti-corruption, International Instruments and Intergovernmental

Knowledge Augmentation for Legal Affairs via Legal Advocacy Training No 3

By Dr Than Lwin Tun



The trainers and trainees from Legal Advocacy Training No 3. (PHOTO: MOLA)

Bariatric surgery has long-term benefits in cancer prevention of females: Study

While prior population studies have established a correlation between body mass index (BMI) and cancer occurrence, the question of whether deliberate weight loss translates to diminished cancer risk remains less clear. This uncertainty stems from the challenges of achieving substantial, lasting weight loss across large populations.

NEW research after adding follow-up years, increased sample sizes and examining multiple surgical procedures has found that bariatric surgery is associated with lower all-cancer and obesity-related cancer incidence among females.

According to a new study published in Obesity, the flagship publication of The Obesity Society (TOS), female surgery

patients had a considerably lower cancer mortality rate than non-surgical participants

Although population studies have established a positive association between body mass index and cancer incidence, less clear is whether the voluntary reduction in body weight leads to reduced cancer risk because significant and sustained weight loss in large populations is difficult to achieve.

However, because of the substantial and maintained weight loss following bariatric surgery, studies have reported reduced cancer incidence and lower cancer mortality in bariatric surgical patients compared with matched non-surgical subjects, according to the study’s authors.

force Weight Loss Surgery “As scientists study human diseases, an element of discovery is to confirm like results from multiple studies.

This research represents another important study that strongly supports the long-term benefits of weight loss surgery in the prevention of cancer,” said Ted D Adams, PhD, MPH, Intermountain Surgical Spec-

Consistent Findings Rein-

alties/Digestive Health Clinical Programme and Intermountain Healthcare; Division of Epidemiology, Department of Internal Medicine and the Department of Nutrition and Integrative Physiology, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah. Adams is the corresponding author of the study.

In the current study, researchers compared cancer inci-

dence and mortality stratified by obesity- and non-obesity-related cancers, sex, cancer stage and procedure.

Retrospectively (1982-2019), nearly 22,000 bariatric surgery patients were compared with non-surgical subjects with severe obesity.

The participants were matched 1:1 for age, sex and body mass index. The Utah Pop-



The women who had the surgery had a lower risk of getting cancer and a lower risk of dying from cancer. This is important because being overweight or obese can increase the risk of cancer. PHOTO: AFP

ulation Database was used for this study and included linked population-based data such as statewide birth and death certifi-

knowledge can really be empowering. For example, in education, gaining knowledge and skills can open doors to better career opportunities. In personal relationships, understanding and knowledge about oneself and others can lead to healthier and more fulfilling connections. In scientific research and innovation, knowledge enables progress and the development of new technologies and discoveries. However, it is important to note that knowledge alone may not be sufficient without the application of that knowledge or the development of other skills and qualities. It is the combination of knowledge, skills, and action that truly empowers individuals to make a difference and create positive change.

Consequently, Knowledge Augmentation for Legal Affairs is the key important issue for us and supports organizational effectiveness. In addition, we learned a lot from the Ministry of Legal Affairs and improved our knowledge. We, Legal Advocacy Training No 3 Group acknowledge and respect all the lecturers for their kindly active contribution and energetic sharing of knowledge.

References - Historical Background of the Ministry of Legal Affairs (www.mola.gov.mm) - Lecture Notes from Legal Advocacy Training No 3

SCI/ENVIRON WORLD



Students with painted faces surround a replica of the Chandrayaan-3 spacecraft in Chennai on 22 August 2023. **PHOTO: R.SATISH BABU / AFP**

India's historic cut-price Moon mission set for touchdown

INDIA readied Wednesday to become the first nation to land a spacecraft on the Moon's south pole, days after a Russian probe crashed in the same region.

The latest attempted Moon landing is a historic moment for the world's most populous nation, as it rapidly closes in on milestones set by global space powers.

Chandrayaan-3, which means "Mooncraft" in Sanskrit, is scheduled to touch down

shortly after 6:00 pm India time (1230 GMT) near the little-explored lunar south pole.

"India reaches for the Moon", The Times of India front-page headline read Wednesday, with the hoped-for lunar landing dominating local news. "It's D-Day for Moon Mission", The Hindustan Times said.

A previous Indian effort failed in 2019, and the latest attempt comes just days after Russia's first Moon mission in

almost 50 years, destined for the same region, crashed on the lunar surface.

