

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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Monday, 3 July 2023

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar State Administration Council: Five-Point Road Map

1. Priority will be given to fully realizing peace, stability and rule of law throughout the Union to safeguard the socioeconomic life of the people.
2. People-centred development work that enhances socioeconomic well-being will be undertaken to ensure the country's prosperity and food security.
3. Processes will further continue to consolidate a genuine, disciplined multiparty democratic system and build a Union based on democracy and federalism.
4. Priority will be accorded to work aligned with the agreements set out in the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement, in order to achieve enduring peace for the entire nation.
5. Upon accomplishing the provisions of the state of emergency, free and fair multiparty democratic elections will be held in line with the 2008 Constitution, and further work will be undertaken to hand over State duties to the winning party in accordance with democratic standards.

Agricultural and livestock production can initiate much improvement of industries and services: Senior General

AS those from administration sector emphasize management, agricultural and livestock operators have to produce raw materials whereas manufacturers need to produce products, said Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at the meeting with officials from UMFCCI and associates at the UMFCCI Office in Yangon yesterday morning.

Speaking on the occasion, the Senior General highlighted that unbalance of supply and demand causes spiking prices of commodities because although the country is plentiful sound foundations of land and water resources for operating agriculture and livestock farms, production capacity is down.

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Some local fishermen seen at Myanmar coastal areas.

Myanmar earns US\$69.425 million from export of marine products in April, May 2023

EXPORT of marine products earned US\$69.425 million through maritime and border trade routes in April and May this financial year, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

Businesspersons send freshwater and seawater fish as well as farming fish to foreign markets. In this regard, export of fish and shrimp and other marine products are separately

categorized in farming tasks. During the two-month period, export of fish pocketed more than \$11 million, shrimp \$1.68 million and other marine products \$16.24 million.

In the total amount of exporting the fishery products, export of marine products through shipping secured \$46.423 million whereas border trade process earned \$23.002 million in sending the fishery products to foreign

markets. Such products flowed out to neighbouring countries Thailand and China through Muse, Myawady, Kawthoung, Myeik and Mawtaung borders, Bangladesh through Maungtau border and Laos through Kenglek border. Myanmar's maritime products are regularly sent to China, Thailand and other neighbouring countries in addition to Japan and European countries.

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GTI (Insein) produces qualified technicians in EV



Deputy Minister for Science and Technology Dr Aung Zeya looks into the conducting of No 3 Training of Trainers Course on Electric Vehicles at the Government Technical Institute (Insein) on 1 July.

DEPUTY Minister for Science and Technology Dr Aung Zeya visited the Department of Technical, Vocational Education and Training at the Government Technical Institute (Insein) on 1 July and inspected the opening of No 3 Training of Trainers Course on Electric Vehicles.

During the inspection, the principal of the GTI (Insein) explained the training measures on EV courses, and the information on teaching aid and training infrastructure updates. The Deputy Minister then stressed the need to fill up equipment that meets the standards, improve the quality within the specified period, fully teach the subjects on the EV charging system and charger types, teach effectively with the

materials being imported, and encourage the production of qualified technicians in EV by continuously conducting the TOT (Training of Trainers) courses and multiplier courses. After that, the Deputy Minister warmly greeted the trainees and urged them to share experiences and knowledge what they had learned, make efforts to share knowledge, and continue to study when they returned to their respective departments after completion of the training. EV courses have been opened at the Government Technical Institute (Insein) since 15 December 2022, and have turned out 45 trainees who graduated from two TOT courses, 15 from a TOT refresher course, and 31 from a regular multiplier course. — MNA/CT

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MYANMAR Daily Weather Report

(ISSUED at 7:00 pm Sunday 2 July 2023)

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

FORECAST VALID UNTIL MORNING OF THE 3 July 2023: Rain or thundershowers will be isolated in Magway Region, scattered in Nay Pyi Taw, Lower Sagaing Region and Chin State, fairly widespread in Upper Sagaing, Mandalay and Bago regions and Kachin, Kayin and Mon states and widespread in the remaining regions and states with likelihood of isolated heavyfalls in Taninthayi Region and Kachin, Kayin and Mon states. Degree of certainty is (100%).

STATE OF THE SEA: Squalls with rough seas are likely at times in Deltaic, Gulf of Mottama, off and along Mon-Taninthayi Coasts. Surface wind speed in squall may reach (35-40) mph. Sea will be moderate elsewhere in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about (9-11) feet in Deltaic, Gulf of Mottama, off and along Mon-Taninthayi Coasts and (5-7) feet off and along Rakhine Coast.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Increase of rain in Upper Sagaing, Bago, Yangon, Ayeyawady and Taninthayi regions and Kachin, Kayin and Mon states.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 3 July 2023: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

Announcement for local and foreign well-wishers to donate cash to cyclonic storm Mocha victims

1. AN announcement has been issued that well-wishers wishing to make donations for people who fell victim to the extremely severe cyclonic storm Mocha which hit Myanmar on 14-5-2023 can donate cash to Myanmar account OA-011834 and foreign account 1DA-0300086.
2. In this announcement, it is duly mentioned that our commitment to receiving donations extends to additional electronic payment systems and mobile payment systems. Further updates and notifications will be made in due course.
3. It has been announced that dona-

4. Donations can be made through KBZ Pay or Wave Money. If you wish to donate, please scan the QR codes provided by both KBZ Pay and Wave Money. To contribute, enter the code included within the respective QR codes.
5. People make donations through CB Pay, AYA Pay, OK \$, UAB pay and

Citizens Pay which are widely used to enhance convenience for donors. To donate, please scan the QR code and

enter the code provided within it. 6. The well-wishers can contact the following persons for further information: -



Nay Pyi Taw	Yangon	Mandalay
Daw Lei Lei Aye Director-General Department of Disaster Management 067-3404050 09-2021491	U Than Soe Director Department of Disaster Management Office of Yangon Region Department 09-250123885	U Aye Min Thu Director Department of Disaster Management Office of Mandalay Region Department 09-420708827
U Win Shwe Deputy Director-General Department of Disaster Management 067-3404048 09-254170011	Daw Than Than Win Deputy Director Department of Disaster Management Office of Yangon Region Department 09-420740160	
Daw Phyu Phyu Win Director Department of Disaster Management 067-3404316 09-43054844		

National Disaster Management Committee

Products must be of better quality to attract consumers

- For successful production, efforts must be made to ensure good quality products and modern packaging to attract consumers.
- If products are the same, prices should be cheaper. If prices are the same, products must be of better quality. With these, our goods will be marketable.

(Excerpts from the discussion by State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at a meeting with MSME businesspersons of Myeik District held on 5 November 2022)

Agricultural and livestock production can initiate much improvement of industries and services: Senior General

FROM PAGE-1

He noted that running of agriculture and livestock farms is weak, so some regions and states do not have deserved food sufficiency. Successful undertaking of agriculture and livestock farms can boost production, and it will raise domestic consumption and export products depending on the raw materials. If so, agricultural, industrial and service sectors will have development.

Underground resources can run out at a time if underground and aboveground natural resources are extremely extracted. So, the government allows extraction of suitable volume of natural resources only.

The Senior General stressed the need to cultivate oil crops to meet the target so as to solve the domestic oil sufficiency. Research should be conducted for production of high yield oil crops. If oil crops groundnut and sesame are used in oil production at home rather than exportation, oil mills can be operated, feed-stuffs produced and job generated with local oil sufficiency.

Agricultural and livestock production can initiate much improvement of industries and services. As such, people



Chairman of State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing warmly greets businesspersons from UMFCCI and its associate organizations at the meeting with officials from UMFCCI and associates at the UMFCCI Office in Yangon on 2 July 2023.

need to operate agriculture and livestock farming tasks successfully.

President of UMFCCI U Aye Win discussed seeking the ways for cooperation of businessperson in striving for domestic oil sufficiency, eradication of illegal trade which can harm domestic production and economic development, techni-

cal and capital assistance from the government with economic policies for development of the State economy.

Businesspersons reported on difficulties in agriculture, livestock breeding and industries.

SAC member Lt-Gen Moe Myint Tun and Union ministers discussed efforts of the govern-

ment for development of State economy, plans of rising export volume, needs of participation in combating illegal trade and swift and smooth flow of commodity and many circulation.

In conclusion, the Senior General said that as the country relies on imported goods, it is necessary to raise manufacturing of products at home.

