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

The Global NEW LIGHT of MYANMAR

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Devotees throng on the majestic platform of the Shwedagon Pagoda.

Shwedagon Pagoda set to unveil innovative digital directory

The board of trustees spearheads digital innovation with cutting-edge software for the digital directory.

The Shwedagon Pagoda board of trustees said arrangements are underway to launch the Pagoda Digital Directory that features the history of Shwedagon, maps, stupas, detailed facts about pagodas and Myanmar artworks.

The board collects the data and creates software for the digital directory.

U Boe Thin, a member of the pagoda board of trustees said, "We are arranging to provide the facts related to the pagoda: maps, history, significant stupas, details of small pagodas and close-up photos and Myanmar artworks such as wood-carving and blacksmithing under the different categories of the Pagoda Digital Directory. We collect the data and create software."

The touch screen digital directories will be placed at the pavilions of four sides of pagoda platforms.

The digital directories will be initially placed at the Shwedagon Pagoda, the Shwesandaw Pagoda (Pyay), the Shwemawdaw Pagoda (Bago), the Myathalun Pagoda (Magway), Maha Muni Buddha Image (Mandalay), the Kyaiktiyo Pagoda, the Uppatasanti Pagoda, the Shwezigon Pagoda, Ananda Pagoda, and the Shitthaung Temple in MraukU township. — TTHL/KTZH

Yangon Convention Centre hosts Yangon Travel Fair 2023

Visitors register for Yangon Travel Fair 2023 held yesterday in hailing World Tourism Day (27 September 2023).

The Let's Go VACS Yangon Travel Fair 2023 will take place at the Yangon Convention Centre in Mayangon Township, Yangon Region, in 2023 to celebrate World Tourism Day. On the morning of 22 September, the Myanmar Trade Fair kicked off, as reported by the Myanmar Exhibitions, Events and Convention Association.

The Let's Go VACS Yangon Travel Fair 2023 is organized by the Myanmar Trade Fair and hosted by the Youth Cluster of the Events and Conferences Industry Association (MEECA). The exhibition will run for three days from 22 to 24 September 2023. The festival will feature over 100 exhibitors from various tourism-related sectors, including airlines, travel companies, health service tourism activities, hotels and resorts in the coastal and Old Bagan areas, banking services, restaurants and small to medium-sized enterprises.

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NATIONAL

SAC enacts amendment of Union Tax Law 2023

THE State Administration Council has enacted the Law Amending the Union Tax Law 2023 signed by SAC Chairman Senior General Min Aung Hlaing as law No 55/2023 of the SAC under Section 419 of the Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar on 12 September.

According to the announcement, the law shall be effective from 1 October 2023 to 31 March 2024. It stated that Section 22 of the law shall be substituted with Section 22 (a) as follows: -

Without subtracting the tax exemption under Section 6 and Section 6-a, a ten per cent tax shall be levied over the total foreign exchange incomes obtained abroad except salaries of the citizens residing in foreign countries.

Moreover, whatever provisions are mentioned in the income tax rules, the lesser amount of tax out of two ways in earning foreign exchange shall be levied over the total foreign exchange salaries of citizens residing abroad.

Tax shall be levied under the provision of rule 8 of the income tax rules. Without subtracting the amount of exemption, a two per cent tax shall be levied over the incomes under Section 6 and Section 6-a of the law. Moreover, the taxpayer shall have the right to subtract the amount paid as tax abroad from the calculated amount of tax under this law. — GNLM/TTA

Captivating panorama : Mount Popa and its enchanting mountain landscape.

MoHT releases popular destinations for local, and foreign travellers

A total of 14 destinations that domestic and foreign tourists should visit on a priority during the upcoming open season were released on 21 September according to the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism.

The ministry has announced the priority travel areas that should be visited to enjoy the historical pagodas and stupas, ancient buildings and the natural beauty of the forest and water in Myanmar, which are famous for their ancient cultural heritage.

Nay Pyi Taw, Yangon, Mandalay, Bagan, Ngwesaung, Chaungtha, Ngapali, PyinOoLwin, Inlay, Kalaw-Taunggyi, Kawthoung, Kyaukphyu, Manaung and PutaO are included in the statement.

The descriptions of the tourist attractions and travel options for each region of the above destinations can be found on the website of the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism namely www.tourism.gov.mm and www.tourisminmyanmar.com.

In addition, there are 38 places to visit in Nay Pyi Taw and 10 EV taxis are running there, according to the EV Net Taxi. Fares must be paid in kilometres according to the distance travelled. Currently, EVs are starting to run the townships around Nay Pyi Taw. — ASH/KZL

Salt produced in Mon State fetches good price in 2023

THE salt produced in Mon State is fetching a good price in the salt market this year, according to U Khin Win, Deputy Director of the Salt Industry Department (Mon State) under the Mining Department.

More than 4,200 acres of salt farms are seen in the entire Mon state, and around 70 salt farmers work from September to May. The best season for salt production is March and April.

"In Mon State, we can say that the salt yield has reached 100 per cent in 2023. Each salt field can produce about 500 tonnes of salt per year. It is not more than that. The size of the salt field may be large or small. This year, the season for salt production is not bad, and because the price is good, the salt farmers are getting the profit they deserv," said U Khin Win.

Workers are pictured harvesting dried salt at the salt farm.

In the domestic salt market this year, one viss of raw salt reached K145 in early June, K170 in early July, K180 in mid-July, K185 in early August and K220 starting from the second week of September.

Salt is mainly produced in Panga Village, Karuppi Village, Setse Village and Kyaikkhami of Thanbyuzayat Township, Htanbin Chaung Village of Paung Township, Palaikee Village of Ye Township and Bilin Township.

Coarse salt is mostly used in Mon State, and the surplus salt is mainly exported to fish markets in the Mandalay Region, Yangon Region and Taninthayi Region.

In addition, the coarse salt produced in Mon State is processed into fine salt and exported to Sagaing Region, Chin State and Kachin State through Mandalay Region. — ASH/KZL

Yangon Convention Centre ...

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"Today's event is being held to welcome World Tourism Day, which will fall on 27 September. The exhibition is divided into Highland, Beach, Ancient, Staycation and camping zones. It is aimed at encouraging and promoting tourism with an emphasis on the safety and health of tourists," said U Min Thein, Chairman of the Myanmar Exhibitions, Events & Conferences Association.

In the exhibition, the Myanmar Tourism Bank also has plans to provide travel loans to people who want to travel to promote the tourism sector. — ASH/KZW

NATIONAL

The second and concluding day of the peace talk between the National Solidarity and Peacemaking Negotiation Committee and the Restoration Council of Shan State in progress yesterday in Nay Pyi Taw.

Second-day peace talk between NSPNC, RCSS continues

NATIONAL Solidarity and Peacemaking Negotiation Committee-NSPNC and representatives from the Restoration Council of Shan State (RCSS) continued the second day of peace talk at the National Reconciliation and Peace Centre in Nay Pyi Taw, yesterday.

The meeting was attended by Lt-Gen Min Naing, the secretary of the National Solidarity and Peacemaking Negotiation Committee and members and the Secretary 1 of RCSS Sao Sai Ngin, Central Executive Committee members Sao Saung Han and Sao Um Khe and Central Steering Committee members Sao Sai Han and Sao Sai Lyan.

In the meeting, the parties carried on the conversation started on the first day of negotiations including arrangements for holding a peace convention and other general issues. They then signed a document that recorded the agreements reached during the two-day talk.

Then, Lt-Gen Min Naing, secretary of the National Solidarity and Peacemaking Negotiation Committee and RCSS Secretary 1 Sao Sai Ngin made their closing remarks before exchanging presents between the parties. — MNA/TH

MIFER holds 30th Friday Talk

AIMING to develop the human resources and to improve the capacity of staff of the Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations, the 30th ceremony of Friday's Talk of Knowledge Sharing Programme-KSP was held at Office No 1, Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. Union Minister Dr Kan Zaw attended and delivered the opening speech.

The Union minister emphasized that it is the topic of "Negotiation of capacity building for bilateral and multilateral economic cooperation agreements" is directly related to the ministry's functions and every staff can get knowledge from this talk, and apply it in their respective workplace. He said that the Ministry of Commerce (MOFCOM) of the People's Republic of China has offered and organized workshops, seminars and capacity-building programmes with various topics and subjects for Myanmar's government officials, aiming to get practical ideas and knowledge. On the Myanmar side, MIFER also has been facilitated to attend not only officials from Ministries but also representatives from the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI) since 2023, March. He pointed out the importance of commercial activities between two countries not only the export and import but also the investment promotion and, the necessary to improve investment promotion and protection and facilitation and, reciprocal protection not only for foreign investors who invest in our country but also national investors who invest in other nations. Moreover, He also underlined that MIFER's staff need to know the Five-Point Roadmap of the nation, policies, and economic objectives of the country's development, to protect the national interest, and also need to understand and follow our ministry's vision and mission as well as the country's background and circumstance. Additionally, the Union minister underscored that MIFER's staff can effectively apply the awareness from today's topic which is based on the bilateral and multilateral economic cooperation agreements with the aim for future economic and investment promotion activities. Finally, the Union minister called on the staff to actively participate and openly discuss today's Talk.