But former Indian space chief K. Sivan said the latest photos transmitted back home by the lander gave every indication the final leg of the voyage would succeed.

"It is giving some encouragement that we will be able to achieve the landing mission without any problem," he told AFP on Monday. — AFP

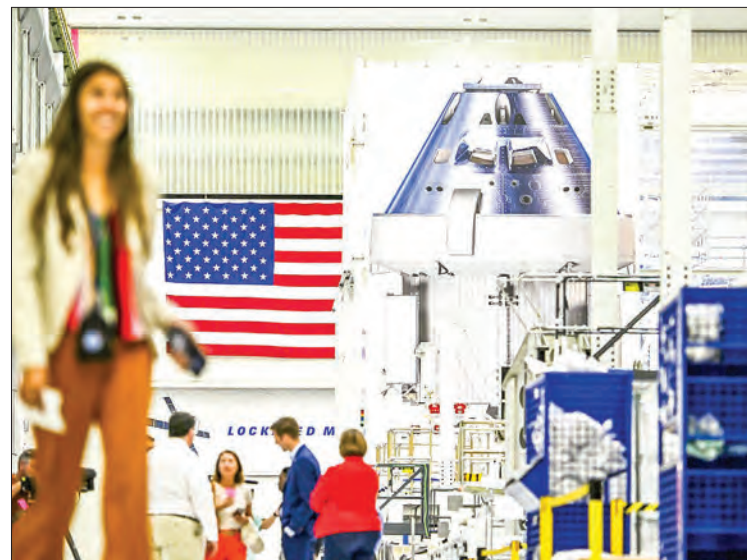
NASA picks geology team for first crewed lunar landing mission

AMID the frenzied anticipation in India around its third lunar mission - Chandrayaan-3, American space agency NASA has chosen a geology team that will develop the surface science strategy for the first crewed lunar landing mission in more than 50 years, the agency informed through an official release.

For advancing scientific research and opening the door for extensive lunar exploration, NASA's Artemis III mission will send humans, including the first

woman to set foot on the Moon, close to the lunar South Pole.

Dr Nicky Fox, NASA's Science Associate administrator, was quoted as saying in the release, "Science is one of the pillars of Artemis," adding, "This team will be responsible for leading the geology planning for humanity's first return to the lunar surface in more than 50 years, ensuring that we maximise the science return of Artemis and grow in our understanding of our nearest celestial neighbour." — ANI



Officials and media personnel are seen inside the Operations and Checkout Building (O&C) at the Kennedy Space Centre in Cape Canaveral, Florida. **PHOTO: CHANDAN KHANNA / AFP**

Crying wolf to save livestock and their predator

USING a powerful torch, Alik Buhayer-Mach momentarily drenches a nearby mountain top in light, straining to see if wolves are lurking in the shadows. If the predator were to get past the electric wires stretched around this high-altitude pasture in the Swiss Alps, the 57-year-old biologist knows "it would be a massacre".

She and her 60-year-old husband Francois Mach-Buhayer — a leading Swiss cardiologist — have settled in to spend the night watching over some 480 sheep grazing in the remote mountains near the Italian border.

The pair of unlikely herders are among several hundred people



Shepherd Mathis von Siebenthal leads sheep in the Swiss Alps during a monitoring programme by Swiss NGO "OPPAL" to watch livestock against wolves. **PHOTO: AFP**

volunteering this summer through OPPAL, a Swiss NGO seeking a novel way to protect

wolves, by helping chase them away from grazing livestock.

"Our goal is that by the end

of the summer season, the livestock are still alive... and the wolves too," OPPAL director Jeremie Moulin told AFP.

He co-founded the organization three years ago in a bid to help promote and improve cohabitation between wildlife and human activities, at a time when swelling wolf populations had emotions running high.

"I think this project helps enable dialogue," Moulin said.

Soaring wolf attacks

After being wiped out more than a century ago, wolves have in recent decades begun returning to Switzerland, like several other European countries. — AFP

As wildfires multiply, a new era of air pollution

FROM Quebec to British Columbia to Hawaii, North America is facing an extraordinary wildfire season — and regions both near and far have found themselves increasingly blighted by smoke exposure.

Here's what you should know about air pollution from these blazes.

What we know

One of the defining aspects of smoke from wildfires is "particulate matter" — toxins that, in their numbers, can make smoke visible. — AFP

Footballer Honda sets up tourney to help children play independently

FORMER Japan attacker Keisuke Honda has founded a new type of national football tournament for children aged 10 or under aimed at helping them think for themselves and play without direction from a coach on the bench.

