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

The Global NEW LIGHT of MYANMAR

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A group documentary picture at Myanmar's booth.

Myanmar foods exhibited at Creative Life Festival of World Rice Noodle

MYANMAR foods were exhibited at the 2023 Nanning Qingxiu District Creative Life Festival of the World Rice Noodle held in Nanning, Qingxiu District, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, People's Republic of China, from 17 to 19 November, according to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The Myanmar consulate-general in Nanning joined the festival by opening a booth and serving visitors traditional Myanmar foods, including 'Nangyithoke' (thick rice noodle salad), coconut noodle soup, and vermicelli soup.

The wife of the Myanmar consul-general explained the objective of joining the event in interviews with Guangxi Daily News, Guangxi TV, Nanning TV, and Xinhua News.

The event was opened by Nanning Communist Party Standing Committee Member and Information Department Chair Mr Zhao Tong Fu and Nanning Qingxiu District Communist Party Secretary Mr Huang Yu. They visited the booths, including Myanmar's and those of other ASEAN countries, displayed in the festival. — ASH/ZS

NATIONAL PAGE-2

Air Chief Marshal of Royal Thai Air Force and delegation welcomed with guard of honour

NATIONAL PAGE-4

Illegal immigrants handed over to relevant authorities

BUSINESS PAGE-7

Octane prices see slight increase on 22 Nov

Kayin State witnesses 100% surge in visitor arrivals, hotel revenue in 9 months

The beautiful landscape of Kayin State with the background of Mount Zwekabin.

DURING the first nine months of this year, visitor arrivals reached 100 per cent in Kayin State, and hotels and guesthouses received more than K2,500 million, according to the Kayin State Directorate of Hotels and Tourism. A total of 134,359 local and foreign visitors entered the state during this period, contributing to hotel and guesthouse revenue of K2,557.751 million, as reported by Kayin State Chief Minister U Saw Myint Oo at a completion ceremony for three basic hotel service courses held in Hpa-an, Kayin State, on 20 November.

In the state, the number of hotels and guesthouses increased to 60, offering a total of 2,159 rooms this year, compared to 49 establishments with a total of 1,673 rooms as of 1 February 2021. The licence issuance rate has increased by 22.45 per cent, and revenue has seen a significant rise from K628.313 million in 2021 to K2,557.751 million in the same period of 2023.

The number of local and foreign visitors increased from 32,260 over nine months in 2021 to 134,359 over the same period in 2023, marking a remarkable 100 per cent increase, according to the directorate. State Chief Minister U Saw Myint Oo stated that both revenue and visitor arrivals have shown a 100 per cent increase when comparing the two periods.

Kayin State, known for its beautiful landscapes, caves, green paddy fields, waterfalls, Kayin ethnic culture and traditions, and seasonal festivals, has become a renowned tourist destination. — TWA/ZS

NATIONAL

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
State Administration Council
Order No 104/ 2023

10th Waxing of Tazaungmone 1385 ME
22 November 2023

Transfer and Duty Assignment of Deputy Minister

THE State Administration Council has transferred and assigned Deputy Minister Maj-Gen Khun Thant Zaw Htoo of the Ministry of Border Affairs to the duties of Deputy Minister at the Union Government Office 1 under Section 419 of the Constitution.

By order,
Aung Lin Dwe
Lieutenant-General
Secretary
State Administration Council

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 increasing of death rate based on the disease.

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Union Election Commission
Notification No 49/2023

10th Waxing of Tazaungmone 1385 ME
22 November 2023

Cancellation of registration as political party, and dissolution of party

1. Union Election Commission approved the registration of the Mro National Party as a political party with Registration No 11, by Announcement No 16/2023 dated 4 May 2023.
2. Regarding the submission for cancellation of registration as a political party (Letter No 55/Ma Ta Pa/ 2023 dated 27 October 2023, the Mro National Party from being registered as a political party, was approved to cancel its registration as a political party and dissolve the party, according to the decision of the Union Election Commission Management Committee Meeting No 33/2023 held on 22 November 2023 under Section 19 (a) of the Political Parties Registration Law.
3. Therefore, the Mro National Party, which is registered as a political party at the Union Election Commission, has been cancelled from its registration as a political party from 22 November 2023 and the party has been dissolved.

Thein Soe
Chairman
Union Election Commission

Air Chief Marshal of Royal Thai Air Force and delegation welcomed with guard of honour

AT the invitation of the Commander-in-Chief (Air) General Tun Aung, a delegation led by Air Chief Marshal Punpakdee Pattanakul and wife arrived in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning on an official goodwill visit to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, and high-ranking officers from Tatmadaw (Air), the Thai military attaché to Myanmar, and officials welcomed them at Nay Pyi Taw airport.

The delegation led by the Air Chief Marshal of the Royal Thai Air Force went to the Memorial to the Fallen Heroes (Nay Pyi Taw) and paid tribute to those who sacrificed their lives for the country and Tatmadaw by paying tribute in front of the monument (Shrine for Valiant Soldiers), and the Air Chief Marshal of the Royal Thai Air Force signed in the guest book.

Commander-in-Chief (Air) General Tun Aung and the Air Chief Marshal of the Royal Thai Air Force inspect the guard (above).
The delegation led by the Air Chief Marshal of the Royal Thai Air Force pays tribute to those who sacrificed their lives for the country and Tatmadaw at the Memorial to the Fallen Heroes (Nay Pyi Taw) (left below).

Air Chief Marshal of the Royal Thai Air Force Punpakdee Pattanakul was welcomed by Commander-in-Chief (Air) General Tun Aung with a guard of honour yesterday afternoon at the Bayintnaung Villa in Nay Pyi Taw.

The Commander-in-Chief (Air) General Tun Aung and the Air Chief Marshal of the Royal Thai Air Force first took the salute from the Guard of Honour and inspected the guard.

The air force officers of the two countries who attended the ceremony were introduced to each other, and the Air Chief Marshal of the Royal Thai Air Force signed in the guest book at the Bayintnaung Villa.

Commander-in-Chief (Air) General Tun Aung then had a discussion with the goodwill delegation led by Air Chief Marshal of the Royal Thai Air Force at the reception hall of Bayintnaung Villa.

Both sides frankly and openly discussed issues related to Myanmar-Thailand mutual friendship visits, sending trainees to further improve the relationship between the two air forces of the two countries, relief measures against natural disasters, technical information exchange, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR).

In the evening, Commander-in-Chief (Air) General Tun Aung hosted a dinner for the delegation led by the Air Chief Marshal of the Royal Thai Air Force and his wife at Jasmine Hotel in Nay Pyi Taw. — MNA/TS

NATIONAL

2023 Inter-State/Region Sepak Takraw Championship opens

State Administration Council members and dignitaries watch the men's doubles match yesterday in Nay Pyi Taw.

AN opening ceremony of the 2023 Inter-State/Region Sepak Takraw Championship was held at the Wunna Theikdi Stadium C in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday, joined by State Administration Council members.

During the event, Union Minister for Sports and Youth Affairs U Min Thein Zan who is also a chairperson of the Myanmar Olympic Committee said that athletes who will be competing in this competition should demonstrate their abilities and qualities to the best of their abilities and compete with the spirit of sportsmanship for the success of the state and regional teams they represent.

Next, he opened the competition by encouraging them to strive to become the country's proud sportsmen who will be able to strengthen the Myanmar national team. After that, athletes took the oaths of sports.

The State Administration Council members, the Union minister and officials cordially met the athletes and watched the men's double matches of the Nay Pyi Taw Council team versus the Taninthayi team and the Magway Region team versus the Mandalay Region team and the women's double matches of the Magway Region team versus the Mandalay Region team respectively.

The tourney is held to raise the level of sports and bring out the next generation of athletes to represent the country.

The 2023 Inter-State/Region Sepak Takraw Championship is being held from 22 to 24 November at Wunna Theikdi Stadium C in Nay Pyi Taw, with a total of 262 athletes from 14 male teams and 12 female teams competing.