UMFCCI needs to consider promotion of the State economy. As those from administration sector emphasize management, agricultural and livestock operators have to produce raw materials whereas manufacturers need to produce products. If so, trading and service will emerge, and they can rely on each other. — MNA/TTA



MoTC honours outstanding students in matriculation exam, provides school stationery to basic education students

THE Ministry of Transport and Communications yesterday honoured children of staff for their outstanding in the matriculation examination for 2022-2023 academic year and provided school stationery to basic education students.

At the ceremony, members of the State Administration Council Deputy Prime Minister

Member of the State Administration Council Deputy Prime Minister Union Minister for Transport and Communications Admiral Tin Aung San awards outstanding students in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

Union Minister for Transport and Communications Admiral Tin Aung San and wife awarded 162 students with distinctions in the matriculation examination in the 2022-2023 academic year.

Afterward, the deputy ministers and their wives presented prizes to 162 outstanding students. Additionally, school stationery was provided to 15,871 basic education students.

Moreover, the Union Minister attended a ceremony to honour athlete staff from the Ministry for their prizes in the XXXII SEA Games and presented certificates of honour and cash awards to them. — MNA/KZW

Ministry of Home Affairs commissions ministry clinic into service

THE current clinic will be first step for opening of the police hospital, said member of the State Administration Council Deputy Prime Minister Union Minister for Home Affairs Lt-Gen Soe Htut at the opening of the Home Affairs Ministry Clinic at the headquarters of Myanmar Police Force in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

Speaking on the occasion, the SAC member said that forces and departments under the ministry operate small clinics on own arrangements to give treatments to ordinary diseases. Current clinic can give early health care to patients and can refer them to relevant hospitals in time for convenience of staff if necessary.

He underscored that six medical doctors and four nurses are employed at the clinic to effectively provide necessary treatments to patients. The clinic has been facilitated with medications and furniture. Pregnant women can get convenient treatment. Moreover, the clinic contacts military hospitals and public general hospitals for further treatments.

Although a setup of police hospital has been allowed by MPF since for 2018, the plan cannot be implemented yet. So, the current clinic will be first step for opening of the police hospital, he noted.

Well-wishers donated cash to the trust-fund of the clinic



Member of the State Administration Council Deputy Prime Minister Union Minister for Home Affairs Lt-Gen Soe Htut and officials cut the ribbon of clinic opening event at the headquarters of Myanmar Police Force in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

and clinic equipment.

Police Adjutant-General Police Brig-Gen Win Tun ex-

plained preparations to open the Home Affairs Ministry clinic.

After the opening ceremony, the SAC member viewed round the clinic. — MNA/TTA

Plan to green Rakhine State with resilience of natural disaster

AS forest cover acreage declines in Rakhine State, natural forests and mangrove forests must be protected with growing more plants, said Union Minister for Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation U Khin Maung Yi at the meeting with officials from the Forest Department in Rakhine State yesterday morning.

Speaking on the occasion, the Union Minister stressed the need to grow 204,200 saplings to successfully thrive in monsoon in Rakhine State as a special duty. As forest cover acreage declines in Rakhine State, natural forests and mangrove forests must be protected with growing more plants. The trees to be grown must not harm urbanization with



Union Minister for Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation U Khin Maung Yi inspects operating of saw mills in Sittway yesterday.

resilience of storm impacts, he added.

The Union Minister inspected operating of saw mills in Sit-

tway and stockpiling of timber at No 1 Saw mill compound before

checking the site of Sittway beach where mangrove plants will be grown.

In meeting with officials at Nandawun botanical garden, the Union Minister instructed officials to grow trees of respective species to meet the garden characteristics and systematically improve the garden for public relaxation.

While in Sittway, the Union Minister met with officers and staff from Rakhine State Environmental Conservation Department. After hearing the reports on loss and damage in the Mocha and progress of rehabilitation, the Union Minister inspected progress in repairing the damaged buildings and left necessary instructions. — MNA/TTA

22 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 2 July, total figure registers 640,496

MYANMAR'S COVID-19-positive cases rose to 640,496 after 22 new cases were reported on 2 July 2023 according to the Ministry of Health. Therefore, a total of 10,867,198 laboratory samples were examined to date and the confirmed COVID-19 cases reached 640,496.

The total number of patients who have recovered from COVID-19 in the country reached 619,421 including 21 new recoveries.

The death toll from COVID-19 in the country registered 19,494 on 2-7-2023 with no new death reported from the pandemic. COVID-19 information can be browsed on the internet page moh.gov.mm of the Ministry of Health. — GNLM



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

Guangdong Province to host China-ASEAN Forum on Emerging Industry

A Myanmar delegation led by Union Minister for Industry Dr Charlie Than left for the People's Republic of China by air yesterday to attend China-ASEAN Forum on Emerging Industry in Shenzhen, Guangdong Province, China, hosted by Ministry of Industry and Information Technology (MIIT) of China on 4 and 5 July.

In the forum, issues related to new energy-fired vehicles, digital economy and electronic energy will be discussed under the theme "Openness, Inclusiveness, Coordination and Sharing for Greater Practical

Cooperation in Emerging Industries".

By attending the forum, China and ASEAN member countries will have a chance to promote cooperation among industrial enterprises and exchange ideas.

Officials from People's Government of Guangdong Province, Ministry of Industry and Information Technology (MIIT) of China and officials from ASEAN Secretariat and ASEAN member countries, business organizations, industrial experts and researchers will join the forum. — MNA/KZW



Union Minister for Industry Dr Charlie Than and delegation members seen off by officials from Ministry of Industry at Yangon International Airport on 2 July 2023.

Illegal teak, foodstuffs, consumer goods, industrial accessories, porcelains, vehicles seized

UNDER the management of the Taninthayi Region Illegal Trade Eradication Special Task Force, the Kawthoung Township Illegal Trade Eradication Team raided warehouses along the strand road of Kawthoung. The officials found five kinds of products, including 5,580 packs of Wai Wai instant noodles with an estimated value of K6 million, for which official documents could not be presented at the warehouse of house No 3 in Kawthoung.

A combined team led by the head of Myeik Township Customs Department conducted inspections at Kyaukphya village. They found 720 bottles of WD cooking oil produced in Thailand (estimated value of K2.7 million) for which no official documents could be presented at Pyitan warehouse in Shinkasein Road. A total seizures at estimated value of K8.7 million was seized and the action is being taken under in accordance with Customs procedures.

A combined team, under the management of the Bago Region Illegal Trade Eradication Task Force, conducted a detailed inspection of three vehicles that were handed over to the Bago Township Customs Department by the Bureau of Special Investigation. They found 8,100 packs of Yum Yum instant noodles (estimated value of K810,000), 25 Kilogrammes of Calcium Chloride Granular (estimated value of K1.125 million) and a Nissan Caravan estimated value of K15 million which was carry-



Smuggled goods seized in Bago Region on 30 June.

ing goods, 7,500 bottles of M-150 energy drink (estimated value of K1,875,000), 468 bags of Yach Non Dairy Creamer (estimated value of K1,404,000), 100 bags of Yach tempura powder (estimated value of K100,000), 828 bottles of Fa Thai Lime Juice (estimated value of K579,600), 168 boxes of Koh Kae Coated Peanuts with Ovaltine Flavour estimated at K120,000, 80 sets of 3M Ketac Cem Easymix Glass Lonomer Luting Cement Powder 30g and Liquid 12 ml (estimated value of K200,000) and a Nissan Caravan (estimated of K15 million), 7,500 bottles of M-150 energy drink worth K 1,875,000, 696 packs of Yach Non Dairy Creamer worth K2,088,000, 100 packs of Yach tempura powder estimated at K100,000, 600 bottles of Fa thai Lime Juice (estimated value of K420,000), 2,160 packets of Violet Milk Flavoured Wafers (estimated value of K259,200) and a Nissan Caravan (estimated at

K15 million).

In Bago, near the Shwe Thanlwin tollgate, a vehicle was checked and subsequently handed over to the Customs Department in Bago Township for detailed inspections. During the inspection, 51 brand new Haier air conditioners (with an estimated value of K14,993,120) and one Mitsubishi Fuso truck (with an estimated value of K25 million) were discovered. In total, items worth an estimated value of K95,948,920 were seized, and appropriate action is being taken in accordance with Customs procedures.

In addition, a vehicle travelling from Mandalay to Kyaukme was inspected at the Kyaukchaw checkpoint, at the 16th-mile, under the management of the Mandalay Region Illegal Trade Eradication Task Force. During the inspection, 950 Kilogrammes of white sandalwood pieces with an estimated value of K68.4 mil-

lion were discovered for which no official document could be presented and one Yutong Express Bus (estimated value K30 million) carrying these items, and a total of 0.1083 tonne of timber (with an estimated value of K2 million) of undisclosed items were found on a vehicle travelling from Monywa to Lashio without valid documents and a Toyota Hiace Mini Bus (estimated value of K50 million).