The move by Honda, who is also active as an angel investor, comes as elementary school-level national tournaments in sports such as judo have been halted amid criticism of a win-at-all-costs mentality that has been a long-term problem in Japanese

junior sports.

In the format promoted by Honda, children play four-on-four football on a futsal court to guarantee each child playing time. They also come up with their own strategies and substitutions.

There have been no previous under-10 national football championships in Japan.

“The results aren’t the most important thing for that age group,” the 37-year-old Honda said. “But it means a lot if children play with their own strong

desire to win.”

More than 200 regional “4v4” tournaments have been scheduled around the country through end of November.

A total of 48 teams — 16 winners of the top-tier regionals and the top 32 teams based on points from matches — will qualify for the national championship in December.

As Honda aims to “support challengers,” losing teams get to enter other tournaments as many times as they want. — Kyodo



Former Japan international Keisuke Honda instructs young football players in the eastern Japan city of Chiba on 1 August 2023, after announcing the organization of a national competition for the Under-10 age group. **PHOTO: KYODO**

‘Losing Old Sanaa’: historic city reels from Yemen war



A picture shows a view of Unesco-listed buildings in the old city of the Yemeni capital Sanaa 12 July 2023. **PHOTO: AFP**

DOAA al-Waseai spent many happy years working as a tour guide in the Old City of Yemen’s capital Sanaa, showing foreigners its hidden hammams and markets teeming with silver and spices.

After nearly a decade of war, that life feels like a distant memory. The Old City itself — Waseai’s childhood home — feels cut off from the world, its warrens of thousand-year-old rammed-earth buildings falling into disrepair.

“Tourism opened my eyes to my own culture,” Waseai, 40, told AFP, reflecting on how

she had gained a deeper appreciation for Yemeni clothing and food by explaining them to outsiders.

She once comfortably spoke English and German, but now her foreign language skills are wasting away, though she reckons it’s just as well.

“There are no words to express our catastrophe — in English or German or even French.”

A UNESCO World Heritage site for nearly four decades, the Old City has been classified as “in danger” since 2015, shortly after Saudi Ara-

bia spearheaded a military intervention to prevent the complete collapse of Yemen’s beleaguered government.

Inhabited without interruption for more than 2,500 years, the area’s iconic mosques and burnt-brick tower-houses have faced both direct threats from air strikes and indirect threats associated with lack of upkeep.

As she waits impatiently for the war to end, Waseai has kept painstaking records of the Old City’s decline, her spreadsheets listing collapsed homes and battered hotels. — AFP

Meta fights back over behavioural marketing ban in Norway

US tech giant Meta on Tuesday asked a Norwegian court to defer a ban on behavioural marketing based on users’ personal information, which has landed it a heavy fine in the country.

Since 14 August, Meta has been incurring a fine of one million kroner (\$97,000) per day of non-compliance under an order issued by the Norwegian data protection agency Datatilsynet.

The watchdog said Meta had not complied with a 14 July ban on sending Facebook and Instagram users targeted advertisements based on their personal data which the social media platform collects without their explicit consent.

“This is an unreasonable decision, which was not possible

to conform to in the given time-frame,” Meta’s lawyer Christian Reusch told the court, quoted by Norwegian news agency NTB.

The group wants the ban suspended and pointed to a similar legal case in Ireland, where its European headquarters is based. In January, the Irish regulator — acting on behalf of the EU — slapped Meta with heavy fines totalling 390 million euros for breaching EU personal data laws on Facebook and Instagram.

On 1 August, the social media giant said it would ask users in the European Union, Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Switzerland to give their consent before allowing targeted advertising on its networks. — AFP



US tech heavyweight Meta formally requested a Norwegian court to postpone the implementation of a ban on behavioural marketing reliant on users’ personal data. **PHOTO: AFP**

ECONOMY
WORLD

Eurozone economic downturn deepens in August

THE eurozone economy is contracting at its fastest rate in three years as a steep decline in manufacturing begins to spread to services, a key survey said Wednesday.

Data from the HCOB Flash Eurozone purchasing managers' index (PMI) survey published by S&P Global fell to 47 in August from 48.6 in July. A figure below 50 indicates contraction.

The figure is the lowest since November 2020, when the world was thrust into an economically crippling shutdown because of the covid pandemic.