Fans are invited to enjoy the matches for free, as stated by the officials. — MNA/KZL

Announcement

1. The Ministry of Transport and Communications of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar supervises the communication services, and application of communication devices as well as imports to be systematic ones as per the enacted Telecommunications Law and Rules.
2. At present, it is reported that the satellite internet services are being operated illegally in Myanmar and the users are also using it illegally.
3. Section (5) of Telecommunications Law and Spectrum Rules 52 (c) state that any person, department or business organization, inside the Republic of the Union of Myanmar or from abroad, willing to provide the end user with the facilities and/or telecommunication services shall apply to the Department for permission and licence.
4. Moreover, under Section 13 of Telecommunications Law and Licensing Rules 33 (a), those who want to keep the following telecommunication equipment in possession or to use are required to apply for telecommunication equipment licences;
   (a) Satellite communication devices (for instance: satellite phones)
   (b) Radar instruments and accessories
   (c) Radio devices (for instance: devices using MF, HF, VHF, and UHF)
5. Therefore, the satellite devices and illegal satellite telecommunications services mentioned in the fourth paragraph are banned from offering services, installation, possession and use without any licences. Those who breach the restriction will be taken action under Section (67) of the Telecommunications Law.

Goethe-Institut Myanmar initiates talk event: The meet Myanmar Photo Archive

GOETHE-INSTITUT Myanmar will hold a talk event under the topic "The meet Myanmar Photo Archive" for Myanmar photographers at Goethe-Institut Myanmar Auditorium in Yangon from 3:30 pm to 6 pm on 25 November.

The event will offer a chance to explore the photographs of the Myanmar Photo Archive and engage in a discussion, according to Goethe-Institut Myanmar.

The Myanmar Photo Archive possesses the largest collection of independent vernacular photography across the country and aims to provide public access to these materials in history and education fields, and for anyone interested in Myanmar's visual history, in collaboration with the Goethe-Institut Myanmar.

The event will also present a selection of artworks of grant recipients under the Open Call programme of Myanmar Photo Archive and a section for everyone to connect and engage in the discussion. — ASH/KTZH

Construction of 2 underpass flyovers planned at Yangon train stations

TWO underpass flyovers are planned to be built between Waibargi station and Okkalapa station and Pazungdaung station and Mahlwagon station on the Yangon circular railway, according to Myanma Railways.

This is part of the Yangon Circular Railway upgrading project and tender is being invited to the private sector.

Private businesses can buy tender application forms as of 20 November and applications will be closed at 12:30 pm on 4 December.

The project will include upgrading railroads and stations, constructing overbridges, upgrading level crossings and repairing works along the railways, according to Myanma Railways. — TWA/ZS

NATIONAL

Yangon-Mandalay highway operating normally despite false closure reports

THE highway connecting Yangon and Mandalay is operating as usual, according to an operator at the Aung Mingala terminal.

He says, "Vehicles are travelling as usual on the highway. They didn't usually travel around midnight before, but now they're going normally. So are express buses." The operator responded to recent fake news claiming that the Yangon-Mandalay highway was shut down.

The Yangon-Nay Pyi Taw segment on the highway was opened on 25 March 2009, the Nay Pyi Taw-Sagar Inn segment on 29 December 2010, and the Sagar Inn-Tagondaing (Mandalay) segment on 23 December 2011, respectively. The road is 336 miles and three furlongs long, spanning 22 townships.

The Highway Maintenance and Management Body at the Department of Highways under the Ministry of Construction has initiated an open tender for the installation of telematics systems on passenger buses commuting along the Yangon-Mandalay highway. The Command Centre aims to monitor the vehicles on the highway for their safety. — Myo Khaing/NT

Illegal immigrants handed over to relevant authorities

The transfer of illegal immigrants underway on the Myanmar-China border.

THE government is focusing on national stability and law and order in all regions and states, including the border areas. As some foreign nationals are illegally entering and residing in Myanmar through land borders, administrative organizations conduct necessary checks and repatriate them to relevant countries under the law.

A total of 1,288 illegal immigrants, comprising 1,091 males and 197 females, were repatriated to China through Chinese officials yesterday. Therefore, a total of 5,206 illegal immigrants, including 4,824 males and 382 females, were repatriated to China from 31 October to 22 November.

The government will continue the process of screening and repatriation for foreign nationals who have illegally entered and resided in the border areas. — MNA/KZW

Counter-argument to false information

Denial of false claims regarding forced porters, nighttime disruptions

RECENTLY, there have been reports on social media networks about people being forcibly taken as porters in Yangon, and in some townships, there is less traffic on nighttime roads than ever before. It has been observed that as soon as night falls, there are fewer people, early closing of shops, and workers returning home early.

According to a spokesperson for the Yangon government, these statements are only false news. Misinformation is being disseminated in a bid to stoke misunderstanding upon the

government, Tatmadaw, and relevant administrative organizations, and fear in the public. — MNA/KZW

MNDAA spokesperson alleges false online claims: Denies rocket strike on displaced people's vehicle in Laukkai

MNDAA, TNLA and AA terrorists launched terrorist attacks in Shan State (North) and the residents of some townships fled their homes. At 9:30 am on 22 November, the shell of terrorists hit a vehicle carrying displaced persons in Tonechain near Laukkai Township, leaving some people dead, according to the displaced persons.

The false news that MNDAA spokesperson Li Kyar Win claimed the shooting was committed by the Regional Control Command (Laukkai) went viral on social media.

According to the locals and other sources, Security Force members did not open fire, but the artillery shells from insurgents, targeting a Tatmadaw base, fell onto a vehicle that carried the displaced persons.

Terrorists intentionally spread such misinformation to cause unrest and garner the support of local ethnic people by instilling fear and causing misunderstanding towards Tatmadaw. — MNA/KTZH

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NATIONAL

Daily nationwide fuel oil delivered to regions/states

Photos show that oil bowsers transport fuels to Mon State (left) and one of the petrol stations in Waingmaw (right).

FUELS are transported from the terminals at Thilawa Port to petrol stations in all regions and states day and night, using bowsers.

A total of 1,308 oil bowsers delivered fuels, including over 1.6 million gallons of 92 Ron, over 230,000 gallons of 95 Ron, over 850,000 million gallons of diesel, and over 1.44 million gallons of premium diesel, to 1,887 filling stations across the country on 21 November.

Thus, the condition for purchasing oil in all petrol stations nationwide is reportedly normal, and the public can buy petrol easily and conveniently. — MNA/KZW

Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal Conditions

Issued at (14:00) hours MST on 22-11-2023

ACCORDING to the observations at (12:30) hrs MST today, a low pressure area may form over the South Andaman Sea on (26.11.2023). It is likely to move West-Northwestwards and may further intensify into a depression over the Southeast Bay and adjoining Andaman Sea on (27.11.2023).

MNHRC inspects Meiktila Prison

THE inspection team, led by Commissioner U Kyaw Myint from the Myanmar National Human Rights Commission, inspected the Meiktila Prison in Meiktila Township, Mandalay Region, on 22 November 2023 under Section 43 and Section 44 of the MNHRC Law.

The inspection team inspected the Meiktila Prison under the MNHRC law and procedures whether the prisoners and detainees enjoy fundamental rights, including appropriate food supply, access to healthcare and provision of adequate purified water. The inspection team enquired about the prisoners to ensure that they get their personal items and items sent by families, family visits and whether there were human rights violations and torture cases in the prison.

The inspection team also inspected the dormitories, clinic, library, kitchen, food storage, water purifier, and water sanitation system of the prison.

Besides, MNHRC donated 100 books for the prisoners.

MNHRC will send recommendations to the relevant department for necessary action based on the findings during the inspection. — MNHRC

Commissioner U Kyaw Myint from the Myanmar National Human Rights Commission inspects food storage of the Meiktila Prison in Meiktila Township yesterday.

Confiscated illegal items: Timbers, foodstuffs, consumer goods, industrial materials, motorbikes and vehicles

A total of 39.490 tonnes of illegal timbers with estimated value of K5,604,810 was confiscated in Gwa township of Thandwe district on 21 November. The action was taken under the Forest Law.

On the same day, the combined on-duty teams impounded an unregistered RAY-Z motorbike worth K500,000 in Kalaywa township and an unregistered Nissan March vehicle (approximately worth K7 million) in Pobbathiri township. The actions were taken under the Export and Import Law.

Similarly, the Customs on-duty teams nabbed four kinds of goods worth K290,000, including an electric drill (used) that was submitted by the owner to abandon and 455 toilet seat covers worth K4.095 million that were not declared in the Import Declaration (ID) from two containers at the Myanmar Industrial Port, 17 kinds of goods worth K32.18 million, including 232 GU sport T-shirts and 248 bottles of Garnibo hair shampoo that were not declared in the ID at the Thilawa Port Terminal container checkpoint, a Mitsubishi Canter vehicle (estimated value of K20 million) travelling from Bago to Thaton carrying 100 jerrycans of Shrimp Brand palm oil (18 litres) worth K5 million without official documents at the Mayanchaung permanent checkpoint and 12,000 ballpens, 20 coat racks (steel) and 50 Vee rubber tyres estimated value of K4.3 million. The actions were taken under Customs procedures.