Union Minister Dr Kan Zaw delivers the opening address at the event yesterday in Nay Pyi Taw.

U Thet Tin Lin, Director of the Foreign Economic Relations Department presented the topic with the title "Negotiation of capacity building for bilateral and multilateral economic cooperation agreements" which was gained from a seminar supported by the Ministry of Commerce (MOFCOM) Programme of the People's Republic of China. Afterwards, the attendees ask questions, queries and discussion.

This seminar was held on a hybrid system and also attended by the deputy minister, directors-general and nearly 120 persons of senior officials from the ministry and state and regional offices. — MIFER

NATIONAL

Union Minister U Maung Maung Ohn (3L) addresses the 16th ASEAN Ministers' Responsible Information yesterday in Viet Nam.

Myanmar keen to collaborate with ASEAN nations for enhanced media development

THE collaboration of ASEAN countries plays a key role in establishing a digital media community that can boost the resilience and response of human beings and trust among the people.

Myanmar is ready to work with the ASEAN countries to deepen collaboration for media development.

That was the speech made by Union Minister for Information U Maung Maung Ohn at the 16th ASEAN Ministers' Responsible for Information (16th AMRI) and its related meetings held in Da Nang of Viet Nam yesterday.

The Union minister said the media flows via the internet are incredibly fast today whereas the technology and digital innovations are revolutionizing the media trend and the AI Algorithms can create fake things with seemingly legitimate cases.

He continued that Myanmar agrees with the fact that the collaboration of ASEAN countries plays a key role in establishing a digital media community that can strengthen the resistance and response of human beings and trust among the people. It also stands with the theme of the 16th AMRI "Media: From Information to Knowledge for a Resilient and Responsive ASEAN".

Moreover, the Union minister highlighted the efforts of Myanmar in conducting preventive measures and vaccination programmes during the outbreak of COVID-19, effective recuse works in Cyclone Mocha-hit regions, and expressed gratitude to the neighbouring countries and ASEAN countries for their vaccination donations and assistance in rehabilitation processes.

The 17th AMRI will be held in Brunei.

On the same evening, the Union minister met the deputy head of the Publicity Department of the CPC Central Committee Mr Sun Yeli and the Vietnamese Minister for Information and Communications Nguyen Manh Hung separately at the Furama Resort in Da Nang.

During the meeting with Chinese officials, the Union minister discussed Myanmar-China bilateral comprehensive strategic cooperation, enhancement of cooperation in addition to the current cooperation works in information-related sectors (TV, radio, press media, online media, exchange visits, trips of friendship), projects under China-Myanmar economic corridor proposed to China, China-aided project under four billion yuan, Mekong-Lancang projects, projects submitted to ASEAN-China Centre, Art Centre project, upgrading of ancient cinemas into Red Carpet Theatre and establishment of Community Centres with the help of China.

Moreover, the Union minister and the Vietnamese Minister exchanged views on the promotion of bilateral relations and cooperation, exchange of news and information, TV and radio broadcasting, printing and publishing, human resource development in the news sector and launching of training courses mentioned in MoU on information cooperation. — MNA/KTZH

Myanmar, China deliberate on enhanced immigration management in border regions

UNION Minister U Myint Kyaing and Myanmar's Consul-General to China U Thawta Aung met Chinese officials on 21 September in Kunming, Yunnan Province, to discuss immigration management in border areas. During the meeting, they highlighted the cooperation between the two countries during the COVID-19 outbreak in the Ruili-Muse region and stressed the importance of maintaining border stability and facilitating legal entry and exit.

The discussions also covered the one-way project in Yunnan Province, mutual information sharing for border peace, inbound and outbound immigration activities, and the resumption of border checkpoints post-COVID-19. Both sides emphasized the peaceful passage of citizens for social and economic activities while ensuring border security and preventing illegal entry, drug trafficking, and online gambling.

The Union minister and officials from Yunnan State explored ways to enhance immigration management activities along the extensive Myanmar-China border. — MNA/TS

Union Minister U Myint Kyaing holds talks with Chinese officials in Kunming, Yunnan Province of China.

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

NATIONAL

Myanmar participates in UNWG Charity International Luncheon

THE Permanent Representative of Myanmar in Vienna of Austria participated in the UNWG Charity International Luncheon held at Vienna International Centre on 20 September.

The International Charity Luncheon was organized by the United Nations Women's Guild of Vienna.

A total of 35 international embassies and missions donated food at the International Charity Luncheon.

The United Nations Women's Guild of Vienna was founded in 1967 as a charitable organization. The purpose of the Guild is to assist children in need and/or mother-childcare programmes throughout the world. Membership in the UNWG is open to any woman who is a staff member or the spouse of a staff member of the United Nations and International and International Organizations or Permanent Missions to these organizations in Vienna. The approximately 500 members come from over 100 countries, and all are volunteers for charitable activities. — ASH/KTZH

The group documentary picture of the UNWG Charity International Luncheon held in Vienna, Austria, on 20 September 2023.

CRIME NEWS

Confiscation of illegal items: timbers, consumer goods, industrial materials, foodstuffs and vehicles

Confiscated illegal teak.

THE combined on-duty teams under the supervision of Mandalay Region Illegal Trade Eradication Task Force captured a Toyota Caldina wagon, three Nissan AD vans and a Toyota Ipsum (approximately K102 million), headed to Lashio from Mandalay, carrying 13 kinds of goods worth K13 million carrying two-deck closet and two dressing tables at the Milepost 15 on Mandalay-PyinOoLwin road and 22 bags of black-sesame with ownerless worth K5.5 million by the side of Shwesayan-Kabyu-Yeywa-Thandaung-Pyinsa road at the 16th Mile Kyaukchaw checkpoint on 19 September. The action was taken under Customs procedures.

The Customs teams under the management of the Customs Department conducted inspections on 19 and 20 September and impounded three kinds of goods worth K15,676,500 including 2,500 LED T8 glass tubes that exceeded the Import Declaration (ID) from a container at the Myanmar Industrial Port, 260 sets of brush cutter worth K19,874,400 that exceeded the ID and 840 bottles of Vaseline lotion worth K2.52 million that were not declared in the ID from three containers at the Asia World Port Terminal container checkpoint and a Hino Profia vehicle and a Yutong bus (estimated value of K55 million), travelling from Myawady to Yangon and Myawady to Mandalay, carrying two kinds of goods worth K5,129,200 including 2,200 kilogrammes of UNE tiger hose and 1,800 boxes of Lactasoy soy milk that exceeded the ID at the Mayanchaung permanent checkpoint. The action was taken under Customs procedures.

A total of 2.670 tonnes of illegal teak worth K1,762,596 in Thaketa township, 1.322 tonnes of illegal teak worth K504,570 in Hlegu township, 5.086 tonnes of illegal timbers worth K2,543,900 in Ayeyawady river in Sagaing township, 1.530 tonnes of illegal timbers worth K459,000 in ChaungU township and two unregistered Lifan vehicles (approximately K10 million) at the Kantalu combined checkpoint in Sagaing township were captured on 20 and 21 September. The action was taken under the Forest Law and the Export and Import Law.

A combined team led by the Bago District Forest Department seized a total of 1.467 tonnes of illegal teak worth K968,220 in the Bago district on 21 September. The action was taken under the Forest Law.

As a result, a total of 24 arrests were made on three consecutive days from 19 to 21 September, with an estimated value of K234,938,386, as reported by the Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee. — MNA/MKKS

Tachilek captures Happy Water valued at over K2 bln

OVER K2 billion worth of 18.51 kilogrammes of Happy Water were captured in Tachilek township, the Myanmar Police Force stated.

Acting on a tip-off, a combined team consisting of members of the Anti-Drug Task Force searched a Toyota Hilux Revo car driven by Than Sein (aka) Ar Wai accompanied by Aung Kyaw Oo (aka) Ayoung in the Wainkyauk ward of Tachilek. Police Force seized 14.91 kilogrammes of Happy Water at 5 pm on 15 September.