Three vehicles travelling from Muse to Mandalay at milepost No 21 on the Mandalay-Lashio Highway. Smuggled items were found, and they were subsequently sent to the Mandalay Township Customs Department for detailed inspection. The officials found 1,000 backpacks including three kinds of goods estimated at K6.6 million and a Dounfeng Truck estimated at K40 million which is carrying the goods, 1,200 backpacks including four kinds of goods estimated

value of K10.75 million, 120 bottles of hair treatment cream including two goods estimated at K 6.96 million and a Mitsubishi Fuso (estimated at K30 million). And five products were found, including 536 kilogrammes of rice boxes (with an estimated value of K8,373,540) which exceeded the amount stated in the import declaration form. Additionally, four kinds of goods were found, including 145 kilogrammes of ceramic spoons (with an estimated value of K2,539,761), and a Cheng Long Tractor head and a trailer (with an estimated value of K80 million) were seized carrying these items. In total, items worth an estimated value of K335,623,301 were seized, and appropriate legal action was taken.

Therefore, 32 arrests made on 30 June was estimated value of K440,272,221, according to the Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee. — MNA/KZW

CURRENT AFFAIRS

PHOTO NEWS

Opening of Mingalar Yankin public rental housing



MANDALAY Region is intended for low-income people, Mingalar Yankin public rental housing in Patheingyi Township was opened on 30 June.

At 91 four-apartment, five-storey buildings for Mingalar Yankin public rental housing, 1,456 apartments have been

built, and the apartments are purposed for low-income people, K50,000 for rental charge was set for current employees and retired employees on the first floor. The second floor charge is set at K45,000, the third floor, K40,000, and the fourth floor K33,000. — Htun Htun (PHOTO: MNP)

One dead body found at Kandawgyi Lake

THE body of a man who had drowned was found in the water near the Paganlon Island in Mingala Taungnyunt Township in Yangon Region at around 3 am on 1 July.



Preparations being made to send a male dead body to the mortuary of YGH.

The deceased may be 65-year-old, and it was reported that the Digayuka social assistance association provided necessary assistance for funeral service.

The body was transported to the mortuary of Yangon General Hospital by the Digayuka social assistance association. The hospital accepted the body under PR-003, and the relevant authorities are currently investigating the cause of death.

— TWA/KZW

MoC implements Warehouse Receipt Financing System

THE implementation workshop for warehouse receipt financing was held by the Ministry of Commerce in collaboration with the Myanmar Rice Federation at the Ministry of Commerce in Nay Pyi Taw on 30 June 2023.

At the workshop, the MoC Deputy Minister stated that a warehouse receipt financing system is being implemented to prevent farmers from losing their profits. The warehouse receipt financing system is purposed for farmers to obtain loans from banks with the certificate of receipt received by depositing crops in storage warehouses as collateral. In this system, farmers are the owners of crops, warehouse



The workshop for implementation on warehouse receipt financing is in progress.

owners in rural areas are the certificate issuers, the government and private banks are lenders who issue loans based on warehouse receipts, and the government departmental organizations are policymakers, he explained.

He also said that the warehouse receipt financing system is being implemented in order to further develop agricultural

businesses, improve the socio-economic lives of small block farmers, and reduce post-harvest losses.

By implementing the system, it will be possible to prevent the decrease in profits, remedy the losses, and help stabilize the rice price due to the decrease in the price of rice during the harvest. — TWA/CT

Myanmar MoU workers going to Thailand require to attend foreign employment course

THE foreign employment course will be conducted for Myanmar MoU workers bound for Thailand from 4 July, according to the Ministry of Labour.

The foreign employment course will be lectured four times a day starting from 4 July. Officials of the Department of

Labour will give lectures on the do's and don'ts at jobs in accordance with Thailand's cultural traditions.

Myanmar MoU workers may face language barriers, leading to potential labour problems arising from a lack of basic knowledge and understanding of workplace regula-

tions. The training course will help them solve labour problems. — TWA/KZW

Some Myanmar labour left for Thailand in 2022 through Kawthoung border to work under MoU.



LOCAL BUSINESS

Myanmar earns US\$69.425 million from export of marine products in April, May 2023

FROM PAGE-1

A total of 480,000 fish farms are being operated to breed fish and shrimp across the nation. In addition, more than 120 cold storage facilities are being run for processing of marine products. Myanmar exports more than 20 species of fish including hilsa, giant sea perch, rohu, barbus and river catfish to foreign markets.

Marine products of Myanmar flow out to foreign countries through normal trade and border trade facilities.

Currently, the export volume of marine products in Myanmar cannot regain the status before the Covid-19 period yet.

Myanmar earned \$765.945 million from export of marine products abroad from 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023 in the 2022-23 financial year, declining \$19.076 million less than that of 2020-21 FY.

Myanmar set the hatchling season from April to June and the fishery season from July in the Myanmar Sea in the 2023-24 financial year.



A fisherman netting fish at coastal area.

Myanmar fishing entrepreneurs and fishermen operate the fishery business at

relevant plots in the sea along coasts of Rakhine State, Ayeyawady and Yangon regions,

Mon State and Taninthayi Region.—TWA/TTA

Demand for palm oil decreases due to large foreign palm oil imports



The edible oil sales counter of a shopping centre.

AROUND 20,000 tonnes of palm oil were expected to arrive from abroad in early July. Therefore, the demand for palm oil in the various regions, including Yangon, decreased remarkably on 1 July.

In the Yangon edible oil market, palm oil prices rose due to the difficulty of purchasing palm oil at the end of June. Edible oil dealers said that the price has risen to K8,000–K8,200 per viss in the market.

The wholesale reference price was K4,010 per viss from 26 June to 1 July, and the market price is around K4,000 per

viss higher than the reference price.

Due to the high market prices, the relevant authorities discussed and negotiated with related parties on 1 July to stabilize palm oil prices. In addition, there has also been news recently that imported palm oil would continue to enter the country.

The increase in oil imports from abroad and the discussion of relevant authorities on the rise in palm oil prices caused an excess supply of palm oil in the Yangon market.

According to a dealer, those who had stored palm

oil at more than K7,000 per viss in previous months were able to sell them again when the price went up at the end of June and got profits instead of losses.

In the Yangon oil market, the price is often raised for some reason, and at the end of June, the wholesale price rose to around K1,000 per viss within a few days. The price of a tonne of imported palm oil was only US\$860 on 30 June. In this situation, local oil traders said that they would monitor the price situation of the oil market on 3 July. — TWA/CT

MACCS Fee for exports/imports via road reduced to K20,000

THE MACCS Fee for exports/imports via road was reduced to K20,000, the Customs Department released on 30 June.

The Customs Department under the Ministry of Planning and Finance reduced the MACCS Fee from K30,000 to K20,000 per form for Mode of Transport-3 (Road) starting 1 July at the places where the MACCS system was installed to facilitate the trading processes and reduce the transportation charges according to Section 211 of the Sea Cus-

toms Act.

The announcement will come into effective on 1 July and the applicants shall have to examine the MACCS Fee for applications made with Mode of Transport: 3 (Road) before 1 July after Release Order/Allowed Shipment.

If the MACCS Fee is K20,000, they have to pay back the remaining K10,000 according to the Amended Declaration. For further information, they can contact Help Desk Section (01-379429) during the office hours. — TWA/KTZH

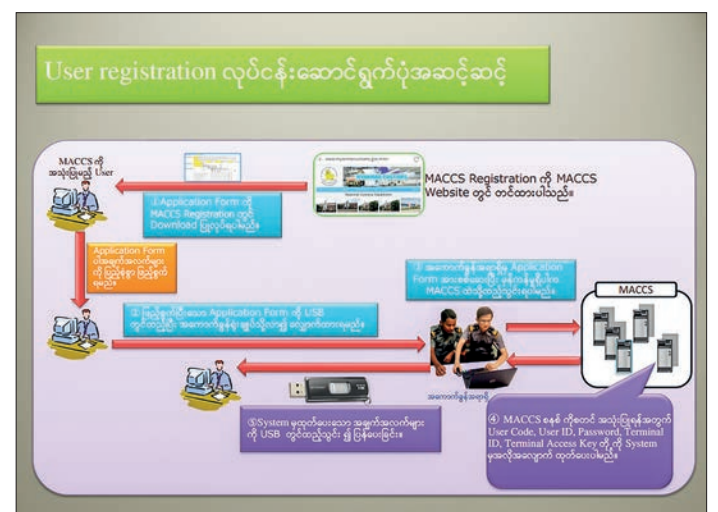


Diagram on work procedure of MACCS system.

