

The Global **NEW LIGHT** of MYANMAR



State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and his wife Daw Kyu Kyu Hla convey the bejewelled diamond orb and the pennant-shape vane round the pagoda by the decorated float.

Ancient Kyaik Pyinnyaya Pagoda hoisted diamond orb, pennant-shape vane in consecration

A ceremony to hoist a bejewelled diamond orb and a pennant-shaped vane atop more than 1,000-year old Kyaik Pyinnyaya Pagoda took place in conjunction with the consecration near Bago University in new satellite Oktha City in Bago Township of Bago Region, yesterday morning, attended by Chairman of the State Samgha Maha Nayaka Committee Agga Maha Pandita Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Thanlyin Minkyaung Sayadaw Dr Bhaddanta Candima Bhivamsa and members of the Samgha.

State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and his wife Daw Kyu Kyu Hla paid homage to the Buddha Image at the southern arch of the pagoda and

offered alms, flowers, water and oil lights.

The Senior General, wife and family offered the bejewelled diamond orb and religious objects and alms to Thanlyin Minkyaung Sayadaw and the pennant-shape vane and alms to Bago Myoma Sayadaw respectively.

The SAC Joint Secretary, council members and Union ministers offered alms to members of the Samgha.

Thanlyin Minkyaung Sayadaw delivered a sermon, and the congregation shared merit gained.

The Senior General, his wife, family and members conveyed the bejewelled diamond orb and the pennant-shape vane round the pagoda by the decorated float. Then, the wife of the Senior General, family members and those present con-

veyed the bejewelled diamond orb and the pennant-shape vane atop the pagoda.

The Council Joint Secretary, council members, Union ministers, chief ministers of Yangon and Bago regions, senior military officers from the Office of the Commander-in-Chief, the commander of Yangon Command and officials hoisted diamond orbs atop the encircled pagodas. The Senior General offered a golden robe to the pagoda.

The Senior General sprinkled scented water on the stone plaque and sprinkled scented water on the banner post.

The Senior General and wife offered day meals to members of the Samgha and served the guests with lunch.

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Cold drink sales double amid soaring temperature in Yangon

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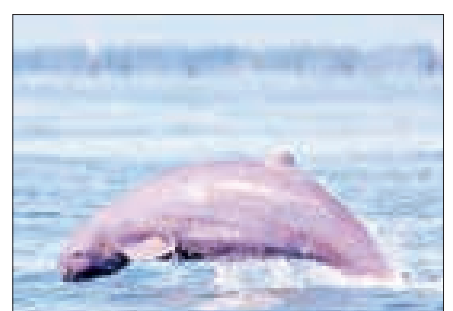
50 artistes from theatre undergo free eye surgical treatment

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15 Irrawaddy dolphins inhabit in Mandalay-Mingun protected area

NATIONAL

Increase in house repairs leads to brisk sales of construction materials

HOME repairs have been increased in Yangon Region and as a result, sales of construction materials have been brisk.

The monsoon season is coming after Thingyan period, therefore people are repairing their houses, resulting in good selling of basic construction materials.

"This is house repairing season. Sales of basic construction materials such as iron, cement, brick, sand and gravel have been active. But sales of imported items have been slowing. As far as we know, price of basic construction materials has been good in Yangon, while it has been normal in other regions," said an owner of a construction material retail and



A truck carrying bricks preparing to unload at a construction site.

wholesale shop in Yangon.

He commented that increase in home renovation and new construction causes the price of basic construction materials climb up to some extent.

"An 8-hole brick is priced at K182 and a 10-hole brick is

priced at about K210. The price of sand for 1.5 sud is K45,000 and the price of gravel for 1.5 sud is K145,000," he quoted the market price on 15 March. Despite the vibrant market for construction materials, interior decoration market has been still quiet. — Htet Oo Maung/ZS

Objectives of 79th Anniversary of Armed Forces Day 2024

- (A) To safeguard the State with the sacrifice of life by upholding Our Three Main National Causes: Non-disintegration of the Union, Non-disintegration of national solidarity and perpetuation of sovereignty as the national policy of Tatmadaw;
- (B) To actively participate in implementing the processes of two national visions of the State: the prosperity of the country and food security by Tatmadaw members together with the government and ethnic people in their respective sectors;
- (C) To steadfastly implement enhancement of three capabilities in accord with the work process of Tatmadaw, such as study, practise and obey in building a modern patriotic Tatmadaw with powerful strength and sharpening prowess;
- (D) To provide necessary assistance to hold a free and fair multiparty democratic general election by Tatmadaw to ensure peace and stability, solidarity and development, which are actual needs of the State and to emerge a Union based on democratic and federal systems.

62-year-old man takes matriculation exam to measure intelligence gap between young and old

WANTING to know the difference in intelligence between youths and elders, he took the 2024 matriculation exam, said a 62-year-old man.

He sat for the matriculation exam at the exam centre located at No 6 Basic Education High School in Yangon Region's Botahtaung township, said the man who did not want to be identified.

"I'm really delighted that the exam is for education upgrade, that's why I sat for it. Education reform is good, as it aims to be modernized later. If the education continues going like that, it can compete with the international education. It is interesting too.

"Today is Biology exam. Biology includes eight chapters and the exam covered all chapters, so students can no longer study only the selected chapters. Questions are founded on general thinking, practical knowledge and thinking," he said.

He is confident of passing the exam and he said he had made preparations seven months in advance of the exam.

"I missed some lessons. I took the exam because I wanted to know what is international education and grade 12 education, how it differs from the modern time and difference in intelligence between adolescents and elders. I wanted to show that elders still have intelligence," he said.

He had attempted to implement this plan in previous years, but failed, and was allowed to participate this year, he added. — Htet Oo Maung/ZS

Cold drink sales double amid soaring temperature in Yangon



A shop selling a variety of cold fruit drinks.

AS the temperature is getting higher in Yangon, the consumption of cold drinks has surged and some cold beverage shops report that sales become almost double compared to previous months, according to shops selling cold beverages.

The temperature has begun rising in Myanmar since last month, and the population who take cold drinks has in-

creased now and the sales of cold drink shops have gone up nearly double recently.

"I don't want to have hot foods because the weather is too hot. When I eat something, I have cold drink too," said a young man who works at a private company.

There are dine-in customers and takeaways too.

"We sell various kinds of

juices, such as strawberry juice, avocado juice, pineapple juice, papaya juice, lime juice, watermelon juice, orange juice and carrot juice, at our shop. Different kinds of cold drinks are also available. Now the weather is extremely hot, many people prefer cold foods rather than warm foods. This is the season when all kinds of cold beverages are sold well," said a cold beverages seller in Yangon.

Currently, the price of ice cubes per bag (containing 10 pyi) is K2,500. Price of fruit juices ranges from K2,000 to K3,000 while instant cold drink bottle starts from at least K800.

"A big juice bottle is priced about K4,700 per one, and depending on it, cold beverage shops have to price their selling items. Recently, there are more customers who take fruit juices," said Daw Myint, owner of Sedanar cold beverages shop in Bago. At present, orders for cold drinks online have climbed up, according to delivery services in Tamway township. — MT/ZS

NATIONAL

Ancient Kyaik Pyinnyaya Pagoda hoisted diamond orb, pennant-shape vane in consecration



Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, his wife Daw Kyu Kyu Hla and congregation listen to a sermon delivered by Thanlyin Minkyaung Sayadaw.

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The Senior General and wife presented cash assistance to supporting groups and philanthropic associations for successfully holding the ceremony.

Also present at the ceremony were Daw Kyu Kyu Hla, wife of the Senior General, SAC Joint Secretary Lt-Gen Ye Win Oo and wife, SAC members

General Mya Tun Oo and wife and Lt-Gen Nyo Saw and wife, and local ethnic people.

Ancient Kyaik Pyinnyaya Pagoda was built by 8th Mon King Gijjhadhiya and queen of Bago-Hanthawady era in 1476 Religious Era, 294 ME. The pagoda is the highest among Kyaik Ponnyaya and Kyaik Malaya pagodas. Sacred Buddha's

relics of successive monarchs and jewellery items donated by people were enshrined at the pagoda. Overall construction of the pagoda completed in 1480 RE, 298 ME. The pagoda has been renovated by governments, Tatmadaw, local people and well-wishers in successive eras. Arrangements were made to hoist a

43-foot-high umbrella atop 204 feet high Kyaik Pyinnyaya Pagoda under the leadership of Bago Dhamma Linkara Monastery Sayadaw Abhidhaja Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotika Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Bhaddanta Visuddha starting from 21 March 2012. The Sayadaw passed away in September 2012 and the reno-

vation process of the pagoda temporarily halted. In accord with the guidance of the Senior General, the renovation process of the pagoda resumed on 19 February 2023. Yesterday, the bejewelled diamond orb and pennant-shaped vane were hoisted atop ancient Kyaik Pyinnyaya Pagoda successfully. — MNA/TTA

MoI UM inspects Myanmar Agricultural Machinery Factory in Kyaukse

UNION Minister for Industry Dr Charlie Than, accompanied by Mandalay Region Chief Minister U Myo Aung and party, inspected the Myanmar Agricultural Machinery Factory in Kyaukse, Mandalay Region, yesterday.

