

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing asserts commitment to democratic and federal Union, warns against disintegration



State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing addresses the Union government meeting 7/2023 in Nay Pyi Taw on 4 December 2023.

THE Union system based on a democratic system and federalism all the people are building consists of all points of demand, and the Union is not to be disintegrated, said Senior General Min Aung Hlaing.

At the meeting 7/2023 of the Union government at the Office of the Chairman of the State Administration Council in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning, SAC Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing delivered an address on the crucial role of the Union system.

The Senior General underscored that Our Three Main National Causes: non-disintegration of the Union, non-disintegration of national solidarity and perpetuation of sovereignty are being

implemented with the national concept. He confirmed that as the nation is firmly built under the Constitution based on Our Three Main National Causes, these causes will not totally be harmed.

He noted that whenever terrorists harm Our Three Main National Causes, relevant regions and residents will suffer harmful consequences.

The Senior General explained that Rakhine State has faced difficulties in the transport sector for many years. From the time of the Tatmadaw government to date, development undertakings reversed the situation of Rakhine State with remarkable improvement. However, AA armed organization commit to

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NATIONAL

Republic of the Union of Myanmar State Administration Council Notification No 240/2023

7th Waning of Tazaungmone 1385 ME
4 December 2023

THE State Administration Council Chairman has conferred an honorary title on the following person for his excellent performance in forging amicable cooperation between the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and the Russian Federation –

Pyidaungsu Sithu Thingaha Title Thray Sithu Title

1. Mr Nikolai Platonovich Patrushev Secretary, the Security Council of the Russian Federation

Sd/ Min Aung Hlaing
Senior General
Chairman
State Administration Council

Five special civil appeal cases passed; seven special criminal cases heard

A special appeal tribunal consisting of Union Chief Justice U Thar Htay and Judges of the Supreme Court of the Union U Tin Hon, Daw Khin May Yi, U Thein Ko Ko and Daw Thin Thin Nwet convened yesterday morning at Room 1 of the Supreme Court of the Union and passed the judgments on five special civil appeal cases — No 40/2022 (Kayin), No 8/2023 (Shan), No 20/2023 (Kachin), No 21/2023 (Magway) and No 24/2023 (Bago).

In addition, the special appeal tribunal heard a total of seven special criminal appeal cases — No 1/2023 (Yangon), No 2/2023 (Mandalay), No 3/2023 (Kachin), No 4/2023 (Kachin), No 5/2023 (Kachin), No 6/2023 (Rakhine) and No 7/2023 (Yangon) in line with the COVID-19 prevention and control guidelines. — MNA

King Alaungpaya's Royal Mausoleum set for authentic preservation

THE Myanmar Royal Descendants Association plans to maintain and preserve the mausoleum of King Alaungpaya U Aung Zeya, the founder of the Third Myanmar Kingdom, in Kin village, Bilin township, adhering to its authentic style, according to an official.

While marching to surround Ayutthaya on hearing that the Siam (Thais) had invaded Kyay Sun Ywa Let in Dawei in 1121 Myanmar Era and returning after falling ill, King Alaungpaya died in Kin village at the age of 45 years, eight years on the throne, on the 12th waning day of Kason, 1122 ME.

Currently, the brick tomb of King Alaungpaya has been

covered with a tiered roof for its durability.

"The roof is to protect it from the rain during the rainy season. The Myanmar Royal Descendants Association bore the cost of ensuring the tomb's durability. We built a roof over it after clearing the grass around the area. We plan to preserve the original work," he said.

The monastery monk at the tomb will take care of the ongoing maintenance.

"There is a head monk at the brick tomb, and he undertakes routine maintenance. Successive head monks have taken care of the mausoleum," said the official. — Htet Oo Maung/ZN



Photo: Moe Min Thein (Putao)

Local tourists flock to Putao's popular, snow-capped mountain destinations

IN addition to climbing trips to the snow-capped mountains of Kachin State, Putao's popular destinations are also attracting more and more visitors from around the country, including from Yangon and Mandalay, said Ko Moe Min Thein (Putao) from Trekking in Myanmar Travel and Snow-capped Mountain Transport Service.

Overall, he said there are loads of visits to well-known tourist attraction sites, but

climbing trips are still few.

"Currently, the majority of visitors are locals. Visitors from Yangon and Mandalay have been visiting prominent destinations since November. Visitors from Lashio and Muse came to take climbing trips to snow-capped mountains," said Moe Min Thein (Putao).

A three-night, four-day trip to Putao, Kachin State, includes a tour of the ancient Maha Muni Buddha Image, which is cast in gold

and bronze, Mount Khakabon National Park Museum, Malikha River that separates Putao and Machanbaw and river crossing suspension bridges, heart-shaped lake, countryside natural beauty, orchards and crop fields and morning sea cloud view, as well as exploring traditions of indigenous people.

The six-night, seven-day, seven-night, eight-day trip features climbing to Mount Phonkanrazi. — Moe Min Thein (Putao)/ZS



NATIONAL

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing asserts commitment to democratic and federal Union, warns against disintegration

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instability in the condition of development undertakings.

He continued that the Rakhine area often encounters natural disasters, and the government carries out rescue and relief measures as well as rehabilitation tasks many times. Moreover, the state faced Bengali unrest. Now, AA armed organization attempts to cause armed terrorism in MraukU, Kyauktaw and Paletwa regions. Such conflicts will bring bad consequences to residents, and their sabotage will cause loss and damage to bridges, roads, buildings and ancient cultural heritages provided by the government. It is necessary to take adequate time to undertake rehabilitation. It can be seen that the Tatmadaw and the government made the utmost efforts for the rehabilitation of Rakhine State to recover from the loss and damage caused by the storm Mocha. The development undertakings aimed to complete rehabilitation in the monsoon so that local people could resume their livelihoods in the dry season. Senior military officers were assigned to each township to manage the rehabilitation tasks within six months for remedying these regions, he explained.

However, the Senior General added that current armed disturbances will negatively impact locals again. Although now is the time to carry out development tasks in their region, valuable time was spent on reconstructing damaged bridges and roads and rehabilitation tasks with a large sum of funds.

The Senior General recounted that due to KNPP and KNDF terrorists, clashes happened in the Loikaw region of Kayah State. When the area was stable, residents rehabilitated and reconstructed with their funds. Now, terror acts of KNPP groups have destroyed houses and buildings in Loikaw, so it is challenging to carry out rehabilitation tasks.



In the education sector, the Senior General unveiled that students are attending the schools in all regions cent per cent except the conflicted areas.

The Senior General recognized health personnel and teachers for their efforts in providing healthcare services and teaching amid difficulties, although some universities were closed due to terror acts of terrorist groups. So, local authorities need to manage the convenience of education and health staff for their security and administrative measures for the sake of the regions.



The Senior General warned that if armed organizations keep on being foolish, residents of the relevant regions will suffer bad impacts. So, it is necessary to consider the lives of the people, and those organizations need to solve their problems politically, discarding their naughty moves.

As such, the Senior General urged all to emphasize the interests of their region and the country and pointed out that conflicts in the country can harm the State economy as well as the tourism sector. Only when the country is peaceful and stable in political and security measures will inbound and outbound tourism industries boom.

With regard to coffee cultivation, the Senior General stressed the need to ex-

tend the cultivation of coffee to increase coffee production within five years. A plan is underway to extend 27,900 more acres of coffee in 2024. If so, the country will have some 300,000 acres of coffee in total, and its results can be seen within five to seven years.

The Senior General also urged all to encourage rubber cultivation in regions and states, up from 1.6 million acres of rubber plantations.

The Senior General gave guidance that it is necessary to expand the tax space in the society but increase the tax rate.

He noted that sanctions were imposed on Myanmar to face difficulties and harm the banking system. As such, Myanmar needs to increase export volume

in order to earn foreign exchange with rising domestic manufacturing.

The government has been controlling the prices of fuel and cooking oil at home. Unscrupulous persons committed to raising cooking oil prices. Everybody needs to consider the lives of the people. Deterrent action was taken against those unscrupulous persons under the law.

The Senior General pledged to ease the restrictions for export and import measures in the export and import sector. It is because exporters submitted that they face made efforts in trading, but importers take advantage. If the country receives the non-trade income, it can reduce reliance on trade.

The Senior General plans to ease restrictions on the export of agricultural produce and allow incomes from exports to be spent on importing basic inputs for agriculture, livestock, and MSME businesses.

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Union ministers reported on their respective sectors. The Senior General gave the necessary guidance after hearing the reports.

