Embrace the Future: Unfolding a New Chapter with a Fresh Vision

The Global NEW LIGHT of MYANMAR

Vol. X, No. 134, 13th Waxing of Wagaung 1385 ME | www.gnlm.com.mm | Tuesday, 29 August 2023



Captivating Panorama: Kawthoung Port, a key border trade post with Thailand, amidst Mawtaung, Hteekhee, Myawady and Tachilek borders.

Myawady border trade volume crosses US$35 mln in past 3 weeks

THE value of trade through the Myawady border with neighbouring Thailand amounted to US$35.404 million in the past three weeks of August, the Ministry of Commerce's statistics indicated.

Export via Myawady was worth $9.832 million and imports were valued at $25.572 million between 1 and 21 August 2023.

On 7 August, torrential rain destroyed some road sections on Myawady-Kawkareik road, which is a major trade channel between Myanmar and Thailand and repair works are underway. Myawady-Kawkareik Asian Highway reopened to a single lane on 15 August, allowing the six-wheel trucks to drive in the lane so far, according to the Construction Ministry.

SEE PAGE-4

CURRENT AFFAIRS PAGE-6



Customs Department seizes smuggled goods worth over K900 million in July

LOCAL BUSINESS PAGE-7

Edible oil supervisory committee raises YGN palm oil wholesale reference price

High-grade Pawsan rice prices head for market pullback in Yangon market



Yangon residents queue up for affordable rice amidst fair pricing.

THE domestic rice market witnessed a soft landing after the prices swept higher in the past weeks. The prices of high-grade Pawsan rice were down by K10,000-23,000 per sack, according to the Myanmar Rice Traders Association (Wahdan rice depot).

The prevailing prices fell to K125,000 per sack of Shwebo Pawsan, K100,000 for Kyapyan variety, and K100,000 for old and new Pawsan rice from Pyapon, Dedaye, Myaungmya and Pathein areas.

On 24 August, the prices hit fresh peaks of K145,000 for Shwebo Pawsan, K123,000 for Kyapyan and K110,000-122,000 for old and new Pawsan from various regions.

SEE PAGE-7

NATIONAL



Devotees throng to the Maravijaya Buddha Image in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

Pilgrims flock to Maravijaya Buddha Image in Nay Pyi Taw

THE Maravijaya Buddha Image which is located at the Buddha Park in Dekkhinathiri Township, Nay Pyi Taw, is crowded with people from all over the country.

The Pagoda is the tallest sitting marble Buddha statue in the world.

Those who visited the pagoda peacefully studied the religious buildings, bridges, and gardens, as well as meditation practising, offering prayers according to the association, and giving donations with the zeal of charity and devotion.

The health workers are providing the necessary health care services to the elderly people who come to pay homage to the Buddha image.

The Myanmar Red Cross and the fire brigades members are also assisting the elderly people who have difficulty walking by transporting them with wheelchairs so that they can pay obeisance comfortably.

The marble statue will be open from 6 am to 8 pm until 3 September for people to come and pay their respects for free. — MNA/KZL

Patients get free cleft lip and palate surgeries

MYANMAR oral and dental specialists of the Medical Services Department of the Ministry of Health and Japanese specialist Dr Naoko Kishi of Japan Heart conducted joint operations for free surgery for nine patients with cleft lips and palates and lecture sessions for dentists from 22 to 24 August in Nay Pyi Taw.

The General Hospitals of the Ministry of Health provided free surgeries for patients with cleft lips and cleft palates in 2023. The free surgeries were offered to 22 patients at Nay Pyi Taw General Hospital (1,000-bed), 72 patients at Nay Pyi Taw Dental Specialist Hospital, 63 patients with cleft lips and 38 patients with cleft palates at Yangon General Hospital between February and August, nine patients with cleft lips and four patients with cleft palate at Mandalay General Hospital between January and August, and 82 patients with cleft lips and palate at Mawlamyine General Hospital between January and August.

Moreover, the surgeons will continue free surgical care at Shwebo Township Hospital and Myeik General Hospital soon. Therefore, patients with cleft lips and palates across the nation can get free treatment at the outpatient departments of these general hospitals in addition to Yangon, Nay Pyi Taw and Mandalay General Hospitals. — MNA/KTZH



Oral and dental specialists performing the cleft lip surgery.

Ceremony marks inaugural collaboration between Mandalay Tech & KUST



The inaugural collaboration ceremony in progress yesterday in Nay Pyi Taw.

A ceremony to introduce cooperation prospects and opportunities between Mandalay University of Technology (MTU) and Kunming University of Science and Technology (KUST) in Kunming, Yunnan Province, People's Republic of China, was held at the Mingala Thiri Hotel in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning. The initiative is to be implemented with the Mekong-Lancang Cooperation Special Fund (2020).

Union Minister of Science and Technology Dr Myo Thein Kyaw gave an opening speech, and the Vice-Chairman of the Mekong-Lancang Cooperation (Myanmar) and the Director of the Embassy of the People's Republic of China to Myanmar extended their greetings.

The aim of collaboration is to focus on the development of human resources, enhance lifelong learning, prioritize collaboration in research and manufacturing within the Mekong community and the close cooperation between Mandalay University of Technology (MTU) and Kunming University of Science and Technology (KUST) in the field of science and technology. Additionally, the partnership aims to establish communication networks among students and provide cross-cultural learning experiences between the two countries, stimulate the students' interest in global developments. — MNA/KZW

COVID-19 report, 28 August 2023

NEW TESTS	NEW CASES	CASUALTIES
4,438	6	0

NATIONAL

SAC member attends Kayin traditional wrist-tying ceremony in Myaungmya

THE Kayin traditional wrist-tying ceremony was held in Myaungmya of Ayeyawady region yesterday morning.

The ceremony was opened by Mahn Nyein Maung, a member of the State Administration Council, by beating the frog drum nine times and delivering a greeting speech.

The regional chief minister, the leader of the advisory group of the SAC and the commander of the South-West Command gave greeting speeches.

Regional Ethnic Affairs Minister U Saw Lin Khel explained the purpose of the ceremony. Mahn Thein Kyaw, Chairman of the Kayin Ethnic Literature and Culture Association of Ayeyawady Region, gave a word of thanks.



The Kayin traditional wrist-tying event in progress in Myaungmya, addressed by SAC Member Mahn Nyein Maung.

Then, young Kayin youths carried white cotton items and placed them in front of Mahn Nyein Maung and other officials. They offered the white cotton items to them.

During the wrist-tying ceremony, they performed traditional Kayin ethnic dances, and they sang the Kayin national song and the ceremony came to a close. — MNA/KZW

Initiative for narrowing down development gap should be continued as a priority in building ASEAN Community



The tenth HLTF-ACV held in Jakarta on 26-27 August and attended by MIFER Deputy Minister Dr Wah Wah Maung-led Myanmar delegation.

MYANMAR delegation led by Dr Wah Wah Maung, an Eminent Person (EP) of Myanmar and Deputy Minister for Investment and Foreign Economic Relations attended the 10th Meeting of the High-Level Task Force on ASEAN Community's Post-2025 Vision (HLTF-ACV), which was held in ASEAN Secretariat, Jakarta, Indonesia, on 26-27 August 2023.

Deputy Director-General U Zaw Zaw Soe from the Department of ASEAN Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs also joined the meeting. The meeting was co-chaired by Mr Dian Triansyah Djani, an Eminent Person (EP) of Indonesia and Special Advisor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs on Priority Programmes, as the ASEAN Chair and Mr Dato' Zainuddin Yahya, an Eminent Person (EP) of Malaysia and Former Malaysian Ambassador, as the permanent shepherd Member State and it was attended by around 70 representatives of Eminent Persons, High-Level Representatives and officials from ASEAN Member States and Timor-Leste as an observer, as well as Deputy Secretary-General and officials from the ASEAN Secretariat.

The meeting adopted the summary of decisions and summary report of the 9th HLTF-ACV Meeting in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia and exchanged views on the inputs received from the High-Level Task Force on ASEAN Economic Integration (HLTF-EI), Senior Officials Committee on the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (SOCA) and the ASEAN Connectivity Coordinating Committee (ACCC) on Economic, and Socio-Cultural and Connectivity sections.