The factory manager explained the research and development process of paddy transplanting machines. The Union minister emphasized the importance of farming equipment since Myanmar is an agricultural country. Besides, producing equipment and parts for micro, small and medium enterprises could help reduce importing machinery, thereby



Union Minister for Industry Dr Charlie Than views machine parts of agricultural machinery in Kyaukse yesterday.

saving foreign currency.

He also mentioned the Mandalay Industrial Zone's ef-

fort to manufacture double-roller gins for separating cotton wool from seeds. Despite the

country's ample cotton production, the insufficient machinery hampers its potential to

emerge as a cotton-producing powerhouse.

The Union minister underscored the necessity of cotton mills to manufacture value-added products like yarns and clothing. Additionally, he highlighted the potential of producing edible oil from cotton seeds.

The Chief Minister provided details on the manufacturing process of roller gins at the industrial zone, emphasizing the importance of timely milling cotton.

They proceeded with their observation of paddy transplanting machines, seeders, and mechanical part production. — MNA/NT

Daily newspapers available online

FOR those who would like to read the Myanmar 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

Smuggled consumer goods, pharmaceuticals, industrial goods, food products and vehicles seized



Confiscated illegal electric pans and vehicles in Mandalay Region.

COMBINED teams supervised by the Mandalay Region Illegal Trade Eradication Special Task Force confiscated 1,126 electric pans without legal documents (approximately worth K12 million) which were carried by Mitsubishi Canter Truck (approximately worth K16 million) on 14 March, three kinds of goods including 450 Osaka potable torches (approximately worth K9 million) carried by an Isuzu Light Truck (approximately worth K25 million) on 15 March, altogether approximately worth K62 million near the Myitnge-Htonbo tollgate. The action was conducted under Customs Procedures.

Similarly, on 15 March, combined teams supervised by the Yangon Region Illegal Trade Eradication Special Task Force impounded 456 smuggled Red Bull energy drinks, 432 Spy Wine (Black) bottles, 552 Maximus Beer cans (approximately worth K13 million) from the warehouse at No 1053 On Thiri Mingala circular road in Shwepyitha township, 19 consumer goods including 576 bottles of High Commissioner whisky and 500 cartons of Napoli cigarettes without official documents (approximately worth K53 million) from the warehouse at No 210 in Nyana Ward of Mingaladon township and another five products including 200 18-litre palm oil

bottles, 4,776 Spy Wine bottles (approximately worth K23 million) without documents. The action was taken under Customs Procedures.

Moreover, another 720 Shark Top Sun Solar PV Module (Made in China, approximately worth K2,110 million) which do not match with the import declaration form from a container at Myanmar Industrial Port and action was also taken under Customs Procedures.

Therefore, the Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee made 12 arrests over two consecutive days on 14 and 15 March, with an estimated value of K365,329 million.

The on-duty team in Yangon Region impounded three kinds of goods valued at K13.70 million including 3,216 bottles of Milo without official documents in North Okkalapa township on 13 March. Action was taken under Customs procedures.

Combined teams nabbed a Hino Ranger truck (approximately K30 million), heading to Yangon from Myawady, carrying four kinds of goods worth K4.95 million including 1,100 Loop LED bulbs that were not declared in the Import Declaration (ID) at the Nyaungkhashay x-ray station. The action was taken under Customs procedures.

On the same day, the combined team confiscated 11,145.6

square metres of ceramic tiles and 4,434.10 kilogrammes of Dershan worth K162,659,322 that were not declared in the ID from ten containers at the Myanmar Industrial Port, 41 kinds of medications valued at K424,092,375 including 50,000 boxes of ACE Syrup and 9,299 bottles of Annodis tablets from Bangladesh that exceeded the ID from four containers at the Asia World Port Terminal container checkpoint and a Htila Royal truck (estimated value of K25 million), travelling from Hpa-an to Yangon, carrying 165 bags of SCGC polypropylene resin valued at K7.755 million at the Mayanchaung permanent checkpoint. The action was taken under Customs procedures.

On 14 March, Sagaing Region Illegal Trade Eradication Special Task Force impounded three unregistered vehicles of Toyota Gracia (estimated value of K4 million) in No 10 Ward in Shwebo, a Toyota Landcruiser and a Toyota Crown valued at K20 million in Sakhata (8) combined checkpoint of Shwebo township. The action was taken under the Export and Import Law.

The Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee reported that 13 arrests were made on 13 and 14 March, with an estimated value of K692,158,697. — MNA/TRKM/MKKS

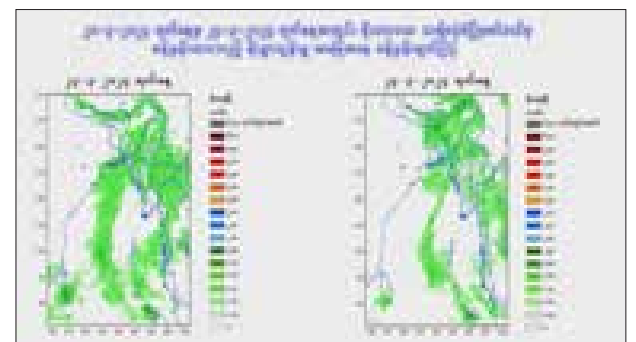
Untimely Rainfall Warning No 2/2024

Issued at (14:00) hours MST on 17-3-2024

ACCORDING to the observations at 1:30 pm MST today, due to the clouds moving from the Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal, Easterly Wave, development of convective clouds and due to the western disturbances, rain or thundershowers are likely to be fairly widespread in Taninthayi Region and Kachin and Shan states and isolated to scattered in the remaining regions and states from 20-3-2024 to 24-3-2024.

Advisory

People should be aware untimely rainfall accompanied with thunder, lightning, hails and strong wind in the areas with development of convective clouds.



Counter-argument to false information

Spreading fake news: more than 100 minors arrested to serve in military in Ayeyawady Region

MALICIOUS media outlets are spreading fake news, alleging that over 100 minors were arrested in Ayeyawady Region within just one month, from 11 February to 11 March, to serve in the military service.

According to the statement of a security official from the

region, there was no arrest of minors in Ayeyawady Region for serving military service.

As the people have already known, the malicious media are just intentionally spreading untrue information to lead the youths in the wrong direction for life and to make them feel frightened, with the activation of the People's Military Service Law.

Therefore, the people should be aware of various kinds of false news concerning the military service by only watching and listening to the official news from the government news media, the official statements, and by getting information from the link of <https://mod.gov.mm/node/74>. — MNA/TRKM



Screenshot validates the fake news of malicious media.

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

NATIONAL

ASEAN Tourism Industry Standards Awards 2024 and Guest List Management System Course commerce

U Phyo Zaw Soe, Deputy Minister for Hotels and Tourism, attended the inauguration of the Guest List Management System Training No 1, approved by the Yangon City Development Committee. This was followed by the ASEAN Tourism Industry Standards Awards Ceremony held at the Tourism Development Centre in Yangon on 16 March 2024.

The deputy minister highlighted that since 2008, ASEAN standards have been awarded biennially. Myanmar has been honoured with a total of 121 awards annually, including 68 Green Hotel Awards, six ASEAN community-based tourism awards for destinations, eight public restroom awards, 11 ASEAN Clean Tourism Cities Awards, 15 ASEAN MICE Conference Hall Awards, four Exhi-



The ASEAN Tourism Industry Standards Awards presenting Ceremony in progress in Yangon, on 16 March 2024.

bition Hall Awards, three Event Venue Awards, two Urban Destination Awards, and four Rural Destination Awards.

Since 2008, the Yangon Re-

gion has received 16 ASEAN Tourism Standard Awards, indicating significant potential to apply for additional awards in the tourism sector, which will be

presented in 2025.

The Guest List Management System (GLMS) has been introduced for use by hotels and guesthouses licensed by the Min-

istry of Hotels and Tourism. The deputy minister emphasised the importance of all licensed lodging houses adhering to the system uniformly.

He urged trainees from guest houses under the Yangon City Development Committee's permission to diligently learn the GLMS guest list filling procedures lectured in the course and to ensure daily completion of guest lists.