"Considering the PMI fig-



Downturns in the European Union's biggest economies, France and Germany, have led to an overall decline in activity in the eurozone.
PHOTO: AFP/FILE

ures in our GDP nowcast leads us to the conclusion that the eurozone will shrink by 0.2 per cent in the third quarter," said Cyrus de la Rubia, chief economist at Hamburg Commercial Bank.

The data showed the eurozone service sector fell into decline in August, recording the first contraction in activity since last December.

The eurozone's woes have been inflamed by downturns in the European Union's biggest economies, France and Germany.

"In the manufacturing sector, Germany's firms are reducing their output at a much faster

pace than the French ones. This will only fuel the discussion of Germany being the sick man of Europe," de la Rubia said.

Germany's "lacklustre" economy will likely stagnate again in the third quarter, the Bundesbank central bank said Monday, as the International Monetary Fund predicts it will be the only major advanced economy to shrink in 2023.

The dire PMI data comes as the European Central Bank (ECB) will decide next month whether to continue raising interest rates in the race to tame red-hot inflation. — AFP

US home sales cool as mortgage rates remain high

SALES of homes in the United States ticked down in July, according to industry data released Tuesday, as elevated mortgage rates and limited housing supply held buyers back.

The housing market in the world's biggest economy has been reeling as interest rates climbed, making home owners reluctant to put their properties

up for sale — having earlier locked in lower rates on their mortgages.

Existing home sales edged down 2.2 per cent last month to an annual rate of 4.1 million, seasonally adjusted, said the National Association of Realtors (NAR).

The figure, which was below expectations, remains the lowest rate since January.

Sales have fallen 16.6 per cent from a year ago, said the association.

"Two factors are driving current sales activity — inventory availability and mortgage rates," said NAR chief economist Lawrence Yun in a statement.

"Both have been unfavorable to buyers," he added. — AFP



Nigeria's former oil minister and OPEC president Diezani Alison-Madueke was first arrested in London in October 2015. **PHOTO: AFP**

French grape-pickers wilt as 'heat dome' temperatures top 40C



Some grape pickers have suffered health problems as a result of the heat. **PHOTO: AFP**

GRAPE-PICKERS were out in French vineyards Tuesday bringing in this year's harvest in "torrid" conditions as temperatures shot past 40C in some areas of the country during a "heat

dome" weather pattern that has brought misery to millions.

In Saint-Quentin-de-Baron in the Bordeaux region of southwest France, local winemakers have adapted the picking rou-

tines to take into account some of the hottest temperatures on record for this time of year.

Sebastien Jacquey, director of the Chateau de Sours, told AFP that shifts had been reduced to six hours a day, instead of eight, and that teams were starting at 7 am to avoid the suffocating heat and humidity of the wind-free afternoons.

Teams armed with secateurs and boxes were reminded of safety routines as they headed out Tuesday to the neat rows of vines, which are owned by Chinese billionaire Jack Ma.

"Remember to take a break at the end of a line, keep yourself hydrated, protect yourself with hats and sun cream, but also let someone know if you don't feel well," Jacquey said. — AFP

Ex-Opec president faces UK corruption charges

FORMER OPEC president Diezani Alison-Madueke has been charged with bribery offences relating to her time as Nigeria's oil minister, the UK National Crime Agency said on Tuesday.

Alison-Madueke has been on bail since first being arrested in London in October 2015. She will appear in court in the British capital on 2 October, the NCA said.

Soon after her arrest, her family's lawyer told AFP she would strongly contest corruption allegations that have dogged her during and after her time in former president Goodluck Jonathan's government.

She has been linked to a string of money laundering, bribery and asset recovery cases in Nigeria, as well as in Italy and

the United States.

In an interview with a Nigerian newspaper in November 2015, she was quoted as saying: "I challenge anyone to come forward with facts showing that I stole government or public money.

"I've never stolen Nigeria's money." Alison-Madueke, who was in office from 2010 to 2015, was the first woman to be oil minister in Nigeria and the first female president of the global oil cartel OPEC.

The head of the NCA's international corruption unit, Andy Kelly, said: "We suspect Diezani Alison-Madueke abused her power in Nigeria and accepted financial rewards for awarding multi-million-pound contracts." — AFP

Getir cuts over tenth of global workforce

TURKISH rapid grocery delivery firm Getir said Tuesday it was slashing over a tenth of its global workforce in a bid to stem losses and keep its foothold in parts of Europe and the United States.

The announcement follows Getir's retreat from France and decision to wind down operations in Italy, Spain and Portugal.