The meeting was also attended by SAC Vice-Chairman Deputy Prime Minister Vice-Senior General Soe Win, Union ministers and officials together with chief ministers of regions and states through videoconferencing. — MNA/TTA

Union Government Office 2 UM receives ICRC Resident Representative

UNION Minister at the Union Government Office 2 U Ko Ko Hlaing received the delegation led by Ms Elena Ajmone Sessera, Resident Representative of the International Committee of the Red Cross at the Ministry

of the Union Government Office 2 in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

During the courtesy call, they cordially discussed humanitarian assistance and international humanitarian laws. — MNA



ICRC Resident Representative Ms Elena Ajmone Sessera calls on Union Minister U Ko Ko Hlaing.

Daily newspapers available online

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

News and Periodicals Enterprise

NATIONAL

Myanmar holds sports festival for basic education students

THE opening ceremony of a sports festival for basic education students for the academic year 2023-2024 was held in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

Speaking at the opening ceremony, Union Minister for Education Dr Nyunt Pe urged the participating students to try hard to become outstanding athletes, whereas the talented ones will be selected for various sports such as football, volleyball, Sepak Takraw, basketball, track & field, table tennis and badminton.

He then talked about achievements in competitions that can uplift the dignity of respective schools, townships,

regions/states. He also highlighted the positive competitive spirit and the need to become outstanding citizens, developing the five essential strengths.

The sports festival will run from 4 to 15 December in Nay Pyi Taw, and 1,850 participants, including sports team leaders, administrators, coaches and athletes, will participate. — MNA/KTZH

The inaugural event of the sports festival for basic education students in action yesterday in Nay Pyi Taw.



Counter-argument to false information

Airstrikes falsely reported to have killed 3 locals, including 4-month-old infant in Muse

FALSE information that Tatmadaw launched airstrikes at 11 pm on 3 December near Namkhwan Village in Muse Township of Shan State (North), resulting in three deaths, including a four-month-old infant, has been circulating on social media pages by malicious media outlets.

Tatmadaw conducts counter-terrorist operations to ensure security and law enforcement. During the armed engagement near Namkhwan Village of Muse Township on 3 December, artillery shells of terrorists fell into the village and exploded.

Tatmadaw did not launch airstrikes in those areas, and malicious media outlets that do not support the counter-terrorist operations of Tatmadaw and



Screenshot validates misinformation.

people spread false news and misinformation to cause disintegration between the people and Tatmadaw. — MNA/KTZH

Social media flooded with misleading information: False news, propaganda with inaccurate details spread

FALSE information is circulating on social media, including there were claims of security forces allegedly burning down Htantabin village along Tamu Road, Tamu, Sagaing Region, as well as assertions of two villages in Ponnagyun being burned by security forces in Rakhine State. This misinformation is contributing to the spread of false narratives.

According to the security officials who are working in these areas and contacted the residents, it was learned that there is no movement of security forces in and around these villages. As malicious media, the local people are afraid, this kind of baseless fake news to destroy

regional stability and reduce trust in the security forces. It is understood that malicious me-

dia are deliberately writing and distributing false information on social networks. — MNA/KZWH



Screenshot validates a fabricated story.

Denial: Misinformation regarding Tatmadaw using chemical gas bombs

FALSE information that Tatmadaw used chemical gas bombs in clashes with the AA terrorist group in Chin State's Paletwa township when it launched air strikes has been circulating on social media pages by malicious

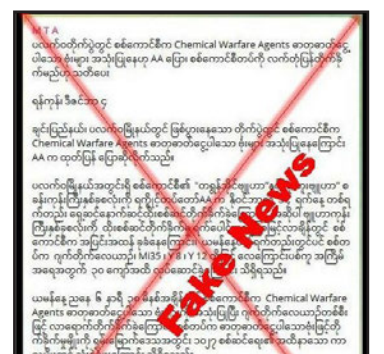
media outlets, the State Administration Council stated on 4 December.

Tatmadaw has carried out a counterattack against AA terrorists by using heavy weapons and air strikes along with soldiers'

brave and effective fight, resulting in many casualties to AA and disheartening them. Therefore, they are spreading such false news with the help of malicious media, said the statement.

It continued that Tatmad-

aw uses no chemical gas bomb when it launches air strikes in all fights, and Tatmadaw will continue carrying out counter-terrorist operations to ensure security and the rule of law in the area. — Thit Taw/ZS



Screenshot validates false information.

NATIONAL

Cherry Blossom Festival set to be held in Loimwe of Kengtung for five days

ACCORDING to the Directorate of Hotels and Tourism of Shan State, the Cherry Blossom Festival is slated to be held in Loimwe located in Kengtung Township of eastern Shan State in 2024 for five days.

The Cherry Blossom Festival was first held in January 2022, its second in January 2023, and this upcoming event will be its third.

U Htin Aung Naing remarked, "The festival is set to be held for five days in the period of the burgeoning cherry season. However, we cannot set a confirmed date yet for the festival since we need to fore-

cast its estimated blossoming and flowering time. That's why, right now, we can say the festival will be held in early January. In the cherry blossoming season, this area is fully covered with cherry flowers since many cherry trees were planted in the British colonial era; also, hundreds of them were planted under projects in consecutive administrative eras. As far as I can recall, around 500 cherry trees were grown in the 1990s; and another 500 trees were also grown in 2022-23. Therefore, there are at least over 1,000 cherry trees in Loimwe."

In Myanmar, cherry trees



People visit the Cherry Blossom Festival in the previous year.

are mostly grown in Chin State and Shan State. In Loimwe, there are two types of cherry trees, which can be divided into sweet and bitter types. Either

of them usually flowers alternatively in nature. The report says the cherries are blossoming and usually last for a month.

In Southeast Asia, Myanmar,

Viet Nam and Thailand hold cherry blossom festivals. Cherry trees are also valued and loved in Japan. — ASH/TMT

Video/film director Maung Maung Myint Lwin passes



Maung Maung Myint Lwin.

MAUNG Maung Myint Lwin, an experienced video and film director, passed away at the charity hospital in Kyauktada Township, Yangon Region, on the morning of 3 December, according to his

wife, Ma Phyu Phyu.

He died of a kidney problem at the age of 56. He directed numerous films, including "Thar Ah Chit Myay Ah Hnit", "Ah Khon" (Shell), "Suu" (Thorn), "Ma Kyay Pwal" (Revenge), "Nga Mone", and "Ah Pay Ah Tay Poe Htein" (Naughty Poe Htein). He dedicated nearly 30 years to the film industry as a director.

"He was hospitalized for a kidney problem at the Muslim Charity Hospital and passed away on the sixth day at the hospital. His funeral was held following Islamic customs," said his wife.

U Maung Maung Myint Lwin was a talented director who collaborated with actors such as Thu Htoo San, Min Yazar, Zay Ye Htet, Wai Lu Kyaw, and others, creating many videos and movies. — ASH/TKO

Illegal timbers, industrial materials and vehicles confiscated

CUSTOMS on-duty teams supervised by the Customs Department seized a Hyundai Kmeft tractor head with a trailer (estimated value of K45 million), travelling from Myawady to Yangon, carrying three kinds of screen valued at K10.2 million, including 500 kilograms of plastic mosquito nets that were not declared in

the Import Declaration (ID), at the Mayanchaung permanent checkpoint on 3 December. The action was taken under Customs procedures.

A combined team managed by the Bago Region Illegal Trade Eradication Task Force captured a total of 2.917 tonnes of illegal hardwood worth K1,458,900 in Bago dis-

trict and a total of 1.348 tonnes of other illegal timbers worth K202,200 in Toungoo district. The action was taken under the Forest Law.

Three arrests were made on 3 and 4 December, with an estimated value of K56,861,100, as reported by the Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee. — MNA/MKKS

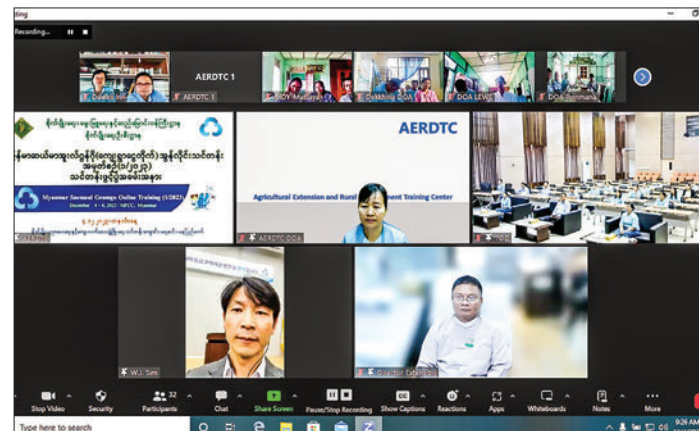
Myanmar Saemaul Geumgo launches online training

THE Department of Agriculture under the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation, along with the Korean Saemaul Geumgo Federation, jointly implements the Myanmar Saemaul Geumgo (village treasury) project.