The meeting finalized the draft vision statement of the ASEAN Community's Post-2025 Vision and agreed to propose the nomenclature of this Vision as "ASEAN Community Vision 2045". The deputy minister expressed appreciation to the Co-chairs and ASEAN Secretariat for compiling the inputs from ASEAN Member States to the revised draft ASEAN Vision 2045 and highlighted that it is necessary for ASEAN to address narrowing down the development gap not only among the ASEAN Member States but also among ASEAN and the rest of the world. In this connection, the initiative for narrowing down the development gap should be continued as a priority in building the ASEAN Community. The deputy minister also stressed that ASEAN Member States should maintain to achieve strong and mutually beneficial economic relations with external partners based on ASEAN Centrality. The meeting agreed on the draft of ASEAN Community Vision 2045 "Resilient, Innovative, Dynamic and People-Centred ASEAN" to be submitted to the 34th ASEAN Coordinating Council Meeting for its endorsement and subsequently submitted to the 43rd ASEAN Summit in September 2023 for notation. — MIFER

NATIONAL

MoE UM meets CAC Secretary-General

MYANMAR delegation led by Union Minister Dr Nyunt Pe, currently in the People's Republic of China to attend the 2023 China-ASEAN Education Cooperation Week ceremony, met Secretary-General Mr Shi Zhongjun of the China-ASEAN Centre and party yesterday.

Both sides talked about the implementation of discussed matters from the Myanmar visit in July by the secretary-general of the China-ASEAN Centre and continued cooperation between the CAC and the Ministry of Education.

At the meeting between Communist Party Secretary and Guizhou Province Governor Mr Li Bingjun and Ministers of Education from ASEAN countries, ambassadors, senior officials from the Ministry of Education, consuls-general of ASEAN countries, Myanmar's Minister Dr Nyunt Pe introduced the educational cooperation between Myanmar and the People's Republic of China.



The meeting between the Communist Party Secretary and Guizhou Province Governor and ASEAN Education Ministers and dignitaries among others in progress yesterday.

The Myanmar delegation also joined the dinner to mark the China-ASEAN Education Cooperation Week. — MNA/TS

MPE to export 200,000+ anti-snake venom units annually to ASEAN

MYANMAR Pharmaceuticals Enterprise (MPE) of the Ministry of Industry will expand its anti-snake venom production to over 200,000 units per year and export to ASEAN regions, according to Dr Aung Khine, Managing Director of the MPE.

The Pharmaceutical Factory (Insein) of MPE produces Bivalent anti-snake venom that can treat both types of venom from vipers and cobras and exports to ASEAN countries.

" The Pharmaceutical Factory (Insein) produces about 120,000 units yearly. It can make double production as one new Freeze-Dryer Machine for anti-snake venom was installed at the factory on 14 August. Myanmar is an agricultural country and the demand for anti-snake venom is high for rural people. Therefore, we will expand the production as per the demand and export to ASEAN countries where we have a solid market," he said.



An anti-snake venom.

The factory currently produces the anti-snake venom in freeze-dried form that can be stored for five years in rural areas that have no access to electricity.

The factory also purchases the things required for producing anti-venom like horse serum and snakes and about 500 horses are raised.

The monument of BPI was erected by the former Prime Minister U Nu on 23 April 1954. U Win Maung , the then president, formally opened it in the name of Burma Pharmaceutical Industry-BPI. BPI started manufacturing 41 categories of medicine and six kinds of vaccines. — ASH/KTZH

Myawady border trade volume crosses US$35 mln in past 3 weeks

FROM PAGE-1

Export and import licence fees and related service fees are waived while road repair on the Myawady-Kawkareik road section is being undertaken, according to the export/import news bulletin (14/2023) released by the Trade Department on 18 August.

Additionally, in order to ensure smooth trade, the exporters are entitled to move to some Myanmar-Thailand border posts after receiving the export licence for the goods. If they want to change the mode of transportation to maritime transport, the authority will give the green light to it as well, as per the Trade Department's notification released on 9 August.

Myanmar exported broken rice, black gram, green gram, peanut, white sesame, turmeric, dried and fresh konjac, onion, rubber, chilli pepper, fish, shrimp, crab, squid, eel and other fishery products, minerals and finished textile clothes to Thailand via Myawady border post, whereas capital goods, intermediate goods and consumer goods were imported.

Myanmar's border trade with the neighbouring country Thailand amounted to $2.29 billion as of 18 August in the current financial year 2023-2024 beginning 1 April.

Myanmar conducts cross-border trade with Thailand via the Tachilek, Myawady, Kawthoung, Myeik, Htikhee and Mawtaung border. Of them, the Htikhee border performed the largest trade worth $1.487 billion over the past four and half months. Exports outperformed imports at Kawthoung, Htikhee and Mawtaung border points.

The trade values stood at $649 million at Myawady border post, $68.5 million at Tachhilek, $43.39 million at Myeik, $42.36 million at Kawthoung and $4.822 million at Mawtaung.

Myanmar also delivered fish powder and minced fish worth $0.232 million by seeking a Certificate of Origin (Form D) benefit to Thailand through Mawtaung with road transport on 21 and 22 August. — TWA/KK

The Global NEW LIGHT of MYANMAR
www.gnlm.com.mm
THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT of MYANMAR

CIRCULATION & DISTRIBUTION
(+95) (01) 8604532,
Hotline - 09 454237515
ADVERTISING & MARKETING
(+95) (01) 8604530,
Hotline - 09 251022355
marketing@gnlm.com.mm
subscription@gnlm.com.mm

Printed and published at the **Global New Light of Myanmar Printing Factory** at No.150, Nga Htat Kyee Pagoda Road, Bahan Township, Yangon, by the **Global New Light of Myanmar Daily** under Printing Permit No. 00510 and Publishing Permit No. 00629.
gnlmnews@gmail.com,
newsroom@gnlm.com.mm
www.gnlm.com.mm

Write for us

We appreciate your feedback and contributions. If you have any comments or would like to submit editorials, analyses or reports please email **aungthuya@gnlm.com.mm** with your name and title.

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

NATIONAL



Efficient collection of biometric data using state-of-the-art machines.

UID essential for people

By Aye Aye Moe Hlaing , Photo-Yin Oo (Dala)

Translated / KTZH

IT is usual that whenever the era changes, the systems also change. I think the better change depends on the government and people of that era. The State Administration Council tries hard to transform into a digital system in accordance with international standards. In implementing an e-government system, the e-ID system is essential and also a key foundation for the development of the country.

e-ID system

e-ID system collects the biographic data and the biometric data of citizens aged 10 years and above residing in the country, associate citizens, naturalized citizens, permanent residence (PR) and permanent taxpayer foreigners and puts them in the database and then sets each unique ID number (Unique Identity) including 10 digits.

In other words, it is an ID card with 10 digits and it will save the Biometric data like ten fingerprints, facial features and iris patterns and personal information like name, father's name, CSC card number, date of birth, blood type, phone number and address in the computer.

UID (Unique Identity)

The computer will generate 10 digits for every single person. The UID digit grant will not be concerned with the citizens/non-citizens but it will be granted to all residents living in the country including citizens aged 10 years and above residing in the country, associate citizens, naturalized citizens, permanent residents (PRs) and permanent taxpayers foreigners.

The experts of the Ministry of Immigration and Population, Tatmadaw, other ministries concerned and the Myanmar Computer Federation work together to transfer the data of citizens from paper to digital system. Moreover, over 52 million data in Naing-4 records and over 13 million household registration Form 66/6 have been put into the database with the help of region/state Chief Ministers, said Chairman of the e-ID System Work Committee Union Minister for Immigration and Population U Myint Kyaing.

Currently, the biometric data are being collected as per the prioritized groups and it already collected data of over seven million people until 10 August 2023. Among the UID number holders, the citizens and the eligible persons who are qualified to be citizens will be granted further National ID (NID) Smart Cards.

Objective of e-ID system

The Ministry of Immigration and Population issues UID (Unique Identity) under the e-ID system to the people aiming for the facilitation of socioeconomic enterprises, the establishment of a fundamental system to identify individuals while the government and private organizations operate online services for Unique ID that is the only way to scrutinize the people residing in Myanmar.

The Ministry of Immigration and Population grants UID (Unique Identity) under the e-ID system to ensure the interests of the country and promote the socio-economic status of its citizens.

Having the UID, the people can be examined that they are the residents of Myanmar, and being system access to e-government applications, they can easily apply for servicing businesses like education, health, SIM registration, banking and financial services, passport, driving licence and local worker identification card. Therefore, UID is essential for the public.







(L to R) Ten-digit UID issuing process in progress in Bago Region, Yangon Region and Ayeyawady Region.