OPINION

Enhance capacity of women with empowerment

Recognizing the immeasurable value of women, Myanmar has designated the 3rd of July as Myanmar Women's Day, a day to honour the noble attributes of women. This annual celebration complements the observance of International Women's Day on 8 March, a global event dedicated to women's rights.

Women's participation in political, economic, social, and national defence roles is prevalent in Myanmar, as it is in other countries. Their significant contributions are crucial in solving critical issues and overcoming difficult challenges across all sectors. In the early 20th century, in response to demands for women's rights, the United Nations officially declared a day to honour women who constitute more than half of the world's population. In Myanmar, this led to the establishment of the Myanmar National Committee on Women's Affairs and the proclamation of July 3rd as Myanmar Women's Day.

Women's Day.

Throughout history, women have actively and independently protected and promoted the interests of their families, communities, nation, and people, standing alongside their male counterparts. They have played leading roles in national reforms aimed at improving society and have shouldered high-level responsibilities in the legislative, administrative, and judicial pillars of the state. It is essential to honour and recognize outstanding women in various fields, such as politics, economics, social affairs, skills and knowledge, arts, defence, and security.

According to the latest estimated population census in June 2023, Myanmar has a population of over 55.79 million, with more than 27.49 million males and more than 28.29 million females. Women

make up 50.70 per cent of the total population, representing more than half. Therefore, harnessing the force and strength of women is vital to achieving the political, economic, and social objectives of the state, ensuring balanced development nationwide, and advancing human society.

Efforts should be made to enhance the security and capabilities of the new generation of Myanmar women. By inspiring them to take pride in and emulate the excellent performances of capable women throughout history, we can encourage the development of their literacy, intellect, knowledge, and personality. This will enable them to stand shoulder to shoulder with men, contributing to the overall progress and prosperity of the nation.

Myanmar Women's Day serves as a reminder of the valuable role women play and emphasizes the need to empower them further. By enhancing the capacity of women, Myanmar can unlock their full potential and create a more inclusive and equitable society. It is a collective responsibility to ensure that women have equal opportunities, support, and recognition, enabling them to thrive in all spheres of life.

Cultivated meat, also known as lab-grown meat, cell-based meat, or cultured meat, refers to meat products that are produced by culturing animal cells in a lab rather than raising and slaughtering animals.

Cultivated meat has gained significant attention in recent years due to its potential to address several global challenges associated with conventional animal agriculture.

Raising animals for food takes a lot of resources like land, water, and food. It also harms the environment by causing deforestation and releasing greenhouse gases. However, cultivated meat can change this. It has the potential to greatly reduce the need for land, water, and the negative effects of animal farming on the environment.

Cultivated meat is made without raising or killing animals, which means it doesn't have the ethical problems of regular farming. Instead, it's produced directly from cells. This makes cultivated meat a kinder option to meet the demand for meat products.

Tackling the Increasing Population and Food Demands

As the world population is expected to reach almost 10 billion by 2050, there's a worry about having enough protein-rich food for everyone. Cultivated meat can help with this challenge. It has the potential to offer a sustainable and expandable solution to feed the growing population. This means we can meet the demand for food without putting too much strain on traditional livestock farming.

Cultivated meat can help solve some health issues related to regular meat production. It reduces the risk of diseases that can spread from animals to humans and decreases the need for antibiotics in farming. Since cultivated meat is produced in a controlled lab setting, the chances of foodborne illnesses and contamination are minimized.

Although cultivated meat holds a lot of potential, there are still some hurdles to overcome before it can be widely available. Some challenges include the high costs of production, increasing the amount of meat produced, creating appropriate culture materials, getting approval from regulators, and gaining acceptance from consumers. These are important areas that need atten-

Unleashing the Power of Cultivated Meat: Exploring Its Market Potential



Upside Foods is a food technology company headquartered in Berkeley, California, aiming to grow sustainable cultured meat. (L); Chicken nuggets made from lab-grown meat in Singapore. (R) PHOTO: UPSIDE FOODS/NICHOLAS YEO / AFP

tion to make cultivated meat a successful and accessible option.

Although there are some difficulties, cultivated meat has a big opportunity in the market. It has caught the interest of investors, researchers, and big food companies. This has led to more funding and improvements in the technology used. As research and development keep going, it's expected that the cost of making cultivated meat will go down. This will make it easier for people to access and it will become more competitive in the market.

To sum up, cultivated meat is a remarkable innovation that can change how we make and eat meat. It has the power to solve environmental and ethical issues linked to regular farming. It offers a sustainable, effective, and kind way to meet the increasing global demand for meat. However, we need ongoing research, investment, and people accepting it to fully unleash the benefits of cultivated meat in the market.

Singapore's lab-grown "chicken bites"

Not long ago, the US start-up Eat Just managed to get its product approved for public sale after regulators in Singapore gave its chicken the green light in December 2020. Up to that point, Singapore was the only country in the world to allow lab-grown meat to be sold.

Singapore approved the sale

of lab-grown "chicken bites" from a US start-up called Eat Just. This is a significant event because it's the first time a government has allowed the sale of lab-grown meat. People are very excited about this because it means we can now have a more ethical way of eating "meat." It's a really important moment in the meat industry.

Eat Just's lab-grown meat is made by growing cells in a big container called a bioreactor, which holds about 1,200 litres. These cells are then mixed with plant-based ingredients. At first, the lab-grown meat will only be available in limited quantities and sold in a restaurant in Singapore. Right now, it might be more expensive than regular chicken, but as production increases, the price will go down.

The cells used for this meat can come from small samples taken from live animals, but the nutrients the cells need to grow come from plants. This lab-grown meat has the same nutritional value as regular chicken.

In the production process in Singapore, a substance called foetal bovine serum is used, which is taken from the blood of unborn cows. However, before the lab-grown meat is consumed, most of this substance is removed. The company plans to use a plant-based serum in their next production line, but it wasn't ready when the Singapore approval process

started two years ago.

Research shows that people in wealthier countries tend to eat more meat than is healthy for them or the planet. Livestock farming contributes about 14.5 per cent of the world's greenhouse gas emissions each year, which is roughly the same as all the emissions from cars, trucks, airplanes, and ships combined.

A study from 2018 found that reducing meat consumption is the most impactful action someone can take for the environment. Lab-grown meat avoids bacterial contamination from animal waste and reduces the need for antibiotics and hormones used in regular meat production.

Exciting news for the world!

There was some exciting news that caught everyone's attention recently. It was about a new development in food technology. This news brought a lot of excitement and interest to people around the world. The United States has now given approvals for the sale of cultivated meat, becoming the second country after Singapore to allow it. This is a significant step forward in the food industry and has generated a lot of buzz.

These companies are the first ones to successfully complete the multi-step approval process for cultivated meat in the U.S. This is a significant milestone in the development and ac-

ceptance of this innovative way of producing meat.

The U.S. government has given the green light for two start-ups to sell cell-cultured chicken. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved the products, saying they are safe to eat.

One of the approved startups is called GOOD Meat, and the other is UPSIDE Foods. GOOD Meat said that this approval is a big deal because it means their chicken, which is made directly from animal cells, can now be sold to people in the United States.

UPSIDE Foods had to go through three important regulatory steps to get the clearance to produce and sell their cultivated meat. They received a "No Questions" letter from the FDA, got approval for their labels from the USDA, and received a USDA Grant of Inspection.

Cultivated meat, also known as lab-grown or cell-based protein, is made by taking stem cells from an animal and putting them in a special container called a cultivator. The cells are then given the right nutrients to grow and multiply. After a few weeks, the meat is harvested, processed, and ready to eat.

This is a significant development in the world of food, opening up new possibilities for more sustainable and ethical ways of producing meat.

BY AUGUSTIN

It's an exciting development in the food industry, as it opens up new possibilities for alternative ways of producing and consuming meat.

Immense market potential and the power

In conclusion, cultivated meat has immense market potential and the power to revolutionize meat production and consumption. However, unlocking this potential requires the collective effort of various stakeholders. Continued research is crucial to refine cultivation techniques, enhance the taste and texture of cultivated meat, and overcome scalability and cost challenges.

Investment in the cultivated meat industry is vital to drive innovation, expand production capacity, and establish a strong supply chain. Support from investors will accelerate the industry's development, enabling it to achieve economies of scale and competitive positioning.

Consumer acceptance is equally important. Educating the public about the sustainability, animal welfare, and public health benefits of cultivated meat is essential. Transparent communication and clear labeling will foster consumer confidence and facilitate the widespread adoption of cultivated meat.