The aim is to improve the living standards of rural people by systematically collecting a pool of money, practising financial management, and using capital alternately for rural development and enhancing the living stand-

ard of rural communities.

The Myanmar Saemaul Geumgo Online Training Course 1/2023 was inaugurated at the Agricultural Education and Rural Development Centre in Zeyathiri Township, Nay Pyi Taw, yesterday. The course will run for three days, from 4 to 6 December, with 75 participants. Currently, there are 35 village treasuries actively working towards rural development and the socio-economic enhancement of rural communities. — MNA/TRKM



Myanmar Saemaul Geumgo Online Training through Zoom application.

NATIONAL



Thatbyinnyu Temple in Bagan. (Credit: Chinese Embassy to Myanmar)

Initial repair of quake-hit Thatbyinnyu Temple completed

THE first stage of emergency maintenance on the quake-affected Thatbyinnyu Temple has been completed, according to the Department of Archaeology and National Museum (Bagan Branch). A group of Chinese experts led the renovation works on the pagoda,

which was damaged by an earthquake in the Bagan Ancient Cultural Zone in 2016.

The leading committee overseeing the renovation of ancient cultural heritage in Bagan announced on 1 December that the experts conducted

strength tests on the pagoda in line with the initial renovation plan. So far, they have observed no indications of additional deterioration or instability.

The earthquake on 24 August 2016 affected 389 ancient pagodas and temples in Bagan. — TWA/NT

Botahtaung Pagoda draws 2,000+ visitors from 28 countries in 11 months

ACCORDING to the Pagoda Treasurer's Board of Trustees, in the 11 months of this year, more than 20,000 foreigners from 28 countries have visited the Botahtaung Pagoda.

Between January and November of this year, there were more than 20,000 pilgrims; for 2022, there were only over 5,000 foreign visitors.

The most prominent foreign tourists come from Thailand, Viet Nam, and Russia, and pilgrims from 28 countries.

Starting from 1 December, the entrance fee for foreigners to the pagoda has been increased from K10,000 to K15,000. — TWA/KZW



At Botahtaung Pagoda, Ms Souphaphone Chanthanileuth from Laos fixes a gold finger stent valued at over K14 million during a donation event on 19 July 2023. PHOTO: YMG

Commencing 1 January, online drug registration extension applications open

THE Department of Food and Drug Administration (FDA Myanmar) has announced that the process for extending drug registration online will be allowed starting from 1 January 2024.

FDA Myanmar has notified that applicants should submit their extension applications through the e-submission system on the FDA Myanmar website at least 180 days before the registration expires.

Applicants must pay K300,000 for the preliminary document scrutiny process through digital payment on the e-submission system.

According to the FDA Myanmar announcement, companies must resubmit the neces-



Varieties of drugs and medicines seen in the market.

sary documents online within a month. Failure to do so within the stipulated time will result in the removal of their registrations from the online system.

The annual fee for each registered drug item is K300,000, and it must be paid digitally on the e-submission system. — ASH/TMT

Agri exports earn US\$1.9 bln in eight months

ACCORDING to the Ministry of Commerce, Myanmar's agricultural exports have generated over US\$1.98 billion in the past eight months.

However, the statistics from 1 April to 24 November indicate a decline of \$286 million compared to the earnings of \$2.26 billion during the same period last year. Exporters attribute this decrease to the escalating commodity prices within the country.

The country's exports encompass agricultural produce, animal products, marine products, minerals, forest products, finished products on a cut-make-pack (CMP) basis, and other commodities. Myanmar chiefly imports capital goods,

raw materials, consumer goods, and materials for CMP businesses. Agricultural produce mainly comprises rice, broken rice, beans and pulses, fruits and vegetables, sesame,

dried tea leaves, sugar, and other farm goods. The primary buyers are China, Singapore, Malaysia, the Philippines, Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, and Sri Lanka. — TWA/NT



Lorries laden with Watermelons seen lining up at the Myanmar-China border.

YGN palm oil wholesale reference price set to dwindle this week ending 10 December

THE wholesale reference rate of palm oil for the Yangon market shrank to K4,920 per viss for a week from 4 to 10 December 2023, according to the Supervisory Committee on edible oil import and distribution.

The wholesale price was registered at K5,000 per viss last week, ending 3 December.

The Supervisory Committee on Edible Oil Import and Distribution under the Ministry of Commerce has closely observed the Free on Board prices in Malaysia and Indonesia, adding transport costs, tariffs and banking services to decide the weekly wholesale market reference rate for edible oil.

Nevertheless, the market price was way higher than the reference price.

To tackle overcharging, the Consumer Affairs Department under the Ministry of Com-



Community members lining up for the purchase of palm oil at affordable prices.

merce informed the consumers of lodging the complaints for overcharging through the call centre's hotline in late August. The Department urged consumers not to buy palm oil at high prices.

The Department is making concerted efforts to steer the

high volatility in palm oil prices in the retail market and offer fairer prices to consumers in coordination with the Myanmar Edible Oil Dealers Association and oil importing companies.

The complaints for overcharging can be lodged over Hot Line: 1535 of the Call Centre of

the Consumers Affairs Department or sent to the Facebook Page of the Department and the region and state departments concerned.

Myanmar Edible Oil Dealers Association formed a task force for edible oil price stability. It started informing the lists of

wholesale/retail shops of each company on 28 August, including the address of the shops in the respective townships and the number of available barrels.

The task force will govern the market to meet the satisfaction of the end-users in the supply chain and get easy access to the consumers.

It will also supervise the market to ensure the palm oil sales at wholesale prices are not higher than two per cent of the net profit margin and retail prices are not higher than 10 per cent margin.

The domestic consumption of palm oil is estimated at one million tonnes per year. The local palm oil production is just about 400,000 tonnes. About 700,000 tonnes of palm oil are imported yearly through Malaysia and Indonesia to meet domestic demands. — NN/EM

YGEA's gold reference price rises following spot gold price rally

SPOT gold price hit a high of US\$2,086 per ounce, driving the Yangon Region Gold Entrepreneurs Association (YGEA) to raise the reference price to K3.28 million per tical (0.578 ounce, or 0.016 kilogramme).

The pure gold market price fluctuated upward to K3.72 million per tical in the grey market. There is a large gap of over K430,000 per tical between the YGEA's reference price and the unofficial market's 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. The US dollar is currently exchanged at approximately K3,500 in the grey market.

The US dollar exchange rate determines the gap between the domestic gold market value and YGEA's reference gold price. When the dollar exchange rate surged to K4,000, the gold price peaked at K4 million per tical in late August 2023. — NN/EM

Security market extends downward trajectory in Nov

THE continuous and block trading of the eight listed companies on the Yangon Stock Exchange (YSX) braced for a downward spiral in November, with 282,673 shares worth K687.8 million, according to the monthly report released by the exchange.

The equity market showed an upward trajectory with a total trading value of K2.068 billion from 958,368 shares traded in July. Then, the trading values declined to K1.296 billion with 509,827 shares in August and K1.38 billion with 302,164 shares in September. The downward trend persisted in October, with 305,102 shares and K771.89 million in October 2023.

At present, shares of eight listed companies — First Myanmar Investment (FMI), Myanmar Thilawa SEZ Holdings (MTSH), Myanmar Citizens Bank (MCB), First Private Bank (FPB), TMH Telecom Public Co Ltd (TMH), the Ever Flow River Group Public Co Ltd (EFR) and Amata Holding Public Co Ltd. (AMATA) and Myanmar Agro Exchange Public Co Ltd (MAEX) were traded in the security market. The total trading volumes were registered at 11,435 shares of FMI worth K98.84 million, 79,577 shares of MTSH worth K230.65 million, 621 shares of MCB worth K4.6 million, 28,046 shares of FPB worth over K44.7 million, 1,714 shares of



A man looks at the LED board showing the stock exchange rates at YSX in Yangon.

TMH worth K4.15 million, 141,753 shares of EFR worth over K279.545 million, 423 shares of AMATA worth K2 million and 19,104 shares of MAEX worth K32 million respectively last month.