Getir said it was laying off 2,500 additional "couriers, warehouse and office workers", representing 11 percent of its remaining staff.

The layoffs will come in five countries where Getir intends to maintain operations — Türkiye, Britain, Germany,



Getir has been downsizing since reaching its zenith during the coronavirus pandemic. PHOTO: AFP

the Netherlands and the United States.

"We have decided to restructure our global organization in order to significantly increase our operational efficiency," the company said in a statement released

to AFP.

"We will implement this difficult decision... in full compliance with the laws of the countries in which we operate."

Founded in Istanbul in 2015, Getir won substantial financial back-

ing from investors such as the California-based investment funds Sequoia Capital and Silver Lake as well as the Emirati sovereign wealth fund Mubadala.

Getir reached its zenith during the coronavirus pandemic, when restaurant and grocery deliveries boomed.

A self-proclaimed pioneer in ultra-fast grocery delivery model, it expanded to nine countries on three continents, entering the Spanish market towards the end of 2021.

But its rapid expansion never resulted in profits, and Getir has been downsizing for much of the past year. — AFP

Swatch can challenge Malaysia's Pride watch seizure, court rules

A Malaysian court ruled Wednesday that Swatch can challenge the seizure of more than 100 Pride-themed watches, the Swiss company's lawyer said.

The government in Malaysia — where homosexuality is outlawed and LGBTQ people face widespread discrimination — has banned rainbow-themed Swatch timepieces, warning that owners or sellers face up to three years in prison.

In May, authorities raided Swatch stores at 11 malls across Malaysia, confiscating 172 watches they described as having "LGBT elements".

— AFP



Swatch is a Swiss watchmaker known for its colourful and innovative designs. PHOTO: SWATCH

Arm listing may boost return to IPOs

THE initial public offering of British chip designing giant Arm, announced on Monday, could signal a rebound in companies introducing their shares on stock markets after a year of relatively few such listings.

Arm is a world leader in designing chips that are used in smartphones across the world and aims to be a major player in artificial intelligence (AI).

In documents filed on Monday, Arm said it planned to list on the Nasdaq, seven years after quitting London's

stock exchange after being purchased by Japan's SoftBank.

The partial listing for an as yet undetermined number of shares could happen as soon as next month, according to financial media, possibly raising some \$10 billion for SoftBank and valuing Arm at more than \$60 billion.

That would be the largest listing on the tech-oriented Nasdaq since electric vehicle manufacturer Rivian went public in 2021 with a market value of \$68 billion. — AFP



Arm will soon get its moment in the IPO spotlight. PHOTO: AFP

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V CONTRIVIA VOY.NO. (049N/S)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V CONTRIVIA VOY.NO. (049N/S)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **24-8-2023** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MIP** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.
Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

(ONE) OCEAN NETWORK EXPRESS LINE

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V IAL 001 VOY.NO. (N159)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V IAL 001 VOY. NO. (N159)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **24-8-2023** 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 INTER ASIA LINES

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V MSC DHANTIA VOY.NO. (SB332A)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V MSC DHANTIA VOY.NO. (SB332A)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **24-8-2023** 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 MEDITERRANEAN SHIPPING COMPANY S.A

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V FORTUNE 9 VOY.NO. (2312)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V FORTUNE 9 VOY.NO. (2312)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **24-8-2023** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MITT-3** 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: **2301989**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S UNI SPRING LOGISTICS HOLDINGS PTE LTD

ROLLING UPDATES
WORLD

Brazilian president calls for replacement of US dollar hegemony

“Lula da Silva highlighted the need for an alternative to the US dollar in the international market. He proposed the development of a common currency specifically for cross-border trade within BRICS nations, while maintaining the integrity of national currencies.

BRAZILIAN President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva on Tuesday called for creating a common trading currency for BRICS countries to counter US dollar hegemony.

Advocating the creation of a common currency for cross-border trade between BRICS nations without affecting national currencies, Lula da Silva said at the BRICS Business Forum Leaders' Dialogue that an alternative to the US dollar needs to be found in the international market.

The common currency would be used to facilitate trade between the emerging nations, he said. “We want BRICS to be a multilateral institution, not an exclusive club,” Lula da Silva said. “We just want to organize ourselves.”

In April, he proposed possibly creating a common regional



Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva has called for the creation of a shared trading currency among BRICS countries as a countermeasure to the dominance of the US dollar. PHOTO: AFP/FILE

currency or similar mechanism to reduce reliance on the US dollar in trade.