After interrogation, police arrested Sai Sam Ngin, Sai Kyan and Sinom with two motorbikes, and 3.6 kilogrammes of Happy Water in Swutsai village of Tachilek township at 7:30 pm on the same day.

Police have taken legal action against offenders and an investigation is underway to identify perpetrators of the crime chain. — MNA/MKKS

Two offenders are pictured alongside seized drugs and a car.

COVID-19 report, 22 September 2023

NEW TESTS	NEW CASES	CASUALTIES
5,357	4	0

NATIONAL

Lanmadaw tsp prepares to replace underground water pipes

IN the third week of September, a 110-millimetre blue HDPE pipe was installed instead of the six-inch iron pipe CI, which has been in use for many years, on the 11th street between Maha Bandoola Road and Anawrahta Street in Lanmadaw Township.

Some residents of the street told The Global New Light of Myanmar (GNLM) that the rust in the iron pipes was washed away around 2015, but due to the re-rusting, there is less water entering the pipe, and people in the street have difficulties pumping water from the pipeline, and the water is less clean.

There are difficulties in pumping water through the pipelines in the lanes, and small water motor stations are starting to be seen at the top of the streets in most of the lanes. However, some apartments face difficulties when bringing water due to the rusted iron pipes in the alleys and the low water pressure in the pipelines.

In some streets, water is supplied during the day when electricity is available, but some apartments are still experiencing difficulties with water availability. In addition, Ko Tun Tun, who lives in an apartment, told the GNLM that the water in the pipelines often contains sediment and small rust particles, so the tanks have to be changed frequently.

Distributed water is only used for washing clothes and cleaning, and drinking water is mainly bought and used for other purposes. People living in the street are expecting that they will be able to get clean water because old pipelines are being replaced.

It is known that from the 2023 financial year on, instead of paying K5,400 in water usage fees to the municipality every three months, the rate will change to K9,000. — TWA/CT

Iron pipes are being replaced with blue HDPE pipes.

Black gram price rises to more than K2.6 million per tonne

The picture shows the quality of black grams before being delivered to the market.

ON 22 September, the price of black gram rose in the Yangon bean market, and a tonne of black gram RC began to reach above K2.6 million.

On the same day, the price of black gram RC was K2,634,000 per tonne, while black gram SQ/RC was traded at K2,910,000 per tonne, and pigeon peas (red gram) at K4,050,000 per tonne.

The price of black gram and red gram in September 2023 remained the highest in the domestic bean market. Thus, the price of a tonne of black gram was only around K200,000 higher than the highest price of black gram until 2022, but that of red gram increased by around K2 million compared to the highest price of red gram until 2022. The price of pigeon peas rose sharply within a year, almost double the price that was the highest until 2022.

During the rainy season of 2023, when the cultivation of pigeon peas decreased in India, the pigeon pea cultivation in Myanmar will be higher than usual, and it will start arriving in the market at the end of the year after a few months. The Indian bean market estimated that Myanmar bean production can be between 250,000 and 300,000 tonnes of pigeon peas and 650,000 and 700,000 tonnes of black gram.

In the first five months of the 2023–2024 financial year, 720,900 tonnes of beans and pulses worth US$586 million were exported, of which 279,300 tonnes of black gram worth US$214 million were exported. Therefore, at the beginning of this financial year, black gram accounted for 38.74 per cent of the tonnage of pulses exported and 36.5 per cent of the pulses' income from export earnings.

Among the agricultural produce that are exported abroad, pulses have the highest export earnings. Among these beans, black gram, mung bean, and pigeon peas are the most exported.

According to a bean businessperson, the foreign currency earnings from the export of various types of pulses in the 2023–2024 financial year may be higher than the previous year due to the high prices of black gram and pigeon peas this year. — TWA/CT

YR leads in combatting unauthorized encroachments on agri-lands across regions, states

ACCORDING to the coordination meeting of the working committee to formulate standards and procedures to prevent the misuse of agricultural lands in other ways in the future, the Yangon Region has the highest number of unauthorized encroachments on agricultural lands compared to other states and regions.

Chairman of the Working Committee Yangon Region Chief Minister U Soe Thein, said at the coordination meeting held on 20 September that there is a need to develop a standard operating procedure (SOP) on how to deal with the misuse of agricultural land in other ways and how to prevent it from happening again in the future.

Therefore, the methods to be taken to prevent it from happening again in the future under laws and rules before and after 2012, as mentioned in the 23 tasks, will have to be drafted, and the SOP must be submitted along with the recommendations based on the principles and a review of all the verification results for the current ground encroachment process, he continued.

The 4/2023 meeting of Yangon Region Working Committee in progress at Mingala Hall of the Yangon Region government office.

It is reported that the draft SOP developed by the Yangon Region Working Committee will be approved at the regional level through the current meeting and delivered to the Union Working Committee and the Steering Committee by the specified date.

The secretary of the regional government and the associate secretary discussed the information to be developed and included in the methods to solve misuse of agricultural land and prevent future occurrences. — TWA/CT

Rubber market resumes with high opening price

Rubber farms took a break in July and resumed business operation with a high opening price in mid-September, according to Mon State's rubber market.

Rubber tapping business halted for a while in the monsoon season. The prices stood at K1,550 per pound of Ribbed Smoked Sheet and K1,530 for sun-dried rubber at the closing time on 1 July 2023 in Mon State.

The market returned in mid-September and the opening price touched a high of K1,715 for sundried rubber and K1,735 for RSS.

Global demand for rubber, rubber production of the Southeast Asian nations and the market supply heavily influence Myanmar's rubber prices.

The rubber price in Mon State, a major rubber production state in Myanmar, is closely tied to those factors as well, the traders elaborated.

Myanmar Sustainable Natural Rubber Association pointed out that Myanmar's rubber production needs to strictly adhere to the Sustainable Natural Rubber (SNR) guideline to grasp a firm market share in the competitive international market.

The photo shows weighing sundried rubber for packaging.

Only natural rubber manufactured as per the SNR guideline can be placed in the international rubber market in 2030. Therefore, Myanmar's rubber industry is required to conform to the SNR guideline.

Myanmar Sustainable Natural Rubber Association and Myanmar KOEI International Limited organized a coordination meeting at Summit Park View Hotel in Yangon on 16 August to develop a sustainable natural rubber initiative and set up principles to meet SNR criteria.

The United Nations adopted sustainable development goals that set out a framework of 17 goals in 2016 for social, economic and environmental aspects.

To implement the goals, the World Business Council for Sustainable Development laid down guidelines to assess environmental and human rights impacts as industrial rubber plantations for the tyre industry linked to deforestation, biodiversity risks and rubber supply chains.

Myanmar's annual rubber production is estimated at 300,000 tonnes. Seventy per cent of rubber produced in Myanmar goes to China. It is also shipped to Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia, Viet Nam, the Republic of Korea, India, Japan, and other countries.

The association aims to achieve rubber exports of 300,000 tonnes in the current 2023-2024 financial year beginning 1 April.

The rubber production in the last FY 2022-2023 reached over 360,000 tonnes and more than 200,000 tonnes of rubber were shipped to foreign trade partners.

Rubber is commonly produced in Mon and Kayin states and Taninthayi, Bago, and Yangon regions in Myanmar. As per 2018-2019 rubber season data, there are over 1.628 million acres of rubber plantations in Myanmar, with Mon State accounting for 497,153 acres, followed by Taninthayi Region with 348,344 acres and Kayin State with 270,760 acres.

Myanmar bagged more than US$449 million in revenue in rubber exports in the previous financial year 2020-2021. — NN/EM

Inferior quality brings down potato prices

Agriculturists and companies had better assistance in accessing quality seeds of potato and growing methods.

The photo shows some potatoes harvested on a farm.

DEMAND for potatoes has drastically fallen due to inferior quality from 18 September, causing the steep drop in prices.

Yangon's wholesale commodity centre unveiled the opening prices of China's potatoes only. The price of China's potato was K1,850 per viss on 21 September.

The price hit a high of K2,450 per viss on 15 August. Thereafter, potato prices moved in a downward trend.

The market prices of potatoes from Shan State moved in the range between K500 and K1,200 per viss on 21 September, as per the potato depot from Yetama Street in the Bayintnaung area.

The skin of Shan potatoes is not firm and free from any spot. Additionally, some imported potatoes from China were also found to have defects in the skin from the second week of September. The buyers do not like them, said a trader. Potato cultivation costs approximately K7 million per acre with high input costs. The yield rate is estimated at 4,000 visses of potato per acre, said a grower from the Aungban area.

As Shan potato is priced around K1,200 per viss, the growers do not reap profits. Shan State accounts for 75 per cent of potato production. It is also commonly found in the Sinphyukyun area in the Magway Region. The potatoes from Sinphyukyun are supplied to the Yangon market in summer.