The share prices per unit fell to K8,800 for FMI, K2,900 for MTSH, K7,100 for MCB, K1,550 for FPB, K2,450 for TMH, K2,000 for EFR and K4,900 for AMATA and K1,650 for MAEX on the last day of November 2023. Next, the Securities and Exchange Commission of Myanmar (SECM) has allowed foreigners to invest in the local equity market since 20 March 2020 to attract better capital inflows, pro-

mote long-term and sustainable investment, encourage good corporate governance, and support market orientation.

The YSX conducts stock investment webinars and training courses to disseminate rules and regulations regarding the stock exchange and knowledge of share trading among the public. The YSX Investment Virtual Series also offers insight talks with listed companies' executives and investment presentations by security companies every weekend at 4 pm on YouTube, Facebook, Viber, and Telegram platforms of the YSX, along with panel discussions with experts. — KK

OPINION

Choose the best option for daily oil consumption

IN Myanmar, cooking oil is an indispensable component of daily meals, contributing to their flavour and appeal. Despite the acknowledged drawbacks associated with excessive oil consumption, Myanmar's populace continues to embrace oily meals as a routine part of their daily diet.

While a certain amount of oil is necessary for meal preparation, it is crucial to adhere to established limits. All foods inherently contain calories derived from oil, but an excess of oil can lead to adverse health effects. Consequently, social organizations and medical experts are advocating for a reduction in oil content in daily meals.

In accordance with health guidelines, individuals are advised to limit their daily oil and oily meal intake to 1.8 ticals (one tical is equal to 0.0163 kilogramme). Excessive oil consumption poses

health risks, and it is essential to distinguish between saturated oil, unsaturated oil, and transformed oil. Unsaturated oils, including olive oil, groundnut oil, sunflower oil, sesame oil, soybean oil, corn oil, and avocado oil, are deemed healthier options.

Saturated oils, found in pork, beef, chicken, palm oils, and dairy products, can affect health differently. Consumers are advised to minimize the use of these oils, ensuring that saturated oil constitutes less than 10 per cent of their daily caloric intake. Transformed oils, often resulting from deep frying or refining processes, should also be consumed judiciously.

As Myanmar relies heavily on agriculture, particularly oil crops, it is imperative to expand the cultivation of crops like groundnut, sesame, and sunflower for both domestic consumption and export purposes. Regions like Magway and Taninthayi have been recognized as vital contributors to the country's oil production, playing a crucial role in bolstering the economy.

In the 2022-23 cultivation season, approximately 800,000 acres were dedicated to oil crops, excluding oil palm plantations. This extensive cultivation is projected to yield 680,000 tonnes of cooking oil, surpassing the nation's oil sufficiency needs by 26.2 per cent.

To achieve a balance between local consumption and export demands, individuals must consider increasing the production of cooking oil while concurrently reducing personal oil consumption to safeguard their health. This is because Myanmar prefers to eat too many oily meals on a daily basis, spending a large sum of money. By aligning daily oil consumption with recommended guidelines, individuals not only promote their well-being but also contribute to increased economic gains for the nation.

CONTINUE FROM YESTERDAY:

Q3. Did the Forum help you establish contacts with the leaders of other associations of graduates of Russian universities in Asian countries?

Answers

Dr Hlaing Min Oo (Myanmar): "The Forum was very helpful in establishing contacts with the leaders of other associations of graduates of Russian universities in Asian countries, as well as organizing cooperation for the exchange of knowledge between our educational organizations, which is an example of the unity of the global educational community and emphasizes the importance of collective efforts to solve global problems."

Siviengphet Phetvorasak (Lao): "Certainly, the Forum has helped establish contacts with them and create favourable conditions for further cooperation between foreign graduates of Soviet and Russian universities and Russian universities. The Forum provided an opportunity to immerse into the creative and innovative activities of graduate associations of Russian universities in Asian countries."

Jainal Abedin (Bangla-



Ravdanzhamts Urgamal (Mongolia), a graduate of St. Petersburg State University, teacher at the Mongolian State University of Education, Doctor of Pedagogical Sciences, Executive Director of the University Graduate Association in Mongolia.

desh): "This was an excellent opportunity for us to establish contacts with the leaders of other associations of graduates of Russian universities in Asian countries and exchange experiences."

Dr Ratindra Nath (Nepal): "Undoubtedly, such contacts have been established."

Ravdanzhamts Urgamal (Mongolia): "Yes, of course, it really helped. Most likely, we became both partners and friends.

Exclusive Interview

Graduates from Russian universities meet in Hanoi: Reflections after the forum

Our meeting was fruitful, successful, and unforgettable, as I had imagined before the Forum."

Hasan Shahid (Pakistan): "Yes, we have established a good understanding with Graduate Associations of different countries, especially Russia, China, Vietnam, India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Nepal. During the Forum, we concluded that the meeting of Asian Alumni Associations from Soviet and Russian universities was useful. We met with rectors and representatives of various Russian Universities for active cooperation in the field of exchange of experience and scientific research, as well as with delegations from RUDN University, St. Petersburg State University, Ural Federal University named after the first President of Russia B N Yeltsin and Tyumen Industrial University."

Q4. How do you feel about



Memory after the lecture on Lifelong Learning - Future Education Concept.



Dr Ratindra Nath (Nepal), Professor, Dean of Kathmandu Chinnamangal Medical College (Nepal), Head of the Department of Anatomy.

the idea of holding the Forum of Foreign Graduates of Russian Universities annually in different countries of the world?

Answers

Dr Hlaing Min Oo (Myanmar): "The Forum that took place indicates that Russia pays close attention to foreign graduates of Soviet and Russian universities. The results of the Forum are of great value for the further development of cooperation between

their cooperation in general. At the end of the Forum, certificates of advanced training were awarded. I consider the main result of the Forum to be the creation of a strong foundation for further cooperation between foreign graduates from Russian universities and Russian universities themselves. In conclusion, on behalf of the graduates from Laos, let me express my deep gratitude to Rosstrudnichestvo, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health of Viet Nam for the warm reception and the excellent realization of the Forum in Hanoi."

Jainal Abedin (Bangladesh): "I feel positive about the idea of holding the Forum of Foreign Graduates from Russian Universities annually in different countries of the world. And I really hope that this event will become traditional. I do not doubt that such systematic work will be fruitful. We need to meet more often to exchange experience and develop further work plans. Holding such forums will certainly help to intensify the work of associations of Soviet and Russian university graduates. In conclusion, I would

like to express my gratitude to Rosstrudnichestvo for the invitation to this historical Forum in Hanoi, the birthplace of the Great Ho Chi Minh."

Dr Ratindra Nath (Nepal): "It is necessary to organize such events every year. This will help the Russian side share information about its achievements in the field of science and technology, as well as trends in education and healthcare. The platform of the Forum also acts as a peaceful

as in which Russian universities and institutes can conduct joint research, organize programs of dual degree, etc."



Hasan Shahid (Pakistan), Head of the Pakistan Association of Russian University Graduates.

INTERVIEW

as in which Russian universities and institutes can conduct joint research, organize programs of dual degree, etc."

Detail Biography

Dr Hlaing Min Oo (Myanmar), a graduate of the National Research University "MPEI", Doctor of Sciences (DSc), Professor, Head of the Sub-Department of "Power Engineering" of the Scientific and Technical Research Center in PyinOoLwin (Myanmar), the Honorary Professor of National Research University "MPEI", Russia. (Fig. 2 and Fig. 3)

Siviengphet Phetvorasak (Lao), a graduate of Kyiv State Pedagogical Institute of Foreign Languages, Director of the Centre for Open Education at the Lao National University, former Ambassador of Laos to the Russian Federation, PhD in Philology (Fig. 4)

Jainal Abedin (Bangladesh), a graduate from the Kuban State

power, helping Russia expand its political influence around the world."

Ravdanzhamts Urgamal (Mongolia): "I am happy about this idea. I am sure that participation in such a Forum will be a valuable experience for everyone and bring new impressions, acquaintances and inspiration for our further movement forward, the same way it happened this time."

