

The Global **NEW LIGHT** of MYANMAR

Lawkananda Wildlife Sanctuary launches ecotourism

The Lawkananda Wildlife Sanctuary, located in NyaungU Township, Mandalay Region, has introduced nature-based tourism initiatives within the park, according to warden U Shwe Htay Aung.

The park amenities feature bungalows, palm huts, and palmwood chairs along the Ayeyawady River, offering picturesque views of the river and Mount Tantkyi. Additionally, observation platforms are set up for birdwatching, providing opportunities to spot waterfowl and wintering birds in their natural habitat.

The warden said: "Visitors

can observe animals such as deer, muntjac and peacocks through our facilities. A tour of ancient pagodas in the park is also provided. Officials share information about the sanctuary and conservation efforts at the demonstration hall."

Fauna, such as star tortoises and golden deer, alongside a rich array of flora, including 90 tree species, 160 medicinal herbs, 32 flowering plants, and five types of bamboo, shelter the sanctuary.

Established in 1995 at Thiri Pyitsaya Village, the sanctuary spans 0.47 square kilometres between Bagan and the Ayeyawady River. — ASH/NT



A general view of Lawkananda Wildlife Sanctuary.

SUNDAY EDITION

NATIONAL

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Japan to recruit more than 1,200 Myanmar workers

BUSINESS

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Myanmar loses watermelon market share in China to Laos due to unfair competition

Yangon Port expects 50 container vessels in April



File photo shows containers being loaded and unloaded aboard container vessels at the international port of Yangon.

A total of 50 container vessels are scheduled to enter the Yangon Port in April 2024, the Myanmar Port Authority announced.

Seven container vessels run by Maersk A/S Line, six by Samudera Shipping Line, five by Cosco Shipping Line, four each by CMA CGM Line, MSC Line, SITC Shipping Line and Ti2 Container Line, three each by BLPL Shipping Line, Evergreen Line and RCL Line, two each by ONE Line, and PIL Line and one each by Bay Line and IAL Shipping Line and Land and Sea are slated to call in the Yangon Port in April. Myanmar Port Authority stated 49 vessels in January, 53 in February, and 55 in March docked at the Yangon Port. **SEE PAGE-2**

Now, Sky Cable car has been just opened, you can see and enjoy the beauty of Pyin Oo Lwin (Flower City) while riding the Sky Cable car.

Pwe Gauk (BE.FALLS) Waterfalls Resort

NATIONAL



Kachin State Chief Minister U Khet Htein Nan comforts internally displaced persons at the KBC IDP camp near Mingna Village in Waingmaw Township of Kachin State on 29 March 2024. **PHOTO: STATE IPRD**

Foodstuffs, cash assistance provided at KBC IDP camp in Waingmaw Tsp

KACHIN State Chief Minister U Khet Htein Nan met with the internally displaced persons at the KBC IDP camp near Mingna Village in Waingmaw Township of Kachin State on Friday.

During the meeting, the chief minister talked about his visit to the camp, aiming to comfort the people and to provide the necessary assistance for a second time.

Then, the chief minister and relevant officials of departments and associations presented cash assistance and K102,638,100 worth of foodstuffs, utensils, and clothes.

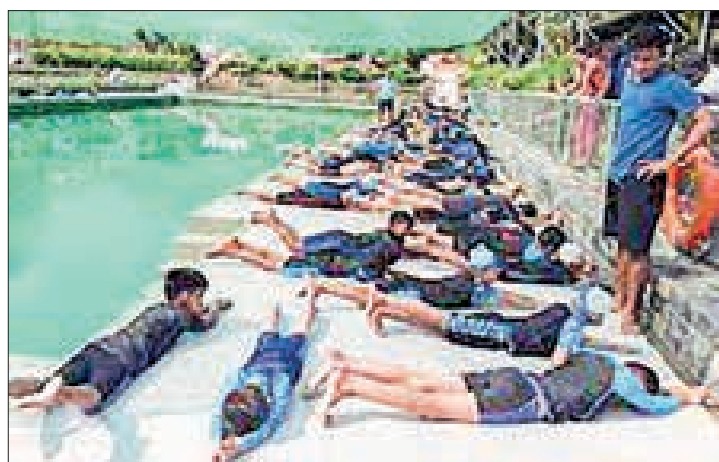
The chief minister and party then attended the closing ceremony of the eight-day basic Grammar and spoken language class for officers and staff of the state General Administration Department at the Kachin State government office.