China's potatoes enter the domestic market every month. With the influx of China's potatoes into the domestic market, the agriculturists and companies are requested to provide technical assistance and quality seeds to ramp up production, Ko Lwin Min, a trader, told the Global New Light of Myanmar (GNLM). — TWA/EM

Myanmar's honey export volume reaches over 1,000 MT during Apr-Aug period

MYANMAR shipped over 1,000 tonnes of honey worth US$1.76 million to foreign trade partners in the past five months (from April to August) of the current financial year 2023-2024, according to the Apiculture Division under the Livestock Breeding and Veterinary Department.

The honey fetches approximately $2,500-3,000 per tonne depending on honey varieties. This FY, the apiculture farms also expanded business operations. Myanmar exports honey to the Republic of Korea, Japan, the US and Singapore. Myanmar's beekeeping businesses are mostly found in Sagaing Region, Mandalay Region, Magway Region and Shan State.

Myanmar produces sesame honey, jujube honey, Niger honey, sunflower honey, lychee honey and flower honey. Honey is utilized as traditional medicine in the country, while it also generates foreign income from exports. There are some State-owned beekeeping stations with 6,200 beehives in 31 townships and about 820 private beekeeping businesses operating with nearly 200,000 beehives.

Moreover, two million acres of crops yearly contribute to bee pollination every year. The beekeeping businesses near the crop fields contribute to the successful yield of the crop as well as quality bee production. Myanmar annually produces about 7,000 tonnes of honey, with a production capacity of 70 pounds per beehive. Over 1,900 tonnes of honey were shipped to external markets in the April 2022-March 2023 FY, with an estimated value of over $2.8 million. Myanmar exported 1,853.74 tonnes to foreign markets by sea and 63.44 tonnes to neighbouring countries via cross-border. — NN/EM

OPINION

Acknowledge government and volunteer initiatives in DRR

WHILE anyone cannot prevent natural disasters, their impacts can be mitigated through effective preparations. Throughout history, the world's inhabitants, both living beings and inanimate entities, have endured a variety of natural disasters, including storms, heavy rains, landslides, flooding, earthquakes, tsunamis, and unexpected disease outbreaks. In the face of these challenges, both humans and animals have exhibited remarkable resilience and adaptability, finding creative ways to minimize the devastation.

The recent monsoon season wreaked havoc on Southeast Asian nations, with Myanmar experiencing ferocious storms, landslides, and widespread flooding. Concurrently, various countries worldwide have grappled with a relentless onslaught of natural disasters.

In Libya's city of Derna, heavy rains breached the embankments of two major dams, resulting in over 11,000 fatalities and more than 10,000 individuals reported missing till 19 September, according to the international media but the World Health Organization confirmed 3,922 deaths. Furthermore, severe squalls claimed the lives of over 170 people across Libya. The World Meteorological Organization Secretary-General Petteri Taalas, emphasized the importance of continuous meteorological and hydrological services to reduce casualties during extreme weather events.

> Recognizing the commendable efforts of governments and volunteers in disaster risk reduction is crucial. While everybody cannot halt nature's fury, preparedness and response can significantly reduce the toll on lives and property. Taking lessons from the disaster events in recent tragedies in Libya reminds all of the importance of proactive measures and cooperation in the face of natural disasters. By working together, everybody can enhance our resilience and protect the communities from the devastating impacts of such events.

The catastrophic events in Libya underscore a vital lesson: adequate preparation is the most effective defence against natural disasters. Such preparations should aim to minimize property damage and protect human lives. Even when fatigue sets in during disaster preparedness efforts, these endeavours are invaluable in safeguarding lives and mitigating impacts.

This monsoon season, affected by El Niño, unexpectedly triggered landslides, floods, heavy rains, and inundations, disrupting daily life and the environment in Myanmar. The government's meticulous disaster preparedness plans allowed the people of Myanmar to weather these challenges admirably. This year's collaborative efforts between the government and the public in disaster risk reduction have resulted in numerous success stories.

A holistic approach encompassing prevention, rescue and relief, resettlement, rehabilitation, and reconstruction is paramount to help those affected by natural disasters rebuild their lives. Therefore, it is essential for all citizens in Myanmar to fully appreciate the government's disaster prevention efforts and the invaluable contributions of volunteer organizations toward ensuring their survival.

Recognizing the commendable efforts of governments and volunteers in disaster risk reduction is crucial. While everybody cannot halt nature's fury, preparedness and response can significantly reduce the toll on lives and property. Taking lessons from the disaster events in recent tragedies in Libya reminds all of the importance of proactive measures and cooperation in the face of natural disasters. By working together, everybody can enhance our resilience and protect the communities from the devastating impacts of such events.

ARTICLE

From Screens to Carts, Shoppers Explore a Boundless Digital Economy

BY AUGUSTIN

TODAY, consumers are increasingly engaging with and navigating the vast and limitless world of the digital economy through their computer screens and mobile devices. They are transitioning from simply browsing or viewing products and services on digital screens (such as smartphones, tablets, or computers) to actively making purchases or adding items to their online shopping carts.

Online shopping and the delivery business have transformed the way people shop and receive products in Asian countries.

With the ever-evolving technological landscape and changing consumer expectations, the online retail and logistics industries in Asia will continue to evolve and thrive.

As these sectors adapt to challenges and harness opportunities, they will play a pivotal role in shaping the future of commerce in the region and beyond.

One of the key drivers of online shopping in Asia is the availability of a diverse array of products at competitive prices.

E-commerce giants like Alibaba, Amazon, Flipkart, and Lazada have become household names, offering a vast selection of goods at various price points. Moreover, these platforms often provide exclusive deals, discounts, and customer reviews, enhancing the shopping experience.

The adoption of online shopping in Asian countries has been remarkable. Factors contributing to this shift include increasing internet penetration, the proliferation of smartphones, and changing lifestyles.

E-commerce Thrives Across Asia

Consumers in countries like China, India, Japan, and South Korea have embraced e-commerce platforms as convenient and efficient ways to shop for a wide range of products, from electronics to groceries.

China has been a powerhouse in the world of e-commerce and online shopping. Companies like Alibaba Group (owner of platforms like Taobao and Tmall) and JD.com have a massive presence, and they offer a wide range of products. China also has a well-developed logistics network, including companies like SF Express and Cainiao, which support efficient delivery services.

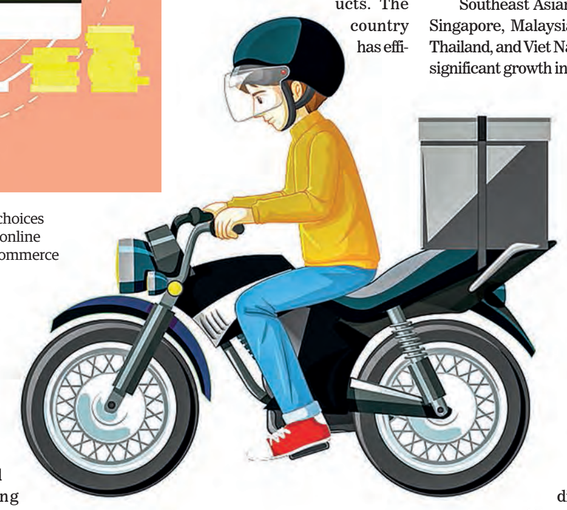
The rapid expansion of China's e-commerce market has emerged as a promising avenue for Thai businesses, as indicated by a study conducted by the Thai Commerce Ministry. This study, released by the ministry's Trade Policy and Strategy Office (TPSO), sheds light on the potential benefits Thai businesses can reap from the booming cross-border trade between the two nations.

To facilitate this surge in cross-border e-commerce (CBEC), the Chinese government has proactively introduced regulations and established a remarkable 165 pilot CBEC zones across 33 cities and areas. These zones play a pivotal role in enabling the sale of Chinese products on foreign websites and, conversely, the sale of foreign products on Chinese websites.

The digital economy offers consumers countless choices with a wide range of products and services, while online shopping delivery services are essential in the e-commerce system. **ILLUSTRATION: PIXABAY**

India's e-commerce market has been rapidly growing, driven by companies like Flipkart and Amazon India. The country's large population and increasing internet penetration have contributed to the growth of online shopping. Delivery services and logistics have also expanded significantly to serve a vast and diverse customer base.

Japan has a strong e-commerce market, with companies like Rakuten and Amazon Japan leading the way. Online shopping is well-established, and Japanese consumers are known for their preference for high-quality products. The country has efficient delivery services, ensuring prompt and reliable order fulfilment.