Also on Tuesday, the Brazilian president announced that his government is considering the possibility of using the Chinese yuan in trade with Argentina.

“We cannot depend on a single country that has the dollar, that puts more money into circulation in dollars, and we are forced to live off the fluctuation of that currency. It’s not right,” he said. — Xinhua

Zimbabweans vote in tense poll as president seeks new term

ZIMBABWEANS on Wednesday voted in closely-watched presidential and legislative elections after a campaign tainted by a crackdown on the opposition, fears of vote rigging and public anger at the economic crisis.

President Emmerson Mnangagwa, 80, who came to power after a coup that deposed late ruler Robert Mugabe in 2017 is seeking re-election.

His main challenger is Nelson Chamisa, 45, who leads the yellow-coloured Citizens Coalition for Change (CCC) party.

Casting his ballot in his home town of Kwekwe, central Zimbabwe, a confident Mnangagwa told journalists: “If I think I’m not going to take it, then I will be foolish.”

“Everyone who contests should go into the race to win”, he added, sporting his trademark multicoloured scarf.

The opposition is hoping to ride a wave of discontent over the southern African country’s economic woes that include high inflation, unemployment and widespread poverty. — AFP



The opposition has party has complained about being unfairly targeted by authorities. PHOTO: AFP

Spanish king calls on right-wing leader to try to form govt



Seeking to resolve a political impasse, King Felipe VI received PP prime ministerial hopeful Alberto Nunez Feijoo at the Zarzuela Palace in Madrid. PHOTO: POOL/AFP

SEEKING to break a political impasse, Spain’s King Felipe VI on Tuesday called on Alberto Nunez Feijoo to seek to form a new government, despite his conservative Popular Party not having a majority.

The PP garnered the most votes in an inconclusive election last month and the king called on Feijoo to try to form a government with the PP at the head of a coalition.

The Socialist president of parliament, Francina Armengol, told a news conference that the king had communicated “his decision to propose Alberto Nunez Feijoo as candidate to head the government.”

But the outcome remains uncertain as the early elections on 23 July left neither Feijoo’s conservatives nor outgoing Socialist Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez with a clear path to a majority.

Armengol said nonetheless she would be contacting Feijoo in the coming hours to set a date for a parliamentary investiture debate. Both Sanchez and Feijoo had indicated after meeting earlier with the king that they would submit themselves to an investiture vote should the monarch designate them.

Earlier, Felipe, seeking to ascertain which party leader has the best chance of eventually putting together a coalition, also met Santiago Abascal, leader of the far-right Vox party.

The PP won the most votes in the poll but it is not clear if it can secure the 176 votes in parliament required to obtain an absolute majority in the 350-seat chamber.

Should Feijoo fail, that would trigger a two-month countdown to determine if another majority can come together. Failing that the country will go back to the polls to try to break the political deadlock.

On the face of it, Feijoo will fall short as his PP has 137 parliamentary seats while potential allies Vox and two small regional parties only have 33 between them which, if pooled, would give a PP-led coalition only 172 votes, four short of the required majority. — AFP

SPORTS

Spain PM says football boss apology over kiss ‘insufficient’

SPANISH Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez on Tuesday blasted as “insufficient” the apology given by Spain’s football federation chief for kissing star player Jennifer Hermoso on the lips after Spain won the Women’s World Cup.

Spanish Football Federation (RFEF) chief Luis Rubiales, 45, kissed Hermoso as he handed the Spanish team their gold medals after they beat England 1-0 in the final on Sunday in Sydney, provoking outrage in Spain.

He kissed other players on the cheek or embraced them.

“What we saw was an unacceptable gesture,” Sanchez told a news conference when asked about the outcry over the unsolicited kiss.