Confiscated illegal items at Thilawa container terminal.

Additionally, a combined team managed by the Yangon Region Illegal Trade Eradication Task Force captured 552 bottles of Two-Shrimp brand palm oil (five litres), 480 bottles of Two-Shrimp brand palm oil (two litres) and 21 jerrycans of Shrimp brand palm oil (18 litres) worth K12.294 million at the No 58 warehouse in Wahdan Warehouse in Lanmadaw township, 216 bottles of Two-Shrimp brand palm oil (one litre), 132 bottles of Two-Shrimp brand palm oil (two litres) and 48 bottles of Two-Shrimp brand palm oil (five litres) worth K2.16 million at the D-2 warehouse at the Wahdan Port in Lanmadaw township and a Nissan Diesel truck (estimated value of K60 million) carrying 5,320 bottles of Cream Hardner worth K3.724 million that were not declared in the ID, at the Ywathagyi Dry Port. The actions were taken under Customs procedures.

An on-duty team captured a total of 2.346 tonnes of illegal teak worth K654,640 in Toungoo district on 22 November and action was taken under the Forest Law.

A total of 16 arrests were made on 21 and 22 November, with an estimated value of K157,802,450, as reported by the Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee. — MNA/MKKS

NATIONAL

An eye specialist is seen checking a child for diagnosis at the Yangon Eye Hospital.

Specialized ophthalmological care offered to 500 patients daily

THE Yangon Eye Hospital (YEH) provides treatment to nearly 500 eye patients daily.

The hospital comprises a department for common eye disorders and diseases along with seven other ophthalmological departments. Ophthalmologists and specialists from the hospital attend to about 50 patients with glaucoma or cataracts and around 450 outpatients every day.

YEH offers care and treatment for various eye conditions, including glaucoma, cataracts, child retinal diseases, and other ophthalmological issues. The child ophthalmology ward was established in 2014-2015, and the hospital conducts immediate operations for emergency cases.

Emergency services are available 24 hours and seven days (24/7), while outpatients can consult with ophthalmologists on weekends from 8:30 am to 4 pm.

Patients can utilize the online booking system to contact the Outpatient Department and Specialist Department for Outpatients at YEH by searching for "Caremebot" on Viber or Messenger. — TWA/ TMT

Pulses prices roll back in domestic market

THE prices of some pulses went down in November in Yangon's market due to weak global demand.

The prevailing prices of black gram (urad) and pigeon pea (tur) are not back to record highs owing to weak demand by India. Furthermore, new pigeon pea harvest time is near, driving the price down drastically.

The black gram (Fair Average Quality/RC) hit the highest of K2.9375 million per tonne on 31 October 2023. Similarly, the pigeon pea price peaked at K4,15 million per tonne on 8 September. The prices dropped to K2.845 million per tonne for black gram and K3.25 million per tonne for pigeon peas on 22 November.

Therefore, the figures showed a drop of K90,000 per tonne of black gram and K900,000 per tonne of pigeon pea. Moreover, the green gram prices also decreased to K2,500-2,835 per viss of green gram from the Pakokku area and K3,430 for the Shwe Wah variety.

The chickpea price was also estimated at K5,700-6,000 per viss only on 22 November.

The photo shows a variety of pulses sold in the market

The prices stood at K3,630 per viss of green gram (Shwe Wah), K3,080-3,250 per viss of green gram from the Pakokku area and K5,850-6,100 per viss of chickpea on 25 October.

The green gram price declined in the domestic market as demand from China faltered.

India's market observers forecast that Myanmar's pulses yield rate is estimated at 700,000 tonnes for black gram and 400,000 tonnes for pigeon peas.

There is less chance for the price to rise in the domestic market at present. The pulses output of India and its import policy are contributing factors to the pulses price fluctuations in Myanmar, a trader pointed out. — TWA/KK

UNICEF Myanmar announces painting contest on children's rights & dreams

A painting contest depicting the rights and dreams of children is planned to be held, as announced by UNICEF Myanmar.

The theme of the contest is "My Right, My Dream", and children between nine and 16 years old are eligible to participate.

Artworks can take the form of pencil drawings, paintings, collective creations, and other visual expressions, with a maximum size not exceeding A3 (42 x 29.7 centimetres), as stated by UNICEF Myanmar.

The back of the artwork should include the name and age of the child, along with the address, phone number, and email address of the parents or guardian.

In the case of a collective creation, the name and age of each child, along with contact details for each child, must be mentioned on the back of the artwork. Additionally, the purpose and story (meaning) of the artwork should be included.

Submissions for the artworks can be sent via mail, express or postal delivery services, or in person to the Yangon office of UNICEF Myanmar by 28 November at the latest.

UNICEF Myanmar has specified that four top prizes will be awarded, with two prizes in each of the respective age categories. — TWA/ TMT

The invitation artwork for this year's contest by UNICEF.

Over K16,000 mln in losses from 1,221 fires in 2023

THERE have been 1,221 cases of fires within 10 months this year, resulting in a loss of over K16,000 million, according to statistics from the Myanmar Fire Service Department.

From January to October 2023, 72 people were killed in fires, and the number of injured persons reached 162.

According to statistics, there were 200 fire cases in Yangon Region, the highest number in the country, 169 times in Shan State, and 157 times in Mandalay Region.

Although the number of cases has decreased compared to last year, there was a higher value of loss. Within 10 months in 2022, there were 1,057 cases of fires, resulting in a loss of K6,765 million. — TWA/TKO

Octane prices see slight increase on 22 Nov

OCTANE prices moved up a bit in the domestic market, indicating a one-day increase of K105-110 per litre.

Fuel prices were K2,105 per litre of Octane 92 and K2,240 for Octane 95 on 21 November. Then, the prices increased slightly t to K2,210 per litre of Octane 92 and K2,350 of Octane 95 on 22 November.

Yet, diesel prices stayed unchanged at K2,125 for diesel and K2,215 for premium diesel on 22 November.

The price index set by Mean of Platts Singapore (MOPS), the pricing basis for many refined products in southeast Asia, is closely tied to the domestic fuel prices, according to the Supervisory Committee on Fuel Oil Import, Storage and Distribution.

In August 2022, the oil prices hit the highest of K2,605 per litre for Octane 92, K2,670 for Octane 95, K3,330 for premium diesel and K3,245 for diesel.

The committee is therefore steering the fuel oil storage and distribution sector effectively so as not to have a shortage of oil in the domestic market and to ensure price stability for energy consumers.

A lorry refilling its fuels at one of the petrol stations in Meiktila Township.

Of 146 petrol stations in Yangon, some petrol stations braced for the high demand for Octane 92. Distribution by three terminals did not meet the demand, causing fuel shortages on 10 November.

However, the petrol stations were urgently filled with stocks on the night of 10 November. Four oil tankers docked at port terminals on 11 and 12 November, and 15 more are slated to arrive at the port. Therefore, oil will be distributed to the filling stations on time, as per the committee.

At present, there is a fuel oil security in the market, with stocks of over 13 million of Octane 92, over three million of Octane 95, 1.4 million of Octane 97, over 29 million of diesel and over 20 million of premium diesel.

Myanmar imports 90 per cent of fuel oil consumption, while the remaining 10 per cent is produced locally. The domestic fuel price is highly correlated with international prices. The government is steering the market to mitigate the loss between the importers, sellers and energy consumers. Consequently, the government is trying to distribute the oil at a reasonable price compared to those of regional countries.

Some countries levied higher tax rates and hiked oil prices compared to that of Myanmar. However, Malaysia's oil sector receives government subsidies and the prices are about 60 per cent cheaper than that of Myanmar. Every country lays down different patterns of policy to fix the oil prices. Myanmar also levies only a lower tax rate on fuel oil and strives for energy consumers to buy the oil at a cheaper rate. — NN/EM

YGEA hikes up gold reference price tracking rally in spot gold price

THE spot gold price hit over US$2,000 per ounce, pushing up the Yangon Region Gold Entrepreneurs Association (YGEA) to set the reference price higher to around K3.146 million per tical (0.578 ounce or 0.016 kilogramme) on 22 November.

The spot gold price dipped to $1,938 per ounce on 11 November, and two weeks after, the price rallied to $2,003 per ounce on 22 November, showing an increase of $65 per ounce.