South Korea boasts a robust e-commerce sector, with platforms like Gmarket and Coupang enjoying popularity. The country's advanced technology infrastructure and widespread use of smartphones have contributed to the success of online shopping. Efficient delivery services are essential in this competitive market.

Southeast Asian nations like Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, and Viet Nam have seen significant growth in e-commerce and online shopping. Companies like Shopee and Lazada have made a substantial impact in the region. E-commerce and delivery services are expanding rapidly to cater to the diverse needs of these markets.

Online shopping in Myanmar was gradually emerging as internet access improved and e-commerce platforms began to operate in the country. There were local e-commerce platforms and online marketplaces.

Online payment methods and digital wallets were also in the process of gaining popularity. Cash on delivery (COD) was a common payment option for online shoppers in Myanmar. Internet penetration in Myanmar has been expanding with high-speed internet and smartphones in all areas of the country.

Like in any emerging e-commerce market, the reliability and trustworthiness of online sellers could vary. To engage in online shopping in Myanmar, you can start by searching for local e-commerce websites and platforms. The e-commerce landscape can change rapidly.

Effective Online Shopping Regulation in Myanmar

To regulate the online shopping landscape in Myanmar effectively and comprehensively, the Ministry of Commerce has taken a series of measures and established a comprehensive framework.

The Ministry of Commerce has released an E-commerce guide applicable to all businesses engaged in the sale of goods and services via the Internet, including online stores.

According to these guidelines, individuals or entities entering the E-commerce sector in Myanmar must register within the registration system managed by the Ministry of Commerce. Furthermore, they are obligated to adhere to the specific laws relevant to their field of operation.

Additionally, E-commerce operators are required to disclose their methods and provide information for resolving any disputes regarding the accuracy of the address and phone number listed on their websites or social media platforms where they conduct their business.

Moreover, those selling through websites must offer a means of entering into contracts with buyers and consumers, and a similar requirement applies to sellers using social networks.

The guide includes a chapter on consumer protection, mandating that sellers clearly describe their products and services. Sellers must furnish details on pricing, taxes, delivery, and refund policies.

If the delivery exceeds the agreed-upon timeframe by more than 15 days, buyers have the right to terminate the transaction and receive a full refund, as per the agreement. Importantly, it is prohibited to use endorsements from individuals who have not actually used the product.

E-commerce operators are obligated to maintain payment records for a minimum of three years and provide them free of charge upon request by users. Additionally, they must furnish this information when requested by the court or authorities.

The guidelines encompass 99 points applicable to E-commerce businesses, outlining rules that must be observed in cases of disputes between buyers and sellers of goods and services.

SEE PAGE-11

Google's AI chatbot goes personal tapping into Gmail

Google has integrated Gmail, YouTube, and other tools into its Bard chatbot to highlight the utility of generative AI while addressing safety concerns.

GOOGLE on Tuesday said it had integrated Gmail, YouTube and other tools into its Bard chatbot as the tech giants seek to persuade users that generative AI is useful and not dangerous or just a fad.

The search engine juggernaut has for years discreetly developed AI powers, but was caught off guard when OpenAI late last year released ChatGPT and teamed up with Microsoft to make its capabilities available to users worldwide.

Google then raced out its own Bard chatbot earlier this year, making it available in more than 40 languages and overcoming data privacy concerns from regulators in Europe.

The company said its beefed up chatbot would allow users to carry out new tasks such as summarize a confusing string of emails into its main points or tap into Google Maps to find the best way to a holiday destination.

Google Unveils Bard Extensions

These so-called Bard Extensions would also be available to retrieve key points from content across Google Docs and Google Drive, including PDFs, the company said.

The new powers would also help expose incorrect answers with a new button that would compare Bard output with the results of a Google search query on the same topic, flagging discrepancies.

This would hopefully give comfort to those put off by the so-called "hallucinations" or bad responses that are a constant danger when using Bard, ChatGPT or Microsoft's Bing.

Bard's new capabilities closely match offerings from Microsoft that infuse its Office 365 apps with AI powers, though those come at an extra cost to customers and are not available through the Bing chatbot.

To assuage privacy concerns, a pop-up on the Bard webpage said the new powers would only access personal data "with your permission".

Google Assures Privacy

Any scraping of personal content from Google's workplace tools — such as Docs, Drive or Gmail — would not be used to target ads, train Bard, or be seen by human reviewers, it said. "You're always in control of your privacy settings when deciding how you want to use these extensions, and you can turn them off at any time," the company said in a blog post.

SOURCE: AFP

Google's goal is to demonstrate that generative AI can be practical and safe for a wide range of tasks and applications. **PHOTO: LIONEL BONAVENTURE/ AFP**

SCI/TECH WORLD

Scientists find 'missing ingredient' for pink diamonds

Scientists have made a significant discovery related to pink diamonds, known for their extreme rarity and beauty.

More than 90 per cent of the world's pink diamonds have been found at the Argyle mine, in the remote northwest of Australia. **PHOTO: NATURE PUBLISHING GROUP/AFP**

SCIENTISTS said on Tuesday they have found the "missing ingredient" for pink diamonds, some of the world's most expensive stones due their rarity and beauty, and the discovery could help find more.

More than 90 per cent of all the pink diamonds ever found were discovered at the recently closed Argyle mine in the remote northwest of Australia.

But exactly why Argyle — which unlike most other diamond mines does not sit in the middle of a continent but on the edge of one — produced so many pink gems has remained a mystery.

In a new study published in the journal Nature Communications, a team of Australia-based researchers said the pink diamonds were brought to the Earth's surface by the break up of the first supercontinent around 1.3 billion years ago.

Hugo Olierook, a researcher at Curtin University in the state of Western Australia and the study's lead author, told AFP that two of the three ingredients for forming pink diamonds had already been known.

The first ingredient is carbon — and it must be in the bowels of Earth.

Anything shallower than 150 kilometres (93 miles) deep would be graphite — "that stuff in your pencils, not nearly as pretty on an engagement ring", Olierook said.

The second ingredient is just the right amount of pressure, to damage the otherwise clear diamonds.

"Push just a little bit and it turns pink. Push a little too hard and they turn brown," he said. Most of the diamonds discovered at Argyle were of this less valuable brown hue, he added. — AFP

Solar panels go into service near North Pole

Neatly lined up in six rows in a field, 360 solar panels will on Thursday begin providing electricity to an old shipping radio station, Isfjord Radio, now converted into a base camp for tourists. **PHOTO: AFP**

NORWAY has installed solar panels in its Svalbard archipelago, a region plunged in round-the-clock darkness all winter, in a pilot project that could help remote Arctic communities transition to green energy.

Neatly lined up in six rows in a field, 360 solar panels will on Thursday begin providing electricity to an old shipping radio station, Isfjord Radio, now converted into a base camp for tourists.

The windswept archipelago — also known as Spitsbergen — is located some 1,300 kilometres (800 miles) from the North Pole and is accessible only by boat or helicopter, weather-permitting.

"It's what we believe to be the world's northernmost ground-mounted PV (photovoltaic) system," Mons Ole Sellevold, renewable energies technical adviser at state-owned energy group Store Norske, told AFP.

"It's the first time anyone has done it at this scale in the Arctic," he said, his rifle slung over his shoulder in case polar bears turn up, a not uncommon occurrence at these latitudes.

Another 100 solar panels are positioned on the roof of the radio station — which has until now run on diesel generators — and should cover about half of the site's electricity needs and cut its CO2 emissions.

In summer, the region is bathed in an abundance of sunlight, with a "midnight sun" that never sets.

The solar panels also benefit from the "albedo" effect, the reflective power of snow and ice, as well as low temperatures that improve their efficiency. — AFP

'Game of Thrones' author, other writers sue ChatGPT creator over copyrights

"GAME of Thrones" author George RR Martin and other best-selling fiction writers have filed a class-action lawsuit against OpenAI, accusing the tech start-up of violating their copyrights to fuel its generative AI chatbot ChatGPT. The Authors Guild, an organization representing writers, and several novelists including Martin, John Grisham and Jodi Picoult, accused the California-based company of using their books "without permission" to train ChatGPT's "large language models", algorithms capable of producing human-sounding text responses based on simple queries, according to the lawsuit.

"And at the heart of these algorithms is systematic theft on a massive scale," said the complaint, filed Tuesday in a New York federal court. — AFP

George RR Martin speaks onstage at the "House of the Dragon" panel during 2022 Comic Con International: San Diego at San Diego Convention Center on 23 July 2022 in San Diego, California. **PHOTO: KEVIN WINTER /AFP/FILE**

Australia to host Taylor Swift academic symposium

Melbourne University is hosting "Swiftposium 2024", a scholarly conference on 11-13 February, focused on various academic disciplines related to the 33-year-old pop icon.