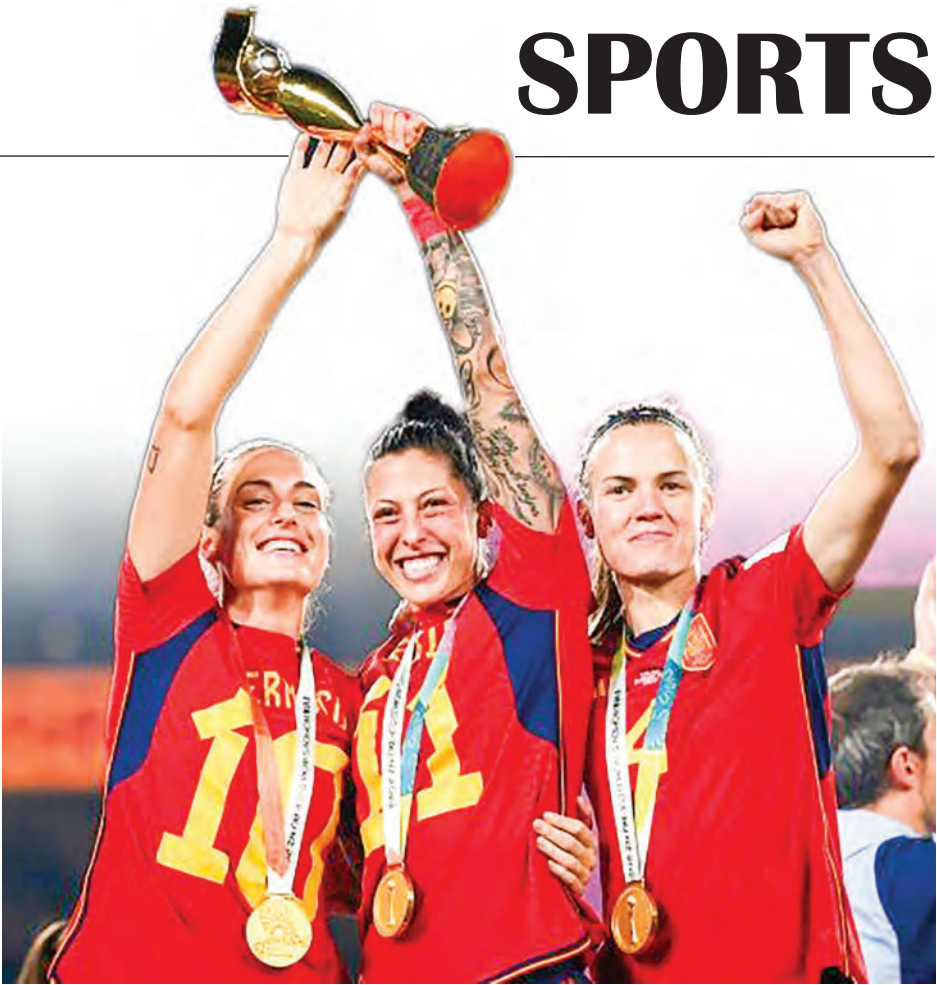
“I also think the apologies given

by Mr Rubiales are insufficient. And I even think that they are inappropriate, and that he must go further,” added Sanchez, a Socialist politician whose government has pushed through tougher laws on sexual consent and harassment.

The RFEF announced later Tuesday that it would call an extraordinary general assembly on Friday “as a matter of urgency” to address the incident.

As the controversy over the kiss grew, Rubiales apologized on Monday in a video posted on social media.

“It was done without any ill intention in a moment of the highest exuberance. Here we saw it as natural and normal but outside it has caused a commotion. — AFP



Jennifer Hermoso, centre, lifting the Women’s World Cup after Spain’s 1-0 victory against England. PHOTO: AFP

PGA Tour chief confident of Saudi deal by December deadline



The PGA Tour generated shockwaves within the golfing world in June by announcing an unexpected collaboration with the Saudi backers of LIV Golf. This partnership aimed to bring an end to the sport’s two-year internal conflict. PHOTO: AFP

PGA Tour chief executive Jay Monahan said Tuesday he is confident of meeting a 31 December deadline to hammer out details of the tour’s merger with Saudi-backed LIV Golf.

Speaking ahead of this week’s Tour Championship playoff finale in Atlanta, Monahan said he expected a deal for the new circuit to be in place by 1 January. The PGA Tour stunned world golf in June after announcing a shock agreement with the Saudi backers of LIV Golf aimed at ending the sport’s two-year civil war.

However firm details

of how the “new collectively owned, for-profit entity” that will see the PGA Tour, Europe’s DP World Tour and LIV Golf merge have yet to be divulged.

Under the agreement signed by all sides in June, a 31 December deadline was set to finalize the details for the new circuit. Despite ongoing scepticism, Monahan told reporters on Tuesday there was no reason to believe the deadline would not be met.

“As I sit here today, I’m confident we will reach an agreement that achieves a positive outcome for the PGA Tour and

our fans - I see it and I’m certain of it,” Monahan said.