At the event, the chief minister remarked, and the lecturer clarified the course.

Then, the chief minister and party gave a cash prize to the lecturer and the certificate of honour and cash prizes to the first, second and third prize winners in the Grammar and spoken language sessions. — State IPRD/KTZH

5th National Sports Festival to feature swimming sports

THE Union Minister for Sports and Youth Affairs said, at the closing ceremony of the summer swimming course held



The photo of one summer swimming course for youths.

on 29 March, that swimming is scheduled to be included in the 5th National Sports Festival, planned to take place from 9 to 20 December this year.

The festival includes six sports at the ministry level and twenty-three kinds of sports at the state and regional levels.

Coordination meetings are being conducted with respective departments to facilitate performance rehearsals by artistes, cultural troupes, and sports federations in preparation for the grand celebration of the 5th National Sports Festival. — TWA/TRKM

Yangon Port expects 50 container...

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Yangon Port handled 629 container vessels in 2023. Thanks to the draft extension, the international ocean liners can access the inner port for now, according to the Myanmar Port Authority's statement on 22 June 2022.

After the new navigation channel (Kings Bank Channel) accessing the inner Yangon River had been found, the

draft extension work was accelerated. Afterwards, the port can now handle larger ships. The container vessel (185.99 m LOA, 35.25 metres Beam, 29,232 GRT and 2,698 TEU) Hong Kong-based SITC Shipping Line docked at Asia World Port Terminal for the first time on 22 June, which is the largest ship that AWPT Port handled.

Since May 2021, the arrival of ships at terminals in Yangon

has increased again. To fulfil the seaborne trade requirements, three new container vessels by Maersk Line Myanmar (SeaLand and Maersk) started to run in 2021.

Earlier, the larger ships had draft problems preventing their sailing on the Yangon River. With the draft being extended up to 10 metres, more giant ocean liners can enter the Thilawa Port. — NN/EM



The 27th Chongqing Urban Culture and Tourism Festival was being held.

Myanmar participates in 27th Chongqing Urban Culture & Tourism Festival

THE Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) reported that Myanmar personnel attended the 27th Chongqing Urban Culture and Tourism Festival that was held in Chongqing, Yuzhong District of the People's Republic of China, where Myanmar's pearls were showcased at the booth representing Myanmar.

The event, which is being held from 28 to 31 March, features the presence of U Thwin Htet Lin, Myanmar's Consul-General to Chongqing, at the opening ceremony.

The 27th Chongqing Urban Culture and Tourism Festival is organized by the Chongqing

Municipal Government's Culture and Tourism Development Committee and the Yuzhong District People's Government. The report also states that officials and persons responsible from the Chongqing Municipal Government's Culture and Tourism Development Committee, Yuzhong District Government, Consuls-General to Chongqing and Chengdu attended the opening ceremony.

Culture and tourism-related products from nine countries were showcased at the event. Myanmar pearls were displayed at the booth of the Myanmar Consulate-General. — ASH/TMT

NATIONAL

MoI UM inspects staff housings in Nay Pyi Taw

UNION Minister for Information U Maung Maung Ohn, Deputy Minister U Ye Tint, and relevant officials conducted inspections of the ministry's employee housings in five wards across Zabuthiri Township in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

The Union minister advised residents not to allow guests to stay overnight for security reasons. They should permit relatives only after informing the ward administration office and obtaining permits. Residents should dispose

of garbage responsibly and be cautious of fire hazards.