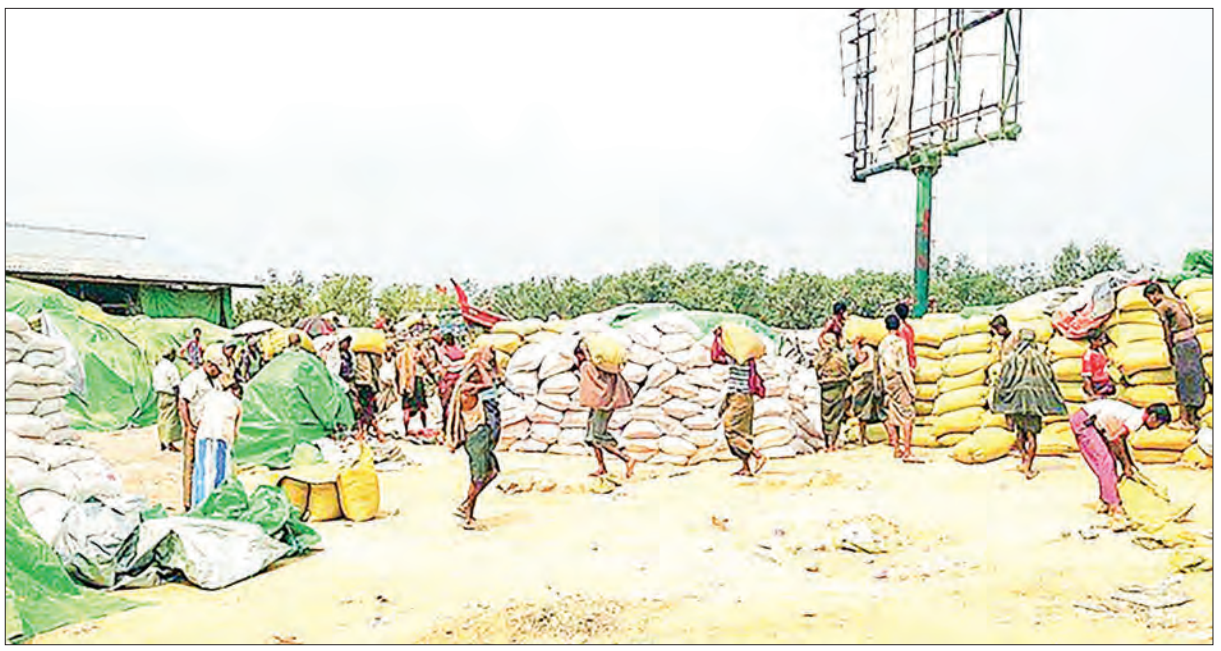
The people are urged to receive vaccination of Covid-19 without fail as full-time vaccination of Covid-19 and receiving booster shots can effectively mitigate infection of the virus, severe suffering from the disease and increase of death rate due to the disease.

Daily newspapers available online

FOR those who would like to read the Myanma Alinn, the Kyemon and the Global New Light of Myanmar, published daily by the Ministry of Information, please visit www.moi.gov.mm/mal, www.moi.gov.mm/km, www.moi.gov.mm/nlm and www.gnlm.com.mm/e-paper.

News and Periodicals Enterprise

CURRENT AFFAIRS



The photo shows cargo loading and unloading at the Maungtaw border.

Myanmar exports surpass imports in cross-border trade with Bangladesh

MYANMAR'S exports outperformed imports in the cross-border trade with Bangladesh, with exports worth US$5.4 million and imports worth $0.936 million as of 18 August in the 2023-2024 financial year beginning 1 April, the Ministry of Commerce's statistics showed.

Myanmar's fishery exports accounted for 65 per cent and exports of dried groceries constituted 35 per cent at two border posts with Bangladesh: Sittway and Maungtaw border posts. The fishery products include farmed rohu, hilsa, mackerel, dried anchovy and dried fish meal. Tamarind, onion, ginger, dried jujube powder, jaggery, longyi and clothes are also exported.

Myanmar sent tamarind, palm paste and fresh ginger valued at $0.0582 million to Bangladesh via the Sittway border between 19 and 22 August, while no import was seen at the border.

On 21-22 August, Myanmar carried out a border trade worth $0.168 million with Bangladesh via the Maungtaw checkpoint. Various fisheries including live mud crab, live mussels, frozen crab, salted fish, live prawn, banana, onion and fresh chilli pepper were the main export items, whereas fruit, canned fish and ceramic tiles were imported.

The capacity of Yangon-Sittway Road can only accommodate 12-wheel trucks in the rainy season. There are about 70 nautical miles between Myanmar and Bangladesh. Yet, maritime trade is conducted depending on the weather forecast in the monsoon season. — TWA/KK

Fire breaks out in ambulance transporting patient

A fire broke out in an ambulance of the Social Assistance Association while it was transporting a patient from the hospital Pyapon on 28 August.

The Ayechan Phyusin Myittashin social assistance association went to help transport a patient who had been discharged from Asia Royal Hospital to Pyapon Township at around 5 am yesterday.

The ambulance stopped at the Denko filling station in Hlinethaya (East) Township to refuel after picking up the patient. The fire started when the patient's depleted oxygen tank was being replaced outside the station, resulting in one member of the association being injured. Fortunately, the patient remained unharmed. The car was completely burned down, and the injured member was transported to Sanpya Hospital, as stated by the person in charge of the Ayechan Phyusin Myittashin social assistance association.



A burned ambulance.

Two fire engines from Hlinethaya Township extinguished the fire, and the Ayechan Phyusin Myittashin social assistance association has alerted other social organizations to handle and use oxygen tanks properly to prevent such accidents. — TWA/CT

Customs Department seizes smuggled goods worth over K900 million in July

THE Customs Department confiscated illegal items worth over K900 million in July. Smuggled goods were impounded from the Yangon International Airport, the Yangon Port, the special customs post, the Yangon General Post Office, and various customs areas.

According to the statistics of the Customs Department, the total value of seized goods in July was K9,330.126 million. The seized goods are in 431 cases of import and export without any official documents for import and export.

In June, the Customs Department made 253 arrests and seized illegal goods worth K5,927.14 million at the Yangon International Airport, the Yangon port, the special customs posts, the Yangon General Post Office, and various customs areas. — TWA/CT



Smuggled goods seized from Yepu permanent checkpoint in Shan State (North) were being prepared for incineration.

Regulations issued for monitoring EVs in Nay Pyi Taw municipal area

A gazette was issued for overseeing electric vehicles operating within Nay Pyi Taw municipal area under the disciplines.

The Nay Pyi Taw Development Committee has set routes for running of electric vehicles in the municipal area based on their priority levels. Bus stands and terminals have been set along these routes.

Depending on number of EVs in 2022, estimated percentage of these vehicles have been limited between 2023 and 2050 with wheel tax exemption. The committee can amend the wheel tax. Moreover, the committee warned that anyone shall not be allowed to set the routes of EVs and change them and these vehicles shall not be allowed to stop in any places except the set areas.

Action will be taken against those who offend against any disciplines under the Nay Pyi Taw Development Law and other existing laws. Moreover, it is necessary to follow the rules and regulations, procedures, disciplines, notifications, orders and directives issued by the committee. — TWA/KZW

LOCAL BUSINESS

High-grade Pawsan rice prices head for market pullback in Yangon market

FROM PAGE-1

The figures showed a price decrease of K10,000-23,000 per sack depending on Pawsan rice varieties.

Furthermore, other rice varieties were also down by K1,000-6,000 per sack. The prices declined to K72,000 for short-mature rice (90 days), K95,000 for Pawkywe, K98,000 for Kunni, K70,000 for Ngasein, K69,000 for rice grown under the intercropping system, K68,000-69,000 for Aemahta rice, as per the Wahdan rice depot's statistics.

The forex market and commodities market braced for turmoil in the weeks following the news of the issuance of a K20,000 new note by the Central Bank of Myanmar on 23 July, resulting in a remarkable rise in rice prices.

To steer the volatile market, the Myanmar Rice Federation started selling off reserved rice in some regions and states.



Myanmar Rice Federation (MRF) facilitates fair-priced rice sales as consumers eagerly purchase.

Additionally, the MRF distributed 250,000 sacks of rice to four regions and states beyond the Yangon Region to sell them at fairer prices to the consumers to control the high volatility in the domestic market, including 200,000 sacks to Rakhine State, 2,000 to Mon State, 1,000 to Magway Region and 2,000 to Kayin State, according to its notification released on 25 August.

Aemahta rice of export quality (well-milled, polished and sorted) started to sell off at K2,500 per pyi. The mobile market scheme for Aemahta rice variety covers 17 townships with 42 shops starting from 25 August.

In addition to the rice depots, the MRF is selling off rice to the staff from government departments, factories and companies according to the relevant reports. The federation is also running a mobile market in the quarters in the townships, with the fairer price of K2,500 per pyi of Aemahta rice.

The rice prices are set at K110,000-120,000 per sack of Pawsan from the Shwebo area, K94,000-97,000 for Pawsan from Ayeyawady, K65,000 for Aemahta (10 per cent broken) and K60,000 for Aemahta (25 per cent broken) respectively.