Representatives accepted awards on behalf of the Myanmar Convention Centre (MCC), Yangon City Development Committee, which received the ASEAN MICE Venue Standard in the Event Venue category, and Cha-trium Hotel, which achieved the ASEAN MICE Venue Standard in the Event Venue category. — MNA/KZL

Notice for Implementation of MACCS for Cargo Clearance Processes at Tachilek Border on 22 March 2024

1. The Customs Department will extend the Myanmar Automated Cargo Clearance System (MACCS) to the Tachilek border area on 22 March 2024. This system is currently operational in Yangon, the Myawady border, Muse border, and Chinshwehaw border areas.
2. To ensure the successful implementation of the system, the department has arranged negotiation meetings with trade bodies, provided comprehensive training to MACCS users encompassing both theoretical knowledge and practical skills, and conducted running tests in collaboration with customs staff, trade bodies, the Tachilek Border Chamber of Commerce, export and import companies located in Tachilek, and the Myanmar Customs Brokers Association.
3. Anyone engaged in export and import business and customs service along the Tachilek border area and related trading routes can apply the MACCS for Customs clearance starting from 22 March 2024.

Customs Department
Ministry of Planning and Finance

50 artistes from theatre undergo free eye surgical treatment

A total of 50 artistes from the realms of film, theatre, music, and literature underwent eye surgery free of charge, performed by ophthalmologists from Japan, Cambodia, and Myanmar," according to U Nay Win, Secretary of the Myanmar Theatrical Association (Central).

The ophthalmologists from Thailand, Cambodia and Myanmar are providing free eye surgical treatment to artistes from film, theatre, music and literature starting from 13 to

23 March under the patronage of Shweratu Tipitakadhara Tipitakakovida Dhamma Bhandagarika Myinmu Sayadaw Bhaddanta Vamsapala Lankara and Tipitaka Sayadaw Bhaddanta Pañnasila Lankara.

"The Myanmar Theatrical Association (Central) welcomed the generous offer by the monks to provide free eye surgical treatment and arranged coordination with related associations to facilitate the reception of the treatment. Out of the total of 50 artistes,

20 have received eye surgical treatment starting on 13 March, and the remaining will also undergo the treatment," said U Nay Win.

Artistes from all over Myanmar are being given free eye surgery at the Shweratu Tipitaka Cakkhupala Eye Hospital (Yangon) in Dagon Myothit (Seikkan) Township. The hospital also provides accommodation, food, medications, and cash for eye patients who come from other regions and states. — ASH/ MKKS



The photo shows the Myanmar Theatrical Association officials encouraging the surgical treatment of artistes.

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NATIONAL

Plan to build sericulture and silk factory in Kachin State



Land Management Committee's workshop (1/2024) discusses construction of sericulture and silk factory in Kachin State.

ACCORDING to the regional government, the sericulture and silk factory will be constructed in Kachin State.

The factory will be built in Myitkyina, Kachin State, and officials from Rando (Myanmar) Silk Crop, Ltd held a business coordination meeting on 15 March to discuss the investment and operation of the factory.

At the meeting, Kachin State Chief Minister U Khet Htein Nan delivered that the investments that benefit the state must be implemented in

accordance with laws and regulations.

Regarding the establishment of a silk factory in cooperation with the mulberry farm, Mr Lee Fain Kyung, director of Rando (Myanmar) Silk Crop, Ltd, explained the plans to carry out for the establishment of the silk factory and the production of sericulture and obtaining raw materials. Then, the discussion continued the nurturing of silkworms for the establishment of the silk factory in accordance with the procedures. — TWA/TKO

CBM revokes licences of three money changers, suspends six money changers

THE Central Bank of Myanmar revoked the licences of three money changers and suspended those of six money changers in the past two days as they failed to comply with the rules and directives issued by the CBM.

CBM cancelled the money changer licences of Archipelago Seamen Club, SJ Vita Myanmar, and M Plus Myanmar companies for non-compliance with rules and directives of the CBM on 13 March 2024, as per the CBM's notification dated 14 March.

Similarly, Sweet Yadana Co Ltd was granted a money changer licence (CBM FEMD-500/2020) on 18 June 2020 and was found to violate Section 22 of the Foreign Exchange Management Law. Consequently, it got suspended for up to six months under Section 35 (B) of the Law starting from 13 March.

Moreover, Ngwe Myinn Phyu Co Ltd, which was granted a money changer licence (CBM FEMD-38/2013), got a six-month cancellation of the licence for non-compliance on 12 March 2024.

Additionally, Thura Nay Tun (Fame Money Changer), Lead Star Money Changer, Steber Group Money Changer and Asia Shwe Thee Money Changer got their licences suspended for three months from 12 March 2024.

The CBM will conduct surprise inspections at money changers in a bid to stabilize foreign exchange rates in line with the existing laws, the CBM announced on 11 March.

The CBM initiated an online trading market in which exporters/importers and private banks are engaged, with a view to developing the FX market. Additionally, the authorized money changers sell the foreign currency as petty cash to those going abroad, according to the CBM's notification.

Moreover, the surprise visits are being undertaken at money changers to ensure they abide by the directive issued by the Foreign Exchange Management Law.

A combined team led by the Monitoring and Steering Committee on Gold and Currency Market, comprising competent authorities from the CBM, Yangon City Development Committee, the Department of General Administration and law enforcement agencies, has been conducting the surprise inspections. — NN/EM

Mekong-Lancang Waste Recycling Research Laboratory opens in Mandalay

THE Ministry of Science and Technology has announced the opening of the Waste Recycling Laboratory for Mekong-Lancang Region at Mandalay Technological University in Pathingyi Township, Mandalay.

Established with the Mekong-Lancang Regional Countries Research Cooperation Fund, the laboratory commenced operations on 11 March. It aims to develop technologies to address waste management and environmental sustainability issues across the Mekong-Lancang region.

With the increasing adoption of electric vehicle technologies, the laboratory will focus on research into waste management, specifically the production and recycling of



Chief Minister of Mandalay Region U Myo Aung and guests view round Waste Recycling Laboratory for Mekong-Lancang Region.

electric vehicle batteries from waste materials. This initiative aims to serve as a model for other universities. Furthermore, collaboration and exchange of information on scientific innova-

tions related to waste recycling management are expected to mitigate not only environmental impact but also foster regional economic and social development. — TWA/KZL

Nearly 200,000 people aged over 85 to be provided with social pensions in 2024–2025 FY

THE Department of Social Welfare, under the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, plans to provide social pensions to approximately 200,000 senior citizens aged over 85 in the 2024–2025 financial year.

A total of 163,502 elderly people is entitled to receive K10,000 per month, with payments made every three months during the third phase

of this financial year, according to an official from the department.

In the 2023–2024 financial year, a total of K16.74 billion has been provided as social pensions to senior citizens over the age of 85, with the ministry allocated funds for support during both the first and second quarters of the 2024–2025 financial year.

The scheme has been im-

plemented under the social protection system since 2017. In the 2017–2018 financial year, a total of 49,009 beneficiaries over the age of 90 received social pensions, while in the 2018–2019 financial year, 188,740 beneficiaries over the age of 85 were provided with social pensions. In the financial year 2020–2021, the ministry supported 248,322 beneficiaries. — TWA/TH

Sugar prices surge, expected to reach new highs

MARKET data indicates that the price of domestic sugar has soared to K4,550 per viss and is expected to continue rising steadily in the coming days.

On both 14 and 16 March, sugar prices in the Yangon market witnessed repeated increases, with a significant spike reported on 16 March, reaching K4,550 per viss.

Although the daily wholesale rate in the Yangon market on 16 March stood at K4,340 per viss, it surged to K4,550 per viss in the evening, despite a lower price earlier in the day. Despite this surge, there's a noticeable rise in demand, as reported by sugar trader U Khine Zaw to the Global New Light of Myanmar.

The sugar price trajectory shows a rapid increase, with prices escalating from K3,970 per viss on 17 February to K4,400 on 14 March. The Mandalay market saw a similar trend, with prices rising



The photo shows sugar from a retail shop.

from K3,970 to K4,300 during the same period.

Transport costs from Mandalay to Yangon also triggered the price surge, with prices increasing again on 14 March.

In Yangon, sugar prices climbed from K3,930 per viss in early February to K4,400 by mid-March. Predictions suggest further increases in late March, just before the Thingyan Festival.

A bakery owner in Dala Township, Ko Zarni, revealed that sugar retail prices hit K4,500 per viss on 15 March. Despite the surge, supermarket prices for white sugar remain relatively lower, at K2,150 per bag (800 grammes), according to consumers in Dagon Myothit (South) Township.

It's anticipated that retail sugar prices will continue to rise, possibly reaching K5,000 per viss in the coming days, equivalent to jaggery prices. — TWA/TMT

Thabyay (Eugenia) grafts gain buyers from Thailand whereas local demand is also good



Eugenia grafts are sold at the market.