The deputy minister stressed the importance of cleanliness and responsible use of electricity. They instructed the superintendents to prioritize security and promptly report any challenges they encountered.

Subsequently, they provided essential assistance to the residents after listening to their needs, including financial aid. — MNA/NT



Union Minister for Information U Maung Maung Ohn meets staff members of the Ministry of Information during his inspection tour of the ministry's employee housings yesterday.



Editorial workshop on standardization of terms, vocabularies, and usages for the English-edition paper, The Global New Light of Myanmar (GNLM) newspaper, in progress in Yangon yesterday.

Editorial Workshop on GNLM nomenclature held in Yangon

THE Global New Light of Myanmar (GNLM) newspaper organized an editorial workshop on standardization of terms, vocabularies, and usages for the English-edition paper, the joint venture operation of the News & Periodicals Enterprise of the Ministry of Information (MoI) and Global Direct Link Co Ltd.

The workshop was held yesterday afternoon at Novotel Yangon Max Hotel in Yangon.

Managing Director U Thet Swe of the News and Periodicals Enterprise under the Ministry of Information and Ms Feng

Liping, Director of Information and Public Affairs Section of the Chinese Embassy to Myanmar addressed opening remarks.

Consultant of the GNLM U Ko Ko (aka) Ko Ko (Sethmu Tekkatho), participated in the workshop as a moderator, while linguistic experts, departmental personnel, and invitees discussed terms and usages proposed by the editorial department of the GNLM. Some terminologies and usages were agreed upon as the style guide of the GNLM newspaper.

GNLM Chief Editor U Aungthu Ya gave an apprecia-

tion remark. The event concluded after the invited personnel were presented with gifts by senior officers and editors of the GNLM.

The event was attended by personnel from the departments and enterprise under the MoI, invited personnel from the respective ministries, the director of Information and Public Affairs Section of the Chinese Embassy to Myanmar, experienced translators from the news and media industry, former chief editors, and the GNLM editorial staff members.

— MNA/TMT

MoST UM visits Novosibirsk State Technical University, Nuclear Energy Information Centre in Russia

A Myanmar delegation led by Union Minister for Science and Technology Dr Myo Thein Kyaw visited Novosibirsk State Technical University and Nuclear Energy Information Centre together with officials of Rosatom on 29 March during the tour to Novosibirsk in Russia.

On arrival at the Novosibirsk State Technical University, the Rector and officials briefed him on the university data, curriculum, international students, academic activities and research with video presentation. Then, they discussed matters related to science and technology, as well as cooperation in research and scholarship programmes.

Next, the Union Minister and party observed the university campus.

They then proceeded to the Nuclear Energy Information Centre.

Officials of the Nuclear Energy Information Centre explained the energy information release, awareness campaigns, collaboration with universities, promotion activities of the science and technology sector and work plans of the Nuclear Technology Information Centre established in Myanmar. — MNA/KTZH



NATIONAL

Indian Air Force delegation visits Maravijaya Buddha Image



The Indian Air Force delegation observes the Agga Dhipati Sasana Beikman at Maravijaya Buddha Image in Dekkhinathiri Township of Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

THE Indian Air Force delegation led by Indian Air Force Wing Commander Savitesh Chandler Mishra visited the world's tallest Maravijaya Buddha Image in Dekkhinathiri Township of Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

First, the pagoda board of trustees and professionals involved in building and maintaining the Buddha Image explained the successful construction process with the video records to the Indian Air Force delegation.

Then, the delegation observed the Agga Dhipati Sasana Beikman and stone plaques bearing inscriptions on Tri Pitaka treatises in Pali and Romanized languages in stone plaque chambers on which small pagodas are built. — MNA/TRKM

Confiscations of illegal items: Timbers, foods, industrial materials and vehicles

THE combined teams managed by the Customs Department nabbed five kinds of goods worth K2.368 million, including 90 kilogrammes of various snacks from Japan that were not declared in the Import Declaration (ID) from a container at the Asia World Port Terminal container checkpoint on 28 March. This enforcement was carried out under Customs procedures.