MRF, affiliated associations, rice exporting companies, rice mills and traders will exert concerted efforts to stabilize the prices in August and September and offer the fairer prices to the consumers of low income, MRF stated. — NN/EM

Edible oil supervisory committee raises YGN palm oil wholesale reference price

THE wholesale reference rate of palm oil for the Yangon market was set higher this week from 28 August to 3 September, according to the Supervisory Committee on edible oil import and distribution.

The reference price increased to K4,155 per viss this week ending 3 September from K4,065 per viss registered last week (21 to 27 August), showing a one-week increase of K90 per viss.

The Supervisory Committee on Edible Oil Import and Distribution under the Ministry of Commerce has been closely observing the FOB prices in Malaysia and Indonesia including transport costs, tariffs and banking services, and issuing the wholesale market reference rate for edible oil every week.

A coordination meeting on security of palm oil and price stability was held on 25 August at the meeting hall of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry, with the presence of UMFCCI president, Myanmar Edible Oil Dealers Association's chair, oil importing companies, distributors and officials concerned.

The Ministry of Commerce is also trying to secure edible oil sufficiency, supervise the market to offer a reasonable price to the consumers, maintain price stability and lessen the consumers' concern over the possible shortage of palm oil.

At present, mobile market trucks operated by oil importing companies, in coordination with the Myanmar Edible Oil Dealers' Association, were back to business in some townships on 17 July 2022 to offer palm oil at a subsidized rate. They offer palm oil at a fairer price to the consumers directly depending on the reference price. However, there are limited sources of supply although they directly sell the palm oil at reference rate depending on the volume quota. The domestic consumption of edible oil is estimated at 1 million tonnes per year. The local cooking oil production is just about 400,000 tonnes. To meet the oil sufficiency in the domestic market, about 700,000 tonnes of cooking oil are yearly imported through Malaysia and Indonesia. — NN/EM

Thai customs duty-free import of corn expires on Aug-end

U Phyo Ko Ko Naing, Secretary General of the Myanmar Maize Entrepreneurs Association, said that, after 31 August 2023, there will be no more duty-free export of maize to Thailand.

U Phyo Ko Ko Naing stated on his Facebook page that the Ministry of Commerce and Thai traders requested a one-month extension of the duty-free import permit for Myanmar millet due to the Myawady Road landslide, but the food processing factories in Thailand reported that their corn stock is sufficient and that there is no need for corn as Thailand is reaching the corn season.

Therefore, as in previous years, on 31 August 2023, Thailand's duty-free import of corn will expire.

"Thailand is the only country that buys Myanmar's corn more than the world market. Therefore, if you can send it to Thailand, the price of corn can go up. If you can't send it, the price of corn can go down," said U Phyo Ko Ko Naing.

Thailand doesn't buy corn for a whole year, but they buy it for seven months from 1 February to 31 August every year, which is a duty-free period.

Because of this, the month of August is nearing the end, and as the remaining days to export duty-free to Thailand are decreasing, corn prices are falling. There are about 200,000 tonnes of remaining domestic corn, and new rain-fed corn will be released starting from September. — LLO

OPINION

Embrace harmony and unity in a society

MYANMAR stands as a diverse tapestry, woven with over 130 distinct ethnicities, each boasting its own literature, culture, and heritage. These facets stand as vivid reflections of their identity, a mirror that never distorts the image of another. United by common origin, the various cultures thrive in brotherhood, fostering mutual respect, understanding, and trust — a testament to their familial bonds. This unity should quell any impulse to disrupt or harm one another's beliefs and traditions.

The fabric of Myanmar's cultural landscape is composed of threads like the Kachin, Kayah, Kayin, Chin, Bamar, Mon, Rakhine, and Shan peoples. These threads, while distinct, must never entangle in conflict. Instead, they must guard their own cultural tapestries while embracing others with compassion. Centuries of preservation lie behind these tangible and intangible treasures, steeped in the blood and sweat of generations. The duty to protect these cultural legacies is paramount, transcending biases and parochialism. Recognizing the worth of ancient artefacts is key; their destruction equates to an assault on the essence of traditions, customs, and the honour of the related communities.

> The path ahead, paved with mutual respect, trust, and understanding, propels Myanmar's diverse population towards serenity and stability. Within this confluence of more than 130 ethnicities, the nation's potential for prosperity shines brilliantly. Like branches from a common tree, these ethnicities must unite as a family, propelling each other towards a harmonious modern society, and leaving behind the shackles of enmity.

Even inaction, refraining from tampering with these legacies, constitutes a form of protection. It's a commitment that binds the ethnic groups, preserving their heritage despite differences. Regardless of moments marred by unintentional errors, mutual respect, trust, and compassion should erase those blunders. The real strength lies in acknowledging past missteps and ensuring they are not repeated, cultivating an environment of enlightenment.

The path ahead, paved with mutual respect, trust, and understanding, propels Myanmar's diverse population towards serenity and stability. Within this confluence of more than 130 ethnicities, the nation's potential for prosperity shines brilliantly. Like branches from a common tree, these ethnicities must unite as a family, propelling each other towards a harmonious modern society, and leaving behind the shackles of enmity.

The narrative of Myanmar is not one of division, but of unity, a story where differences intertwine harmoniously. Each ethnic group bears the responsibility of nurturing this unity, fostering an environment where resentment and hostility are forgotten. In its place, a collective vision emerges, fueling progress and development, and transcending the challenges that once seemed insurmountable.

In the grand tapestry of Myanmar, threads of diversity are tightly woven, forming a resilient and vibrant whole. The legacy of a prosperous nation awaits, illuminated by the spirit of unity and compassion. This is the narrative that Myanmar's more than 130 ethnicities must craft together — an epic of shared respect, coexistence, and mutual support as they march towards a brighter future.

ARTICLE
Weather Report

Time to Eliminate Bad Online Shopping Practices

By U AC

POST February 2021 e-commerce scene was dominated by pygmy shops of all kinds, most of them selling shading goods or selling snake oils at exorbitant prices. The giants of the recent past, such as shop.com or rgo47 have been forced to hibernate through no fault of their own, but because of the felonious actions of NNCP terrorists, ever trolling online, to slander businesses and government officials. Yet the most ignominious persons of this insurrection are the terrorists who committed treachery against their own country and fellow countrymen.

Without the leaders to set the standards, the online marketplace is now mostly acting like a headless chicken, with most sellers on Facebook making dubious claims about their dodgy products. A thorough examination of the online shops revealed that most of the shops are committing multiple of the following unethical practices to exploit and defraud potential customers.

No stating of price

Most of the Facebook ads will not show the prices, asking people to head to the chat box. This could only be one thing; there is no price transparency. Besides wasting consumers' time having to write a comment 'price please', the objective was for the seller to rip the uninformed buyer off, through overpricing. Without competent market knowledge, the buyer is at a disadvantage if he is to negotiate 121 through Chat Box with the seller.

Remedy: Try to avoid shops or sellers that do not display the price of goods and ask you to come to the Chat Box. Display a bit of personal social responsibility by encouraging the seller to display the price (through the comment). Please note that asking the potential buyers to go to the seller's website or telegram page, to promote its own platforms, is perfectly ethical and legal.

Not clarifying genuine or a replica

Especially in relation to branded sportswear and gear, such as shoes, golf clubs, etc., Myanmar consumers are sold mainly replicas. With limited disposable income, all citizens of developing countries have to choose between affordability and a daily meal. Yet a lot of sellers sell these replica products without stating of this critical fact, at a price close to a used genuine item. This is purely cheating, hence the bromide for all buyers: Buyers Beware!

Remedy: Before you purchase a branded product, specifically ask if the item being put on offer is genuine or replica. If you do not get a response, do not risk your money.

Faking up circumstances for sale.

Replicating the strategies from the NNCP terrorist group seeking donations through crocodile tears, online sellers are also stating the sob stories, such as closing down businesses, having to leave Myanmar, loss of jobs, etc. Who would not want to hear a good story? How can the perennial contender of the world's top three most generous nations and its mainly Buddhist citizens ignore the chance to do some Dharna for the better of one's next life, by helping those in despair?



Most of the Facebook ads will not show the prices, asking people to head to the chat box. This could only be one thing; there is no price transparency. **PHOTO: ILLUSTRATION: PIXABAY**

Remedy: Ignore the emotional appeals and hardship tales. See-through all these unverifiable statements and focus on the pricing only.

Creating fake sales.

This happens in live sales. Human beings have the tendency to follow the crowd and subliminal etching on the mind that if everyone is doing, then it must be true or good. Fraudsters take advantage of that by asking associates or relatives to bid or buy during a live sales event, with the objective of dragging along unsuspecting buyers to buy overpriced goods.