The pure gold fetches around K3.62 million per tical in the grey market. There is a price gap of over K470,000 per tical between the YGEA's reference price and the grey market rate.

The YGEA switched to the Central Bank of Myanmar's exchange rate (K2,900) for interbank transactions in calculating the reference price for pure gold. At present, the US dollar is exchanged at approximately K3,390 in the unauthorized forex market.

The US dollar exchange rate weighs on the gap between the domestic gold market value and YGEA's reference gold price.

When the dollar exchange rate soared to K4,000, the gold price hit a record high of K4 million per tical in late August 2023. — NN/EM

Submission deadline for Myanmar GDE Consortium extended to 30 Dec

CENTRAL Committee for Myanmar Special Economic Zone under the Ministry of Commerce stated that the deadline was extended for submission of Expression of Interest (EOI) by 30 December to set up the Myanmar Government Designated Entity Consortium with a view to collaborating in a deep-sea port project at Kyaukpyu SEZ.

The submission of EOI was earlier set before 18 November. To draw the attention of those interested companies, the deadline was extended to 30 December.

Those companies owned by Myanmar citizens will be scrutinized to join the consortium, following rules and regulations.

Those companies must be domestically owned private companies or public companies registered under Myanmar Companies Law 2017. They must run continuous operations from the incorporation and must hold the Company Extract Form and company registration certificate issued by the Directorate of Investment and Company Registration, and must not be suspended on the DICA's online registry system MyCO.

The company must be incorporated for more than 10 years or must have five years of experience in successful infrastructure development processes. If the entity is incorporated in the presence of Rakhine ethnic residents, the set period of incorporation will be eased to a certain extent.

Furthermore, the Average Minimum Annual Turnover must be US$20 million or an equivalent amount of foreign currency or local currency in the past three years. Those entities must not be blacklisted or disqualified by the ministry, Nay Pyi Taw Council, region and state governments.

Those companies must employ adequate numbers of skilled staff and professionals who could provide technical support to the project. Each entity must present a document affirming that they can put an investment of at least $5 million in the proposal. The financial report during the past three years together with the audit report must be submitted.

Tax clearance certificates by the respective tax offices must be provided as well.

Those interested companies can take out an EOI form with a K10,000 payment at SEZ division of office No 3, Myanmar Trade Promotion Organization under the Ministry of Commerce in Nay Pyi Taw or MTPO located at No 622/626 on the corner of Merchant Road and Bozunpat Street in Pabedan Township, Yangon, by 18 November.

The EOI and other necessary documents must be submitted to the respective office by 15 December. For further details, phone numbers 067 408648, 067 408619 and 01-8371203 can be reached. — NN/EM

OPINION

Promote societal health and happiness through air pollution mitigation

AIR pollution, stemming from both natural processes and human activities, poses a significant threat to global well-being. Emissions of carbon dioxide and other gases trigger air pollution, with the concentration of these gases in the atmosphere being a key factor in such occurrences.

In many developing and underdeveloped nations throughout the world, waste disposal sites are commonly situated outside urban areas. However, the expansion of farmland reclamation and public residences often encroach upon these dump sites. This encroachment results in the release of noxious odours and hazardous gases into the air, posing a constant threat to the health of the population.

A report from the World Health Organization (WHO) highlights the grim consequences of air pollution, revealing that household air pollution claimed the lives of over 423,000 individuals globally in 2019, while outdoor air pollution led to 236,000 deaths. Alarmingly, a significant portion of these casualties consisted of vulnerable groups such as children and older individuals.

> Every member of society plays a crucial role in nurturing an environment free from dangers and ensuring the well-being and happiness of its inhabitants. By collectively striving to eliminate air pollution, individuals contribute to the improvement of their own health and the overall vitality of the community. From now on, everybody needs to launch an air pollution mitigation campaign as much as possible.

Researchers underscore that over 50 per cent of deaths among the elderly can be attributed to outdoor air pollution. Household air pollution, stemming from activities like outdoor cooking, the use of firewood and charcoal, and smoking, further exacerbates health risks. Additionally, emissions from construction sites, businesses, industries, and vehicles release carbon dioxide and carbon monoxide, leading to respiratory diseases. Major cities worldwide witness dense emissions of carbon oxide gas from generators, factories, and sewage drains.

In response, responsible authorities are relocating dump sites to the outskirts of cities, constantly changing their locations again and again to maintain a safe distance from residential areas. Simultaneously, these authorities are undertaking initiatives such as planting trees and flowers to mitigate air pollution and reduce health risks.

It is important for everyone to refrain from activities that stipulate air pollution, including the release of smog and dust in various contexts. Globally, countries must prioritize the reduction of fossil fuel usage, a primary contributor to air pollution. Active participation in preventive measures, such as afforestation campaigns and the reduction of inappropriate gas emissions, is essential for a healthier environment for all.

Every member of society plays a crucial role in nurturing an environment free from dangers and ensuring the well-being and happiness of its inhabitants. By collectively striving to eliminate air pollution, individuals contribute to the improvement of their own health and the overall vitality of the community. From now on, everybody needs to launch an air pollution mitigation campaign as much as possible.

ARTICLE

Mastering the Scorch
That Is Innovative Approaches to Tackling Heat Waves

BY MIN ZAN

A heat wave in July 2022 caused major cracks in a roadway in Kingston upon Thames, a town in Greater London. Concrete expands in high heat, as do many other materials crucial to infrastructure and technology. Engineers and materials scientists are studying ways to manage increasing temperatures, including how to capture and reuse expended heat from machines and other devices.

HIGHER temperatures cause machines to overheat, batteries to lose power, and roads to buckle, crippling infrastructure systems.

Humans weren't the only ones who needed to stay cool during 2023's record-breaking heat waves. Many machines, including cell phones, data centres, cars, and aeroplanes, become less efficient and degrade more quickly in extreme heat. Machines generate their own heat, too, which can make hot temperatures around them even hotter.

No machine is perfectly efficient — all machines face some internal friction during operation. This friction causes machines to dissipate some heat. That dispelled heat mixes with the external temperature, so the hotter it is outside, the hotter the machine will be.

Cell phones and similar devices with lithium-ion batteries experience decreased performance when operating in climates above 35 degrees Celsius (95 degrees Fahrenheit). This throttling is designed to avoid overheating and increased stress on the electronics.

Designs that use innovative phase-changing fluids can help keep machines cool, but in most cases, heat is still dissipated into the air. So, the hotter the air, the harder it is to keep a machine cool enough to function efficiently. Plus, the closer together machines are, the more dissipated heat there will be in the surrounding area.

We are engineering researchers who study how machines manage heat, as well as ways to effectively recover and reuse heat that is otherwise wasted. Technologies for reducing, capturing, and reusing heat could help prevent mechanical failures and weaken infrastructure systems during an era of rising temperatures.

Deforming Materials Higher temperatures, either from the weather or from the excess heat radiated from machinery, can cause materials in machinery to deform. To understand why, consider what temperature means at the molecular level.

At the molecular scale, the temperature is a measure of how much molecules are vibrating. The hotter the temperature, the more the molecules that make up everything from the air to the ground to materials in machinery vibrate.

As the temperature increases and the molecules vibrate more, the average space between them grows, causing most materials to expand. Roads are one place to see this happen — hot concrete expands, gets constricted, and eventually cracks. This phenomenon can happen to machinery, too, and thermal stresses are just the beginning of the problem. Travel Delays and Safety Risks High temperatures can also change the way oil in your car's engine behaves, leading to potential engine failures. For example, if a heat wave makes it 16.7 degrees Celsius hotter than normal, the viscosity of typical car engine oil can change by a factor of three.

Fluids such as engine oils become thinner as they heat up, so if it gets too hot, the oil may not be thick enough to properly lubricate and protect engine parts from increased wear and tear.

Additionally, a hot day will cause the air inside your tyres to expand and raise the tyre pressure, which could increase wear and the risk of skidding.

Aeroplanes are also not designed to take off at extreme temperatures. As it gets hotter outside, air expands, making it thinner or less dense. This reduction in air density decreases the amount of weight the plane can support during flight, which can cause significant travel delays or flight cancellations.

Battery Degradation In general, the electronics contained in devices such as cell phones, personal computers, and data centres consist of many kinds of materials that all respond differently to temperature changes. These materials are all located next to one another in tight spaces. So as the temperature increases, the types of materials deform differently, potentially leading to premature wear and failure.