On the same day, the combined teams captured two vehicles with a trailer (approximately K117 million) heading to Yangon from Thamanya, carrying 4,800 boxes of Lactasoy soy milk and 3,000 kilogrammes of Polene plastics resin that were not declared in the ID at the Ywathagyi Dry Port and illegal timbers weighing 1.176 tonnes valued at K176,690 in Mindon township. The action was conducted under Customs procedures and the Forest Law.

On 29 March, the combined

teams seized illegal teak weighing 4.62 tonnes, illegal hardwood weighing 0.65 tonne and other timbers weighing 0.71 tonne in Toungoo and Pyay districts. The action was taken under the Forest Law.

Additionally, the combined teams confiscated 5,040 bottles of Zein branded pure liquor, 684 bottles of Tiger beer and 1,080 cans of 8.6 branded beer worth K6.894 million without official documents at the Yadanabon bridge combined checkpoint and illegal timbers weighing 0.687 tonne including a 25HP engine and related things worth K1,168,829 in Mawlamyine township. The action was taken under the Excise Act and the Forest Law.

The Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee reported that ten arrests were made on 28 and 29 March, with an estimated value of K149,357,183. — MNA/MKKS

Counter-argument to false information

False information: 50 civilians arrested to serve military service



The screenshot validates misinformation.

THE subversive media are circulating false information claiming that on the evening of 29 March, along the Sagaing-Mingun road, about 50 civilians returning from work were arrested and extorted for ransom money.

On 29 March, members of the Township's General Administration Department and the traffic police, in cooperation with the traffic control police in some places in Sagaing township, conducted awareness raising for road users to ensure the safety of the road in accordance with traffic and road rules.

The subversive media have been spreading various kinds of fake news, fabricating and writing in a vile and vulgar manner, ever since the People's Military Service Law came into force. — MNA/TKO



Confiscated illegal foodstuffs, Polene plastics resin and vehicles in Yangon.

Write for us

We appreciate your feedback and contributions. If you have any comments or would like to submit editorials, analyses or reports please email aungthuya@gnlm.com.mm with your name and title.

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

Six solar power plants in operation, 13 under construction

ACCORDING to the Ministry of Electric Power, a total of six solar power plants are being operated nationwide and 13 more solar power plants are under construction.

Currently, six solar power plants are producing 180 megawatts of electricity, and upon completion of the 13 solar power plants under construction, they will contribute more than 960 megawatts of electricity.

“Currently, there are three operating solar power plants in Thazi and Myittha of Mandalay Region. Additionally, there are three solar power plants in Pwintbyu, Minbu, and Sedoktara townships of Magway Region; six plants in Madaya, Kyaukse, Taungtha, and Thazi



The photo shows the generation of electricity from solar power.

of Mandalay Region; three in the area of Nay Pyi Taw Council; two in Magway and Minbu

townships of Magway Region; one plant in Shwegyin of Bago Region; and one in Ywangan township of Shan State. These will generate over 960 megawatts of electricity,” said an

official.

The nation needs more than 3,600 megawatts of electricity, but only 2,800 megawatts can be produced. The nation’s need for electricity is increasing by 15 per cent annually and the current power production system generates 47.6 per cent of its energy from hydropower, 1.7 per cent from solar energy and 50.7 per cent from thermal energy.

To fulfil the yearly increase in demand for power, diesel, natural gas, and solar energy are used to produce electricity. In addition to thermal energy, renewable energy sources like hydro, wind, and solar power are used to generate electricity. — ASH/MKKS



Some highway bus stands at Aungmingala Highway Bus Terminal.

Highway bus ticket bookings rise ahead of Thingyan

AS Thingyan gets closer, there are many people who would like to return to their natives, and bookings for highway express bus tickets have reportedly mounted.

Travellers have now booked bus tickets to go back home in Thingyan; therefore, bus tickets have been selling well at counters.