EUGENIA graft, which is one of the flowers offered to Buddha, has received many orders from Thailand and local demand has been good too, according to Eugenia growers.

"We export Eugenia to overseas market too. There are many orders from Myanmar nationals in Thailand. The demand has been pretty good now. Eugenia is also produced in Myawady. Eugenia farms receive orders from Thailand as well as other countries," said an Eugenia wholesaler from Pobathiri township in Nay Pyi Taw Council Area. Sales are expected to be better in coming months, according to Eugenia farmers.

"This is the peak season. Sales of Eugenia were slow last dry season. But

from this March, sales will be active until April and May. Most of our customers buy Eugenia to make offerings to the Buddha. We sell wholesales only," said the wholesaler.

Among other flowers, Eugenia graft is more durable, that is why it is one of the best selling flowers, and the sprig lasts for a few months just by changing water in the vase.

At present, depending on the size and variety, the price of a graft of Eugenia starts from K200 to the maximum K3,000, according to Eugenia growers in Nay Pyi Taw. Eugenia is a perennial tree and can be cut in two years of planting, and it brings many benefits to farmers, said Eugenia farmers. — Thit Taw/ZS

Despite slight periodic fall, betel price may soon rebound

AT present, betel price has fallen slightly, but is expected to recover soon, according to betel growers and sellers.

"Betel trading is a bit slow in our market because this is summer and there is no water or rain. And this is the time to curl up the long betel stems, so prices will drop a little. It used to be produced in various towns. This year the price is not as good as last year. But, market inactivity at this time is in the nature of betel. Say, it drops from K1,000 to K800. The price will rise again when the Thingyan festival is near. In summer, some growers do activities like rolling up the stems of betel plants at the foot, cutting the stems and cultivating replacement plants. So, the market

slowdown is normal at this time," said betel-grower Ko Thura Myo Min from Kyaukse.

Betel prices will rise again in the next two weeks and fall back during April, some predicted.

"The price will increase in the next one or two weeks. It is not a prediction, but it will be better because betel market goes according to its season and its right time. For example, the price will go down once in April as it is the right time to fall. But, it will recover when Thingyan approaches. In the last three or four weeks, the price has gone up to K20,000-K30,000. Another factor is that the price can rise if the production is low and fall when it is high," he said. — Thit Taw/ZN



A betel farm under proper cultivation.

OPINION

Work in concert to ensure swift and smooth trade flow

In fostering a robust economy, the government emphasizes the pivotal role of a seamless and efficient trade flow. This imperative aligns with established trade procedures, policies, and initiatives aimed at bolstering the export of agricultural products, meat, and fish to foreign partners while meeting local consumption needs.

The stability of commodity flow hinges on the ease of transport in the domestic market. The burgeoning demand from international markets propels the expansion of agricultural acreage for crops such as corn and black beans, as well as the increased production of fishery products. Ensuring a smooth trade process not only benefits manufacturers but also positively impacts the entire supply and demand chains, fostering the overall development of the state economy.

Underlining the commitment to agricultural development, the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, and Irrigation secured US\$12.18 million from the Mekong-Lancang cooperation special fund for implementing 35 projects spanning from 2017 to 2023. In the current year, four projects, amounting to \$1.29 million, are slated for implementation, aligning with export agreements inked between Myanmar and its member countries. This strategic move is poised to contribute significantly to the value chain of Myanmar's agricultural produce.

The financial year 2023-24 witnessed a substantial increase of \$238.22 million, 212.80 million Chinese yuan, and 688.48 million Thai baht compared to the same period in 2022-23.

Underlining the commitment to agricultural development, the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, and Irrigation secured US\$12.18 million from the Mekong-Lancang cooperation special fund for implementing 35 projects spanning from 2017 to 2023. In the current year, four projects, amounting to \$1.29 million, are slated for implementation, aligning with export agreements inked between Myanmar and its member countries. This strategic move is poised to contribute significantly to the value chain of Myanmar's agricultural produce.

International collaborations, particularly with China, have seen agreements on plant pest prevention, further fortifying market opportunities for agricultural produce and fostering bilateral economic development. It is incumbent upon all stakeholders to remain vigilant and avoid actions that may disrupt the current swift and smooth trade process, ensuring mutual benefits for both the state and its populace.

In a proactive approach, the government has urged businesses and relevant organizations to adhere to bilateral trade agreements, disciplines, and standards. This concerted effort aims to streamline the trade process, facilitating solutions to challenges associated with trading agricultural produce, meat, and fish products. By aligning with the actual factors influencing trade, the government seeks to achieve a swift and smooth flow of goods.

As a testament to these efforts, a total of 1,301 companies reported earnings amounting to US\$283.36 million, 321.80 million Chinese yuan, and 876.15 million Thai baht from October 2023 to February 2024. This starkly contrasts with the corresponding period in 2022, where 215 companies earned \$45.14 million, 109 million Chinese yuan, and 187.67 million Thai baht.

Finally, ASEAN Sees the Light

By U AC

First, just like the US and the West, they refused to believe in the voters' fraud.

Second, following the West, they boycotted Myanmar, forcing foreign companies to leave town and increasing joblessness among people with low incomes.

Third, taking a pinch of im-

perialism, they wanted to impose their 4/5 points of nonsense on the Myanmar people.

Some countries tried to close the bank accounts of Myanmar citizens and Myanmar companies. Some tried to cower Myanmar into following their instructions. Some even openly recognized the NNCP terrorist group as an al-

ternative legitimate government!

Finally, they realize the foundations and meanings of the ASEAN Charter and that being a Western lap dog would lead them nowhere. For the first time in nearly three years, one representative from Myanmar was invited to be at the ASEAN foreign ministers meeting held on 29 January. A fe-

male director-general was present during the meeting. It is a small step for the Myanmar public, a giant step in putting NNCP terrorist groups where they belong. Last but not least, the more important and concrete step was what has been mentioned in para 23 of the communique issued afterwards: "ASEAN would help people of My-

anmar, find a Myanmar-owned and led solution towards a peaceful, stable and unified Myanmar contributing to peace and prosperity of the region".

As MLK said, "The arch of the moral universe is long, but in the end, it bends towards justice."

Having been free from the shackles of unnecessary pres-

ures from ASEAN, the burden is now on the Myanmar government to show that it can bring the country progress and much-needed development while improving by leaps and bounds on law and order, reducing corruption and ceasing never-ending presidential pardons!

Genuine Art of Staying Quiet

By Hu Wo (Cuckoo's Song)

People must have got the benefits of staying quiet. Firstly, the less anyone speaks, the fewer mistakes they tend to make. Consequently, they seldom get into 'debt of words'; that is, they do not need to keep many promises simply because they are not given.

As all of us know, there is a famous saying, 'Silence is golden'. Speaking as Myanmar, silence is worth a thousand, of course. Some people can be found to stay quiet as usual. In particular, they have a laconic manner, i.e. they do not always speak a lot in any situation. Those people often include the aged and the educated. Almost all the aged have had lots of life experience, and they would like to share this experience with the next generation. But sometimes, they do not express a desire to tell their experience in life, possibly because of poor health or any circumstance that they cannot speak out first-hand experience. Naturally, the very educated do not talk about their theoretical and practical experience unless that experience is needed to do so, except working for the love of it sometimes.

There may be several reasons arising from the fact that many people, especially those aged, do not blather in any case. Some people themselves are not garrulous due to their inborn genes, gender, family life, or the environment. A number of people who are not talkative have liked saying something short and to the point even since their childhood. A good few people want to be loquacious but bashful but keep quiet about anything, though. Speaking of gender differences, boys do not commonly



A peaceful and quiet environment or neighbourhood makes the people around it feel an atmosphere of tranquillity. ILLUSTRATION: PIX FOR VISUAL PURPOSE/PIXABAY

waffle as much as girls. Quite a few families would love to stay calm at all times, but they are apparently unconcerned about

their food, clothing, and shelter more than needed. Those families are given to pass on this stability to their new children

as well. A peaceful and quiet environment or neighbourhood makes the people around it feel an atmosphere of tranquillity.

People must have got the benefits of staying quiet. Firstly, the less anyone speaks, the fewer mistakes they tend to make. Consequently, they seldom get into 'debt of words'; that is, they do not need to keep many promises simply because they are not given. The hardest debt to pay back in the world involves the words irresponsibly spoken, we should know. Secondly, they can save their energy as much as possible by sitting still – in other words, they will not be flatulent. In that case, they do not need to quarrel with anybody, whether strange or close. Lastly, they will be able to control their temper very quickly by remaining silently and can be subsequently regarded as a man of great calmness. Normal people like to blench and show respect for a person of emotional maturity even when they come across him.