On 7 August, Taylor Swift performed at SoFi Stadium in Inglewood, California, as part of "The Eras Tour". **PHOTO: AFP**

AN Australian university says it will host an academic symposium on Taylor Swift, exploring her impact on gender, literature, the economy and the music industry.

Scholars will gather at Melbourne University for "Swiftposium 2024" on 11-13 February to delve into a "broad range of academic disciplines" related to the 33-year-old pop icon.

The university this week issued a call for academic papers to be submitted ahead of the learned meeting, which is being organized along with six other universities across Australia and New Zealand. "Swiftposium is a hybrid academic conference for scholars to engage in critical dialogue about Swift's popularity and its profound implications for a range of issues," it said.

Among the main themes are the phenomenon of Swift fandom, the economic impacts of Swift's touring and cultural prominence, her relationship with gender, sexuality, feminism and LGBTQ+ rights, intellectual property, and literary interpretations. — AFP

Mexican singer Peso Pluma cancels concert after death threats

MEXICAN singer Peso Pluma on Wednesday cancelled a planned upcoming concert in Tijuana after a drug cartel allegedly threatened to kill him if he performed in the crime-plagued border city. "Our goal is to protect the fans and the team. For the safety of everyone involved we will cancel our show in Tijuana," the artist said in a message on his production company's Instagram account.

"Thank you very much to all our fans for understanding. We love you," added the 24-year-old behind the hit "Ella Baila Sola", who admits to having written songs at the request of drug traffickers. Tijuana authorities said last week that four signs had been put up in the city just south of San Diego, in the US state of California, threatening to murder the singer if he performed there on 14 October. — AFP

From Screens to Carts, Shoppers Explore a Boundless Digital Economy

FROM PAGE-9

These rules span various aspects of commerce, including online payment systems, advertising terms, copyright issues, fraudulent sales and purchases, and consumer protection regulations.

Prominent Asian delivery businesses

Here are some of the top delivery companies in Asia. They offer a variety of services, from food delivery to logistics, and have grown to serve customers all across the continent.

A dynamic sector has seen the rise of companies like GrabFood, Gojek, Zomato, Swiggy, Foodpanda, Deliveroo, Lalamove, Ninja Van, J&T Express, and Yamato Transport, offering diverse delivery solutions, from food to logistics, in response to evolving consumer demands.

In Myanmar's evolving delivery landscape, several companies have emerged to meet the growing demand for efficient logistics and courier services.

DHL is a globally recognized logistics and courier powerhouse, extending its reach into Myanmar. This international giant offers a comprehensive array of shipping and delivery services, leveraging its expertise to cater to local and international needs.

J&T Express, a dynamic courier and delivery service provider, has strategically expanded its operations across Southeast Asia, including Myanmar. With a focus on reliability and efficiency, it has become a prominent choice for sending parcels and documents.

Grab, renowned as Southeast Asia's ride-hailing leader, has diversified its services to include GrabExpress. This feature enables users to dispatch parcels and essential documents swiftly and conveniently, capitalizing on Grab's extensive regional network.

Specializing in crucial last-mile delivery solutions, Ninja Van has made its mark in Myanmar's delivery landscape. It primarily serves the burgeoning e-commerce sector, streamlining the critical journey of packages from sellers to buyers.

Mogok Express is a locally rooted delivery service provider in Myanmar. With a focus on domestic logistics, it offers reliable and efficient delivery and courier services, meeting the needs of businesses and individuals across the country.

The contemporary shopping landscape has undergone a profound transformation, thanks to the advent of e-commerce. One particular facet of this shift is the way consumers engage with the process of purchasing, where the transition from physical stores to virtual platforms has been particularly noteworthy.

In conclusion, the transition from passive screen-based engagement to active participation in online shopping and various digital economic activities reflects the profound impact of digital technology on our daily lives. ■

In war-scarred Iraqi city, food business gives women independence

ABIR Jassem is busy preparing stuffed vegetables at a kitchen in Iraq's Mosul, where after years of unrest a women-run catering service has helped single mothers like her achieve financial security.

The 37-year-old, who lost her husband while the city was under the control of the Islamic State (IS) group, said she had to get a job to put food on the table for her and her children.

"If I didn't work, we wouldn't have anything to eat," said Jassem. She is now one of some 30 employees of "Taste of Mosul", which celebrates local delicacies and was founded in 2017 after the northern Iraqi metropolis was liberated from IS jihadists. Most of the workers — cooks as well as two deliverywomen — are widowed or divorced. Mosul residents are all reeling from the brutal IS rule and the war to defeat it, but for women in Iraq's largely conservative and patriarchal society, the challenges are often compounded. For Jassem, whose husband died of hepatitis, the catering business has offered a lifeline. Her family had refused for her to work in any mixed-gender spaces, "but I wanted to work so I would not have to depend on anybody", she said. — AFP

Abir Jassem says a women-run catering service in the northern Iraqi city of Mosul has offered her a lifeline. **PHOTO: ZAID AL-OBEIDI/AFP**

ECONOMY
WORLD

India has highest potential rate: American investor Ray Dalio

India's economic rise: From 10th to 5th largest economy, now behind the US, China, Japan, and Germany.

AMERICAN investor Ray Dalio has said that India has the highest potential growth rate. Speaking at the All-In Summit conducted by The All-In Podcast, Dalio called India "important", he said that New Delhi is where China was when he started to go there in 1984.

Ray Dalio is an American investor and hedge fund manager, who is the founder of Bridgewater Associates one of the world's largest hedge funds. In the podcast that showcased on social media platform YouTube, Dalio compared Prime Minister Narendra Modi to former Chinese President Deng Xiaoping and spoke about massive reform, development and creativity in India. In 2014 when Narendra Modi was sworn in as the Prime Minister, India was the 10th largest economy. In 2022, India became the fifth-largest economy overtaking the UK. Indian economy is currently ranked fifth and is behind the US, China, Japan, and Germany. At the All-In Summit 2023 at Royce Hall on the UCLA Campus in Los Angeles, Dalio said, "We have ten-year growth rate estimates for China excuse me, India and all the countries, top 22 countries. And you could see it online if you want, country by country, and the reasons for it, India has the highest potential growth rate." "I think India is where China was when I started to go. I started to go in 1984. So, if you look at the complexion, the per capita income, and I think Modi is a Deng Xiaoping, so that you have a massive reform, development, creativity, all those elements. — ANI

Ray Dalio recalled that the neutral countries in history did the best. **PHOTO: PIX FOR VISUAL PURPOSE/ AFP**

Gates Foundation donates US$ 200 mln to SDGs in low-income countries

THE Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation has announced commitments totaling 200 million US dollars to advance the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs).

The announcement was made at the 2023 Goalkeepers events on Tuesday and Wednesday in New York City, the foundation said in a press release Wednesday.

About half of the funding will go to the UN Population Fund (UNFPA) Supplies Partnership to ensure accessible and affordable contraceptives for more women in need in LMICs. The other half will go to Unitaid, an organization saving lives by making new health products available and affordable for people in low- and middle-income countries, to help accelerate the introduction and delivery of new lifesaving solutions at equitable scale, including those for maternal and newborn health. — Xinhua

About half of the funding will go to the UN Population Fund (UNFPA) Supplies Partnership to ensure accessible and affordable contraceptives for more women in need in LMICs. **PHOTO: MOADH AL-DULAIMI/AFP**

Russia curbs fuel exports to avoid shortages

This decision follows Russia's earlier choice to extend voluntary cuts in oil exports, in cooperation with Saudi Arabia, with the goal of supporting global crude oil prices.

RUSSIA'S government announced Thursday it was temporarily limiting exports of petrol and diesel fuel to avoid shortages on the domestic market.

The exchange price of domestic petrol soared to a record high this week, in part due to a weaker rouble, rising global oil prices and repair work at refineries curbing supplies.

The announcement comes weeks after Moscow decided to extend a voluntary cut of oil exports until the end of the year in a coordinated move with Saudi Arabia aimed at propping up global crude prices. "The government introduced a temporary restriction on exports of motor gasoline and diesel fuel to stabilise the domestic market," the government said Thursday. "The decision was made to stabilize fuel prices on the domestic market," it said, without specifying what kind of measures would be introduced. — AFP

Oil port in Russia. **PHOTO: YURI SMITYUK / SPUTNIK**

Slovakia, Ukraine strike grain exports deal: Slovak ministry

SLOVAKIA and Ukraine have struck a deal on a new grain trading system that should see Slovakia's current import ban lifted by the end of the year, Slovakia said Thursday.