“People have started buying bus tickets, both those who want to go back home and those who want to travel. Some bus lines are now fully booked. The majority would

go back to Anya (central Myanmar), such as Myingyan and Pakokku,” said an official from a bus ticket counter at Aungmingala Highway Bus Terminal.

Bus tickets for March are sold out now, according to busline offices.

“Bookings for Thingyan are normally made. Tickets are not available until the end of the month. Bookings can be available next month. Most people have already booked tickets,” said an official from a bus ticket counter.

Despite a lot of bookings, there is no activity of reselling tickets at higher prices.

“I’m not sure about it when Thingyan is nearing. At present, there is no selling of unofficial tickets. Bus ticket fees will get high later, but not yet. If bookings for Thingyan days are made, the price will be nearly double. The increase in bus ticket fees will be visible next month. It has stayed normal until now,” a bus ticket agent told The Global New Light of Myanmar (GNLM). — Thit Taw/ZS

Japan to recruit more than 1,200 Myanmar workers

MORE than 300 companies in Japan will provide jobs for up to 1,200 Myanmar workers, according to the statement released by the Myanmar Embassy to Japan on 29 March.

Myanmar embassy has carried out verification of demand letters in order of the date that it received a reply from Japanese companies, and this is a statement about 325 demand letters, which were verified until 20 February 2024 and re-submitted to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

According to the statement, 325 Japanese companies will recruit more than 400 Myanmar male workers and 800 Myanmar

female workers, totalling up to 1,200.

The embassy verified on documents whether Japan’s labour supervisory company and factories or companies that offer jobs are officially established in Japan and resent findings and remarks to the Ministry of Labour through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The embassy in Tokyo announced on 15 March that 500 Japanese companies would recruit more than 1,700 Myanmar workers.

Japan is the most attractive country for Myanmar workers to go to work in. — MT/ZS



Myanmar workers departed for Japan in 2023.

NATIONAL

ME in Bangkok announces issuance of PJ passports to CI holders

MYANMAR Embassy in Bangkok announced that PJ passports will be issued to Myanmar workers holding Certificate of Identity (CI) in Thailand.

The Mobile Team is processing the issuance of PJ passports to CI holders who are working at factories and workshops in Thailand starting in March.

In the process, the Myanmar Embassy has released a statement mentioning the five types of documentary requirements needed to obtain a PJ passport. These include the original CI, a residence permit (visa) issued by Thailand, a work permit, the original citizenship scrutiny card, and a copy of the household list, etc.

In order to access the list of MOU workers, the relevant



CI holders of Myanmar workers in Thailand.

factories, workshops, workplace officials and the labour attaché office can coordinate.

During processing, the relevant departments will contact counterparts in Nay Pyi Taw to confirm the accuracy of the information. Within 45 days of

collecting the information, PJ passports will only be issued to those who have provided accurate information and given permission; issuance of PJ passports will be denied if the information provided is incorrect. — TWA/TKO

Students amid security situation allowed to retake matriculation exam at 17 exam centres

THE Ministry of Education has announced that students who were not given the opportunity to sit the matriculation examination due to security reasons will be able to retake the exams from 29 April to 6 May at the designated 17 exam centres of their choice.

It has been reported that this arrangement is a special programme that allows students to take the exam again.

Students will sit for Myanmar subject on 29 April, English on 30 April, Mathematics on 2 May, Chemistry or Geography

on 3 May, Physics or History on 4 May, Biology or Economics on 6 May between 9 am and 12 pm at 17 exam centres of various states and regions.

“In the 2023-2024 academic year, students who were unable to take the exam due to security reasons will be able to retake it at the designated exam centres in the respective regions and states. Students have the right to choose the exam centres they like,” said the Union Minister for Education at educational meeting held on 28 March.

According to data from the Ministry of Education, 128,635 of the 146,523 students who registered to take the matriculation exam for the last 2023-2024 academic year were 128,635 so the number of students who took the exam hit 87.79 per cent.