Lithium-ion batteries in cars and electronic devices degrade faster at higher operating temperatures. Heat increases the rate of reactions within the battery, including corrosion reactions that deplete the lithium levels, which in turn reduces the battery's storage capacity. Tests conducted by Recurrent (a company that provides car and battery information for the secondary electric vehicle market) found that electric vehicles can lose about 20 per cent of their range when exposed to sustained 32-degree Celsius (90-degree Fahrenheit) weather.

Data centres full of computer servers dissipate significant amounts of heat to keep their components cool. On very hot days, fans must work harder to ensure chips do not overheat, and in some cases, powerful fans are not enough to cool the electronics.

When the data centres need a stronger cooling system, they often turn to evaporative cooling. This method sends incoming dry air from the outside through a moist pad. The water from the pad evaporates into the air and absorbs heat, which cools the air. This technique is usually an effective and economical way to keep chips at a reasonable operating temperature. However, evaporative cooling can require a significant amount of water, which is problematic in regions where water is scarce. Water for cooling can add to the already intense resource footprint associated with data centres.

Air conditioners struggle to perform effectively as it gets hotter outside — just when they're needed the most. On hot days, air conditioner compressors have to work harder to send the heat from homes outside, which in turn disproportionately increases electricity consumption and overall electricity demand. For example, in Texas, every increase of one degree Celsius creates a rise of about four per cent in electricity demand.

Heat leads to a staggering 50 per cent increase in electricity demand during the summer in hotter countries, posing serious threats of electricity shortages or blackouts, as well as higher greenhouse gas emissions.

Reusing Heat

Heat waves and warming temperatures around the globe pose significant short and long-term problems for people and machines alike. Fortunately, there are ways to minimize the damage.

One is to ensure that machines are kept in air-conditioned, well-insulated spaces out of direct sunlight. Another is for consumers to use high-energy devices, such as air conditioners and electric vehicle charging stations, during off-peak hours when fewer people are using electricity.

Individual changes at the consumer level will not solve the problem alone, so scientists and engineers are developing ways to use and recycle the vast amounts of heat dissipated from machines. One simple example is using the waste heat from data centres to heat water. Waste heat could also drive other kinds of air-conditioning systems such as absorption chillers, which use heat as energy to support coolers through a series of chemical and heat-transferring processes.

> Many people enjoy warm and sunny weather, making heat waves an opportunity for the tourism and recreation industries. During heat waves, tourist destinations can attract more visitors looking to relax on beaches, go hiking, or explore outdoor activities.

In both of these examples, the energy needed to heat or cool something comes from heat that is otherwise wasted. Indeed, one of us collaborated on a 2011 study that found that waste heat from power plants could support 27 per cent of residential air-conditioning needs, which would result in a dramatic reduction of overall energy consumption and carbon emissions.

Extreme heat can affect every aspect of modern life, and heat waves aren't going away in the coming years. However, there are opportunities to harness extreme heat and make it work for us.

Furthermore, heat waves are a natural occurrence that happens when there is a prolonged period of excessively hot weather. While these heat waves can be uncomfortable and even dangerous, they can also have some benefits if managed properly. Therefore, let us explore ways to make heat waves beneficial by using them to our advantage while also addressing the challenges they pose.

One way to make heat waves beneficial is by harnessing the excessive heat for energy generation. Solar panels, for example, are more efficient during hot weather. The increased sunlight and high temperatures allow these panels to produce more electricity, which can be used to power homes, businesses, and even entire communities. By investing in renewable energy sources during heat waves, we can reduce our dependence on fossil fuels and lower our carbon footprint.

Heat waves can also benefit agriculture and food production when managed correctly. Some crops, such as tomatoes and peppers, thrive in hot weather. Farmers can take advantage of these conditions by planting heat-tolerant crops during heat waves, which can lead to increased yields. Furthermore, the dry conditions that often accompany heat waves can reduce the risk of certain plant diseases, such as mould and mildew, thereby promoting healthier crops.

Many people enjoy warm and sunny weather, making heat waves an opportunity for the tourism and recreation industries. During heat waves, tourist destinations can attract more visitors looking to relax on beaches, go hiking, or explore outdoor activities. This influx of tourists can stimulate local economies and create job opportunities. However, it is essential to provide adequate infrastructure and safety measures to protect both tourists and residents from heat-related health risks.

Heat waves can lead to drought conditions, which can be a major challenge. However, they also provide an opportunity to raise awareness about the importance of water conservation. During these periods, communities can implement water-saving measures and educate the public about responsible water usage. This can lead to long-term benefits by reducing water waste and ensuring a more sustainable supply of freshwater in the future.

While making heat waves beneficial is important, it is equally crucial to prepare for extreme weather events that may accompany them. Heat waves can lead to forest fires, heat-related illnesses, and other dangers. Adequate planning, early warning systems, and community outreach can help minimize the negative impacts of heat waves and ensure the safety and well-being of residents.

In brief, heat waves are a natural phenomenon that, when managed properly, can offer various benefits. By using the excess heat for energy generation, promoting heat-tolerant agriculture, boosting tourism, encouraging water conservation, and preparing for extreme weather events, we can make the most out of heat waves. However, it is essential to strike a balance and ensure that we are also ready to address the challenges that heat waves may bring. With proper planning and a focus on sustainability, we can turn heat waves into opportunities for growth and positive change.

Reference: American Scientist Nov 2023

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SCI/ENVIRON WORLD

Antarctic ozone hole getting deeper in mid-spring, research suggests

Denmark is a member of the Antarctic Treaty System. Tourists leave Ittoqqortoormiit, Denmark, after visiting the village on 20 August. **PHOTO: PIX FOR VISUAL PURPOSE/ AFP**

From the mid-1970s, chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), previously used in aerosols and refrigerators, were discovered to deplete ozone, causing annual holes, primarily over Antarctica.

THE hole in the Antarctic ozone layer has been getting deeper in mid-spring over the last two decades, despite a global ban on chemicals that deplete Earth's shield from deadly solar radiation, new research suggested Tuesday. The ozone layer 11 to 40 kilometres (seven to 25 miles) above Earth's surface filters out most of the Sun's ultraviolet radiation, which can cause skin cancer and cataracts. From the mid-1970s, chemicals called chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) -- once widely used in aerosols and refrigerators -- were found to be reducing ozone levels, creating annual holes largely over the Antarctica region.

The 1987 Montreal Protocol, which banned CFCs in a bid to close the hole, is considered a success story for international environmental cooperation.

In January, a major UN-backed assessment found that the agreement was working. It projected the ozone layer should be restored to 1980 levels over the Antarctic by around 2066.

Smaller holes over the Arctic were projected to recover by 2045, and for the rest of the world in around two decades. But despite the decline in CFCs, there has not yet been a significant reduction in the area covered by the Antarctic ozone hole, according to New Zealand researchers behind a new study in the journal Nature Communications. — AFP

Iguana invasion: Thailand rounds up rogue reptiles

THAILAND has captured more than 150 rogue iguanas that were rampaging through the countryside, raiding farms and damaging the local environment, officials said.

The lizards are not native to the kingdom, hailing originally from Central and South America, but are increasingly popular as pets in Thailand.

Environmental concerns have been raised over the activities of the herbivorous lacertilians, which are thought to be pets that have either escaped or been deliberately released into the wild.

The Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation (DNP) said Tuesday that 134 iguanas had been captured in Pattana Nikom district, Lopburi, around 160 kilometres (100 miles) north of Bangkok. — AFP

Iguanas are not indigenenous to Thailand but have been increasingly popular as pets. **PHOTO: THAILAND'S DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL PARKS, WILDLIFE AND PLANT CONSERVATION (DNP)/AFP**

Iraqis displaced by climate change fall into poverty

FOR the past decade, Nasser Jabbar and his children have lived in a rundown house built of grey concrete blocks at a shantytown in southern Iraq.

Drought chased the father of 10 out of the countryside, where he had been a herder and farmer, and into a life of unemployment and urban poverty.

"We lost the land and we lost the water," said the father in his 40s, wearing a traditional white robe.

He spoke to AFP in his home on the edges of Nasiriyah, capital of Dhi Qar province.

Jabbar's neighbourhood typifies the extreme poverty that those displaced by climate change face in south and central Iraq.

With declining rainfall, the country has seen four consecutive years of drought.

In the shantytown where he lives, cracked streets lined with rubble and piles of rubbish snake between houses thrown together by their inhabitants.

Despite Iraq being an oil-rich country, poverty is common. **PHOTO: AFP**

On an empty lot surrounded by ramshackle buildings, sewers empty onto open ground as cows rest in the shadow of a low wall nearby.