Remedy: Avoid buying at live sales. There will be products left in inventory. Do not believe the words, limited stocks, pre-orders and ignore the crowd.

False claims/unsuitable items

From products claiming to enhance your manhood to those that claim to be a cure for all, Facebook online shops are filled with items with unverifiable and dubious acclaims. Some of the products being sold are also totally unsuitable for the environment in question e.g., cherry plants being sold, as if they would survive monsoon and extra hot weather down south.

Remedy: Avoid buying medicinal and health-related products online. There would not be any recourse should something go awry. If you are buying living things, such as plants, seeds or animals, do yourself a favour and research via Google or ChatGPT, to figure out the suitability in your environment.

Overpricing

This has been the most common issue since the advent of online shopping; attracting customers with double-digit discounts, via raising the pre-offer price. Even if this huge discounting approach is not used, the pricing may significantly vary among online shops, especially for novelty or popular products. One shop may be selling the same product at twice the price.

Remedy: Do your homework and search for the correct pricing via Google or AI, before you commit to a purchase.

What is the government doing?

Recently there was an announcement from MoC, designating online shops/sales under the category of special goods, requiring a separate registration of online shops operating within the country. This comes after years of working out on e-commerce guidelines, regulations, etc., and after thousands of consumer complaints relating to online shops to the Consumer Affairs Department under the Ministry.

The registration cost is likely to be between 50,000 - 100,000 Kyats. Those shops that do not register may face legal action and registered shops also fall under the jurisdiction and supervision of the Consumer Affairs Department. These steps are a move in the right direction to reduce the above fraudulent activities. The gap still exists for those selling personal properties or second-hand goods through one-off posts.

Childhood inactivity is associated with cardiac disease in young adults: Study



This was the first study to look into the connection between young people's sedentary time as measured by smartwatches and later-life heart disease. **PHOTO: ANI**

ACCORDING to a study presented at ESC Congress 2023, hours of inactivity during childhood could be laying the groundwork for heart attacks and strokes later in life. Even in people with normal weights and blood pressure, the study found that sedentary time accumulated from childhood to young adulthood was linked to cardiac damage.

"All those hours of screen time in young people add up to a heavier heart, which we know from studies in adults raises the likelihood of heart attack and stroke," said study author Dr Andrew Agbaje of the University of Eastern Finland, Kuopio, Finland. "Children and teenagers need to move more to protect their long-term health."

This was the first study to look into the connection between young people's sedentary time as measured by smartwatches and later-life heart disease.

It was carried out as a part of the Children of the 1990s project, one of the largest cohorts with lifestyle assessments starting at birth and beginning in 1990/1991.3 Children aged 11 used an activity tracker-equipped smartwatch for seven days. This happened once again at age 15 and once more at age 24.

At 17 and 24 years of age, the weight of the left ventricle of the heart was measured by echocardiogram, a form of ultrasound examination, and expressed as grammes per cubic metre of height (g/m2.7).

After adjusting for variables that could affect the relationship, such as age, sex, blood pressure, body fat, smoking, physical activity, and socioeconomic status, the researchers examined the relationship between sedentary time between the ages of 11 and 24 and heart measurements between the ages of 17 and 24.

From 11 to 24 years of age, every additional minute spent sitting was linked to a 0.004 g/m2.7 rise in left ventricular mass between 17 and 24 years of age. This translates to a daily rise of 0.7 g/m2.7 or a 3-gramme increase in left ventricular mass between echocardiogram measurements at the average height gain when multiplied by the additional 169 minutes of inactivity.

A similar rise in left ventricular mass (1 g/m2.7) during a seven-year period was linked to a two-fold greater risk of heart disease, stroke, and mortality in adults, according to a prior study.

Dr. Agbaje said, "Children were sedentary for more than six hours a day and this increased by nearly three hours a day by the time they reached young adulthood. Our study indicates that the accumulation of inactive time is related to heart damage regardless of body weight and blood pressure. Parents should encourage children and teenagers to move more by taking them out for a walk and limiting time spent on social media and video games. As Martin Luther King Jr. once said, 'If you can't fly, run. If you can't run, walk. If you can't walk, crawl. But by all means, keep moving.'"

SOURCE: ANI

Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 7:00 pm Monday 28 August 2023)

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

SPECIAL FEACTURES: According to the observations at (17:30) hrs MST today, the Typhoon "Saola" over the Philippines Sea is likely forecast to move North- Northwestwards.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL NOON OF THE 29 August 2023: Rain or thundershowers will be scattered in Lower Sagaing, Mandalay and Magway regions and Kayah State, fairly widespread in Nay Pyi Taw, Shan and Chin states and widespread in the remaining regions and states with likelihood of isolated heavyfalls in Upper Sagaing Region and Kachin and Mon states. Degree of certainty is (100%).

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

SCI/TECH
WORLD

The fight over a 'dangerous' ideology shaping AI debate

SILICON Valley's favourite philosophy, longtermism, has helped to frame the debate on artificial intelligence around the idea of human extinction.

But increasingly vocal critics are warning that the philosophy is dangerous, and the obsession with extinction distracts from real problems associated with AI like data theft and biased algorithms.

Author Emile Torres, a former longtermist turned critic of the movement, told AFP that the philosophy rested on the kind of principles used in the past to justify mass murder and genocide.



A child visits the World Artificial Intelligence Conference (WAIC) in Shanghai on 6 July 2023. **PHOTO: AFP**

Yet the movement and linked ideologies like transhumanism and effective altruism hold huge sway in universities from Oxford to Stanford and throughout the tech sector.

Venture capitalists like Peter Thiel and Marc Andreessen have invested in life-extension companies and other pet projects linked to the movement.

Elon Musk and OpenAI's Sam Altman have signed open letters warning that AI could make humanity extinct — though they stand to benefit by arguing only their products can save us.

Ultimately critics say this fringe movement is holding far too much influence over public debates over the future of humanity.

'Really dangerous'

Longtermists believe we are dutybound to try to produce the best outcomes for the greatest number of humans.

This is no different to many 19th century liberals, but longtermists have a much longer timeline in mind.

They look to the far future and see trillions upon trillions of humans floating through space, colonising new worlds.

They argue that we owe the same duty to each of these future humans as we do to anyone alive today.

And because there are so many of them, they carry much more weight than today's specimens.

This kind of thinking makes the ideology "really dangerous", said Torres, author of "Human Extinction: A History of the Science and Ethics of Annihilation". — AFP

Japan's lunar lander-carrying H2A rocket launch delayed due to winds

MITSUBISHI Heavy Industries Ltd said Monday that the lift-off of a H2A rocket carrying the Japanese space agency's lunar lander was postponed due to strong winds over the launch point.

The domestically-produced rocket was to blast off Monday morning from Tanegashima Space Centre on Tanegashima Island in the southwestern prefecture of Kagoshima. A new date will be decided within the launch window that runs until 15 September, a Mitsubishi official said.



An H2A rocket carrying a lunar lander developed by the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency is seen at Tanegashima Space Centre in Kagoshima Prefecture, on 28 August 2023. **PHOTO: KYODO**

The decision to delay was made 30 minutes before the planned lift-off of 9:26 am, a call which the official described at a press conference as being "very painful" but necessary due to the need for careful judgment.

It was the third postponement due to inclement weather since its initial launch date on Saturday.

The rocket will carry the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency-developed SLIM lunar lander which will test technology for pinpoint landings on the Moon's surface.

SLIM is expected to enter the Moon's orbit some three to four months after being launched and to attempt to reach the lunar surface in four to six months.

If successful, Japan will be the fifth country after the former Soviet Union, the United States, China and India to land a craft on the Moon.

India became the fourth country to reach the lunar surface on Wednesday when it deposited its Chandrayaan-3 on the Moon's south pole, with the nation's success coming just days after a Russian lander failed to touch down safely. — Kyodo

SpaceX craft with 4 astronauts docks at Intl Space Station



This screengrab from NASA TV shows the crew of the SpaceX Crew-7 mission (front L-R) Roscosmos cosmonaut Konstantin Borisov, European Space Agency (ESA) astronaut Andreas Mogensen, NASA astronaut Jasmin Moghbeli, and Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) astronaut Satoshi Furukawa, joining members of Expedition 69 after docking at the International Space Station on 27 August 2023. **PHOTO: NASA TV / AFP**

A team of four astronauts from Japan, Denmark, Russia and the United States aboard a SpaceX craft successfully docked with the International Space Station on Sunday.

The Crew-7 mission comprising of NASA's Jasmin Moghbeli, Satoshi Furukawa of Japan, Andreas Mogensen of Denmark and Konstantin Borisov of Russia will stay on the ISS for about six months.