Hasan Shahid (Pakistan): "We agree that this kind of Forum should be organized every year for foreign graduates of universities



Jainal Abedin (Bangladesh), a graduate of the Kuban State Agrarian University, Secretary-General of the Association of Soviet University Graduates in Bangladesh.

of the USSR and Russia. The topic should focus on education and health, representing key issues for developing countries such as Pakistan. There are many are-

Dr Ratindra Nath (Nepal), Professor, Dean of Kathmandu Chinnamangal Medical College (Nepal), Head of the Department of Anatomy (Fig. 6)

Ravdanzhamts Urgamal (Mongolia), a graduate of St Petersburg State University, teacher at the Mongolian State University of Education, a Doctor of Pedagogical Sciences, and Executive Director of the University Graduate Association in Mongolia (Fig. 7)

Hasan Shahid (Pakistan), Head of the Pakistan Association of Russian University Graduates (Fig. 8)

ENVIRONMENT WORLD

Volunteer divers guard Oman's 'unique' coral reefs

ON a sailing boat anchored off Oman's pristine Daymaniyat Islands, volunteer divers pull on wetsuits, check their scuba tanks and then take turns plunging into the clear turquoise water.

They are diving for a reason: to remove the massive fishing nets damaging an unusually resilient coral reef system that is seen as more likely than most to survive rising sea temperatures.

The clean-up is one example of how divers and Omani authorities are joining forces to protect the reefs — which are critical for marine wildlife — from man-made damage.

"Coral reefs are a refuge for marine habitat and wildlife," said Hammoud al-Nayri of Oman's environmental authority, as he watched the divers.

"To protect marine ecosystems, we must first preserve coral reefs," said the 45-year-old who oversees the Daymaniyat Islands, Oman's only marine reserve.

Most shallow-water corals, battered and bleached white by repeated marine heatwaves, are "unlikely to last the century", the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change said last year.

Global warming, as well as



A volunteer diver shows fishing nets removed from coral reefs at Oman's Dimaniyat islands on 4 October 2023. PHOTO: AFP

dynamite fishing and pollution, wiped out a startling 14 per cent of the world's reefs between 2009 and 2018, according to the Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network.

But Oman's relatively cooler waters provide a rare refuge for its reefs, which are among the least studied in the world.

"Oman's reefs are actually considered to be relatively less vulnerable than some regions," said John Burt, associate professor of biology at New York University Abu Dhabi.

"This is largely due to the influence of the monsoon," the marine expert explained. — AFP

Net-zero targets must include fossil fuel 'phase-out': monitor



Delegates queue to enter the Expo City venue during the COP28 United Nations climate talks in Dubai on 4 December 2023. PHOTO: AFP

MOST countries which have committed to a target of net-zero carbon emissions have not announced any plans to phase out fossil fuels, putting those pledges at risk of being little more than a "bumper sticker", a climate monitor warned Monday.

A new report from the group Net Zero Tracker was released amid contentious negotiations at the COP28 climate talks in Dubai about whether nations will agree to "phase down" or "phase out" planet-heating fossil fuels.

Some 150 countries have committed to a net-zero emissions target of some kind, covering 88 per cent of all human-driven greenhouse gases emitted worldwide, the report said.

Yet only 13 per cent of those countries have made at least one commitment to phase out the use, production or exploration of coal, oil and gas, said the platform, which is run by several research centres including Britain's Oxford University.

Natasha Lutz, the group's co-data lead, suggested that the proliferation of net-zero pledges could amount to little if they are not matched by phase-out plans.

"A pledge without a plan for implementation is at risk of becoming a bumper-sticker; broadcasted but never taken seriously," she said.

The report was released a day after it was revealed that Sultan Al Jaber — who is both the UAE's COP28 president

and the head of state oil giant ADNOC — said there was "no science" to show that phasing out fossil fuels would achieve the world's climate goals.

Jaber also said that removing fossil fuels would take the world "back into caves", according to a video published by The Guardian.

The Net Zero Tracker analysis looked at more than 1,500 nations, regions, cities and large companies who have committed to any kind of net-zero target, analyzing how serious they are about achieving the goal.

Around 95 per cent of countries that produce oil and gas have not pledged to phase out exploration, the analysis found.

It was more positive when it came to companies, finding that 56 per cent of firms working in coal production had at least partially committed to phasing out the particularly dirty fuel.

African and European companies were relatively well represented in the phase-out plans, while US firms lagged far behind.

The report also praised Spain for including phase-out plans in legislation, Swedish capital Stockholm for its emissions reductions targets and Danish energy company Orsted for divesting from fossil fuels. — AFP

In Peru, a small carbon footprint is not a choice

SOFIA Llocella Pellaca always descends on foot from the unlit hill where she lives with hardly any electricity on the outskirts of Lima. She rarely eats meat and cooks on a gas or wood stove.

She has never even heard of a carbon footprint.

While some climate-conscious people in rich countries try to restrict their carbon emissions, Pellaca's minimal impact on the environment is an unhappy side-effect of poverty.

Giving the poor a better life and spurring economic growth while also curbing planet-harming emissions is one of the major challenges facing world leaders meeting for COP28 climate talks next month in the United Arab

Emirates.

"I walk down, I walk where I need to be, I walk back" up the hill, said Pellaca, 31, a single mother of two who barely uses public transport, owns no car or motorbike, and has never travelled by plane.

Pellaca is a domestic worker who earns less than half Peru's minimum wage of \$265 per month.

She lives in a shantytown in the fog-covered desert highlands of the Peruvian capital that are home to many of Lima's 2.7 million poor people.

Peru's economy mainly leans on fishing and mining, with 73 per cent of the working population in the informal sector. — AFP



(FILES) Sofia Llocella Pellaca (31) gets water from a fog catcher in Villa Maria del Triunfo district, on the southern outskirts of Lima, on 7 October 2023. PHOTO: AFP

Feeling stressed? Cuddle a cow, says UK dairy farm

MORAG, an imposing Highland cow with a caramel coat, ambles out of the main shed at Dumble Farm in northern England and stands ready to meet her guests.

Visitors have travelled from far and wide to the farm near Beverley in east Yorkshire, not to buy milk, yoghurt or cheese, but to enjoy a cuddle with Morag and her companions.

Fiona Wilson and her co-farmers at Dumble Farm started offering the cuddling sessions in February when it became obvious that economic difficulties of modern dairy farming had become untenable.

"Some people like to engage with dogs or cats or horses and other people find that cows are the animals they want to be with," Wilson told AFP.

"People are coming for a wellbeing point of view. That anxiety relieving-ness of being with animals is almost like a therapy."

Horn of a dilemma

Dumble Farm's owners looked to diversify because a sharp fall in the price of milk and high inflation was crippling



Ella Gartell-Bishop takes part in a 'Cow Cuddling' experience with a small herd of retired dairy cows on Dumble Farm in Arram, near Beverley, north east England on 29 November 2023. PHOTO: AFP

their dairy farming business.

Economic hardship has forced farmers to leave the industry in their droves for decades.

According to a House of Commons Library research brief, the UK had 196,000 dairy

farms in 1950. By 1995 there were just 35,700.

Lower milk prices and rising energy, fuel, feed and fertilizer costs since the outbreak of war in Ukraine 20 months ago has been a nail in the coffin for many more.

In its latest survey of ma-

ajor milk buyers, the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board, which represents farmers, estimated that there were 7,500 dairy producers in Britain in October 2023.

For Dumble Farm, flooding in six out of the past seven years

was an added challenge, leaving the farm under water often for months at a time.

Wilson said she and her partners at the farm, who include her husband and brother, were working 14 hours every day of the year and losing money.

"It's impossible to live like that," she said. "There was just no future. We were just getting nowhere."

In January 2022, the farmers decided to diversify and sold off their dairy herd other than five cows that they could not bring themselves to leave.

"They were our friends really, with placid friendly natures," Wilson said.

"We thought maybe that we could try having a go at cow cuddling, just to earn a bit of extra money on top of our conservation scheme and also to engage people with what we were doing here."

The farm prepared the cows for months before inviting customers to come and cuddle them — and the cows appeared happy to oblige. — AFP

Art exhibition opens as part of Liangzhu Forum in east China



A woman visits the art exhibition of "Silk Road Artists' Rendezvous" in Hangzhou, capital of east China's Zhejiang Province, 3 December 2023. PHOTO: XINHUA

AN art exhibition opened as a sideline event of the first Liangzhu Forum on Sunday in Hangzhou, east China's Zhejiang Province.

The exhibition, "Silk Road Artists' Rendezvous", features 152 works created by 84 artists from 83 countries.