Realizing the full potential of cultivated meat necessitates a collaborative approach involving governments, research institutions, food companies, investors, and consumers. By embracing this transformative technology and its advantages, we can pave the way for a more sustainable, ethical, and secure future of meat production. Continued research, investment, and consumer acceptance serve as the stepping stones toward a thriving cultivated meat market, where sustainability, taste, and compassion converge.

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Gene variant linked to multiple sclerosis severity

SCIENTISTS have discovered a genetic variant linked with multiple sclerosis becoming more debilitating over time, in research hailed as a first step towards a new drug.

Multiple sclerosis (MS) is a lifelong condition in which a person's body is attacked by its own immune system, causing a range of symptoms including problems with vision, movement and balance.

For some people, the symptoms can come and go in phases called relapses, while in others they become progressively worse.

Way to slow down the disease from getting worse

There are treatments that can help control the symptoms, but there is no cure or way to slow down the disease from getting worse.

In a study published in the journal Nature Wednesday, researchers from more than 70 institutes around the world said they had found the first-ever genetic variant linked to MS severity.

First, the researchers combined the genetic data of 12,000 people with MS to study what variants they shared and how quickly their disease advanced.

Out of seven million variants, they found a single one associated with the disease

progressing faster.

The variant sits between two genes called DYSF and ZNF638, which had never before been linked to MS, according to the study.

The first gene works to repair damaged cells, while the other helps control viral infections.

The genes are much more active in the brain and spinal cord than the immune system, where drug research has previously focused, the study said.

To confirm what they found, the researchers then looked at the genetics of nearly 10,000 more patients, finding similar results.

"Inheriting this genetic variant from both parents accelerates the time to needing a walking aid by almost four years," US researcher and study co-author Sergio Baranzini said in a statement.

"A lot of excitement about this study" in MS circles

Ruth Dobson, a neurologist at the Queen Mary University of London who was not involved in the research, told AFP there was "a lot of excitement about this study" in MS circles.

"It's the first step towards treatments that work in a different way," she said, emphasizing that any such drug was a long way from being available.

SOURCE: AFP



People with multiple sclerosis who inherited the genetic variant from both parents needed a walking aid almost four times faster, the study said. Elderly spectators needing a walking aid arrive to attend a concert specifically tailored to people living with dementia at the Wiener Musikverein in Vienna. PHOTO: ALEX HALADA / AFP

SCI/TECH WORLD

Scientific innovation widens development path of China's resort island



This aerial photo taken on 17 October 2022 shows the construction site of the deep-sea science and technology innovation public platform of Yazhou Bay Science and Technology City in Sanya, south China's Hainan Province. **PHOTO: YANG GUANYU/XINHUA**

THE scorching summer cannot stop the work in a seaside innovation park at the Yazhou Bay of Sanya City in south China's Hainan Province.

As China's southernmost science and technology innovation park, the Sanya Yazhou Bay Science and Technology City (YZBSTC) is a major stronghold for agricultural development and deep-sea technological advancements.

Dotted with towering cranes, this once desolate area has become a vibrant hub of scientific

research platforms and industrial projects. The YZBSTC has realized a fixed-asset investment of 59.83 billion yuan (8.28 billion US dollars) by March 2023. The structures for innovation, completed and under construction, cover an area of over 600,000 square meters, with 16 public technology service platforms, 9,649 registered enterprises, and 19 scientific research institutes.

In particular, seed breeding and deep-sea technology have been crucial factors in the strategic development of the YZBSTC

since its official launch in 2019.

A diverse range of experimental crops are thriving in breeding facilities, and research projects are now gearing up following a deep-sea, technology-innovation public platform construction.

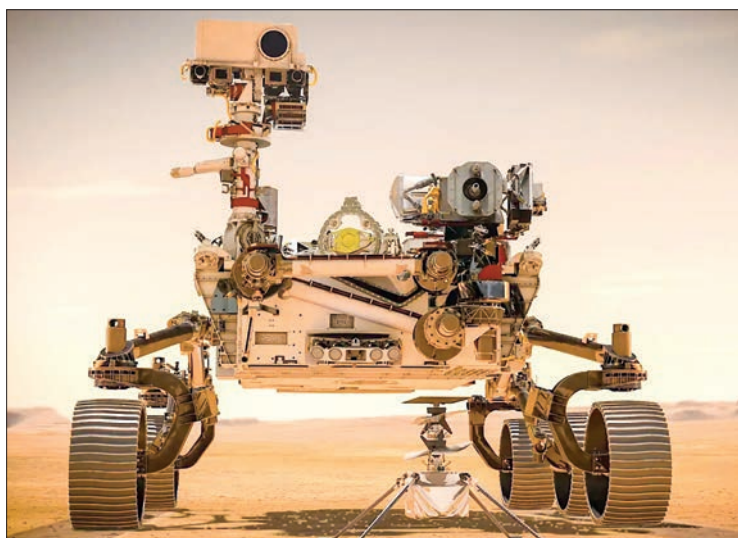
With an intelligent management system, field operations such as planting, plowing, and drainage are now automated, and the growth cycle data of every single seed is meticulously monitored with digital breeding equipment. — Xinhua

NASA's Mars helicopter 'phones home' after no contact for 63 days

LONG time, no speak: NASA has re-established contact with the intrepid Ingenuity Mars Helicopter after more than two months of radio silence, the space agency said Friday.

The mini rotorcraft, which hitched a ride to the Red Planet with the Perseverance rover in early 2021, has already survived well beyond its initial 30-day mission to prove the feasibility of its technology in five test flights.

Since then, it has been deployed dozens of times, acting as an aerial scout to assist its wheeled companion in searching for signs of ancient microbial life from billions of years ago, when Mars was much wetter and warmer than today.



An artist's illustration shows NASA's Perseverance rover and Ingenuity helicopter on Mars. **PHOTO: NASA/JPL-CALTECH**

Ingenuity's 52nd flight launched on 26 April, but mission controllers at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) in California lost contact as it descended to the surface following its two minute, 1,191-foot (363-meter) hop. — AFP

In AI tussle, Twitter restricts number of posts users can read

ELON Musk announced Saturday that Twitter would temporarily restrict how many tweets users could read per day, in a move meant to tamp down on the use of the site's data by artificial intelligence companies.

The platform is limiting verified accounts to reading 10,000 tweets a day. Non-verified users — the free accounts that make up the majority of users — are limited to reading 1,000 tweets per day.

New unverified accounts would be limited to 500 tweets.

The decision was made "to address extreme levels of data scraping" and "system manipulation" by third-party

platforms, Musk said in a tweet Saturday afternoon, as some users quickly hit their limits.

"Goodbye Twitter" was a trending topic in the United States following Musk's announcement.

Twitter's billionaire owner did not give a timeline for how long the measures would be in place.

The day before, Musk had announced that it would no longer be possible to read tweets on the site without an account. Much of the data scraping was coming from firms using it to build their AI models, Musk said, to the point that it was causing traffic issues with the site. — AFP



The twitter's logo is pictured on screen reflected by mirrors in Mulhouse, eastern France on 30 May 2023. **PHOTO: SEBASTIEN BOZON/AFP**

NEWS IN BRIEF

Norway's quest for 'black gold' from used car batteries

WEARING a white lab coat and with a gas mask within reach, Ole Jorgen Gronvold measures the humidity of an intriguing dark powder touted as the planet's next "black gold".

But this "black gold" — a term that usually refers to oil — is actually good for the Earth.

In southeastern Norway lies Europe's biggest plant for recycling used or defective electric car batteries, turning them into a powder, or "black mass", made up of nickel, manganese, cobalt, lithium and graphite. — AFP

Restart of nuclear reactor in Sweden delayed for 3 more weeks

THE restart of a Swedish nuclear reactor which was due to be operational by the end of June following maintenance work has been postponed by three more weeks, Swedish Television (SVT) reported on Saturday.

The Ringhals 3 reactor will instead restart on 19 July, Johan Pettersson, a spokesperson for the electricity company Vattenfall which owns and operates the Ringhals nuclear power plant told SVT. — AFP

Mexican mayor weds a reptile — and couldn't be happier!

AS onlookers clapped and danced, a mayor of a small southern Mexico town entered into holy matrimony with a female reptile in a traditional rite to bring good fortune to his people.

Victor Hugo Sosa, mayor of San Pedro Huamelula, a town of Indigenous Chontal people in the Tehuantepec isthmus of Mexico, took as his betrothed a reptile named Alicia Adriana, re-enacting an ancestral ritual.