Furukawa will conduct experiments using new technology to reuse water for a potential future mission on the Moon. He is also expected to be the subject of a study looking into the effects of an extended stay in space on various organs.

It is the 59-year-old medical doctor's second time on the ISS.

The crew lifted off Saturday on the SpaceX Dragon space capsule, called Endurance, atop the Falcon 9 rocket from Kennedy Space Centre of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration in Florida. — Kyodo

Chinese film festival screens 8 Russian movies

EIGHT Russian movies are being presented at a film festival in Changchun, the capital of northeast China's Jilin Province.

The international film show, as part of the 18th Changchun Film Festival China 2023, consists of classic and contemporary sections, with four Russian films featured in each segment.

The film show starting on Sunday will last for eight days.

"The Cranes Are Flying" directed by Mikhail Kalatozov and "The Ballad of a Soldier" directed by Grigoriy Chukhray are among the movies screened in the classic segment, while "The Whaler Boy" and "The Age of Pioneers" are included in the contemporary segment, according to the organizing committee of the film festival. — Xinhua

Neolithic village discovered in France after 150 years of research

ARCHAEOLOGISTS working a vast Neolithic site in northeast France have uncovered what they say is the last piece of the puzzle — traces of a permanent settlement.

The settlement was unearthed at the vast Neolithic site of Marais de Saint-Gond, giving rare insights into its social organization 150 years after the first flints were discovered.

"This is the last piece of the jigsaw we were missing," said Remi Martineau, a researcher at France's national centre for scientific research (CNRS), who located the village with his team this summer.

In Marais de Saint-Gond in northeastern France, 15 large flint mines have already been identified on 450 hectares, as well as 135 hypogeum — constructed underground chambers.

Five megalithic covered alleys, ten polishers for axes and fields cultivated by controlled burns have also been located since flints were first discovered a century and a half ago.

This new discovery makes it possible to pass a milestone in the understanding of "the economic, societal and territorial organization of the Neolithic", Martineau said, adding that there is "no equivalent" in all of Europe.

The village was discovered when a ditch for the installation of a palisade was identified in the commune Val-des-Marais around 136 kilometres (84 miles) from Paris.

The prehistoric enclosure was circling a hill, enclosing an estimated area of one hectare (2.5 acres), according to the archaeological evaluations.

In the process, an apse building was cleared, near a large rubbish pit some 20 metres in diameter, along with wells.

"The site was completely structured", said Martineau.

"The foundations of our society are already there".



Remi Martineau, researcher at the CNRS, holds up a fragment of pottery dating from the Modern Neolithic, around 3,500-years-ago, from a settlement suggesting the presence of a village occupied by a structured population, at Val-des-Marais in the south of the Marne, on 23 August 2023. **PHOTO: AFP**

These successive discoveries are the result of a research programme started 20 years ago, led by the CNRS.

The last campaign, which brought together CNRS, the joint laboratory Artehis, the University of Bourgogne Franche-Comte and the culture ministry, involved 50 people including researchers from France and abroad, as well as 20 "excavators", mainly archaeology students.

They have also unearthed a tiny oval object made of mother-of-pearl — a true "museum piece", according to Martineau. — AFP

Citizens of N Korea allowed to re-enter with 1-week quarantine



People believed to have been transported by a car arranged by the North Korean Embassy in Beijing are seen heading to Beijing Capital International Airport on 22 August 2023. **PHOTO: KYODO**

NORTH Korea's citizens abroad will be allowed to re-enter the country with one week of quarantine, state media said Sunday, as Pyongyang eased its strict COVID-19 border controls in place since early 2020.

The State Emergency Epidemic Prevention Headquarters announced the measures Saturday based on its decision "to adjust the anti-epidemic degree in reference to the eased worldwide pandemic situation", the official Korean Central News Agency said.

North Korea recently resumed international passenger flights, with state-run carrier Air Koryo operating services linking Pyongyang and Beijing from Tuesday as well as the capital and Vladivostok in the Russian Far East from Friday.

Tens of thousands of North Korean labourers have remained in China and Russia due to the border closure. Sources familiar with the country's situation said, however, foreigners are still not allowed to enter North Korea.

Late last month, delegations from Russia and China attended a military parade and other events in Pyongyang to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the Korean War armistice, becoming the first known foreign groups to be invited to North Korea without undergoing quarantine since its border closure. — Kyodo

'Gran Turismo' barely outraces 'Barbie' in N America theatres

SONY'S sports action film "Gran Turismo" didn't exactly roar to the front of the North American box office, but did make it there on a slow late-August weekend, beating a still-turbo-powered "Barbie".

Based on a popular video game, "Gran Turismo" took in an estimated $17.3 million for the Friday-through-Sunday period, industry watcher Exhibitor Relations reported Sunday.

"This is a lukewarm opening for an action film based on a video game," particularly compared to previous game-based films like "Warcraft" ($439 million in worldwide ticket sales) and "Rampage" ($428 million), analyst David A. Gross said.

The movie stars David Harbour and Orlando Bloom in a story about a racing academy that recruits skilled video gamers to train them as real race-car drivers.

Warner Bros.' "Barbie," meantime, has remained a steady seat-filler, with its $17.1 million take in its sixth week out propelling it to a $594 million domestic total.

The Greta Gerwig film recently overtook "The Super Mario Bros. Movie" ($574 million) as the year's domestic box office champ. Add to that the $745 million "Barbie" has earned overseas.

Analysts said Sony's accounting of ticket sales for "Gran Turismo" was a bit wonky (including millions in presales) and predicted "Barbie" might, in the final tally, be the weekend's Number One — as she is Ken's. — AFP

ECONOMY
WORLD

Ethiopia's entry into BRICS mechanism to boost economic growth, political cooperation: experts

ETHIOPIA'S entry into the BRICS mechanism is expected to facilitate the country's economic growth, and help forge strong and lasting political cooperation with the BRICS family, Ethiopian experts have said.

BRICS leaders agreed on Thursday to invite six countries, namely Argentina, Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), to join the group. Their membership will take effect on 1 January 2024.

"Working with these countries advances our economic development by attracting foreign direct investment for industrialization and infrastructure projects," Balew Demissie, an associate professor at Addis Ababa University, told Xinhua in a recent interview.



People walk near the venue of the 15th BRICS Summit in Johannesburg, South Africa, 20 August 2023. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

Highlighting the potential advantages of Ethiopia's collaboration with BRICS, the professor said "the cooperation can improve connectivity within the country and with neighbouring nations, facilitate trade, promote regional integration, and create new economic opportunities".

Demissie further emphasized Ethiopia's aim to modernize its agricultural sector, increase productivity, and improve food production and distribution through the utilization of advanced agricultural technologies and know-how from BRICS countries.

He believes Ethiopia's entry into BRICS can also expand the group's influence and reach. "As an African country with a rapidly growing economy, Ethiopia can contribute to the collective strength of the platform and bring a fresh perspective to the African continent," Demissie noted.

Mukerrim Miftah, an assistant professor at the Ethiopian Civil Service University, agreed, saying that "Ethiopia serves as a political anchor in East Africa and Africa as a whole, helping the BRICS counter the dominance of the West on the African continent." — Xinhua

New Zealand govt tightens belt, clamps down on spending

THE New Zealand government is requiring public agencies to find permanent savings including through cutting back on contractors, in the face of a deteriorating global economy and tax revenue failing to meet Treasury's forecasts.

The government is also reducing future budget allowances, trimming back some programmes, and taking back underspends, Finance Minister Grant Robertson said at a press conference on Monday.

The savings and efficiency exercise will save taxpayers nearly four billion NZ dollars (2.36 billion US dollars) over the forecast period, Robertson said.

The government's published accounts for the 11 months to the end of May showed that tax revenue was more than two billion NZ dollars (1.18 billion US dollars) behind where Treasury had forecast it to be at the Budget, the minister said, adding government spending was in line with forecasts during this period. — Xinhua

Direct air service links China's Hangzhou with Spain's Madrid

A new direct air route has been launched between Hangzhou, capital of Zhejiang Province in east China, and Madrid, Spain.

The maiden flight of JD 361, operated by Beijing Capital Airlines, left Hangzhou Xiaoshan International Airport for Madrid on 27 August, carrying more than 240 passengers on an Airbus A330 aircraft. Two round trips are scheduled weekly via the new air service.

This is the fourth intercontinental passenger route launched this year by Xiaoshan airport, after Rome in Italy, Lisbon in Portugal, and Cairo in Egypt.