"Until this system is launched and its full functionality is tested, the ban on the import of four commodities from Ukraine... is still valid until the end of 2023," the Slovak agriculture ministry said in a statement.

The spokesman said that during a phone conversation with his Ukrainian counterpart Mykola Solskyi on Wednesday, — AFP

As electric shift stalls, Volkswagen weighs up savings

VOLKSWAGEN'S factory in the heart of the east German city of Dresden was conceived as a showcase for the auto giant's electric future but on a September afternoon the production line stands still.

Rather than serving as a shining example, the site, where the group's flagship electric model ID.3 is finished, is more of an illustration of the challenges facing Volkswagen's transition away from internal combustion engines.

Production of battery-powered vehicles at the plant is small scale and slower than its foreign rivals, which have left the storied German group for dust. Chinese and American carmakers, such as BYD and Tesla, are well ahead of Volkswagen on the key components needed to make electric vehicles – notably in the area of battery technology.

Volkswagen is pouring tens of billions of euros into its pivot to electric vehicles. But with the economic outlook less than rosy, chief executive Oliver Blume has pledged to "work hard" on cutting costs to boost performance. — AFP

Around 35 Volkswagen electric cars are finished every day at the "Transparent Factory" in Dresden. **PHOTO: POOL/AFP/FILE**

Microsoft nears takeover of 'Call of Duty' maker

XBOX-OWNER Microsoft has closed in on its $69-billion takeover of "Call of Duty" video-game maker Activision Blizzard after the UK said Friday that a revamped deal addressed regulatory concerns.

The US tech titan launched its bid early last year, seeking to establish the world's third biggest gaming firm by revenue after China's Tencent and Japan's PlayStation maker Sony.

The transaction has faced significant scrutiny from regulators in the United States as well as Britain, where the Competition and Markets Authority blocked a previous version of the deal in April.

The CMA said in a statement on Friday that "the restructured deal makes important changes" and "opens the door to the deal being cleared".

The CMA would consult on the "remedies" before making a final decision, it added.

In a separate statement, Microsoft vice-chairman and president Brad Smith said the group was "encouraged by this positive development in the CMA's review process.

"We presented solutions that we believe fully address the CMA's remaining concerns related to cloud game streaming, and we will continue to work towards earning approval to close" the deal by 18 October. — AFP

Microsoft's bid for Activision Blizzard has faced intense scrutiny from regulator. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

EU reduces record Intel antitrust fine to 376 mln euros

THE European Commission slapped a new fine of 376 million euros ($400 million) on US chipmaker Intel on Friday after an EU court annulled a previous record penalty for abusing its dominance in the computer chip market.

The case is one of many protracted legal battles against tech behemoths the European Union has faced, fights which have driven Brussels to introduce tough new curbs on how digital giants do business in Europe.

The European Union's antitrust enforcer said Intel had engaged in "anti-competitive practices aimed at excluding competitors from the relevant market".

The commission said it was restoring the fine partially "for a previously established abuse of dominant position in the market for computer chips called x86 central processing units".

An EU court in Luxembourg last year annulled the fine of 1.06 billion euros handed down in 2009, after it found that Brussels failed to adequately prove anti-competitive practices. — AFP

PESTICIDES DISTRIBUTER CHANGING

We, **Marga Min Co.,Ltd** would like to change distributer of the following products, (registered by **Pilarquim (Shanghai) Co.,Ltd** to Pesticide Registration Board, Myanmar), from former distributer **Myanmar Golden Sun Crop Science Co.,Ltd.** If any objection or enquiry, please contact to Pesticide Registration Board, Plant Protection Division, Bayint Naung Road, West Gyogone, Insein Township, Yangon, from here to next 14 days.
MARGA MIN CO.LTD 09-455557861

Sr.	Trade Name	Active Ingredient	Type of pesticide	Registration No.
1.	PILARSPIRIT	Cyhalofop-butyl 15% + Penoxsulam 2% OD	Herbicide	P2021-5433

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
M.V KOTA HAPAS VOY.NO. (KHPS0396N)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V KOTA HAPAS VOY.NO. (KHPS0396N)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **23-9-2023** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **AWPT** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL LINES

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
M.V LUCKY STAR VOY.NO. (2308)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V LUCKY STAR VOY.NO. (2308)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **25-9-2023** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MIPLT** 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: **2301928**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:
M/S ELDER TRIUMPHANT SHIPPING LINES PTE LTD.

Announcement

Booking.Com (Myanmar) Company Limited hereby announces that a reduction of its capital by an amount of USD 750,000 has been approved by its members on 22.09.2023.

The Global New Light of Myanmar
www.gnlm.com.mm
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09 454 237 515

ROLLING UPDATES
WORLD

Fragile ceasefire in Nagorno-Karabakh after 'constructive' peace talks

Fragile ceasefire holds in Nagorno-Karabakh after Armenian surrender; Azerbaijan and separatists begin peace talks after Baku's claimed control.

The Nagorno-Karabakh conflict involves Armenia and Azerbaijan in a dispute over the Nagorno-Karabakh region, primarily inhabited by ethnic Armenians, along with seven adjacent districts once inhabited by Azerbaijanis, who were displaced in the 1990s. **PHOTO: REPRESENTATIONAL IMAGE/AFP**

A fragile ceasefire held on Friday in Nagorno-Karabakh, after Armenian separatists this week capitulated to Azerbaijan's lightning offensive. Azerbaijan and the separatists from the disputed territory of Nagorno-Karabakh held their first direct peace talks Thursday, after Baku claimed to have regained control over the breakaway region.

The separatists agreed to lay down their arms on Wednesday as part of a Russian-brokered ceasefire plan that halted Azerbaijan's 24-hour offensive to retake land at the centre of decades of conflict. Azerbaijan's presidency said the two-hour meeting had been "held in a constructive and peaceful atmosphere" in the presence of Russian peacekeepers. Both sides expressed readiness to hold more talks.

Baku's negotiators presented plans for the "reintegration" of Karabakh's Armenian population into Azerbaijan and pledged to provide urgently needed fuel, humanitarian supplies, and medical care to residents. While the meeting was happening, gunfire rang out in the separatist stronghold of Stepanakert, despite the truce deal. The breakaway authorities accused Azerbaijan of violating the ceasefire, but Baku denied the allegation. — AFP

Arson turns Amazon reforestation project to ashes

IT was supposed to be a good-news story out of the damaged Amazon rainforest: a project that replanted hundreds of thousands of trees in an illegally deforested nature reserve in Brazil.

Then it went up in flames, allegedly torched by land-grabbers trying to reclaim the territory for cattle pasture.

Launched in 2019 by environmental research group Rioterra, the reforestation project took 270 hectares (665 acres) of forest that had been razed by cattle ranching on a protected nature reserve in the northern state of Rondonia and replanted it with 360,000 trees.

The idea was ambitious, says Rioterra's project coordinator, Alexis Bastos: save a corner of the world's biggest rainforest, fighting climate change and creating green jobs along the way.

Then, just as the scarred brown land started returning to emerald-green forest—its growing young trees absorbing an estimated 8,000 tonnes of carbon from the atmosphere in three years—the whole thing burned to the ground.

Bastos remembers the sinking feeling he got when he saw the area turned to ashes. — AFP

Investigators concluded the fire, which started on 3 September, was arson, according to a forensic report by federal environmental agency ICMBio. **PHOTO: AFP**

US farmers, tech tycoons square off over plans for utopian city

Silicon Valley elites secretly working to transform California farmland into a modern city face opposition and questions from local ranchers about their methods and intentions.

A stealth campaign by Silicon Valley elites with a dream of turning a swath of California farmland into a new age city has ranchers who live here challenging their tactics and their motives. The project first surfaced when a mysterious buyer started snapping up parcels of land in this rural outback between San Francisco and Sacramento.

The buyer, first revealed by The New York Times in August, turned out to be a secretive outfit called Flannery Associates, the brainchild of a former Goldman Sachs wunderkind, Jan Sramek. Flannery Associates said on its recently launched website that it has acquired more than 50,000 acres (20,200 hectares) of land for its California Forever project, whose backers include LinkedIn cofounder Reid Hoffman, Steve Jobs's widow Laurene Powell Jobs and star tech investor Marc Andreessen. — AFP

A stealth campaign by Silicon Valley elites with a dream of turning a swath of California farmland into a new age city has ranchers who live here challenging their tactics and their motives. **PHOTO: AFP**

Charles in Bordeaux on last day of climate-focused France trip

KING Charles III on Friday arrived in France's southwestern city of Bordeaux on the final day of his state visit, putting the environment at centre stage in a region famed for its vineyards but also hit by climate-induced wildfires.