Like Jabbar, many of the displaced who live here abandoned their villages after a life working in agriculture.

Jabbar, a farmer from Gateia in Dhi Qar, Iraq, once cultivated five hectares of land with his brothers, yielding barley in winter and vegetables in summer.

Over four years, he struggled against a worsening climate by digging a well, but water scarcity forced him to sell his 50-goat herd. Upon moving to the city, he took up manual labour on construction sites but had to quit due to back issues. Jabbar has been unemployed for three years, facing economic challenges stemming from climate-related difficulties in his agricultural pursuits. — AFP

The Rolling Stones back on tour in their 80s

The latest album includes appearances from big stars like Elton John, Lady Gaga, and even their old rival, Paul McCartney.

THE Rolling Stones are still refusing to gather any moss, announcing Tuesday that they are heading back on tour across North America even as the legendary rockers hit their 80s.

To support "Hackney Diamonds", their first studio album in 18 years, released last month, the British band will visit 16 cities, starting in Houston on 28 April and ending in Santa Clara on 17 July.

The new album features megastar cameos from Elton John, Lady Gaga and even their old rival, Paul McCartney.

It arrived shortly after Mick Jagger celebrated his 80th birthday, with his wing man Keith Richards hitting that landmark in December.

Reviews of the new album have been largely warm in the English-language press, with The Telegraph calling it "crisp and thrilling" and Uncut saying the band had "come out fighting" since the death of drummer Charlie Watts in 2021.

Others were less forgiving, with Pitchfork describing it as "a bunch of hackneyed duds, polished until the character has disappeared". — AFP

'Hackney Diamonds' is their 24th studio album. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

A set of six jerseys that Lionel Messi wore during Argentina's victorious 2022 World Cup run will be auctioned in December. **PHOTO: AFP**

Messi's 2022 World Cup jerseys predicted to top $10 mln at auction

If the jerseys sell for over $10 million, it could become the most valuable sports memorabilia collection ever auctioned, according to Sotheby's.

A set of six jerseys that Lionel Messi wore during Argentina's victorious 2022 World Cup run will be auctioned in December, Sotheby's announced Tuesday, estimating their value at more than $10 million.

The football star donned these shirts during the first halves of the group-stage rounds against Saudi Arabia and Mexico, as well as later games against Australia, the Netherlands and Croatia — and the final against France.

Argentina's winning run in Qatar last year was the final feather in the forward's cap, having failed to secure the championship in four previous World Cups.

If the jerseys indeed fetch above $10 million, that could make the sale the most valuable collection of sports memorabilia ever auctioned off, Sotheby's said.

The most expensive individual jersey ever sold at auction was one that basketball legend Michael Jordan wore during his NBA finals run with the Chicago Bulls in 1998.

It sold for $10.1 million last year. Auction houses have increasingly taken note of sports memorabilia in recent years, considered a growing market. — AFP

Money for something: Dire Straits legend to sell guitar collection

MARK KNOPFLER, the former frontman of British rock group Dire Straits, announced Tuesday he will sell more than 120 guitars and amps spanning his five-decade career at an auction next year. The sale, at Christie's auctioneers on 31 January, will feature the guitar used to record the band's hit song "Money For Nothing" and famously played at the legendary 1985 Live Aid concert in London. "The Mark Knopfler Guitar Collection" sale also comprises an array of guitars he used to write, record and perform Dire Straits' and solo tracks, Christie's said. – AFP

Deal deluge: Black Friday kicks off holiday shopping season

ONCE again, US retailers are gearing up for "Black Friday", the annual shopping extravaganza that kicks off the holiday gift-giving season with price discounts and chaotic crowds.

Held the day after Thanksgiving and increasingly copied in Europe and beyond, "Black Friday" has evolved into a catchphrase for a multiday period in late November that concludes with "Cyber Monday" and the weekend in between the two events. This year's markdowns are expected to be especially deep, reflecting the pressure stores feel to lure in a US consumer jaded by still-high inflation and the upheaval of the pandemic years. Still, forecasters expect heavy consumer traffic.

While the actual Black Friday period remains crucial, stores have actually been offering deals for weeks marketing Black Friday sales earlier and earlier in October. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

The National Retail Federation (NRF) predicts more than 182 million consumers will shop in stores and online over the shopping weekend. That turnout — equal to more than half the US population — would top by 16 million last year's level and constitute a record since the trade group began tracking the period in 2017. — AFP

ECONOMY
WORLD

Japan cuts economic view, 1st in 10 months, on weak domestic demand

Japan's economic outlook has been downgraded following a 2.1 per cent annualized contraction in the economy during the July-September period. This marks the first decline in three quarters, attributed to decreases in crucial indicators of domestic demand.

Capital spending and private consumption, both key gauges of domestic demand, fell and export growth slowed. **PHOTO: KYODO/FILE**

THE government on Wednesday downgraded its assessment of Japan's economy for the first time in 10 months, saying it is recovering moderately but "appears to be pausing in part" on weak domestic demand, a worrying sign before new inflation relief steps are rolled out.

Among key components, the Cabinet Office cut its view on capital spending, the first in nearly two years, noting in its monthly report that the recent pick-up is "pausing" partly due to slowing global growth, particularly in China. The latest assessment came after Japan's economy marked its first contraction in three quarters in July-September, with gross domestic product falling at an annual real rate of 2.1 per cent, as capital spending and private consumption, both key gauges of domestic demand, fell and export growth slowed.

Until October, the government described the economy as "recovering at a moderate pace" for six consecutive months.

Diet deliberations began this week on a 13.20 trillion yen ($89 billion) extra budget for the current fiscal year to next March to fund an economic package aimed at easing the pain of rising prices on households and navigating the economy through the cost-of-living crisis to a longer-term growth path. — Kyodo

Singapore economy growth beats forecast in third quarter

A Singaporean worker in an electronics factory in a file photo. **PHOTO: AFP**

SINGAPORE'S economy grew more than expected in the third quarter, data showed Wednesday, while officials narrowed their full-year forecast owing to subdued demand for its exports in key markets including the United States and China.

The 1.1 per cent expansion in July-September was driven by the construction industry and services sector, including tourism.

The reading from the trade ministry was better than the 0.8 per cent growth expected and well up from the previous three months.

Officials said they saw the economy growing 1.0 per cent throughout 2023, against the 0.5-1.5 per cent previously estimated. — AFP

Britain awaits key budget with eyes on election

BRITAIN'S Conservative government will on Wednesday unveil a vital budget update aiming to reinvigorate the economy and woo voters, as it lags badly in polls before next year's expected general election.

There are rising expectations of tax cuts when finance minister Jeremy Hunt delivers the Tories' taxation-and-spending plans before parliament at 1230 GMT, alongside the latest economic and fiscal forecasts.

Prime Minister Rishi Sunak was boosted last week by news that he has met his target to halve inflation, and won another lift on Tuesday after year-to-date borrowing undershot forecasts.

Yet the Conservatives are trailing behind the main opposition Labour party — whose leader Keir Starmer has benefited from public anger over a cost-of-living crisis which has eroded wages, sparked strikes and left millions of Britons struggling to pay bills.

However, Sunak and Chancellor of the Exchequer Hunt have cautioned against big giveaways despite recent falls in inflation, which remains elevated, and pressure from some parliamentary colleagues. — AFP

Sunak pledged to cautiously and sustainably reduce taxes after achieving his inflation-cutting goal in October. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

Afghan border trade resumes after Pakistan suspends new visa rule

CROSS-BORDER trade between Pakistan and Afghanistan was back to normal Wednesday, officials in both countries said, after Islamabad suspended a new visa rule.

Commercial traffic ground to a halt Tuesday when Pakistan began requiring the crew of commercial vehicles to have passports and visas to enter, and Afghanistan responded by refusing to allow any trucks to pass.

"Yesterday, when Pakistan enforced its new rules, the Afghan side responded by suspending trade in protest," a Pakistan customs official told AFP Wednesday. — AFP

China's Inner Mongolia sees foreign trade climb 28.3% in Jan-Oct

Exports rose by 22 per cent, totalling 59.79 billion yuan, while imports increased by 32.7 per cent, reaching 93.2 billion yuan, according to the customs bureau in Hohhot, the regional capital.

NORTH China's Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region reported a foreign trade volume of 152.99 billion yuan (about 21.43 billion US dollars) in the first 10 months of 2023, up 28.3 per cent year on year.