The reptile is a caiman, an alligator-like marsh dweller endemic to Mexico and Central America.

Sosa swore to be true to what local lore calls “the princess girl.”

“I accept responsibility

because we love each other. That is what is important. You can't have a marriage without love... I yield to marriage with the princess girl,” Sosa said during the ritual.

Marriage between a man and a female caiman has happened here for 230 years to commemorate the day when two Indigenous groups came to peace — with a marriage.

Tradition has it that frictions were overcome when a Chontal king, embodied these days by the mayor, wedded a princess girl of the Huave Indigenous group, represented by the female alligator.

The Huave live along coastal Oaxaca state, not far from this inland town. — AFP



Victor Hugo Sosa, Mayor of San Pedro Huamelula, kisses a spectacled caiman (Caiman crocodilus) called “La Niña Princesa” (“The Princess Girl”) before marrying her in San Pedro Huamelula, Oaxaca state, Mexico on 30 June 2023. PHOTO: AFP

Hollywood actors extend contract talks just before deadline

THE union representing 160,000 actors and performers on Friday agreed to extend contract negotiations with Hollywood studios, staving off a potentially crippling strike until at least 12 July.

The Screen Actors Guild (SAG-AFTRA) has been locked in lengthy negotiations with the likes of Netflix and Disney, but as a midnight deadline loomed, both sides announced they would continue to negotiate.

The current contract has been extended until 12 July at midnight Los Angeles time, SAG-AFTRA said in a statement, adding that a media blackout on the negotiations would remain in effect.

Fears had mounted that the actors would join writers on the picket line, a “double strike” not seen in more than 60 years, and which would bring nearly all US film and television productions to a halt. — AFP

Beyond sushi: Japan expands vegan options to tempt tourists



Vegetarian dining options aren't easy to come by in Japan, but that is beginning to change. PHOTO: AFP

EVEN on a weekday, there is a queue at Tokyo's vegan Izakaya Masaka, including many tourists eager to try meat-free versions of Japanese classics like fried chicken and juicy dumplings.

While millions of visitors have happily savoured Japan's fish- and meat-heavy cuisine, options for vegetarians and vegans are harder to find.

Now, Tokyo and other cities are on a mission to show the country's renowned gastronomy is not off-limits to those who do not eat meat.

Ms Tina Bui, a 36-year-old

vegan from San Francisco, said she was very excited to order the signature “karaage” soy fried chicken at Izakaya Masaka.

Tokyo's government has held seminars for restaurateurs and dispatched experts to help eateries develop new menu items, introducing alternatives to staple ingredients such as dried fish flakes or pork-bone broth.

Buddhist traditions

Data on vegetarians and vegans in Japan is sparse, with small-scale surveys finding just a small percentage of the popu-

lation following such diets.

But the concept is not new in the country, where Buddhist vegetarian cuisine, known as “shojin ryori”, has been eaten for hundreds of years.

These days, it is served mainly at temples and specialist restaurants — and at a cooking class in Kamakura, a popular seaside day-trip destination near Tokyo. At the workshop, expert Mari Fujii showed five people from Sweden, Venezuela, India and the US how to make “kenchinjiru” vegetable soup and several side dishes. — AFP

France requires parental consent for minors on social media

FRANCE approved a new law Thursday requiring social media platforms like TikTok to verify users'



Lawmakers' concerns ranged from pornography to cyberstalking, unattainable beauty standards and the attention-grabbing addictive nature of the platforms, which pose a particular risk for youth. PHOTO: AFP

ages and obtain parental consent for those under 15 years in an effort to protect children online. The legislation is part of a string of recent moves by the government to reduce children's screen time and protect them from cyberbullying and other crimes. The “landmark” law would be “applied as soon as possible”, Digital Transition Minister Jean-Noel Barrot told lawmakers.

But the exact date the age verification bill will come into force remains unclear following Thursday's Senate approval, as no specific date was set and the European Commission has yet to check it that it conforms with EU law.

Sites will then have a year to comply with the policy for new subscribers, and another two years to apply the requirements to existing users.

Lawmakers' concerns ranged from pornography to cyberstalking, unattainable beauty standards and the attention-grabbing addictive nature of the platforms, which pose a particular risk for youth. — AFP

ECONOMY WORLD

Laos rejoices as foreign tourists increase steadily

LAOS welcomed more than 1.1 million foreign visitors in the first four months of 2023, representing an increase of 204 per cent compared to the same period in 2022.

The largest number of visitors came from Thailand with 430,979, followed by 224,461 from Vietnam and 223,350 from China.

The sharp increase in the number of foreign tourists follows the full revival of international travel in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as the travel options offered by the China-Laos Railway, Lao Minister of Planning and Investment Khamjane Vongphosy said at the fifth ordinary session of the National Assembly (Ninth Legislature) of Laos on Monday.

Some 1.6 million domestic and foreign tourists took trips in Laos in the first four months

of 2023, representing a major increase over the number of tourists recorded in the same period of 2022.

More than 485,000 of them were Lao nationals, accounting for 81 per cent of the half-year target. The Lao government hopes the figure will rise to 600,000 in the first six months of 2023.

Laos recorded 1,294,388 tourists visiting the country in 2022. Most international visitors came from Thailand, Vietnam, China, South Korea and the United States, according to the Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism. "Our tourism town has been very quiet for a few years because of the pandemic. Now there are a lot of tourists, especially during the weekend. I am delighted to see an increase of both domestic and international visitors," Khampha, a food



Tourists take photos in the Patuxay Park in Lao capital Vientiane on 30 June 2023. PHOTO: KAIKEO SAIYASANE/XINHUA

vendor in Vangvieng, a tourism town in Vientiane province, told Xinhua on Sunday.

Laos is placing its hopes on the China-Laos Railway as a

means of transporting tourists to some of the country's most popular attractions, Phonemaly Inthaphome, director of the Tourism Development Department under the Lao Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism, said at a meeting held on June 8 to discuss the Visit Laos Year 2024. — Xinhua

French tourism sector faces cancellations over unrest

DAYS of violent protests across France after the fatal police shooting of a teenager have started to impact the country's tourism sector, with hotels and restaurants facing cancellations while some have also suffered damage in the unrest.

Since the death of 17-year-old Nahel during a traffic stop in a Paris suburb on Tuesday, "our hotel members have suffered a wave of cancellations of reservations in all the territories affected by the damage and clashes," said chef Thierry Marx, president of the main association for hotel and catering industry employers.

Marx said Friday he was receiving daily alerts from industry professionals who have suffered "attacks, looting and destruction of their businesses, including some restaurants and cafes".

"Our establishments are intrinsically hospitality venues, and sometimes even refuges and places of help in crisis situations. They must not suffer the consequences of anger that they have not aroused and we condemn these actions," he added.

Marx wants the authori-



A waiter clears the terrace of a cafe during a demonstration in Paris on 30 June 2023. PHOTO: CHARLY TRIBALLEAU/AFP

ties to do "everything" to guarantee the safety of people in the hotel and catering industry in the world's most popular tourist destination.

The French retail federation (FCD) also called for reinforced police security around stores, said managing director Jacques Creyssel.

The riots "gave rise to real

scenes of looting", he said, with "more than a hundred medium and large food or non-food stores vandalised, looted or even burned".

These incidents "are extremely serious and have an extremely heavy cost", according to Creyssel, who said he had asked the economy, interior and trade ministers to act. — AFP

Diamonds are for now: Botswana inks new deal with De Beers

BOTSWANA has reached an eleventh-hour deal with diamond giant De Beers after months of tense negotiations that saw the continent's top producer threatening to cut ties with the storied company.

The Botswana government and Anglo-American, the majority owner of De Beers, have reached an "agreement in principle", the two sides said in a statement issued late Friday.

The agreement provides for a new 10-year agreement to sell the rough diamonds produced by Debswana — a joint venture equally owned by the government and De Beers

— and a 25-year extension of its mining licenses.

No value was given for the agreement.

The previous 2011 sale agreement between the southern African country, one of the continent's richest, and the world's largest diamond company by value, was extended exceptionally until 30 June, 2023, due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Under terms negotiated by the two sides in 2011, De Beers received 90 per cent of the rough diamonds mined, while Botswana had 10 per cent to sell itself. In 2020, Botswana's share had risen to 25 per cent. — AFP



Botswana government and De Beers reached an agreement following Botswana's threat to cut ties with the company if talks were unfavourable for the country. PHOTO: DEBEERSGROUP/TWITTER

Kyoto offers \$2,770 premium seats for famous Gion Festival

A Kyoto tourism association is selling premium tickets worth 400,000 yen (\$2,770) each to view the Gion Festival, one of the largest festivals in Japan, held annually in July.