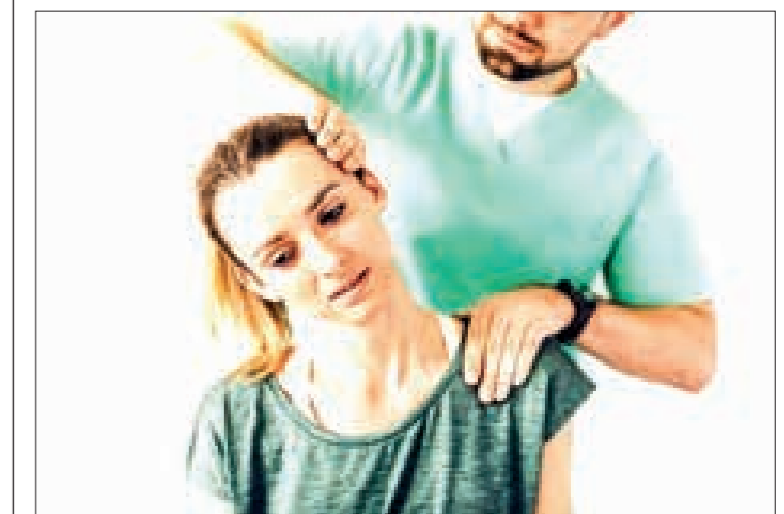
Any person should not stay calm in all affairs that they are facing unquestionably. He must not keep a problem quiet, and he has to find a solution for certain. As Shin Maha Ratthasara, who was a great laureate in the Inwa Era of Myanmar, wrote, everyone ought to say something that he still has the responsibility and accountability to do so. Only an animal called a man is capable of deciding which is right, wrong, suitable, or inappropriate. People must be made to take notice of what is right versus what is

wrong sometimes. Besides this, they can be provided a chance to choose what is suitable as well as avoid what is inappropriate. Not every matter should be unknowingly skipped by thinking about the saying, 'Let bygones be bygones'. If not so, undesirable neglect gives rise to bitter regret and even physical, mental or both breakdowns.

In fact, staying quiet might come out as a habit that is made possible by anyone. We had better stay away from the states that do not directly relate to us, or else we will get involved in these potentially confused states for no apparent reason. If we wish to stay quiet for sure, we should live in total silence for as many hours as we can. As long as we remain silent, we will get used to it sooner or later. Next, the people who keep quiet are loved by most people, the way I see it. As the saying goes, living silent is supposed to indirectly tell a bit of someone's acknowledgement of having done wrong. But in some cases, hanging in the balance, it would be better to say no words or, at the very worst, be lost for words to somebody. Those who keep still, especially boys and women, can get respected in a fierce way. In the main, staying quiet ought to give us all grace and glow one way or the other.

Neck muscle inflammation primary cause of headache: Study

Researchers at RSNA linked neck muscles to primary headaches, offering potential for improved treatments, though the exact causes of types like tension headaches and migraines remain unclear.



Neck pain is often tied to primary headaches, yet there are no clear biomarkers for myofascial involvement. ILLUSTRATION: PIX FOR VISUAL PURPOSE/PEXELS

Researchers disclosed genuine proof of how the neck muscles are implicated in primary headaches in a study presented at the annual meeting of the Radiological Society of North America (RSNA). The findings could lead to improved treatments.

The distinct underlying causes of primary headaches are still not fully understood. The most common primary headaches are tension-type headaches and migraines.

Imaging approach

"Our imaging approach provides first objective evidence for the very frequent involvement of the neck muscles in primary headaches, such as neck pain in migraine or tension-type headache, using the ability to quantify subtle inflammation within muscles," said Nico Sollmann, M.D., Ph.D., resident in the Department of Diagnostic and Interventional Radiology at University Hospital Ulm, and the Department of Diagnostic and Interventional Neuroradiology at University Hospital Rechts der

Isar in Munich, Germany.

Tension-type headaches affect two out of every three adults in the US. People with tension-type headaches often feel a tightening in the head and mild to moderate dull pain on both sides of the head. While these headaches are typically associated with stress and muscle tension, their exact origin is not fully understood.

Chronic migraine

Migraines are characterized by a severe throbbing pain. Migraines generally occur on one side of the head, or the pain is worse on one side. Migraines may also cause nausea, weakness and light sensitivity. According to the American Migraine Foundation, over 37 million people in the U.S. are affected by migraine, and up to 148 million people worldwide suffer from chronic migraine.

Neck pain is commonly associated with primary headaches. However, no objective biomarkers exist for myofascial involvement. Myofascial pain is associated with inflammation or irritation of muscle or of the connective tissue, known as fascia, that surrounds the muscle.

SOURCE: ANI

NATIONAL



Pots from Ayekyun village being sold at market fair of Buddha Pujaniya festival.

CBT attracts at least 300 domestic tourists to Sinkyun village daily

ACCORDING to U Maung Maung Lay, chair of the Irrawaddy Dolphin protection team of the Mandalay Region Department of Fisheries, approximately 300 domestic tourists visit Sinkyun village, which is implementing community-based tourism in Madaya Township, Mandalay Region.

Starting from the first week of March, around 300 domestic travellers on a daily

basis have been visiting Ayekyun Village, which is developing community-based tourism. In February, about 200 domestic tourists visited the village daily.

“Sinkyun, Ayekyun, Myay-sun and Seinpankon villages in Madaya Township and Myitkangyi and Sithel villages in Singu Township are the existing community-based tourism destinations in Mandalay Region. Most tourists come

to Sinkyun village to view Irrawaddy dolphins grazing in the Ayeyawady,” U Maung Maung Lay said.

In Ayekyun Village of Madaya Township, which is currently attracting domestic tourists, the number of visitors is increasing as tourists are interested in traditional weaving, pottery, bamboo hat, cheroot, sandal and Myanmar handicrafts industries. — ASH/TKO

Mandalay Region’s cultural zones to open for Thingyan holidays

U Aung Aung Kyaw, Director (Admin) of the Department of Archaeology and National Museum, recently said that the cultural zones of Mandalay Region, including Pinya Cultural Zone, Inwa Cultural Zone and Bagan Cultural Zone, will be accessible to the public for exploration and relaxation during coming Thingyan holidays.

“The cultural zones, which attract numerous visitors an-

nually, will be open during the Thingyan holidays as usual,” stated U Aung Aung Kyaw. “Additionally, Bago Cultural Zone and Sri Kestra Cultural Zone will also be open, although the museums in those zones will remain closed.”

However, it has been reported that the Myanansankyaw Golden Palace will be closed during these days. — ASH/TRKM



A cluster of pagodas in Nyaungyan era are seen in Inwa Cultural Zone.

15 Irrawaddy dolphins inhabit in Mandalay-Mingun protected area

THE Irrawaddy Dolphin protection team of the Mandalay Region Fisheries Department recently reported that the number of Irrawaddy Dolphins in the Mandalay-Mingun protected area has now reached 15 individuals.

The team conducts regular monitoring of the dolphin population three times a month. According to U Maung Maung Lay, chair of the team, they observed 15 dolphins in the waters near Mingun on 14 March. During a previous observation on 4 March,

17 individuals were spotted in the Mandalay-Kyaukmyaung area.

With the lower water levels in the Ayeyawady River during this season, the collaborative fishing technique between fishermen and dolphins has become more noticeable.

This activity has garnered significant attention from visitors. Similarly, visitors are drawn to Ayekyun Village, known for its community-based tourism, in Madaya Township, to stay and observe the dolphins. — ASH/NT

Fisheries Department announces fishing ban season for 2024

U Aung Nyi Toe, the staff officer of the Fisheries Department of Taninthayi Region, has stated that the fishing ban season for the year 2024 will be from April to June.

During this period, fewer exports are expected as offshore fishing vessels will be concentrating on catching aquatic products closer to the shore. Surplus marine products after meeting domestic demand will be sold to Thailand. While normally up to 26 vessel loads can be exported daily during the fishing period, this number will decrease to only five per day during the fishing ban season, as men-

tioned by U Aung Nyi Toe.

Inshore fishing vessels are the only ones permitted to fish during the ban season, with offshore fishing vessels prohibited from doing so, particularly in Yangon Region, Taninthayi Region, Ayeyawady Region, Rakhine State, and Mon State.

According to the Fisheries Department, there are a total of 884 offshore fishing vessels registered with ‘Ta’ licence for offshore fishing business, 507 with ‘Ta Wa’ licence for local offshore fishing business, and 122 vessels carrying aquatic products with offshore licence. This amounts to 1,513 registered offshore fishing vessels and 7,927

registered inshore fishing vessels. Taninthayi Region boasts the highest number of registered offshore fishing vessels in Myanmar, with over 1,500 vessels, followed by Yangon Region, Ayeyawady Region, Rakhine State, and Mon State, which together have more than 1,700 offshore fishing vessels in total. The size of an offshore fishing vessel typically ranges from 15 to 40 labourers, depending on its scale.