As part of the particular programme, the Ministry of Education has announced that students who will be taking the matriculation exam must register at the 17 exam centres of their choice by 12 April. — TWA/KZL



The head office of the Ministry of Education.

NEWS In BRIEF

SAC Chair: US\$2.2 billion foreign debt repaid in 3 years

THE government has repaid US\$2.2 billion foreign debt in the past three years, says State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at the SAC meeting on 29 March. He noted that a significant portion of this debt comprised capital loans acquired by preceding administrations. Despite notable GDP growth in the last financial year and positive economic indicators, the performance of the economy still fell short of expectations.

Myanmar, China pledge for strengthening bilateral ties

CHINESE Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Chen Hai and Union Minister for Foreign Affairs U Than Swe engaged in discussions aimed at bolstering bilateral relations, coordinating trans-border travel management, fostering cooperation for peace and stability along the borders, and advancing mutually beneficial collaborations. These discussions took place at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs office in Nay Pyi Taw on 29 March.

Russian Embassy, Myanmar-China Friendship Association to take part in Myanmar's Thingyan Festival

THE Russian Embassy to Myanmar and the Myanmar-China Friendship Association will participate in the upcoming Thingyan Water Festival by hosting a pavilion each, says Union Minister for Information U Maung Maung Ohn on 29 March. He shared the information at the meeting of the Committee on Implementing Nay Pyi Taw Walking Thingyan 2024. Talks are also underway about the participation of K-pop artists in the festival.

Chinese Ambassador: Mekong-Lancang Cooperation yields significant growth

DURING the eight years of Mekong-Lancang Cooperation, regional countries have achieved significant growth in multiple sectors, including transport infrastructure, natural gas, and grid connection, according to the Chinese Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Chen Hai. The MLC is a multilateral agreement between the riparian countries of the Mekong and Lancang Rivers, established in 2016 with six member countries. China funded \$130 million in the cooperation, and Myanmar received 106 projects worth \$31.6 million.

Nay Pyi Taw to honour environmental-friendly towns, villages

THE Nay Pyi Taw Council's second working committee meeting announced on 29 March that it would reward towns and villages with sound environmental management within the council area. Award committees will evaluate video clips submitted by each town along with on-ground studies to determine the recipients of these rewards. — Htun Htun/NT

Myanmar loses watermelon market share in China to Laos due to unfair competition

AS Laos can enjoy some trade preferences, unlike Myanmar's watermelon export to China, it might grasp more market share, Sai Min Thu Naing, director of Khwanyo Fruit Depot, criticized.

During his visit to the Mohan fruit yard on the border of China and Laos, he realized a different purchase policy and treatment for growers of Laos, he added.

Laos now has direct access to the Chinese market through its trucks. Therefore, Laos can enjoy direct trade, direct payment and zero tariffs as tax and other charges are imposed only on Chinese traders for transactions.

Mohan border town is being developed as a special economic zone. The Laos-China six-lane highway facilitates border trade, allowing Laos growers to sell fresh fruits.

Meanwhile, Myanmar's growers are struggling to export them without having equal treatment. This way, they might lose market share in the long term, he pointed out.

Extreme weather and transport disruption at borders are contributing factors to the physical damage of the fruits at present.

Subsequently, Myanmar exporters are suggested to contemplate the market conditions depending on the supply and demand factors amid the export risks and transport disruption.



A watermelon stall at a fruit market.

Myanmar delivers watermelon and muskmelons to China through Lweje and Mongla road channels under some circumstances.

Myanmar's watermelon is primarily exported to China. However, fruit traders emphasized that traders are facing prolonged challenges amid the policy changes in China.

Tight inspections of Chinese Customs hindered truck transport in early February last year. That being so, only 20-30 trucks were given green lights to pass the checkpoint despite high demand.

Consequently, watermelon was sold

out at the depots on the Chinese side, and more than 500 trucks queued in line on the Myanmar side.