In late November, the artists visited various scenic locations across Zhejiang, including the Liangzhu ancient city and the West Lake, a UNESCO World Heritage Site in Hangzhou, and created works inspired by their week-long tour. Since 2009, hundreds of artists from nearly 100 countries have participated in similar "Silk Road Artists' Rendezvous" visits to China, which were organized by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism several times. — Xinhua

Detective Conan-themed train starts operation in Japan's Tottori

A special express train decorated with characters from the famous manga "Detective Conan" departed at the Kurayoshi station in Japan's manga hub Tottori Prefecture on Sunday as the region looked to attract tourists from home

and abroad.

Both the exterior and interior of the Detective Conan-themed Super Hakuto train, bound for Kyoto, feature various depictions of the iconic characters in the manga so that passengers can immerse

themselves in the Conan world.

The launch of the themed train service has attracted Conan fans from other parts of Japan.

"I am so excited to see the decorated train carriages and really look forward to the tour," said a passenger who took an overnight bus from Tokyo for the train ride.

The Super Hakuto Limited Express, jointly operated by Chizu Express Co Ltd and the West Japan Railway Company, connects Tottori Prefecture, the hometown of Detective Conan's creator Gosho Aoyama, with Japan's Keihanshin area including the cities of Kobe, Osaka, and Kyoto.

As the 2025 World Exposition in Osaka approaches, Tottori anticipates a surge in visitors with the special train service. — Xinhua



The Detective Conan-themed train waits for departure at the Kurayoshi station in Tottori, Japan, 3 December 2023. PHOTO: XINHUA

ECONOMY WORLD

Malaysia's manufacturing activity to improve in near term: research houses

RESEARCH houses in Malaysia on Monday anticipated the country's manufacturing activity to improve in the near term after S&P Global Malaysia Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) rose to a seven-month high of 47.9 in November.

Kenanga Research said in a note on Monday that the slowdown in Malaysia's manufacturing activity may reach its bottom and is expected to gradually improve in the near term.

According to the research house, the recent uptick in Malaysia's manufacturing PMI suggests a possible resurgence in the health of the manufacturing sector as the year draws to a close, with the positive momentum extending into 2024.

This is partly attributed to the potential upswing in the technology sector and China's gradual recovery, both of which are expected to contribute to an improvement in Malaysia's

export performance moving forward, it said.

Consequently, it forecast that Malaysia's gross domestic product (GDP) growth will continue to expand in the final quarter this year, reaching 3.7 per cent, primarily driven by a resilient domestic demand, bolstered by year-end festive spending and a rise in tourist arrivals.

Additionally, it said the growth will also be supported by increased fiscal spending, as the government typically ramps up spending towards the year's end.

MIDF Research also said in a note that the better PMI reading and improved manufacturers' optimism reflected a more positive outlook for the sector. This is also aligned with its expectations for recovery in Malaysia's trade and production activities.

"On that note, we continue to expect Malaysia's exports of goods will pick up and rebound in 2024," it said. — Xinhua

Gold hits record high as equities weaken

GOLD hit a record high Monday as growing optimism that the Federal Reserve will cut US interest rates in the new year has dented the dollar in recent weeks.

The precious metal, seen as a haven investment, reached an all-time pinnacle at \$2,135.39 an ounce.

Profit-taking later set in, leaving it to trade at \$2,069.01. The dollar was also firmer Monday.

Gold is benefitting also from the Israel-Hamas war according to analysts.

"Concerns about the shaky global economic backdrop and the Israel-Hamas conflict have fuelled investor demand for safe-haven assets like gold," said Victoria Scholar, head of investment at Interactive Investor.

"Plus, expectations for Fed rate cuts next year have put downward pressure on the US dollar which is trading around three-month lows, adding to gold's attractiveness."



(FILES) A worker polishes gold bullion bars at the ABC Refinery in Sydney on 5 August 2020. Gold prices soared to a record high above USD 2,100 on 4 December 2023 as traders grow increasingly confident the Federal Reserve will cut interest rates in the new year. **PHOTO: AFP**

Elsewhere, bitcoin traded above \$40,000 for the first time since May last year, boosted by hopes that the United States would soon allow broader trading of the world's biggest cryptocurrency.

Major stock markets mostly fell in Europe and Asia, while oil prices dropped.

Traders are shrugging off Fed boss Jerome Powell's attempts to temper expectations of US rate cuts in the

first quarter of 2024.

Bets on an easing of monetary policy were ramped up when Powell said Friday that it was "well into restrictive territory" after more than a year of hikes that have put borrowing costs at a two-decade high.

Central banks around the globe have sent interest rates soaring, helping to bring down surging inflation. — AFP

'Where is our future': Uganda declares war on used clothing



Sellers offering second-hand clothes wait for costumers at a market in Kampala on 7 October 2023. **PHOTO: AFP**

FOR nearly three decades, the chaotic, overcrowded Owino secondhand market in Uganda's capital has been the cornerstone of Hadija Nakimuli's life, helping the widowed shopkeeper build a house and

raise 12 children.

But a potential government ban on the sale of used clothing threatens to sever this crucial lifeline for Nakimuli and tens of thousands of vendors like her.

"Where is our future if they stop secondhand clothes?" the 62-year-old asked, rummaging through her stash of underwear, dresses, shoes and bags.

Established in 1971, the sprawling market employs some 80,000 people, 70 per cent of them women, according to Kampala city authorities.

"Other than students, my clients include ministers (and) members of parliament who call me to deliver clothes to their air-conditioned offices," said Joseph Barimugaya, whose stall stocks menswear.

"This trade should not be tampered with. Everyone benefits, including the government, which gets taxes," the father of four told AFP. — AFP

German exports disappoint again in October

GERMAN exports fell unexpectedly in October on the back of lower demand from fellow European Union countries, official data showed Monday.

Exports totalled 126.4 billion euros (\$137 billion), down 0.2 per cent on the previous month, according to adjusted figures from federal statistics agency Destatis.

Analysts surveyed by Factset had predicted a one-per-cent rebound in exports following a dip in September.

Imports meanwhile declined more sharply by 1.2 per cent month-on-month, totalling 108.6 billion euros.

As a result, the country's trade surplus — the difference between exports and imports — grew to 17.8 billion euros from 16.7 billion in September.

The latest drop in exports

was driven by a 2.7-per-cent plunge in demand from EU member states, against a sombre economic backdrop.

Shipments of "made in Germany" goods to other parts of the world were up 2.9 per cent however, including a 5.7-per-cent jump in exports to the United States.

The German economy, the EU's largest, has struggled to find its way out of a downturn in recent months as it battles headwinds including the fallout from Russia's war in Ukraine, high inflation and weaker demand from key market China.

The German government expects output to contract by 0.4 per cent this year.

The International Monetary Fund believes Germany will be the only major advanced economy to contract in 2023. — AFP

Local speciality industries thrive amid China's rural revitalization drive



Guests learn about local specialities at the 2023 Boao Forum for Entrepreneurs in Boao, south China's Hainan Province, 3 December 2023. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

AT the start of the harvesting season, the air in the village of Yongchu is filled with the aroma of rice wine.

In Baisha Li Autonomous County, south China's Hainan Province, the ripening of its distinctive Shanlan rice marks the season for ethnic villagers to welcome relatives and friends to taste home-grown rice and drink the wine made from it.

The upland rice varieties cultivated by the ethnic Li people have a rich history, spanning up to 1,000 years, with

cultivation mainly for subsistence for much of this period. However, these traditional crops have gained added value in recent years, evolving into grain commodities popular with urbanites.

This transformation is enabling locals to earn extra money. In the village of Yongchu alone, 184 rural families currently rake in a combined annual income of more than two million yuan (280,300 US dollars) from Shanlan rice and related products.

The specialities of this village are just an

epitome of a local speciality industry thriving amid China's rural revitalization drive.

At the ongoing 2023 Boao Forum for Entrepreneurs in Boao, a coastal town in Hainan, local specialities from across the country have gained much attention, highlighting how products once stuck deep in mountains or the rural hinterland have found their way to a broader market.

One of the specialties on show at the event is Jin'er, or Golden Ear in English, an edible fungus

rich in fat, protein and trace elements such as phosphorus, calcium and potassium.

Grown in the county of Xinhe, north China's Hebei Province, this product has been in short supply in the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region due to its widespread popularity in recent years.

This year, the county cooperated with a Beijing-based agricultural company to build a modern agricultural industry demonstration base spanning around 667 hectares, focusing on robust development of the edible fungi industry.

"We have transitioned Xinhe Jin'er planting to an intelligent factory cultivation model," said Chen Long, deputy head of the Hebei Brand Building Research Institute. "Compared to wild species, artificial cultivation offers speed, high yields, and a relatively simple planting process."