The 84 seats, mainly for foreign tourists, will be set up at an intersection in the heart of the city.

Here, they can witness the captivating spectacle of traditional floats spinning 90 degrees through the power of human effort as one of the highlights of the Yamahoko parade portion of the festival on 17 July.

Ticket holders can enjoy this spectacle from their seats, or legless chairs placed on a heightened platform with tatami mats and Japanese-styled sunshades, according to the Kyoto City Tourism Association.

The festival will feature

more than 30 Yamahoko floats, some weighing more than 10 tons, in the parade. The ticket holders can listen to ear-phone-guided explanations in English or Chinese while drinking beverages and eating Kyoto cuisine, said the association.

The highest price for a paid seat had previously been 20,000 yen, according to the association.

For the newest premium seats, tickets started being sold on 19 June, and several have already been sold.

“We wanted to offer a service that would add value to the experience of people from inside and outside Japan and help them understand the culture,” an official of the association said, adding profit from the festival will be used to preserve the tradition. — Kyodo



File photo shows a decorated float during the Yamahoko parade of the traditional Gion Festival in Kyoto, western Japan, on 17 July 2022. PHOTO: KYODO

Philippine tourism video used images from other countries: ad agency

PHILIPPINE tourism officials were left red-faced after the creators of a video promoting the archipelago nation as a holiday destination said on Sunday they had used stock shots from other countries.

Advertising agency DDB Philippines apologized for the “highly inappropriate” images, which included rice terraces in Indonesia and sand dunes in Brazil. The agency was behind the video for the government’s \$900,000 “Love The Philippines” tourism campaign launched on 27 June.

The tourism ministry announced late Saturday that it



The Philippines, known for its white sand beaches and famous diving spots, is dependent on tourism. PHOTO: AFP

was investigating allegations that DDB’s video included “non-original shots”. The video was later removed from its Facebook page.

Popular Philippine blogger Sass Rogando Sasot had posted on Facebook that several images in the campaign video were from other countries. —AFP

NEWS IN BRIEF

Dutch restrictions on chip exports set for September

DUTCH export restrictions on technology to manufacture semiconductors, adopted in March under pressure from the United States and sharply criticized by China, will enter into force in September, the government said Friday.

The Netherlands, thanks to the ASML company, is Europe’s premier maker of the machines that help manufacture semiconductors, the brains driving not only consumer electronics but weapons as well.

The Dutch government said companies producing cutting-edged equipment to manufacture semiconductors would need to obtain permission before exporting their products to foreign clients as of 1 September.

“Semiconductors can provide a crucial contribution to certain advanced military applications,” Dutch trade minister Liesje Schreinemacher said in a statement. — AFP

Nestle steps up reforestation project in Ivory Coast

NESTLE is stepping up its project to combat deforestation in Ivory Coast caused by the growth of cocoa farming, bringing cocoa trading companies directly on board.

Ivory Coast is the world’s largest cocoa producer, at 40 per cent of the global market.

The west African country had 16 million hectares of forest in the 1960s — a figure which

is now down to less than three million, mainly due to cocoa plantations.

Nestle, the Swiss food giant behind chocolate brands like KitKat and Smarties, launched a project in 2020 aimed at restoring and protecting the Cavally Forest in southwest Ivory Coast.

One of the last remaining dense forests in the country,

Cavally is a biodiversity reserve covering more than 67,000 hectares, but is threatened by deforestation linked to the cocoa industry and illegal gold panning.

The Nestle project was a partnership with the Ivorian government and the Earthworm Foundation, an NGO that led the project’s implementation. —AFP



A cocoa farmer dries cocoa beans in Satikran in eastern Ivory Coast. The country is the world’s biggest cocoa producer. PHOTO: ISSOUF SANOGO/AFP

ROLLING UPDATES

ASIA

East Timor independence hero Xanana Gusmao returns to power

EAST Timor's first democratically elected head of state, Xanana Gusmao, returned to power on Saturday, eight years after he resigned as prime minister of Southeast Asia's youngest democracy.

The 77-year-old independence icon was credited with unifying the country during his first two stints in office, after the bloody guerilla fight against Indonesian occupation.

Gusmao's party, the opposition National Congress for Timorese Reconstruction (CNRT), won May's election in a landslide, defeating the incumbent coalition led by resistance movement turned political party Fretilin.

Gusmao was chosen as premier again after CNRT allied with the Democratic Party to

gain a majority in parliament.

The son of teachers of Portuguese-Timorese descent, Gusmao grew up in what was then a Portuguese colony. He joined the Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor (Fretilin) in 1975, fighting for independence first from Portugal and then Indonesia.

Born Jose Alexandre Gusmao, he adopted the code name Xanana, reportedly in connection with a popular doo-wop song.

He quickly rose through the ranks of the resistance and became leader of Fretilin's military wing, Falintil, in 1981, spending much of his life in the jungle with fellow fighters.

When he was captured by Indonesian forces in 1992, he continued to lead the struggle from jail in Jakarta.



Timor Leste's President Jose Ramos Horta (right) witnesses the inauguration of the country's new Prime Minister Xanana Gusmao (left) at the presidential palace in Dili on 1 July 2023. **PHOTO: VALENTINO DARIELL DE SOUSA/AFP**

During his time in prison, he met his second wife through a correspondence. Australian aid worker Kirsty Sword was initially teaching Gusmao English via letters, but she snuck into the prison to meet him face to face.

Gusmao earned the moniker "poet warrior" during this stint behind bars when he was known to paint and write poetry.

"He was a great resistance leader, he's great at unifying people," Damien Kingsbury,

an emeritus professor at Melbourne's Deakin University, told AFP.

"He obtained for CNRT at the last election the best result ever, he's a formidable political personality." — AFP

Neglected elephant boards jumbo flight home to Thailand

A Thai elephant gifted to Sri Lanka two decades ago was flown back to its birth country on Sunday after a diplomatic spat over the animal's alleged mistreatment.

Thai authorities had gifted the 29-year-old Muthu Raja — also known back in its birthplace as Sak Surin — to Sri Lanka in 2001.

But they demanded it back last year after allegations it was tortured and neglected while housed at a Buddhist temple in the island nation's south.

The 4,000-kilogram (8,800-pound) mammal flew out from Colombo airport on Sunday morning on a one-way commercial flight for a repatriation that Thai officials said had cost \$700,000.

The Ilyushin IL-76 cargo plane carrying Muthu Raja took off around 7:40 am (0210 GMT), the airport manager said.

After touching down in Chiang Mai the elephant will be quarantined at a nearby nature reserve. — AFP



Thai keepers lead elephant Muthu Raja at Dehiwala Zoo in Colombo on 23 June 2023, ahead of his relocation to Thailand. **PHOTO: AFP**

Japan's Kumamon on 1st "business trip" to mainland China since COVID

KUMAMON, the popular black bear character and mascot of southwestern Japan's Kumamoto Prefecture, has been on a "business trip" to China for the first time since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, sparking excitement for local fans thrilled to have the opportunity to interact with the character once again.

With a visit to Shanghai, Kumamon returned to mainland China after a hiatus of some three and a half years. The character, known as "Xiong Ben Xiong" in China, has gained popularity in the country, and some fans took pictures with him while others hugged the mascot at an event in the city on Wednesday.

Kumamon, who calls him-



Kumamon, the official black bear-like mascot of Kumamoto Prefecture, southwestern Japan, takes part in an event in Shanghai on 28 June 2023. **PHOTO: KYODO**

self a "sales manager" tasked with bringing happiness to people, also handed out his "business cards" to event participants and promoted tourism to the

prefecture.

A woman in her 20s said she was happy to "see Xiong Ben Xiong in action for the first time" at the event. — Kyodo

Nightclub fire kills six people in Cambodia: police

AT least six people were killed in a nightclub fire in Cambodia's capital on Saturday, police said.

Four men and two women died in the inferno, which broke out in the early evening, Phnom Penh Municipal Police spokes-

man San Sok Seiha told AFP.

It took a few hours for firefighters to extinguish the flames.

Authorities are investigating the cause of the blaze.

"We don't know yet if there will be more victims," Sok Seiha said. He said police were still

waiting to enter the burnt-out club.

In December last year, a fire ripped through a casino on the Thai-Cambodian border, killing 26 people and forcing patrons to jump from ledges and windows to escape the flames. — AFP

Neutral Austria ready to join Germany's Euro air defence project

AUSTRIA, a neutral country, announced on Saturday its intention to join the European Sky Shield initiative, launched in 2022 by Germany against the backdrop of the war in Ukraine.