Exports rose 22 per cent year on year to 59.79 billion yuan, and imports grew 32.7 per cent to 93.2 billion yuan, according to the customs bureau in Hohhot, the capital of the region. From January to October, the region's private enterprises saw rapid growth in their foreign trade volume, which increased 39.2 per cent year on year to 114.35 billion yuan. The region's trade with Belt and Road participating countries increased to approximately 118.79 billion yuan during the period, up 38.42 per cent year on year. — Xinhua

This photo taken on 15 March 2023 shows a crane in operation at the container terminal of the Manzhouli Railway Station in Manzhouli, north China's Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

Nvidia revenue rockets on demand for powerful chips

NVIDIA on Tuesday reported that its revenue more than tripled in the recently ended quarter as companies snapped up chips to power artificial intelligence (AI).

The Silicon Valley chip titan said it made a profit of $9.2 billion on revenue that soared to $18.1 billion, compared with $5.9 billion in the same quarter a year earlier. "Our strong growth reflects the broad industry platform transition from general-purpose to accelerated computing and generative AI," Nvidia chief executive Jensen Huang said in an earnings release.

"Nations and regional (cloud service companies) are investing in AI clouds to serve local demand, enterprise software companies are adding AI copilots and assistants to their platforms, and enterprises are creating custom AI to automate the world's largest industries."

Revenue from sales of chips tailored for data centers set a record in the quarter, hitting $14.5 billion, according to Nvidia.

Nvidia continues to ramp up production to meet demand, chief financial officer Colette Kress said on an earnings call. – AFP

Toshiba shareholders OK stock consolidation, set for Dec delisting

TOSHIBA Corp's shareholders approved a consolidation of the company's shares at an extraordinary meeting Wednesday, paving the way for its delisting from the Tokyo Stock Exchange on 20 December and marking the end of its 74-year history as a public company.

The move will allow a consortium led by Japan Industrial Partners Inc to buy the remaining shares it failed to acquire in its successful two trillion yen takeover bid for the troubled Japanese conglomerate, founded in 1875.

The intention behind the delisting is to sever ties with overseas activist shareholders, allowing the company to focus on growth areas such as social infrastructure and quantum technology, Toshiba has said.

"Toshiba has amazed the world with our incredible technology," Toshiba President Taro Shimada said at the meeting. "We'd like to make our innovative technologies shine across the world again under a stable shareholder base".

The JIP-led consortium acquired 78.65 per cent of Toshiba's shares in the takeover bid, more than two-thirds of the total amount it needed for the consolidation proposal to be approved at the meeting. — Kyodo

Ministry of Cooperative and Rural Development
Department of Rural Development
Myanmar: Mekong-Lancang Cooperation Project
CALL FOR PROPOSALS FOR SOLAR MINI-GRID ELECTRICITY PROJECTS
(Re-invitation)

The Department of Rural Development, Ministry of Cooperative and Rural Development is inviting interested companies to submit mini-grid proposals for the following projects at Kan Seik village, Dedaye Township in Ayeyarwady Region and Kyein Mae Taung village, Boke Pyin Township in Tanintharyi Region,

Lot-1: Kan Seik Solar Mini-grid Electricity Supply and Water Supply Distribution Project (Solar-81kW)

Lot-2: Kyein Mae Taung Solar Mini-grid Electricity Supply and Cold Storage for Fishery Products Projects (Solar-165.68kW)

Submission Deadline: Proposals must be delivered to the address below at 10:00 AM Local Time on 11 December 2023

Interested companies should visit the DRD Website (https://drdmyanmar.org/) or directly contact the following address for further information:

Office No.36, Department of Rural Development, Naypyidaw,
Tel./Fax: +95 673 418635, 418636
Email: PL.hq@drdmyanmar.net; drdnepmg@gmail.com; ksaung@gmail.com; myomyonpd@gmail.com

Tender Committee

Transferring Distributor for Registered Products

Distribution of following pesticide registered by **Asiatic Agricultural Industries Pte Ltd (Singapore)** is transferring from **AKA YARZAR Co., Ltd** to **Farm Link Co., Ltd**. Any Objection regarding to this transfer can notify at Co Secretary, Myanmar Pesticide Registration Board, West Gyogone, Insein Township within two weeks.

Sr	Trade Name	Active Ingredient	Type of Reg.	Reg No.
1.	Sure 75 WP	Tricyclazole 750 g/kg WP	Full	F2020-1553

Asiatic Agricultural Industries Pte Ltd (Myanmar Branch). Room 209, Rangoun Business Centre; No. 97. West Shwe Gon Daing Road, Bahan Township, Yangon. Tele: 09-5145328

Notice for Change of Distributor

Notice is hereby given that official distributor have been changed for the following herbicide distributed by **Taw Win Dar Co. Ltd** to **Aung Linn Animal Health Ltd.**

No	Trade Name	Active Ingredient	Registration Type	Registration Number
1	Sapar Kaung Paung Thay	Bispyribac-sodium 20% WP	Provisional	P2022-5572

Taw Win Dar Co. Ltd., invites objections to Co-secretary, Pesticide Registration Board, Plant Protection Division, West Gyogone, Insein Township, Yangon from all parties within a period of fourteen (14) days form the publication of this notice.
Taw Win Dar Company Co. Ltd: 09-448027852

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
M.V LUDWIG SCHULTE VOY.NO. (344W)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V LUDWIG SCHULTE VOY.NO. (344W)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **23-11-2023** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MITT/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 SEALAND MAERSK ASIA PTE LTD.

ROLLING UPDATES
WORLD

N Korea claims it successfully put satellite into orbit

North Korea launches a Chollima-1 new-type carrier rocket transporting the Malligyong-1 reconnaissance satellite at the Sohae Satellite Launching Ground in Tongchang-ri on 21 November 2023. **PHOTO: KCNA/ KYODO**

The Chollima-1 rocket successfully followed its planned trajectory, placing the Malligyong-1 reconnaissance satellite into orbit at 10:54 pm on Tuesday, approximately 12 minutes after liftoff. This occurred ahead of the scheduled nine-day launch window set to begin on Wednesday.

NORTH Korea said Wednesday it has "successfully launched" a rocket carrying a spy satellite and it "accurately" entered into orbit, according to the official Korean Central News Agency.

Pyongyang defended the launch as its "legitimate right" for strengthening its self-defence capabilities and said it will make "a great contribution" to enhancing the country's war readiness amid "enemies' dangerous military moves," KCNA reported.

The rocket Chollima-1 flew normally along the preset flight track and put the reconnaissance satellite Malligyong-1 on its orbit at 10:54 pm Tuesday, about 12 minutes after the launch, the report said. It came ahead of a nine-day launch window that was supposed to commence Wednesday.

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un oversaw the launch on the spot and congratulated those involved, including scientists and technicians, the agency said. Pyongyang vowed to place several more satellites into orbit in a short span of time to secure its reconnaissance capabilities over South Korea, it added. — Kyodo

THE INTERTWINED HISTORY

S Korean president addresses UK lawmakers on first day of state visit

SOUTH KOREAN President Yoon Suk Yeol told lawmakers in Britain's parliament Tuesday that relations between the two nations "will be reborn" as he began a pomp-filled three-day state visit.

Yoon addressed MPs and peers, assembled in the Royal Gallery of the House of Lords, during an event-packed first day in the British capital.

He highlighted the intertwined history of the two nations before looking forward to deepening ties on Wednesday by signing an agreement on a number of topics – known as the "Downing Street Accord" – and opening negotiations on a beefed up trade deal.

"We will begin negotiations to modernise the FTA (trade deal) to strengthen cooperation and supply chains and digital trade," said Yoon. – AFP

Dutch vote in knife-edge election

DUTCH voters headed to the polls Wednesday for a nail-biting election that will transform the country's political landscape after Prime Minister Mark Rutte's record 13 years in power.

Opinion polls have fluctuated wildly in the run-up to election day, with four candidates — including one from the far-right — seen as having a shot at taking the helm of the EU's fifth-biggest economy.

The election is too close to call. **PHOTO: ANP/AFP**

The stakes are high: punching above its weight in the European Union and on the world stage, the Netherlands is a steadfast supporter of Ukraine and strict fiscal discipline in the eurozone. But polls showed a huge percentage of voters remained undecided right up to election day, making for a tense and unpredictable vote.