Another such example is the broader market developing a taste for coarse grains from the city of Xinzhou, north China's Shanxi Province. — Xinhua

Toyota to make 20% of European sales zero-emission cars by 2026

TOYOTA Motor Corp said Monday it will increase the percentage of zero-emission vehicles in its European sales to over 20 per cent by 2026, offering at least 15 electric and fuel-cell models.

The plan comes as the European Union is set to ban sales of gasoline-powered cars in 2035, prompting global automakers to accelerate a shift to all-electric cars.

The world's biggest carmaker by volume currently offers five EV models and one FCV under the Toyota brand and two EVs under the upscale Lexus brand.

Toyota, which was once seen as reluctant to embrace EVs, has recently

been ramping up its efforts to expand its line-up of battery-driven cars as part of its strategy to offer a wide range of green cars and cater to different energy situations across the world.

"Whilst we will continue to offer multiple carbon reduction technologies, we will also steadily increase the number of zero-emissions vehicles we offer to customers," Yoshihiro Nakata, CEO of Toyota Motor Europe, said in a statement.

All Lexus brand models are scheduled to be EVs by 2035 globally, but for the European market, it plans to achieve that goal by 2030 if market situations allow, Toyota said. — Kyodo



A senior Toyota Motor Corp official speaks about the Japanese automaker's sales strategy in Europe during an event in Brussels on 29 November 2023. **PHOTO: KYODO**

Thailand, Hong Kong launch cross-border QR payment for seamless transactions

THAILAND and China's Hong Kong Special Administrative Region launched a cross-border QR code payment service on Monday, aiming to provide a swift, secure, and easily accessible retail payment experience for travellers.

Through the link between Thailand's PromptPay and Hong Kong's Faster Payment System (FPS), customers can use their mobile payment applications to scan QR codes displayed by merchants for a seamless and efficient transaction, while merchants receive their funds instantly, ac-

ording to a joint press release by the Bank of Thailand (BOT) and Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA).

Sethaput Suthiwartnarueput, governor of the Bank of Thailand, said the collaboration marks a significant step towards a more interconnected and digitized financial landscape in the region.

This cross-border QR payment system is expected to bring tangible benefits to the 1.5 million tourists from Hong Kong and Thailand, enhancing convenience for travellers and supporting tourism

and economic activities between the two economies, Sethaput said.

Eddie Yue, chief executive of the Hong Kong Monetary Authority, said the launch of the service marked an important milestone for Hong Kong's FPS in expanding its utility to cross-border payments.

Seven participating banks and two non-bank Stored Value Facilities from Hong Kong, along with three commercial banks from Thailand, are among the service providers offering this cross-border payment service, according to the joint press release. — Xinhua

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V AQUILA GLORY VOY.NO. (2313)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V AQUILA GLORY VOY.NO. (2313)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **7-12-2023** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MKH** 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
Myanmar Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S BEN LINE AGENCIES (S'PORE) PTE LTD

ROLLING UPDATES

WORLD

Rains pound southern India ahead of cyclone

RAINS lashed southern India's city of Chennai on Monday ahead of the landfall of a powerful cyclone, with a crocodile spotted swimming the streets and cars floating away.

Cyclone Michaung will hit the Andhra Pradesh state's coast on Tuesday morning as a "severe cyclonic storm", packing winds of 90-100 kilometres (55-62 miles) per hour winds with gusts up to 110 km/h, the Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) said.

In Tamil Nadu, the airport in state capital Chennai was expected to be closed until late Monday, local media reported, as rains pounded the city.

The IMD issued warnings to those fishing in the area to suspend operations, warning of expected "major damage" to thatch huts along the coast.



Commuters make their way through a flooded road after heavy rains in Chennai on 4 December 2023. Cyclone Michaung is expected to make landfall on 5 December along the southern coast. **PHOTO: AFP**

Trees were uprooted and vehicles swept away due to the heavy rains, according to images posted on social media.

The police posted images of rescuers evacuating people from waterlogged areas.

Tamil Nadu government official Supriya Sahu warned people not to approach a crocodile, after one was spotted on the streets after being washed out by the rains.

"No need to panic," Sahu posted on social media.

"There is no possibility of harm to humans IF these animals are left alone and UNPROVOKED."

The cyclone is expected to hit India's southeast coast at the town of Bapatla, on the 300-kilometre (185-mile) long stretch between Nellore and Machilipatnam. — AFP

Six Thai hostages return home after release by Hamas



Thai nationals, who had been kidnapped and taken hostage by Palestinian Hamas militants during the 7 October attack on Israel, pick up their luggage after arriving back in Thailand at Bangkok's Suvarnabhumi Airport on 30 November 2023. **PHOTO: AFP**

SIX Thai hostages kidnapped and held for weeks in the Gaza Strip by Hamas arrived back in the kingdom on Monday, officials said.

Tens of thousands of Thais were working in Israel, mostly in the agricultural sector, when Palestinian militants poured over the border on 7 October, killing 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and kidnapping roughly 240, according to Israeli authorities.

At least 32 Thais were abducted by Hamas, with Bangkok's foreign ministry and Thai Muslim groups working to negotiate their release.

Seventeen returned last week and on Monday six more landed at the capital's Suvarnabhumi airport at around 2:00 pm (0700 GMT) after weeks in captivity.

Since their release by Hamas, the six have been recuperating at a hospital in Israel

as authorities made preparations to fly them home.

Five of the former hostages are expected to transfer immediately to their home cities around the kingdom, according to the foreign ministry.

The returnees were released during a temporary truce that saw scores of people released before it expired on 1 December.

Another nine Thais are still among the hostages taken by Palestinian militants, according to Bangkok's foreign ministry.

Israel has responded to Hamas's 7 October attack with a massive campaign of air, artillery and naval strikes alongside a ground offensive into Gaza, killing more than 15,500 people, mostly civilians, according to Palestinian officials.

Thailand had 30,000 citizens in Israel when the raid occurred, the majority of them migrant workers from poorer provinces in the kingdom's northeast. — AFP

11 hikers dead after Indonesia volcano erupts, dozen still missing

ELEVEN hikers were found dead Monday and another 12 were missing after a volcano erupted in Indonesia, with rescuers racing to carry injured and burned survivors down the mountain on foot.

Rescuers worked through the night to find dozens of hikers stranded on Mount Marapi on the island of Sumatra after it spewed an ash tower 3,000 metres (9,340 feet) — taller than the volcano itself — into the sky on Sunday.

The dead hikers were found near Marapi's crater after the

2,891-metre volcano rained ash on nearby villages, according to a local rescue official.

Twelve were missing, three more were found alive and 49 had safely descended from the crater, some with burns and fractures, the official said.

"Until now I have not received any information," said Dasman, father of missing hiker Zakir Habibi, who made a two-hour drive from Padang city to the base of the mountain last night in hope of good news. — AFP



Volcanic ash spews from Mount Marapi during an eruption as seen from Batu Palano village in Agam on 4 December 2023. **PHOTO: AFP**

SPORTS

Victorious Shan United has chance to defend championship

THE final day of the 2023 MNL championship (Match-21) took place on 4 December, with champion Shan United securing a victory and edging closer to defending their title.

In the match held at Thuwunna Stadium, Shan United secured a victory over Yadanabon United, scoring four goals to two. This win sent them closer to the championship, and they can clinch the title by earning at least one point in the remaining two games.

As it was the decisive period for the championship, Shan United deployed several players, including foreign ones. They initiated scoring after 20 minutes and successfully secured a three-goal

lead in the first half.

In the match held at the YUSC stadium, Myawady won against Maha United by four goals to two goals.

After Matchday 21, the current champion, Shan United, leads with 56 points, followed by the Yangon team with 50 points. The Hanthawady team has 34 points, Dagon Star has 28 points, and Rakhine United and ISPE Club have 26 points each. The Ayeyawady and Myawady teams secured 25 points each. Yadanabon won 20 points. Unfortunately, the GFA team earned 12 points, and the Kachin United, which made 10 points, faced relegation before the season's conclusion.

— Ko Nyi Lay/KZW



Bello of Shan United scores a header against Yadanabon United during the 2023 MNL championship match yesterday. PHOTO: MNL

Endo sparks dramatic Liverpool win with 1st league goal

JAPAN captain Wataru Endo scored his first Premier League goal for Liverpool on Sunday as his late equalizer set up a dramatic 4-3 home win over Fulham.

The defensive midfielder came on in the 83rd minute at Anfield with his team trailing 3-2 and got his side back on level terms four minutes later, curling in a first-time effort from the edge of the box high into the right-hand corner following a layoff from Mohamed Salah.