The fishing ban season in Myanmar waters has been set from May to July in 2021, April to June in 2022, April to June in 2023, and again from April to June in 2024. — ASH/TMT

Irrawaddy dolphin seen in Mandalay-Mingun protected area on 14 March.



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

In Chile, a lawyer and his dog 'plog' to raise recycling awareness

IT'S still dark out, but Chilean lawyer Gonzalo Chiang and his dog Sam are already out jogging and collecting rubbish in Santiago's largest park.

Chiang, 38, is on an individual quest to promote the practice of "plogging" — picking up garbage while on the run — in a country where recycling lags far behind the Latin American average.

Chiang and Sam the border collie have been plogging together for two years, pioneers in Chile of a practice invented in Sweden in 2016.

The term — a combination of jogging and the Swedish "ploc-

ka," which means "to pick" — was included as a noun in the Collins Dictionary in 2018.

"Every day, with the daily walking of the dog... one can make a big difference" to the environment, Chiang told AFP.

Chile recycles only 3.1 per cent of its non-hazardous waste, according to the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) — below the regional average of 4.4 per cent.

Chiang keeps a meticulous record of his efforts, which he shares on social media as an encouragement to others to join him. — AFP



Gonzalo Chiang and Sam the border collie have been 'plogging' together for two years. PHOTO: RODRIGO ARANGUA / AFP

London 'everywoman' sculpture to grace Trafalgar Square

A sculpture depicting modern women in the British capital will stand on the Fourth Plinth of London's Trafalgar Square from 2026, organisers said Friday.

"Lady in Blue", a bronze patinated with Lapis Lazuli blue by the New York artist Tschabalala Self, depicts "a young metropolitan woman of colour" in a long dress and high heels striding forward.

Self, who credits the city with supporting her artistic development over the years, said her figure would be one that Londoners could relate to.

"She is not an idol to venerate or a historic figurehead to commemorate," she said in a

statement.

"She is a woman striding forward into our collective future with ambition and purpose. She is a Londoner, who represents the city's spirit."

Self is best known for her depictions of female figures that use paint, fabric and discarded pieces of previous her works.

The sculpture is the latest in a rolling programme overseen by the mayor of London that began in 1998 to showcase contemporary art on the "fourth plinth", which marks one corner of Trafalgar Square and has become one of the most coveted art commissions in the world. — AFP

Dutch art fair reports 'record' prices for Van Gogh, Picasso

The European Fine Art Fair (TEFAF) closed with record sales of "tens-of-millions of euros", including a rare Van Gogh and works by Picasso and Kees van Dongen. Top ticket items included a rare early Van Gogh and a multi-million-euro work by abstract art pioneer Wassily Kandinsky.



Staff members hang a rare Vincent van Gogh painting, "Tete de paysanne a la coiffe blanche", painted circa 1884, at the TEFAF Maastricht art fair. PHOTO: AFP

EUROPE'S largest art fair closed its doors on Friday with organisers saying that sales, including a rare Van Gogh and works by Picasso and Kees van Dongen, fetched "record

prices".

Although a total figure of sale for some of the world's most sought-after artworks could not be given, organisers of The European Fine Art Fair

(TEFAF) said that sales ran up to "tens-of-millions of euros".

"It's impossible to tally the total sales as many are not made public," TEFAF organiser Noepy Testa said.

"But we have had record sales, running into tens-of-millions of euros," she told AFP.

Top ticket items for sale this year included a rare early Van Gogh, painted when the artist was living in southern Netherlands around 1884, and a multi-million-euro work by abstract art pioneer Wassily Kandinsky.

The US-based gallery selling the Van Gogh, titled "Tete de paysanne a la coiffe blanche" confirmed a buyer, with Dutch media saying the asking price of 4.5 million euros (\$4.9 million) was reached. — AFP

Inferno destroys prestigious Arab film studio in Cairo

A major fire in Cairo destroyed one of the Arab world's most prestigious and oldest film production houses, founded 80 years ago, an AFP journalist said.

Flames overtook the Al-Ahram Studio in Cairo's Giza district, burning everything inside and spreading to three surrounding buildings which were evacuated before the blaze reached them.

Residents of the neighbouring buildings were still sleeping on the ground in nearby streets at dawn on Saturday, the AFP journalist reported.

Deadly fires are a common hazard in Egypt, where fire codes are rarely enforced and emergency services are often slow to arrive.

In this case, security sources said there were no



During filming in 2006 at Cairo's Al-Ahram Studio, Salah al-Saadani performs in the Ramadan TV series 'Haret al-Zaafarani'. PHOTO: AMRO MARAGHI / AFP/FILE

deaths, though some people suffering smoke inhalation were treated at the scene.

Local media reported that the fire broke out 24 hours after filming finished for a Ramadan television series. The Muslim holy fasting month of Ramadan, which began last Monday, accounts for peak viewership in Egypt and the rest of the Arab

world.

The cause of the fire is still unknown, and firefighters needed more than six hours to extinguish it, according to the security sources.

Yusif Mohammed, a neighbour who witnessed the fire, told AFP that flames "reached the surrounding buildings before fire trucks arrived". — AFP

ECONOMY WORLD

India's forex exchange reserves at over two-year high

The largest component, India's foreign currency assets (FCA), rose by \$8.21 billion to \$562.352 billion during the week. However, gold reserves saw a decline of \$2.299 billion to \$50.716 billion.

INDIA'S foreign exchange reserves rose by USD 10.470 billion to USD 636.095 billion in the week that ended on 8 March, as per the latest data released by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

The foreign exchange kitty rose for a third straight week to hit an over two-year high.

Before 8 March week, the foreign exchange reserves rose

by USD 6.554 billion to USD 625.626 billion, data showed.

During the latest week, India's foreign currency assets (FCA), the biggest component of the forex reserves, rose by USD 8.21 billion to USD 562.352 billion, the central bank's weekly statistical data showed.

Gold reserves during the week declined USD 2.299 billion to USD 50.716 billion.



In 2023 alone, the RBI added approximately \$58 billion to the forex reserves, a significant rebound from the \$71 billion slump seen in 2022. **PHOTO: ANI**

In the calendar year 2023, the RBI added about USD 58 billion to its foreign exchange

Forex reserves or foreign exchange reserves (FX reserves), are assets that are held by a nation's central bank or monetary authority.

It is generally held in reserve currencies, usually the US Dollar and, to a lesser degree, the Euro, Japanese Yen, and Pound Sterling.

In October 2021, the country's foreign exchange reserves touched an all-time high of about USD 645 billion. Much of the decline, though marginal on a cumulative basis, since then can be attributed to a rise in the cost of imported goods in 2022. — ANI

kitty. In 2022, India's forex kitty slumped by USD 71 billion cumulatively.

EU states back watered-down law on supply chain standards

This decision has drawn criticism from organizations like the World Wide Fund for Nature, which called the law a "shadow of its former self" and warned of its weakened effectiveness in combating climate change and corporate abuses.



A residue incineration plant of German chemicals company BASF is pictured on 1 November 2022, in Schwarzeide, eastern Germany. **PHOTO: PIX FOR VISUAL PURPOSE/AFP/FILE**

EU member countries agreed Friday to a new law that would force companies to uphold environmental and human rights standards in their supply chains, Belgium, which holds the EU's rotating presidency, said.

The green light endorsing a duty for "due diligence" on those norms came only after compromises on the original text to win majority support.

The law's scope was slashed by having it apply only to companies with 1,000 em-

ployees or more — double the initial threshold — and with revenues of at least 450 million euros (\$413 million), according to a diplomatic source.

The World Wide Fund for Nature said that EU states had reduced the rules to "a shadow of their former self".

"Today, the EU countries agreed to massively dilute the Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive (CSDDD), removing roughly two-thirds of the companies from the law's scope and weakening

the law's ability to combat climate change," WWF said in a statement.

"This agreement sends a horrendous signal to those suffering from corporate abuses and severely harms the EU's commitment to ensuring a level playing field, as well as its credibility as a legislative force."

EU lawmakers and negotiators representing member states had struck an agreement on the more ambitious early draft of the legislation in December. — AFP

US industrial production edges higher on rise in manufacturing, mining

US industrial production ticked higher in February, aided by an increase in manufacturing and mining, the Federal Reserve said Friday, although earlier data was revised lower.

Production rose 0.1 per cent in February following a revised fall of 0.5 per cent in January, the Fed announced in a statement.

This was slightly above market expectations of no monthly change, according to Briefing.com. But given the sharp downward revision for both December and January, the index remains lower than it was a year ago.