"For me, this is a bit of a different election because anyone can win. In the end it came down to two candidates. I tossed a coin and chose one," Vincent Spijker, a 54-year-old manager told AFP after casting his vote. — AFP

Covid-19 variant maintains threat: WHO

Maria Van Kerkhove, a WHO expert, mentioned that the virus SARS-CoV-2 is currently circulating in every country and continues to represent a threat.

The WHO is urging people to get vaccinated against Covid-19 and influenza as a new coronavirus variant spreads in many countries. **PHOTO: JUAN MABROMATA/AFP**

COVID-19 remains a threat as a virus variant has been spreading steadily around the globe, the World Health Organization said Tuesday.

"This virus, SARS-CoV-2, is circulating in every country right now and it still poses a threat," WHO expert Maria Van Kerkhove said. "We have to remain vigilant because the virus is circulating, evolving and changing," she told a discussion on the WHO's social media channels.

Van Kerkhove was the WHO's technical lead during the coronavirus pandemic that struck in 2019 and is now the UN health agency's interim director for epidemic and pandemic preparedness and prevention. — AFP

SPORTS

Semifinals of Myanmar's traditional Lethwei championship held in Yangon

SEMIFINAL bouts of Myanmar's traditional Lethwei championship were held at Shwelinpan Industrial Zone, Hlinethaya Township, Yangon Region yesterday afternoon.

Sein Lone Chaw (Aung Naing Thu) beat Thway Thit Maung (White Blood) thanks to an elbow strike within the first minute of the first round of the 63.67-kilogramme event.

Next, Thet Win Aung (360 Sports) won over Almwe (Top Lethwei) via a unanimous decision.

In the women's event, the draw result is enough for Ohnma Soe (Myanmar) versus Helen (Sweden). Next, the three-round bouts of Phyo Ko Ko versus Than Lin Aung, and Nay Htet Aung vs Pyae Phyo Aung finished as a tie match while Kaung Sett Naing (Yoeyar Kyar) crushed Thiha (Yazadiritz) in the third round.

Thet Win Aung (360 Sports) will face Sein Lone Chaw (Aung Naing Thu) in the final bout. — Bala Soe/KZL

Thet Win Aung (right) lands the punch on Almwe during the semifinal event of Myanmar's traditional Lethwei championship held in Yangon on 22 November 2023. **PHOTO: BALA SOE**

Sane sees red as Germany's woes continue against Austria

LEROY Sane was shown red for lashing out at an opponent as Germany went down 2-0 to Austria in Vienna on Tuesday, continuing their woeful run just over six months from hosting Euro 2024.

Goals in each half from Marcel Sabitzer and Christoph Baumgartner, along with Sane's red after making contact with the face of Austrian defender Phillipp Mwene, compounded a poor night for Julian Nagelsmann's men in the friendly.

The red card, Sane's first in a professional football career spanning more than 400 games, meant Germany were forced to play catch-up for most of the second-half with a man down.

"I think the red card for Leroy just sums it all up: the frustration, the disappointment," Germany captain Ilkay Gundogan told TV network ZDF.

"At the end we made it far, far too easy for the Austrians to create and score goals. We were simply not good enough."

Sane later apologized to fans and his teammates on social media, saying "despite my emotion and ambition, this can't happen to me, especially in our current situation". Nagelsmann said his side could turn things around "only with extremely hard work". — AFP

Germany forward Leroy Sane sees red in Tuesday's match against Austria in Vienna. **PHOTO: AFP**

Goal-scoring defender Souttar hailed as Australia's 'cheat code'

Australia defender Harry Souttar (R) scores against Palestine in Kuwait City. **PHOTO: AFP**

A Scotland-born centre-back scored a header 18 minutes into the game from a corner, leading Australia to the top of their 2026 World Cup qualifying group with two consecutive wins. The goal silenced the spectators at the 60,000-seater stadium in Kuwait City.

HARRY Souttar has been hailed as a "cheat code" after the towering defender scored his 10th goal for Australia in the 1-0 World Cup qualifying win over Palestine.

The Scotland-born centre-back headed in after 18 minutes from a corner to put Australia top of their 2026 World Cup qualifying group with two wins from two.

It silenced the thousands of spectators who turned out at the 60,000-seater stadium in Kuwait City for a match that was moved from the West Bank because of the Israel-Hamas conflict.

It was the Leicester City defender's second goal in as many internationals and his 10th since making his debut for Australia in 2019, a record more akin to a forward.

"To be fair, on set-pieces he seems to be a bit of a cheat code," forward Mitchell Duke said.

"I have got to catch him. I didn't even have a shot on goal tonight, which is a bit frustrating for attackers."

Palestine proved far tougher opposition than the Bangladesh side that Australia thrashed 7-0 in Melbourne last week to begin their World Cup campaign.

A deflected Brandon Borrello shot was Australia's only other clear chance over a nervy 90 minutes.

"It's a great feeling to be on the scoresheet again, scoring for your country is something really special," said the 25-year-old Souttar, who was born in Aberdeen. — AFP

N Korea claims it successfully put satellite into orbit

PAGE-14

WORLD

This picture taken on 10 February 2020 shows a rainbow in the sky above Rafah on a rainy day at sunset in the southern Gaza Strip. **PHOTO: PIX FOR VISUAL PURPOSE/ SAID KHATIB/AFP/FILE**

Putin's address at BRICS summit on Gaza aligned with Arab-Muslim vision – Mideast experts

AN EXTRAORDINARY online BRICS summit on the escalation of the situation in the Middle East took place on Tuesday, with Russian President Vladimir Putin criticizing the US for monopolizing mediation efforts.

Leaders of BRICS countries including new applicants convened an emergency virtual meeting on 21 November.

The non-stop violence is the result of Washington's "monopolizing" the negotiation process and blocking the Middle East Quartet of international mediators — which, apart from the US includes Russia, the UN and the EU — from stepping in and proposing peace solutions, as Vladimir Putin outlined during the online gathering.

Continuous violence is attributed to Washington's monopolization of the negotiation process, preventing the Middle East Quartet, including Russia, the UN, and the EU, from presenting peace solutions, as stated by Vladimir Putin in an online meeting.

"The timing of the meeting is not a surprise because what we see, there is an ongoing initiative all around the world for a full-fledged ceasefire", Dr Hasan Selim Ozertem, Ankara-based security and political analyst, told Sputnik. — SPUTNIK

TOP HEADLINES

'Extremely venomous' green mamba loose in Netherlands

AN "extremely venomous" two-metre-long green mamba snake is on the loose in the Netherlands, police said Tuesday, warning residents to stay indoors and under no circumstances attempt to ensnare the serpent.

Police in the southern Dutch city of Tilburg said they were alerted by the mamba's owner on Monday evening that "he was missing a snake". Issuing a wanted poster with a mugshot of the coiled green mamba, police warned: "The snake is very dangerous." "The green mamba's bite is extremely venomous. If anyone is bitten, it is important to seek immediate medical attention," police added. — AFP

Floods force evacuation of over 2,000 in Malaysia

FLOODING has displaced 2,294 people in the country's east coast state of Terengganu as of 3 pm local time on Tuesday following continuous heavy rains. Those evacuated were being housed in 19 flood relief centres, according to the country's social welfare department.

In addition, Perak state on the west coast of the Malay Peninsula was affected by flooding with 39 being displaced.

The meteorological department has issued warnings of heavy rains due to the northeast monsoon, which typically lasts from October to March, with strong winds and rough seas expected, in northern states and the country's east coast. — Xinhua

Israel and Hamas agree truce, release of 50 hostages

Following weeks of Qatar-brokered talks, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's cabinet approved a truce accord on Wednesday. Netanyahu described it as a "difficult but right decision" during an extended meeting.

ISRAEL and Hamas announced a deal on Wednesday allowing at least 50 hostages and scores of Palestinian prisoners to be freed, while offering besieged Gaza residents a four-day truce after weeks of all-out war. In the first major diplomatic breakthrough in the war, Palestinian militants will release during a four-day truce 50 women and children kidnapped during their 7 October raids.

After weeks of Qatar-brokered negotiations, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's cabinet approved the truce accord Wednesday after a near-all-night meeting, in which he told ministers this was a "difficult decision but it's a right decision".

The cabinet's sign-off was one of the last stumbling blocks after what one US official described as five "extremely excruciating" weeks of talks.

Hamas released a statement welcoming the "humanitarian truce" and said it would also see 150 Palestinians released from Israeli jails. — AFP

Photos of hostages abducted by Hamas plastered on a wall during a rally outside HaKirya military base in central Tel Aviv on 14 October 2023. **PHOTO: GIL COHEN-MAGEN / AFP/FILE**