The COVID-19 restrictions hindered Myanmar's watermelon and muskmelon exports to China in 2021. Chinese Customs policy changes worsened the delay. Long delays of trucks led to the deterioration of fruits, and only one in five trucks heading to China remained undamaged.

The traders need to carefully consider delivery time, price and profitability, as watermelon is a perishable fruit while trying to explore new markets beyond China. — NN/EM

CBM sells US\$3 mln on 29 March

THE Central Bank of Myanmar (CBM) sold three million US dollars on 29 March.

The CBM sold five million yuan and 50 million Thai baht on 22 March, five million dollars on 15 March, 50 million Thai baht on 11 March and seven million yuan and 12 million Thai baht on 5 March for exporters on online trading platforms. The CBM injected \$10 million and 200 million Thai baht into the financial market on 4 March. The CBM sold \$18 million, 12 million yuan and 312 million Thai baht in March so far, \$77.38 million and 850 million Thai baht in February and \$68.33 million, 313.5 million Thai baht and 4.2 million yuan in January 2024.

The reference exchange rate set by the CBM is K2,100 against a US dollar, while it is valued at some K3,850 at the over-the-counter market at present. The exchange rates currently stand at K105 for a Thai baht and K525 for a yuan.

The CBM allowed the authorized dealers (private banks) to operate online forex trading freely as per the market rate depending on supply and demand, starting from 5 December 2023. Additionally, the outward remittance procedures must adhere to the rules and regulations specified by the Foreign Exchange Supervisory Committee. — NN/EM

YGEA: inspection for gold price speculators underway



The gold outlet is seen in Yangon.

YANGON Region Gold Entrepreneurs Association (YGEA) notified on 30 March that an investigation was being undertaken against those allegedly manipulating the market with a verbal deal.

Seven big gold shops in Yangon issue daily market prices three times a day. At present, the domestic pure gold price gained to K3.83 million per tical (0.578 ounce or 0.016 kilogramme) on 30 March, and there is no price change on that day.

Nonetheless, those price speculators are attempting to hike up the price by misleading price information that is not an actual transaction in the market. The YGEA condemned those unscrupulous traders and their dishonest acts. The YGEA asked its members to inform law

enforcement agencies of the news regarding those manipulators.

The authorities are inspecting those alleged price speculators with the verbal deal in the market.

The YGEA also requested their members to follow the YGEA's reference price and warned them not to be involved in those verbal deals of the brokers.

Additionally, the YGEA notified gold shop owners of seeking a gem trading certificate and gold trading licence for gold ingot issued by the Yangon City Development Committee.

Despite the YGEA's reference price, spot gold price rally and kyat depreciation in the forex market pushed up the gold price to a record high of over K4.5 million per tical. — NN/EM

OPINION

Initiate greening environment based on agroforestry areas

MYANMAR is spearheading an ambitious initiative to revitalize its environment through the strategic implementation of agroforestry practices. By integrating agricultural and forestry technologies, the nation aims to cultivate more diverse, productive, and sustainable land-use systems that benefit both the economy and the ecosystem.

Under the guidance of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation, Myanmar is leveraging the support of the Mekong-Lancang special fund to execute a comprehensive agroforestry plan across Nay Pyi Taw Council Area, Yangon, and Bago regions. This initiative, spanning two and a half years, is designed to not only optimize the utilization of forest areas for crop and timber production but also to uplift the livelihoods of local communities.

Central to this endeavour is the active involvement of residents in the stewardship of community-owned forests. Through their

participation, these forests are safeguarded and nurtured, ensuring a sustainable supply of forest resources for present and future generations. The Ministry has set an ambitious target of converting 2.27 million acres of land into forested areas over a 30-year master plan, with over 1.16 million acres already being managed using agroforestry techniques.