"We must and will take precautions to protect our country against the risk of drone or missile attacks," Austrian Chancellor Karl Nehammer said in a press release, citing "a threat that has considerably worsened".

He stressed that the decision did not call into question the neutrality of Austria, which has been a member of the European Union (EU) since 1995.

"No European state can effectively defend its airspace against new dangers on its



Patriot air defence systems. PHOTO: PIX FOR VISUAL PURPOSE/MOD-NETHERLANDS/ARCHIVE PHOTO

own," Nehammer insisted. Defence Minister Klaudia Tanner hailed "an important step in the

history" of the country. European defence ministries sharply reduced spend-

ing on anti-aircraft equipment following the end of the Cold War, but have revised their po-

sitions since Russia's invasion of Ukraine last year.

Led by Germany, 17 European nations — including the UK, Belgium, Finland, Hungary, the Netherlands and Sweden — have banded together on air defence under the European Sky Shield project.

The Sky Shield system would involve joint procurement for short-, medium- and long-range systems, including the German-made Iris-T, the American Patriot and the US-Israeli Arrow-3.

However France, Italy and Poland have not signed up to the scheme, Paris arguing in favour of a sovereign air defence system using European equipment. —AFP

Hundreds more arrested in fifth night of French rioting

THE French government said Sunday that hundreds more had been arrested in a fifth night of rioting sparked by the police killing of a 17-year-old, as police deployed reinforcements to flashpoint cities around the country.

Protesters, mostly minors, have torched cars, damaged infrastructure and clashed with police in an outpouring of rage since an officer shot Nahel M. point blank as he attempted to flee a traffic stop on Tuesday.

The killing was captured on video, which spread on social media and fueled the anger over police violence against minorities, exposing severe racial tensions in France.



Protesters clash with riot police in Marseille. PHOTO: AFP

A day after Nahel was laid to rest in his home town near Paris, the interior ministry said police had made 719 arrests overnight, still a provisional tally, after around 1,300 the previous night.

Some 45 police officers or gendarmes were injured, 577 vehicles torched, 74 buildings set on fire and 871 fires set in streets and other public spaces, it said. —AFP

NEWS IN BRIEF

UN chief calls on world to make troubled Haiti 'top priority'

ON a visit to spotlight violence and chaos in Haiti, the UN secretary-general on Saturday called for a robust international effort to help the country's beleaguered police in fighting rampant criminal gangs.

For months, Antonio Guterres has raised the alarm bell about the situation in the Western Hemisphere's poorest country, which has been wracked by spiralling violence, a worsening public health situation and political instability.

But he traveled to Port-au-Prince — his first visit to Haiti as head of the United Nations — to make his point on the ground.

"We must put Haiti on the international political map, and make the tragedy of the Haitian people the international community's top priority," Guterres told a press conference.

"I met Haitians, and I felt the exhaustion of a population that has been facing a cascade of crises and unbearable living conditions for too long," he said. —AFP



Greek police crack S America prostitution ring

GREEK police on Saturday said they had cracked a prostitution ring exploiting South American women, freeing over 50 victims and making 22 arrests.

Greater Athens police chief Ioannis Skouras told reporters

that officers had carried out raids in 13 brothels in Athens and Thessaloniki on Friday, where they freed 48 women from Colombia, two from Venezuela and one from Albania.

The ring consisted of two or-

ganisations active in Greece and Colombia for at least three years, added police department spokeswoman Constantia Dimoglidou.

The women had been persuaded to travel to Greece with false promises of well-paid employment, and were forced into round-the-clock prostitution without rest, Skouras said. —AFP

Greek police on Saturday said they had cracked a prostitution ring exploiting South American women, freeing over 50 victims and making 22 arrests. PHOTO: AFP

East Timor independence hero Xanana Gusmao returns to power

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SPORT

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar State Administration Council: Twelve Objectives

1. Political affairs

- (a) To build a Union based on democracy and federalism, through a disciplined and genuine multiparty democratic system that is fair and just.
- (b) To prioritize the achievement of enduring peace for the entire nation in line with the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA).
- (c) To continue implementing the principle of peaceful co-existence among countries through an independent, active, and non-aligned foreign policy.
- (d) To ensure peace, stability, rule of law, and the safe and smooth functioning of transport networks across the Union.

2. Economic affairs

- (a) To enhance development based on agriculture and livestock using modern production techniques and to strengthen all-round development in other sectors of the economy.
- (b) To develop a stable market economy and promote international investment in order to enhance the economic development of the entire National people.
- (c) To assure support for the sustainability of Micro-, Small- and

Medium-Sized Enterprises (MSMEs) that prioritize import substitution, export production, and the use of domestically produced raw materials, in order to increase domestic production and generate employment opportunities.

- (d) To advance the socioeconomic life of the people, in order to ensure the country's prosperity and food security.

3. Social affairs

- (a) To ensure a strong and dynamic Union spirit, the genuine spirit of patriotism.
- (b) To respect and promote the customs and traditions of all National people and preserve and safeguard their faiths, beliefs, culture, and characteristics of patriotic nationalism.
- (c) To strengthen basic health care in order to achieve the emergence of a health system that enhances the longevity and health of the entire nation.
- (d) To comprehensively promote the education sector to make it capable of producing the human resources necessary for building a modern, developed, and progressive democratic nation.

Canada held again, Guadeloupe sparkle with goal parade

TOOTHLESS Canada were held to a goalless draw by Guatemala in the CONCACAF Gold Cup on Saturday, while group D rivals Guadeloupe sparked in a 4-1 crushing of Cuba.

The results leave Guadeloupe top of the group on four points, ahead of Guatemala on goal difference with Canada on two points and Cuba yet to register a point.

John Herdman's Canada can still progress into the quarter-finals with a win against Cuba but it was another below-par performance.

The energy-sapping heat in Houston could be blamed for a lacklustre opening 45 minutes, which saw few chances other than a Nathaniel Mendez drive which was well saved by Milan Borjan and at the other end a Junior Hoilett volley over the bar.

The tempo was higher in the second half but chances remained scarce — Jacob Shaffelburg hesitated inside the box and his effort was blocked in the 75th minute with Zac McGraw blasting the follow-up high. — AFP



Cesc Fabregas played for Monaco before ending his career in the Italian second tier with Como. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

Ex-Arsenal, Barcelona star Fabregas hangs up boots

FORMER Arsenal, Barcelona and Chelsea midfielder Cesc Fabregas announced his retirement from football at the age of 36 on Saturday, revealing his plans to immediately go into coaching. Fabregas won the 2010 World Cup and two European Championships with Spain, two Premier League titles with Chelsea and La Liga with Barcelona.

"It is with great sadness that the time has come for me to hang up my playing boots," Fabregas wrote on social media. "It has been a journey that I'll never forget," he added. "From my first days at Barca, Arsenal, Barca again, Chelsea, Monaco and Como, I will treasure them all. "I lived experiences that I never thought in a million years I would even come close to." Fabregas set up Andres Iniesta to score the winning goal against the Netherlands in the 2010 World Cup final in Johannesburg. — AFP

Ayeyawady United draws Rakhine United 2-2 in Week 11 of Myanmar National League

AYEYAWADY United FC played with Rakhine United FC as week-11 match of the Myanmar National League 2023 season at Thuwunna Stadium yesterday.

Ayeyawady United which currently positioned in the relegation zone of the MNL managed to secure a draw in their match against Rakhine United FC, with both teams scoring two goals each.

Both teams played with their strongest players and aggressively pursued scoring opportunities. Ayeyawady FC took the lead with an opening goal at 13th minute and the goal was scored by Nyi Nyi Aung. After paying the first goal, Rakhine



The players tussling the ball during the MNL football match between Ayeyawady FC and Rakhine FC, at the Thuwunna Stadium, Yangon, on 2 July 2023. **PHOTO: MNL**

FC attempted to equalize with a spirited attack, and Than Kyaw Htay scored an equalizer at 28th minute for Rakhine FC through a passing from Tra O Rah.

The Ayeyawady FC led the first half with a double goal after scoring of Aung

Min Thu of the Ayeyawady at 37th minute of the first half. In the second half, Rakhine FC tried to equalize and Maung Maung Soe of Rakhine FC successfully netted an equalizer from a long range kick at the 53rd minute.

Rakhine FC player Maung Maung Soe won the best player of the match. After this match, the Rakhine Utd accumulated 13 points in 11 games whereas Ayeyawady managed to secure eight points in 11 games. — Ko Nyi Lay/KZW