Much of February's rise was down to a 0.8 per cent rise in manufacturing output, and a 2.2

increase in the index for mining.

"Both gains partly reflected recoveries from weather-related declines in January," the Fed said, adding that the "warmer-than-typical" month also helped push down the utilities index.

"Overall industrial production was slightly better than expected and manufacturing surprised to the upside in February," High Frequency Economics chief US economist Rubeela Farooqi said in a statement. She added that the manufacturing sector "continues to face headwinds from higher borrowing costs and tighter credit conditions". — AFP



Lucid Showroom Miami Worldcenter on 29 June 2023. **PHOTO: REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE/ WIKIMEDIA COMMONS**

China's installed capacity of power batteries grows in Jan-Feb

China's installed capacity of power batteries experienced growth in the first two months of the year, reaching 50.3 gigawatt-hours (GWh), marking a 32 per cent increase compared to the previous year.

CHINA'S installed capacity of power batteries went up in the first two months of the year, according to data from the China Automotive Battery Innovation Alliance.

During the period, the installed capacity of the batteries stood at 50.3 gigawatt-hours (GWh), up 32 per cent year on year. In February alone, the output fell 18.1 per cent year on year to 18 GWh.

The exports of the power batteries came in at 16.3 GWh during the January-February pe-



Visitors learn about power batteries used on new-energy vehicles during the EV & ES Battery-Empowered Green and Low-carbon Travel Exhibition of the 2022 World EV & ES Battery Conference in Yibin, southwest China's Sichuan Province, 21 July 2022. PHOTO: WANG XI/XINHUA

riod, down 1.9 per cent compared with last year, according to the data.

The new energy vehicles (NEVs) sector maintained fast growth momentum during the first two months. The country's NEVs output reached 1.25 million units, climbing 28.2 per cent compared with a year earlier. Sales of NEVs rose 29.4 per cent year on year to 1.21 million units, data from the China Association of Automobile Manufacturers showed.

— Xinhua

UAE-US non-oil trade reached 31.4 billion dollars in 2023

DANNY E Sebright, President of the US-UAE Business Council, said that the volume of non-oil trade between the UAE and the United States reached USD 31.4 billion in 2023, and is expected to continue growing at the same pace in 2024.

Sebright added, in statements to the Emirates News Agency (WAM), that US exports to the UAE reached \$24.8 billion last year, exceeding 2022

exports of USD 20.8 billion, by 19 per cent, noting that the UAE remained the top US export destination in the Middle East and Africa for the fifth consecutive year.

The President of the US-UAE Business Council highlighted that US exports to the UAE support 125,000 jobs in the US, while UAE exports to the US totaled USD 6.6 billion last year.

Sebright said that

UAE investments in the US market continue to grow, focusing on various sectors including real estate, manufacturing, healthcare, and technology. He pointed to three areas with greater potential for further cooperation between the two countries in 2024: healthcare and life sciences, financial services and private equity, and technology and artificial intelligence.

Sebright said that

the UAE and the United States continue to build on the tremendous progress made last year in the lead-up to the UN Climate Change Conference (COP28) in the areas of renewable energy, food security, and sustainability, in addition to the continued strength of traditional foundations of the bilateral trade relationship between the two countries in sectors such as space, defence, and energy. — ANI

Meta investigated over illicit drug sales: report



US authorities are investigating Meta over its role in the illicit sale of medications. PHOTO: AFP/FILE

US authorities are investigating Meta over its role in the illicit sale of medications, The Wall Street Journal reported Saturday.

Citing documents and people close to the matter, the American business daily said prosecutors in the southern US state of Virginia are looking into whether the company's social media platforms are facilitating and profiting from the illegal sale of drugs.

Prosecutors have asked for records on "violative drug content on Meta's platforms and/or the illicit sale of drugs via Meta's platforms,"

according to copies of subpoenas reviewed by The Wall Street Journal.

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has been helping with the investigation, the paper reported.

"The sale of illicit drugs is against our policies and we work to find and remove this content from our services," Meta told the Journal in a statement, adding that it "proactively cooperates" with law enforcement to help combat the sale of illicit drugs. Contacted by AFP on Saturday morning, neither the FDA nor Meta would comment. — AFP

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
M.V BLPL BLESSING VOY.NO. (2406S)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V BLPL BLESSING VOY.NO. (2406S)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **18-3-2024** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MIP** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:
M/S BLPL SHIPPING LINE

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
M.V ALVAN VOY.NO. (SCY1165)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V ALVAN VOY.NO. (SCY1165)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **18-3-2024** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MITT** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:
M/S LAND AND SEA INTERMODAL LOGISTICS
SDN BHD LINE

ROLLING UPDATES

WORLD

Cambodia launches Visit Siem Reap 2024 campaign

The recently opened Siem Reap Angkor International Airport, invested in by China, is expected to further facilitate international travel to the Angkor park and Cambodia as a whole.

CAMBODIA on Saturday launched the Visit Siem Reap 2024 campaign in the northwestern province, aiming to draw more visitors to its tourist attraction the UNESCO-listed Angkor Archaeological Park.

Addressing the launching event with thousands of participants, which was held together with the official opening ceremony of the eighth River Festival, Prime Minister Hun Manet said the campaign was designed to revitalize the tourism industry in Siem Reap province in the post-COVID-19 pandemic era.

“The Visit Siem Reap 2024 campaign, together with the 2024 Cambodia-China people-to-people exchange year and the Cambodia-India tourism year, will give a boost to the tourism sector in Siem Reap province, attracting more foreign tourists to Cambodia,” he



Tourists visit the Angkor Wat in Siem Reap province, Cambodia on 10 February 2024. **PHOTO: SAO KHUTH/XINHUA**

said.

According to Hun Manet, the Chinese-invested Siem

Reap Angkor International Airport (SAI), which started commercial operation last No-

vember, is becoming a potential magnet by facilitating the trip of international tourists to the

Angkor park in particular and to Cambodia in general.

The prime minister also encouraged tourism officials, local authorities and tour agents to organize various tourism activities to support the campaign.

Tourism Minister Sok Soken said the campaign would inject new momentum into the local tourism sector, helping attract more international tourists, particularly to the Angkor park.

“The Visit Siem Reap 2024 campaign is one of our major measures to revitalize the tourism industry in Siem Reap province,” he said. Siem Reap is home to the 401-square-km Angkor Archaeological Park, which was inscribed on the World Heritage List of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in 1992. — Xinhua

TOP NEWS

Russia reports massive cyberattacks on its remote voting system

RUSSIAN election authorities said Saturday that about 160,000 cyberattacks on the country’s remote electronic voting resources were blocked.

The attacks were mainly directed toward the voting portal, with 30,000 attacks launched against the monitoring portal for the remote electronic voting system, said Ella Pamfilova, head of the Russian Central Election Commission.

Pamfilova noted that the cyberattack activity increased significantly on Saturday from Friday and ended in failures. —Xinhua

Venezuela’s Maduro accepts party nomination, will seek third term

VENEZUELA’S President Nicolas Maduro will seek a third term in 28 July elections after 11 years in office marked by sanctions, economic collapse and accusations of widespread repression.

“We’ll go to a new victory,” the 61-year-old said as he accepted his ruling PSUV party’s official nomination to be its candidate in elections from which the state apparatus has excluded his main rival — the favorite in opinion polls.

There was no challenger from within the “Chavista” movement, in power for 25 years and named for Maduro’s popular predecessor Hugo Chavez. — AFP

Cyprus says second aid ship ready to leave for Gaza

The aid corridor from Cyprus aims to alleviate shortages in Gaza after months of conflict, with UN agencies warning of a looming famine.

A second ship loaded with aid for Gaza could depart as early as Saturday, Cyprus said, as the first vessel returned from the war-ravaged territory after successfully delivering its cargo.

The Jennifer was set “to depart for Gaza today or tomorrow,” foreign ministry spokes-

person Theodoros Gotsis told state radio.

US charity World Central Kitchen said the Jennifer had been loaded with 240 tonnes of food but that rough weather made it hard to predict when it would set sail for Gaza or when the first vessel, the Open Arms,

might make a return trip.

“Maritime weather reports show bad weather from Sunday until end of next week — so exact timing of sailing for either boat to return to Gaza is not available at this time,” the charity said in a statement. — AFP



The Open Arms vessel with humanitarian food aid at the Cypriot port of Larnaca. A Spanish charity ship taking 200 tonnes of humanitarian food aid to war-ravaged Gaza, it set sail from the Mediterranean island of Cyprus on 12 March 2024. **PHOTO: OPEN ARMS/AFP**

SPORTS

Three teams competing for championship in MFF Futsal League-2

The futsal team players are competing in the Week-21 match of the Myanmar Football Federation's Futsal League-2. **PHOTO:MFF**



THE Week-21 match of the Myanmar Football Federation's Futsal League-2 tournament continued on 17 March at the Futsal Stadium in Yangon, with the top teams winning and three teams competing for the championship with remaining one game.