Trent Alexander-Arnold squeezed in the winner a minute later from just inside the area to complete the comeback as Liverpool moved up to second on 31 points in the English top flight, two points off leaders Arsenal.

“Wataru was just so impor-

tant... (He) won decisive challenges, super passing, a top goal,” Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp said.

Alexander-Arnold's free-kick hit the bar and ricocheted off Fulham keeper Bernd Leno into the net to give Liverpool a 20th-minute lead, but Harry Wilson steered home a low cross to level against his former club four minutes later.

Alexis Mac Allister struck a 30-metre screamer in the 38th minute for Liverpool only to see the visitors level again through Kenny Tete off a corner in first-half stoppage time, and Fulham led with 10 minutes to go when Bobby De Cordova-Reid headed home a cross before Endo's introduction. — Kyodo

Myanmar Vovinam athletes arrive back with two golds, three silvers, nine bronzes



Myanmar Vovinam athletes are welcomed back by officials, parents and fans at the Yangon International Airport yesterday.

THE Myanmar Vovinam athletes who secured two gold, three silver, and nine bronze medals in the 7th World Vovinam Championships in Viet Nam arrived back in Yangon on 2 December.

They were warmly welcomed back by Yangon Region Sports and Physical Education Committee Chairman Advocate-General U Htay Aung, relevant officials, parents and fans at the Yangon International Airport.

Aung Khine Lin and Hein Htet Aung claimed one gold medal in the Pair Machete Form Male category, and Hnin Thet Wai secured one gold medal in the 51-kg Women's Individual Attacking. In comparison, Tin Htoo Zaw achieved one gold medal in the Four Element Staff Form, Tin Htoo Zaw, Kyaw

Thu Soe Aung, Hein Htet Aung, Chit Nodi Saung, May Honey Aung Lwin, and Eaindray Phoo earned one silver medal in the 3 Male, 3 Female categories, May Honey Aung Lwin grabbed one silver medal in the Ying Yang Sword Form Female category.

In the 54 kilogrammes (attacking) category, Min Min Htike claimed one bronze medal and another bronze medal was claimed by Aung Khine Lin and Chit Nodi Saung in the Female Self Defence (performance) event. At the same time, Tin Htoo Zaw and Kyaw Thu Soe Aung got one bronze medal in the Pair Sword Form Male category, Hein Htet Aung won one bronze medal in the Yin Yang Sword Form Male event, Aung Khine Lin, Hein Htet Aung, Kyaw Thu Soe Aung and Tin Htoo Aung grabbed

one bronze medal in the Male Ying Yang Sword Form Team 4 event.

Moreover, Aung Khine Lin, Hein Htet Aung, Kyaw Thu Soe Aung and Tin Htoo Aung earned one bronze medal in the Male multiple training -01male athlete defended against three others with weapon event, Chit Nodi Saung won one bronze medal received one bronze medal in the Cross form female category while another one bronze medal earned by May Honey Aung Lwin, Aung Khine Lin, Tin Htoo Zaw and Kyaw Thu Soe Aung in the one female athlete defence against three male athletes with weapon competition, one bronze medal by Aung Khine Lin and Hein Htet Aung in the pair knife form male event. — MNA/KTZH

Scheffler wins World Challenge, Woods encouraged in return

WORLD number one Scottie Scheffler fired a bogey-free 68 on Sunday for a three-shot win in the Hero World Challenge, where 15-time major champion Tiger Woods said he'd “come a long way” in his first tournament since April.

Scheffler had four birdies in his four-under par 68 on the Albany golf course in the Bahamas, his 20-under total of 268 beating Austrian Sepp Straka by three shots to give him the trophy after runner-up finishes to Viktor Hovland the last two

years. Tournament host Woods, who hadn't played since ankle surgery in the wake of his third round withdrawal at the Masters, said he was “ecstatic” with how the week had gone after carding a final-round 72 for an even par total of 288. — AFP



COP28's UAE chair says 'we respect' climate science



COP28 president Sultan Ahmed Al Jaber (C), Chair of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Jim Skea (R) and COP28 director of communications Sconaid McGeachin (L) attend a press conference at the United Nations climate summit in Dubai on 4 December 2023. **PHOTO: AFP**

THE Emirati head of the UN climate conference insisted on Monday that he respects climate science after he came under fire over a leaked video in which he questions the science on fossil fuels.

Amid tough negotiations over the future of fossil fuels, Sultan Al Jaber, who is also head of UAE national oil company ADNOC, hit out at "repeated attempts to undermine" the work of the COP28 presidency.

"We're here because we very much believe and respect the science," Jaber told reporters.

"Everything this presidency

has been working on is focused on and centred around the science," Jaber said.

He acknowledged that global greenhouse gas emissions must be cut by 43 per cent by 2030 as part of efforts to achieve the goal of limiting warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius from pre-industrial levels.

The Guardian newspaper published a video on Sunday showing Jaber having a testy exchange with former Irish president Mary Robinson during an online forum.

"I'm not in any way signing up to a discussion that is alarmist," Jaber told the SHE Changes

Climate online conference on 21 November.

"I am factual and I respect the science, and there is no science out there, or no scenario out there, that says that the phase-out of fossil fuels is what's going to achieve 1.5 (degrees)."

The video sparked an outcry among NGOs.

"If the COP28 president is guided by science and 1.5C remains his north star, he must draw the right conclusions: nothing short of a full and rapid phase out of fossil fuels will get us there," said Romain Ioualalen, global policy lead for Oil Change International. — AFP

9 in 10 Asian Americans experience discrimination in US: study

A new study showed that nine out of 10 Asian Americans had personally experienced discrimination and that not enough attention is being paid to the problem in the United States.

The survey was conducted among 7,006 Asian adults from July 2022 to January 2023 and the findings were released on Thursday by the Pew Research Centre.

Researchers identified 17 discrimination incidents, including mispronouncing names, receiving poorer service than other customers in restaurants or stores, or being called offensive names.

They found about nine in 10 Asian Americans had personally experienced at least one of the 17 discrimination incidents. About half of Asian adults said they had experienced four incidents or more.

Nearly six in 10 Asian adults said discrimination against Asians living in the United States is a major problem and 63 per cent said too little attention is being paid to race and racial issues concerning Asians in the country, according to the survey.

Most of them believed it is very important to have a national leader addressing Asian Americans' concerns.

The researchers noted

that as they could not list all possible discrimination experiences, there could be more that were not captured by the survey.

The report pointed out two stereotypes that Asian Americans are often associated with — "forever foreigner" stereotype and "model minority" stereotype.

Of all the respondents, 78 per cent said they had been treated as "foreigners" regardless of their birthplace, citizenship status or strength of their ties to the United States.

These experiences exist even among Asian adults whose families have lived in the United States for generations. Also, 37 per cent of second-generation Asian adults said someone had told them to go back to their home countries, according to the survey.

Another experience many Asian Americans encounter is being stereotyped as "a model minority," no matter what their backgrounds are.

This stereotype generalizes Asian Americans as intelligent, well-off, and able to excel in fields such as mathematics and science, and positions Asian Americans in comparison with other non-White groups such as African Americans and Hispanic Americans. — Xinhua

Iran, Cuba seek closer ties to confront US sanctions

IRAN and Cuba vowed Monday to strengthen relations and stand together against sanctions imposed on them by the United States.

"What can neutralize the sanctions is the exchange of capacities between the two countries," Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi said during a joint statement with his visiting Cuban counterpart Miguel Diaz-Canel.

Cuba has been under a US embargo since 1962 and is in-

cluded on the American list of countries supporting terrorism — like Iran, which is also subject to severe sanctions linked in particular to its nuclear programme.

"There is a serious determination between the two countries to develop relations," Raisi said, adding that "the common feature of the two countries is that they both stand against the system of domination."

Diaz-Canel, who arrived in

Tehran on Sunday after participating in the UN's COP28 climate talks in Dubai, thanked Iran for supporting his country's "fight against the cruel embargo" imposed by the United States.

Seven memorandums of understanding and cooperation documents were signed in various sectors of science and technology, health, agriculture, energy and mining, communications and medicine. — AFP



Handout picture released by the Cuban Presidency showing Cuban President Miguel Diaz-Canel (L) being welcomed by Iran's Health and Medical Education Minister, Bahram Eynollahi, upon landing at Tehran's airport on 3 December 2023. **PHOTO: ALEJANDRO AZCUY / CUBAN PRESIDENCY / AFP**