The new direct route to Madrid is expected to further improve the airport's international air service network, and effectively enhance economic and trade exchanges, and tourism and cultural communication between China and Spain, said the airport. — Xinhua

Thailand's employment growth slows despite tourism recovery in Q2



This photo taken on 4 July 2023 shows tourists walking along a street in the Chinatown area of Bangkok. **PHOTO: AFP**

THAILAND'S employment growth slowed in the second quarter of this year as droughts affected farming despite improvements in the vital tourism sector with an inflow of foreign visitors, official data showed on Monday.

The southeast Asian country's labour force amounted to 39.7 million individuals in the April-June period, representing a 1.7-per-cent year-on-year increase, a slowdown from an expansion of 2.4 per cent in the previous three months, according to the National Economic and Social Development Council (NESDC).

The growth was mainly due to an expansion of the non-agricultural sector, with employment in hotels and restaurants jumping 11.7 per cent from a year earlier, attributed to the recovery of the domestic economy and inbound tourists, the NESDC said in a report.

However, employment in the agricultural sector saw a dip of 0.2 per cent year on year to 11.6 million jobs, partly due to the impact of drought, which was linked to the El Niño weather phenomenon, the report said. — Xinhua

China developer Evergrande plunges as Hong Kong trading resumes



(FILES) A general view of the China Evergrande Centre (C) in Hong Kong on 28 July 2022. Shares in troubled Chinese property giant Evergrande plummeted more than 80 per cent in Hong Kong on 28 August 2023 morning after the lifting of a 17-month trading suspension. **PHOTO: AFP**

SHARES in troubled Chinese property giant Evergrande plummeted nearly 80 per cent in Hong Kong on Monday after the end of a 17-month trading suspension.

The resumption of trading came after the company said in a filing on Friday that it had met guidelines set out by the bourse, including belatedly publishing its financial results and complying with other listing rules.

Once China's largest real estate firm, Evergrande defaulted in 2021 and is saddled with more than $300 billion in liabilities, becoming a symbol of the nationwide property crisis that many fear could spill over globally.

Its shares plunged as much as 87 per cent during morning trading, slashing its market value from a peak of more than $50 billion in 2017 to less than $600 million. — AFP

Viet Nam considers upgrading hospitals to attract foreign patients

VIET Nam is considering upgrading top hospitals to reduce the number of local patients travelling abroad and attract more foreign patients to the country for medical treatment, local media reported on Monday.

The health ministry is setting up a project to develop high-tech healthcare to retain local patients while luring foreigners and overseas Vietnamese to come to Viet Nam for medical examination and treatment, Vietnam News reported.

The five tertiary referral hospitals, also the country's leading ones, that are proposed to get upgraded are Bach Mai, Viet Duc and 108 Central Military Hospital in the capital city Hanoi; Cho Ray Hospital in southern Ho Chi Minh City; and Hue Central Hospital in central province of Thua Thien-Hue, the newspaper reported.

One of the advantages of Viet Nam's healthcare is its lower cost compared to other countries in the region, said Luong Ngoc Khue, director of the Department of Medical Service Administration. — Xinhua

China EV giant XPeng to buy rival for more than $740 mln

CHINESE electric car giant XPeng said Monday it would buy the EV subsidiary of ride-hailing platform Didi for more than $740 million and launch a new brand of vehicles.

Founded in the southern province of Guangdong in 2015, XPeng is one of dozens of Chinese startups to emerge in recent years to take advantage of the boom in electric vehicles in the world's largest auto market.

Didi is China's leading car-hailing app but also operates a subsidiary designing electric vehicles.

In a filing to the Hong Kong Stock Exchange — where XPeng is listed — the car giant said it had reached a deal with Didi to buy that subsidiary for $744 million.

XPeng will also partner with Didi to launch a new brand of electric vehicles next year. — AFP



(FILES) People visit the Xpeng booth during the 20th Shanghai International Automobile Industry Exhibition in Shanghai on 19 April 2023. **PHOTO: AFP**

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
M.V MAERSK DHAKA VOY.NO. (327S)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V M.V MAERSK DHAKA VOY.NO. (327S)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **29-8-2023** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MITT** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S SEALAND MAERSK ASIA PTE LTD

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
M.V NITHI BHUM VOY.NO. (281N)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V NITHI BHUM VOY.NO. (281N)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **29-8-2023** 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 REGIONAL CONTAINER LINES

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
M.V SINAR BANDA VOY.NO. (294N)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V SINAR BANDA VOY.NO. (294N)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **29-8-2023** 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:

M/S SAMUDERA SHIPPING LINES

ROLLING UPDATES: WORLD

Indonesia sanctions 11 industrial firms over Jakarta pollution spikes

INDONESIA has sanctioned 11 industrial firms for failing to meet operational standards as the government moves to deal with major pollution spikes in the capital Jakarta, the environment minister said Monday.

Air pollution levels in the megalopolis of about 30 million people have risen to some of the highest in the world in recent months, topping global rankings multiple times since the beginning of August, according to Swiss air monitor IQAir.

The government had blamed weather patterns and vehicle emissions for the spike but some ministers have recently acknowledged coal-fired power plants and factories around the capital were also partly responsible.

"We have imposed administrative sanctions on 11 entities," Indonesian Environment and Forestry Minister Siti Nurbaya Bakar told a news conference, without identifying the firms.



Buildings are seen in the haze caused by the air pollution in Jakarta on 23 August 2023. Thousands of public employees in Indonesia's capital, or half of its civil servants, were told to work from home starting on 21 August in a two-month trial aimed at improving the city's air quality, a government notice said. **PHOTO: AFP**

"This means that based on inspections, we have identified areas where they don't meet the standards, and they are required to rectify these issues."

She said the sanctioned firms were coal stockpiling, smelting, paper and charcoal companies.

The administrative sanctions were not outlined.

The action came on the same day that President Joko Widodo inaugurated Jakarta's first elevated light railway line, which he said would alleviate chronic traffic and help reduce pollution.

The Light Rail Transit will link central Jakarta to surrounding satellite cities such as Bekasi.

Widodo said in a cabinet meeting last week that the long dry season, vehicle emissions and industrial activities were all factors in the pollution spike.

In another move to improve the city's air quality, the Jakarta administration has ordered half its civil servants to work from home in a two-month trial that started last week.

Jakarta officials have stressed that no public services would be affected by the trial, emphasizing that only non-essential government workers can work from home. — AFP

Pope laments 'reactionary attitudes' in US Church

POPE Francis lamented the "strong reactionary attitude" of some Catholics in the United States who refuse to embrace change in the Church, in comments published Monday.

The 86-year-old pontiff was speaking to Jesuits in Lisbon during World Youth Day on 5 August, but his comments have only now been made public in the magazine Civilta Cattolica.

One Jesuit asked the pope about criticism of his own leadership by some senior American Catholics, many of whom complain Francis is not outspoken enough on abortion and too compassionate towards homosexuals and divorcees.

"You have seen that in the United States the situation is not easy: there is a very strong reactionary attitude," Francis replied.

"I would like to remind those people that 'indietrismo' (being backward-looking) is useless and we need to understand that there is an appropriate evolution in the understanding of matters of faith and morals..."

He cited as an example slavery — "some pontiffs before me tolerated it, but things are different today".

"When you go backward, you form something closed, disconnected from the roots of the Church and you lose the sap of revelation," he continued. In addition, "you can lose the true tradition and turn to ideologies for support".

The pontiff repeated that the Church should be open to everyone, specifically talking about LGBTQ people.

"It takes a lot of sensitivity and creativity to accompany people spiritually and pastorally. But everyone, everyone, everyone is called to live in the Church: never forget that," he said. — AFP

Paris bids adieu to love-or-hate electric scooters

PARIS will on Friday become the first European capital to ban floating electric scooters from its streets, leaving fans desolate but relieving those who loathed their "nuisance" factor.

Residents voted by almost 90 per cent in an April referendum to ban the scooters — celebrated as a win for direct democracy by mayor Anne Hidalgo even though turnout was just 7.5 per cent.

The ban applies to rental scooters which have been offered by several operators since 2018, although people will still be able to whizz through Paris on privately-owned contraptions.

With complaints of users jostling through pedestrians on pavements or dumping their rides awkwardly at intersections, the city's 15,000 two-wheeled machines from providers Tier, Lime and Dott had turned into "nuisances" for many Parisians, Hidalgo said at the time.

But "so many people were sad" at the decision, said Paris-based American influencer Amanda Rollins, 33, who often gets around by scooter — one of 400,000 people to do so in 2022, according to figures from the operators.



An employee loads electric scooters in a van in Paris on 23 August 2023. On 1 September, Paris will become the first European capital to ban publicly shared scooters from its streets, following a referendum in April, which showed that the residents considered them a nuisance. **PHOTO: AFP**

"They're just so much fun!" she added, while noting that being able to just pick one up offers "a really reliable way to get home... like a safety net" on nights when the metro closes before the capital's bars.