The 74-year-old British head of state is wrapping up a three days of diplomacy aimed at forging closer cross-Channel links after Brexit but also closer cooperation on environmental issues, his lifelong passion that are now top of the global political agenda.

Crowds of Union Jack-waving well-wishers gathered outside Bordeaux city hall to welcome Charles and Queen Camilla as they arrived after landing at the city's airport, AFP correspondents said. — AFP

SPORTS

Women's Football: Myanmar suffer 0-3 loss to South Korea in Asian Games

MYANMAR women's football team suffered a 0-3 defeat to South Korea in the opening match of the women's football tournament of the XIX Asian Games held in China yesterday.

The Myanmar team played their best and conceded only one goal in the first half, but conceded two more goals in the second half and lost by 0-3.

Team Myanmar played defensively to limit the number of goals and eliminated South Korea's attack step by step. The South Korean team scored the opening goal in the 24 minute, leading by one goal at the end of the first half.

Team South Korea scored the winning goals in the 58 and 68 minutes and won by three goals at the end of the game.

Myanmar is placed in Group E together with South Korea, the Philippines and Hong Kong. Team Myanmar will take on Hong Kong in the second group match on 25 September. — Ko Nyi Lay/KZL

A Myanmar women's team player acts for a match day advert.

S Korean players are seen celebrating their triumph at the match yesterday.

Lexi Thompson delivered for the USA in the opening match. **PHOTO: AFP**

USA sweep Europe in first Solheim Cup session

LEXI Thompson starred as the United States romped to a clean sweep of the opening morning foursomes against Europe at the Solheim Cup in Spain on Friday.

Aiming to prevent Europe from claiming a third straight title, Stacy Lewis's American team went into the match as underdogs but romped into a 4-0 lead.

It is the first time since 2009 that the USA have won the opening session.

Thompson and Megan Khang set the tone in the top match, winning the opening three holes against European rookies Linn Grant and Maja Stark. The Swedish pair, who had never lost as a foursomes pairing as amateurs, fought back to level the match with five holes to play.

But Thompson, who has endured a poor season, rose to the occasion and made a vital 15-foot birdie putt at the 15th and another win at 17th closed out a 2 and 1 victory.

"It was a real honour to get to hit the first tee shot and Megan and I just kept swinging it well and we had a lot of fun," said the 28-year-old.

"It's great to get a first point on the board."

The second match was close all the way, but a winning birdie from Danielle Kang and Andrea Lee at the 17th proved decisive and was good enough for a one-hole win over Celine Boutier and Georgia Hall.

The European pair had never lost in four previous Solheim Cup outings. The third match was also nip and tuck but Nelly Korda and Allisen Corpuz sneaked a one-up victory over the experienced Anna Nordqvist and Leona Maguire. — AFP

Arsenal captain Odegaard signs new contract

ARSENAL captain Martin Odegaard has signed a new five-year contract at the club, becoming the latest player to commit his long-term future to the Gunners.

The 24-year-old midfielder follows in the footsteps of Bukayo Saka, Gabriel Martinelli and William Saliba, who have all extended their deals.

The former Real Madrid player scored 15 Premier League goals and provided seven assists as the Gunners finished second behind Manchester City last season.

He has three goals in all competitions this season.

"It was an easy decision for me," said the Norway international, who initially joined on loan from Real in January 2021.

"As I said many times, I felt connected and I felt at home here since the first day.

"Also, I was moving around a lot (during loan spells) and struggling to really settle down, so I felt like I needed a place to come and settle down and to kind of find a home."

Odegaard said the spate of players signing new deals reflected the positive direction of the club under manager Mikel Arteta. — AFP

Myanmar to showcase seven sports in Asian Games

MYANMAR will compete in seven sports in the XIX Asian Games hosted by China, as stated by the sports federations.

The tourney will include 40 sports, and Myanmar will compete in only seven sports: football (men and women), Wushu, Sepak Takraw, Traditional Boat Race, Archery, Taekwondo and Esports.

The football matches for men and women are being launched in China and other events will kick-start in the coming days.

Previously, Myanmar only planned to compete in five sports, but with the addition of two more, more than 170 members will compete in the seven sports.

The Myanmar sports team won only two bronze medals in the last competition in the 2018 Asian Games in Indonesia, and now they are preparing for success in the XIX Asian Games. — Ko Nyi Lay/KZL

Myanmar Wushu athlete Aye Thitsa Myint is seen performing at the previous competition. **PHOTO: THAW GYI**

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Fragile ceasefire in Nagorno-Karabakh after 'constructive' peace talks

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Take action against those facing terrorism charges, India tells Canada

- India has made extradition requests or sought assistance related to more than 20-25 individuals over the years, but the response from Canada has been deemed unhelpful.
- BLS International Services suspends Indian visa services in Canada amid diplomatic tensions.

A man checks his mobile as he sits outside an Air Canada regional office in New Delhi on 20 September. 2023. **PHOTO: AFP**

ASKING Canada to take action against those facing charges related to terrorism, India on Thursday said that Ottawa's response to its requests for extradition of anti-India elements has not been helpful.

Responding to a query at the regular media briefing, Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said that Canada should not become a safe haven for those involved in terror activities. "Safe haven is being provided in Canada, we want the Canadian government to not do so and take action against those who have terrorism charges or send them here to face justice," Bagchi said.

"We've sought either extradition request or assistance related to that, at least more than 20-25 individuals we've requested over the years but the response has not been helpful at all," he added.

Referring to terrorism, Bachi said it is funded and supported by Pakistan. He also spoke of the issue of safe havens.

Visa services provider BLS International on Thursday said it has with immediate effect suspended Indian visa services in Canada. BLS International Services Limited is an Indian outsourcing service provider for government and diplomatic missions worldwide. The company manages visa, passport, consular, attestation and citizen services.

Bilateral relations between India and Canada have hit a downward spiral after Prime Minister Trudeau on Monday alleged that "Indian agents" were behind the shooting of Hardeep Nijjar. Nijjar, chief of banned Khalistan Tiger Force (KTF) and a "designated terrorist" was killed in a targeted shooting at British Columbia in Canada's Surrey in June 2018.

India has rejected the allegations by the Trudeau administration, terming them "absurd" and "motivated". — ANI

Arkansas Governor Sarah Huckabee Sanders has defended her state's loosening of child labour laws. **PHOTO: MANDEL NGAN / AFP**

US states relax child labour laws amid rise in illegal work

WORKING in industrial laundries at age 14, labouring up to 35 hours a week on top of school — some US states are relaxing the barriers to employing minors, despite rising cases of exploitation.

At least five states have amended their legislation covering adolescent job regulations, with Arkansas being the latest to see changes take effect in August.

But such shifts come as the number of illegally employed minors has surged by 69 per cent since 2018, according to Labour Department figures. — AFP

Jailed Thaksin could be advisor to new Thai govt: Deputy PM

THAILAND'S jailed former prime minister Thaksin Shinawatra could act as advisor to the new government, the ruling party said on Friday (22 September), a move likely to raise hackles among the billionaire's critics. The 74-year-old, ousted by a military coup in 2006, returned to the kingdom last month and was immediately jailed for historic convictions for graft and abuse of power. New Thai Prime Minister Srettha Thavisin, of Thaksin's Pheu Thai party, said earlier this week that the two-time premier could still serve his country.

Deputy Prime Minister Phumtham Wechayachai said on Friday he supported the idea of having Thaksin as a government advisor. "It would be a good thing because he has six years of experience in the government. It would benefit the country," he told reporters at the government house. — AFP

Military exemption for South Korean gamers reignites debate

South Korea will be among the favourites to win gold in the eSports events. **PHOTO: JUNG YEON-JE / AFP**

K-POP powerhouse BTS didn't get one, star footballer Son Heung-min did: South Korea grants limited exemptions from military service and for the first time eSports players can earn one.

For South Korean men, winning gold in any sport at the Asian Games opening on Saturday in Hangzhou comes with an automatic exemption from 18 months in the army.

This year eSports is a medal event for the first time, meaning South Korea's top players including team captain Lee "Faker" Sang-hyeok have double the incentive.

Typically granted to elite athletes or classical musicians on the basis of promoting national prestige, the exemptions are highly sought after.

Fewer than 100 exemptions for "arts and sports" were handed out last year, official statistics show.

They are also controversial. South Korean skipper and Spurs striker Son avoided full military service after the national football team won gold at the 2018 Asian Games. But despite generating billions for the economy and helping propel K-pop to a global audience, megastars BTS were not deemed eligible.— AFP