In the Week-21 matches, Sun Far

FC beat Maryar FC 3-1, SGF crushed Noka United 5-0, TG United trounced Golden Yoma 3-0, and M-Million FC won over Black Cross 7-5. Meanwhile, YRG FC defeated Shwepyitha FC 4-1, while Seven FC played a 3-3 draw with KKY 3-3.

According to the score after the

Week-21 match, only YRG team, SGF team and TG United team have hopes for the champion, and YRG team, which is leading at the top, has the best chance. If YRG wins the last match, they can win the champion, and the other two teams can only hope for this team to slip up. — Ko Nyi Lay/KZL

Suarez comes off bench for brace as Miami beat DC without Messi

LUIS Suarez came off the bench and scored twice as Inter Miami, without the injured Lionel Messi, won 3-1 at DC United in Major League Soccer on Saturday.

Suarez continued his prolific start to life in MLS with his sixth goal in seven games in all competitions for the South Florida club.

Miami had failed to win their last seven games without Messi, a run dating to September, but despite that record, coach Gerardo Martino left Suarez and Jordi Alba on the bench.

Jared Stroud put for DC United ahead, latching onto a Mateusz Kilch pass and firing a first-time shot past Drake Callender.

The lead lasted only for 10 minutes, however, with Leonardo Campana leading the Miami attacking in place of Suarez, seeing a header saved by Alex Bono but then, after DC failed to clear, turning in after the ball was scooped to him by Federico Redondo.

Busquets delivered a superb cross-field pass to set Robert Taylor in down the left but his low drive clipped the

outside of the post on the stroke of half-time.

Uruguayan Suarez was brought on in the 62nd minute and the 37-year-old was to settle the contest.

Just 10 minutes after coming on Suarez finished off a fine move, turning in a low cross from Campana at the back post.

Then Diego Gomez, Miami's powerful Paraguayan midfielder, won the ball in the centre of the field and broke forward, finding Suarez, whose route to goal was initially blocked. — AFP

Alcaraz faces Medvedev for Indian Wells title after stopping Sinner streak

DEFENDING champion Carlos Alcaraz handed Australian Open winner Jannik Sinner his first defeat of 2024 on Saturday to set up an Indian Wells final against Daniil Medvedev.

Alcaraz's 1-6, 6-3, 6-2 victory ended Sinner's 19-match winning streak, including a 16-0 start to the year, and ensures Alcaraz will remain No 2 in the world rankings next week.

"To be able to end something like this, it's incredible for me," Spain's Alcaraz said of busting the Italian's

streak.

Sunday's final against fourth-seeded Russian Medvedev is a repeat of last year's championship decider.

Medvedev also had to fight back in a 1-6, 7-6 (7/3), 6-2 victory over 17th-ranked American Tommy Paul. In the final he'll be out to thwart Alcaraz's bid to become the first repeat Indian Wells ATP champion since Novak Djokovic won three straight titles from 2014-2016.

Alcaraz and Sinner's semi-final was disrupted by a three-hour rain delay

at 2-1 in the first set but proved worth the wait as the 20-something stars put on a show.

"Matches with Jannik are always special," Alcaraz said. "We know we have to play at our highest level to win. We have to put magic on the court, unbelievable points and for the crowd it is also wonderful".

Sinner quickly seized the initiative when play resumed, winning four straight games to pocket the first set. — AFP

Swiss Gut-Behrami crowned overall World Cup ski champion

LARA Gut-Behrami was crowned women's overall World Cup ski champion at Saalbach on Sunday.

The 32-year-old Swiss skier claimed her second overall title despite only finishing 10th in the season-closing giant slalom.

With that result the Olympic super-G gold medallist takes an unassailable lead into the final two races of the World Cup season, as well as claiming her first giant slalom title.



Lara Gut-Behrami celebrates with the overall trophy after Sunday's giant slalom. **PHOTO: AFP**

Gut-Behrami is also targeting the super-G and downhill titles and if successful she will join Mikaela Shiffrin, Lindsey Vonn and Tina Maze as the only women in history to secure four titles in a single season.

Sunday's race at the World Cup finals went to Federica Brignone, who goes into the last two events 208 points behind in the overall standings, with only 200 on offer.

Brignone finished 21 points behind her Swiss rival in the battle for the giant slalom crystal globe.

Gut-Behrami was securing the overall honours eight years after her first large crystal globe.

Looking ahead to next weekend's speed events at the Austrian resort, Gut-Behrami has a 69-point lead in the super-G standings and a 68-point advantage in the downhill over Conny Huetter and Stephanie Venier respectively.

Gut-Behrami succeeds Shiffrin, who won the last two overall titles and who called time on her season on Saturday with success in the slalom.

The US ski great is sitting out the last two speed events as she has still not fully recovered from the fall in Italy in January that sidelined her for six weeks.

For Gut-Behrami this has been a remarkable season, 17 years after her elite level debut — AFP



DEADLY TRAFFIC ACCIDENT

21 dead, 38 injured in bus collision with tanker in Afghanistan

TWENTY-ONE people were killed and 38 injured on Sunday in southern Afghanistan's Helmand province when a bus collided with an oil tanker and a motorbike, provincial officials said.

Deadly traffic accidents are common in the country, due in part to poor roads, dangerous driving on highways and a lack of regulation.

"On Sunday morning, 21 people were killed and 38 people were injured due to a collision between a tanker, a motorcycle and a passenger bus," the provincial information department said in a post on X.

The accident took place on the Herat-Kandahar highway in Grishk district of Helmand province, it added.

The collision caused the vehicles to ignite, Helmand governor spokesman Mohammad Qasim Riyaz told AFP.

Images shared by the information department on social media showed charred, twisted metal scattered across the highway and the crushed cabin of the tanker. — AFP

PM Modi, Bhutanese counterpart agree to expand energy partnership

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Bhutan's Prime Minister Lyonchhen Tshering Tobgay have agreed to enhance their energy partnership, extending beyond hydroelectricity to include solar, wind, hydrogen, and e-mobility initiatives.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi meets Bhutan counterpart Dasho Tshering Tobgay. PHOTO: X//@NARENDRAMODI/ANI

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi and his visiting Bhutan counterpart PM Lyonchhen Tshering Tobgay have agreed to expand the existing India-Bhutan energy partnership to non-hydro re-

newables, such as solar and wind as well as green initiatives for hydrogen and e-mobility besides energy efficiency and conservation measures.

The two sides reaffirmed the sig-

nificance of cooperating closely in the energy sector.

A joint statement on the official visit of Bhutan Prime Minister Tobgay to India read, "At the invitation of PM Modi, PM of Bhutan Tshering Tobgay accompanied by his wife Tashi Doma is on an official visit to India from 14-18 March 2024. This is Prime Minister Tshering Tobgay's first overseas visit after assuming office in January 2024."

Hydro-power cooperation has been an important pillar of India-Bhutan bilateral economic partnership. Both Prime Ministers reiterated their firm commitment to expanding hydro-power cooperation and directed their officials to hold expeditious consultations on implementation modalities for new projects, the statement also read.

The two sides expressed satisfaction with the progress in construction of the 1020 MW Punatshangchhu-II hydro power project and looked forward to its commissioning in 2024. They noted with satisfaction the progress made towards finding a technically safe and cost-effective way forward on the Punatsangchhu-I hydro power project, it added. — ANI

South Ossetia discussing with Russia possible incorporation - Parliament Chairman



Tskhinvali functions as the capital of South Ossetia. PHOTO: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

South Ossetia's Parliament Chairman, Alan Alborov, stated that the country is in close coordination with Moscow regarding the possibility of a referendum on Russia's entry into the region.

THE topic of the possible entry of South Ossetia into Russia is being discussed in close coordination with Moscow, South Ossetian Parliament Chairman Alan Alborov told Sputnik.

"We are discussing all these issues in close coordination with the Russian Federation, taking into account our bilateral relations and agreements," Alborov said when asked about the possibility of holding a referendum on this topic.

The two parties pursue a joint coordinated foreign policy, Alborov said, noting

that South Ossetia will become part of Russia when the governments of South Ossetia and Russia come to this idea.

On 26 August 2008, following Georgia's armed aggression against Abkhazia and South Ossetia, Russia recognized the independence of the two breakaway regions.

The two republics were subsequently recognized by Venezuela, Nicaragua, Nauru and Syria, while Georgia and the vast majority of UN member states have not recognized them. — SPUTNIK