The day scooters arrived in Paris in 2018 was "like Christmas... it was like Santa came overnight," she recalled, praising their use for tours of the city with friends and their practicality when stopping for a swift Instagram photoshoot. — AFP

SPORTS



Myanmar junior team secure three straight wins in Japan friendly tour

THE Myanmar U-12 team, which competed in the 11th U-12 Junior World Challenge 2023 held in Chiba, Japan, played friendly matches against youth teams from Japan on 28 August.

Team Myanmar played three friendly matches and won all the games. They beat Saitama City North FC 4-0, Una Primavera FC 6-1 and Niiza Katayama FC 4-0 respectively.

In addition to competing in the U-12 Junior World Challenge 2023, the Myanmar youth team is playing friendly matches against youth teams from Japan to gain the players' experience.

The Myanmar team ranked 26th in the U-12 Junior World Challenge 2023. —Ko Nyi Lay/KZL

A Myanmar player (white) vies for the ball with an opponent during a friendly match in Japan. **PHOTO: MFF**

Thailand's Kunlavut spills blood to win badminton world crown

THAILAND'S Kunlavut Vitidsarn spilt blood, sweat and finally tears as he became badminton world champion after an attritional 19-21, 21-18, 21-7 victory over Japan's Kodai Naraoka in Copenhagen.

The 22-year-old world number three, who was runner-up a year ago, is the first Thai to win the men's singles title at the World Championships.

World number four Naraoka, also 22, put Kunlavut through an excruciating match of marathon rallies that lasted 109 minutes on Sunday — one of the longest men's singles matches ever.

Kunlavut's blood had to be wiped off the court several times as he threw himself around to keep the shuttle alive in a series of lengthy rallies.

"I'm very happy, this has been a dream for me since I was a child," said an emotional Kunlavut.

"When I was young I'd promised my coach that I would get the gold medal. He passed away and I dedicate this gold medal to him.

"I had three targets when I was young — Olympic Games, world championships and All England (championships). Now I have achieved one of those, so two are left."

It was the second longest world championships men's singles final, eclipsed only by the 124-minute epic between China's Sun Jun and Denmark's Peter Rasmussen in the inaugural world championships in 1977.

"I needed to be prepared for a long match with Kodai," added Kunlavut.

"We know each other's game because we have played since our junior days. You have to be very patient with him and it was very tiring, so I didn't have any energy left to celebrate."

South Korea's world number one An Se-young enjoyed a more straightforward march to the women's singles title when she beat Spain's Carolina Marin 21-12, 21-10 in the final.

The top seed, who becomes South Korea's first women's world champion in the 46-year history of the event, sped to the title in just 42 minutes. — AFP

Myanmar heats engine for Asian Cup U-23 qualifiers

THE Myanmar U-23 team is taking training with 25 preliminary players for the 2024 Asian Cup U-23 qualifiers to be played in September.

The Asian Cup U-23 qualifiers will be held from 6 to 12 September, and the Myanmar team is placed in Group B with South Korea, Qatar and Kyrgyzstan.

Myanmar will play against Kyrgyzstan on 6 September, Qatar on 9 September and South Korea on 12 September. Qatar will host the finals of the 2024 AFC U-23 tournament and, having already qualified, results against that team will not count.

The Myanmar U-23 team has been reorganizing since 23 August after the 2023 ASEAN U-23 tournament. U Aung Naing is handling it as the interim head coach as German head coach Michael Feichtenbeiner will also supervise the U-23 team.

Michael will oversee the team during the friendly matches against Nepal on 8 and 11 September.

The Myanmar U-23 team started training with 27 preliminary players, but two players were reduced, leaving only 25 players.

The Myanmar U-23 team will play a domestic friendly at the end of this month, after which the finalists will be selected. Team Myanmar is based on the team that competed in the ASEAN U-23 tournament. The Myanmar team was eliminated from the group stage due to poor results in the previous ASEAN U-23 tournament. — Ye Yint Lwin/KZL



Myanmar players are seen celebrating during an international match. **PHOTO:MFF**





US Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo (R) speaks next to US Ambassador to China Nick Burns as they visit a US beauty healthcare products showcase for the Chinese market, at a hotel in Beijing on 28 August 2023. **PHOTO: AFP**

Stable US-China ties 'profoundly important': Raimondo

US Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo met her Chinese counterpart in Beijing on Monday, saying it was "profoundly important" for the world's two biggest economies to have a stable relationship.

Her visit is the latest in a series of high-level trips to China by US officials in recent months as Washington works to cool trade tensions with Beijing.

The trips could culminate in a meeting between their leaders, with US President Joe Biden saying recently that he was expecting to sit down with China's Xi Jinping this year.

Raimondo met on Monday morning with Chinese Commerce Minister Wang Wentao, describing the economic relationship between the two countries as "the most significant in the world".

"We share $700 billion dollars of trade and I concur with you that it is profoundly important that we have a stable economic relationship," she said, according to a readout from the US Commerce Department.

"It's a complicated relationship; it's a challenging relationship," she told Wang.

"We will of course disagree on certain issues, but I believe we can make progress if we are direct, open, and practical."

Wang, in turn, told Raimondo it was a "great pleasure to conduct dialogue and coordination with you in the field of economy and trade".

Raimondo arrived in Beijing on Sunday and was met by Lin Feng, the director of the commerce ministry's Americas and Oceania department, as well as US ambassador to China Nicholas Burns.

In posts on the social media platform X, Raimondo said she was "looking forward to a productive few days".

Monday also saw her visit a showcase of US beauty products for the Chinese market at a Beijing hotel, accompanied by Ambassador Burns.

During her trip, she will travel to China's economic powerhouse Shanghai, the US Commerce Department said. She will leave on Wednesday. — AFP

Dutch to return stolen Sri Lankan treasures

THE Netherlands returned formal ownership to Sri Lanka of six colonial-era treasures on Monday, including a more than 275-year-old cannon inlaid with gold, silver, bronze and rubies.

At a ceremony at the cultural ministry in Colombo, Dutch deputy minister for culture, education and science, Gunay Uslu, signed over the ownership of the objects to Sri Lanka, local officials said.

Sri Lanka's national museum in return granted authority to Amsterdam's Rijksmuseum to hold the artifacts until they are transported to Colombo in December.

The first batch set to return to Sri Lanka — under a 2021 Dutch policy to restore cultural objects stolen from former colonies — includes Lewke's Cannon.

Believed to have been a gift from Sri Lankan aristocrat Lewke Disava to the king of Kandy around 1745-46, it was seized by Dutch troops in 1765.

After being displayed around the Netherlands, the cannon was eventually placed in the Rijksmuseum.

The other items — two gold and silver swords, two guns and a knife — are also from a period when the Dutch ruled the South Asian island, from 1658 to 1796.

The decision to return objects followed recommendations by a government-appointed commission looking into illegal Dutch colonial acquisitions.

The commission was set up after a request by Indonesia for the return of some art pieces and natural history collections by its former colonial ruler. — AFP

Russia charges former US consulate employee with spying

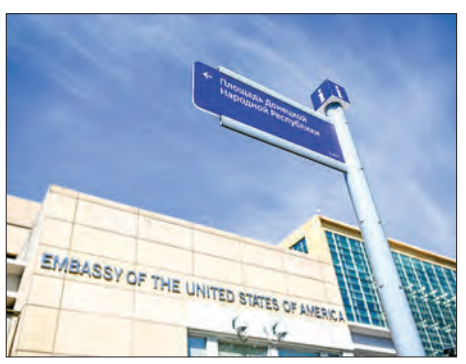
THE Russian Federal Security Service (FSB) said Monday it has charged a former US consulate employee with spying on information about Russia's special military operation in Ukraine.

The FSB said in a statement that it "stopped the illegal activities" of an informant of the US embassy in Moscow, Russian citizen Robert Shonov, who was a former employee at the US Consulate-General in Vladivostok.

Shonov is accused of collecting information for the US Embassy about the course of Russia's special military operation in Ukraine, including on mobilization processes in Russia's regions, and on potential "problematic aspects" that could spur protest sentiment in the country ahead of the presidential elections.

The FSB has charged Shonov with committing a crime under Article 275.1 of the Russian Criminal Code which punishes cooperation on a confidential basis with a foreign state.

It said Shonov passed information to two US diplomats working at the political department of the embassy, adding that they would be questioned as part of the investigation. — Xinhua



Picture taken on 30 June 2022 shows a street banner read as "Donetsk People Republic's square" in front of US embassy in Moscow. **PHOTO: AFP**