“We have put an end to the divisive and distracting litigation, we have safeguards that are in place to put the PGA Tour in a position to control our future.” Asked if he believed a deal would be in place by January 1, Monahan replied: “We’re confident that we’re going to reach a positive outcome for the PGA Tour...I don’t have any reason to think that we won’t be successful.” Monahan refused to be drawn on whether he believed the rebel LIV Golf circuit had a viable long-term future. — AFP

PSM Makassar defeat Yangon United in Play-off stage of AFC Cup Qualifier

THE 2023-2024 season AFC Cup ASEAN Zone Qualifier Play-off matches continued on 23 August, and the Yangon team lost an away match against PSM Makassar and failed to qualify.

In the play-off stage, Indonesian club PSM Makassar crushed Myanmar club Yangon United by four goals to nil, while Cambodian club Phnom Penh Crown beat Singaporean club Tamparlis Rovers by 3:2.

Team Yangon failed to qualify for the final round due to the big loss. As core players could not join Yangon United, some changes were made to the starting line-up.

The Makassar team pressed Yangon United from the start, and

Edison scored the opening goal in the sixth minute. After conceding a goal, the Yangon team tried to equalize, but only the Makassar team scored another goal. In the 35 minute, Emerton added a second goal and led by two goals at the end of the first half.

At the beginning of the second half, the Makassar team led the game and Yakot in the 51 minute and Addison scored more goals in the 61 minute to win by four goals.

The Yangon team previously qualified for the play-off stage by defeating Brunei club DPMM at home by 2-1, but lost to the Makassar team and failed to advance to the final round of the tournament. — Ko Nyi Lay/KZL



A PSM Makassar player (red) blocks Yangon United player during the AFC Cup ASEAN Zone Qualifier Play-off match played on 23 August 2023. PHOTO: PSM MAKASSAR



Five BRICS countries took firm stance on global arena, defend interests of world majority – Putin

The Russian President underscored the importance of BRICS nations expanding settlements using their respective national currencies and fostering increased cooperation among their banking systems.

RUSSIAN President Vladimir Putin addressed the audience of the 15th BRICS summit, highlighting the most crucial issues of global policy and economic cooperation.

Putin stressed that Russia’s actions in Ukraine intend to put end to war unleashed against civilians by Kyiv backed by West.

Putin says it is high time to establish permanent commission on transport



Russian President Vladimir Putin advocated for the establishment of a permanent transport commission within the BRICS framework, focused on advancing logistics. **PHOTO: GRIGORY SYSOEV/SPUTNIK**

within BRICS framework, which will work on logistics.

Vladimir Putin stressed that BRICS countries must expand settlements in national currencies and enhance cooperation between banks.

Putin added that Russia as chairman of BRICS next year plans to hold summit in Kazan in October 2024. — SPUTNIK

South Korea conducts first civil defence drills in 6 years

AIR raid sirens wailed across central Seoul on Wednesday as officials stopped

cars and ordered people to head to underground shelters in South Korea’s first civil



People receive CPR training, practicing on dummies, during a civil defence drill against possible attacks by North Korea, in an underground train station in Seoul on Wednesday. **PHOTO: AFP**

defence exercise in six years.

The 20-minute drill, which began at 2:00 pm (0500 GMT), was aimed at “preparing for a quick evacuation in the event of an air raid attack such as North Korea’s missile provocations”, Seoul’s interior ministry said.

As sirens went off across South Korea, pedestrians were instructed to move to nearby shelters or underground facilities. There are around 17,000 designated shelters across the country.

In regions closer to nuclear-armed North Korea, the government prepared a more intense drill, with chemical, biological and radiological training, including instructions for putting on a gas mask and using emergency food rations.

Participation in the drill was not mandatory, but those who took part said the training was important for raising awareness about the security situation on the Korean peninsula. — AFP

Helicopters, ziplining commandos rescue eight from Pakistan cable car

MILITARY helicopters and ziplining commandos rescued eight people, including six schoolboys, who were trapped for hours on Tuesday in a stricken cable car high above a remote Pakistani valley.

The daring rescue began with a helicopter plucking a child to safety after almost 12 hours, but it was forced back to base as bad weather closed in and night fell. Then, commandos from Pakistan’s Special Service Group (SSG) — known as the Maroon Berets — used the cable keeping the gondola from plunging into the valley as a zipline to rescue the rest of those stranded. “I thought it was my last day and I will be no more,” one of the rescued boys, Attaullah Shah, told AFP.

“God has granted me a second life,” the 15-year-old said. — AFP