Agroforestry offers a multifaceted solution, providing socio-economic development opportunities while delivering essential environmental services. By establishing agroforestry zones, Myanmar aims to mitigate the impacts of climate change, including extreme weather events such as heatwaves, floods, droughts, and landslides. Furthermore, these efforts align with the United Nations' sustainable development goals, addressing poverty alleviation, food security, water quality improvement, and biodiversity conservation.

In parallel, the Ministry is mobilizing communities nationwide to establish firewood plantations and community-owned forests, each spanning two acres per village. This proactive measure not only safeguards the environment but also curbs illegal timber extraction, ensuring the sustainable management of forest reserves and protected areas. Additionally, it provides a readily accessible source of firewood while optimizing land use for seasonal crops, thereby supporting local livelihoods, including those dependent on timber extraction.

Myanmar's commitment to environmental conservation is evident in its efforts to reverse the decline in forest land. Through initiatives such as reforestation projects, wildlife sanctuaries, national parks, and commercial plantations, the nation is steadily increasing its green cover. The envisioned future promises a landscape adorned with expansive greenery—a testament to the collective dedication of the government and its people towards a sustainable and thriving environment not only in urban areas but also in rural areas.

A Pair of Slippers

By Chit Ko Pe



Being together and closely intimate,
at any outing on the day or at night,
protection is given so as not to collide.

Not minding a weary body that surfaces,
it endures spikes and barbs that chase,
with a respite taken beside a staircase.

ဖိနပ်တစ်ရံ

ချစ်ကိုပေ

အတူမခွာ အနီးကပ်လို့
မပြတ်နေညှမှာ
ဘယ်သွားသွားလာ ။
ထိခိုက်ဘေး ကင်းစေရာ
လုံစွာကာကွယ်ပေး ။

ကြံ့ကြံ့ခံ ခန္ဓာနှစ်လည်း
မဝန်းပါ ခဏနားတယ်
လေ့ခါးနံ့ဘေး ။ ။



Graceful Summer

By Mya Thae (Research)

Old leaves shed down,
Tender leaves appear now.

Cuckoo sings lovely songs.
The view of summer is long.

Stupa of sand and water festivals,
Celebrate with joyful heart and pleasure.

Padauk, Ngu, and Kantkaw flowers adorn the summer

Dainty youngsters splash water with each other.

Ordination and Novitiation ceremonies are observed every year.

To get merit forever.

Religious people go to pagodas and meditation centres to do good deeds for better lives.

Oh! How graceful summer.



ROAD IS NOT LOST

By Tin Moe
Translated by Myrint Zan

if the sun does not shine
the white, pure moon
still radiates

if the moon does not shine
and the twinkle of the stars
are faint
the lamp will be prepared
at the entrance to the house
there will still be light

Poet Tin Moe (19 November 1933-22 January 2007) composed this poem on 13 August 1963 and is republished in Tin Moe Kabyar Paung Choke ('Collection of Poems of Tin Moe') published by Seikku Cho Cho Press in July 2013.

လမ်း မပျောက်ပါ



နေ မထွန်းလည်း
လဝန်း ဖြူစင်၊ ထွန်းလျက်ပင်တည့်။
လ မသာလည်း
တာရာ ရှန်းစို၊ ထွန်းလျက်ကိုတည့်။
လမင်း မထိန်၊ ကြယ်ရောင် မှိန်လည်း
အိမ်ပေါက်ဝတွင်၊ မီးခွက်ပြင်၍
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ARTICLE

POEM/BOOKRACK/WEATHER REPORT



Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 7:00 pm Friday 30 March, 2024)

BAY INFERENCE: Weather is partly cloudy to cloudy over the South Andaman Sea and South Bay of Bengal and a few cloud over the North Andaman Sea and elsewhere over the Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL NOON OF THE 31 March 2024: Light rain or thundershowers are likely to be scattered in Upper Sagaing Region and Kachin State, isolated in Lower Sagaing, Mandalay, Taninthayi Regions and Shan, Chin States. Degree of certainty is (60%). Weather will be partly cloudy in the remaining Regions and States.

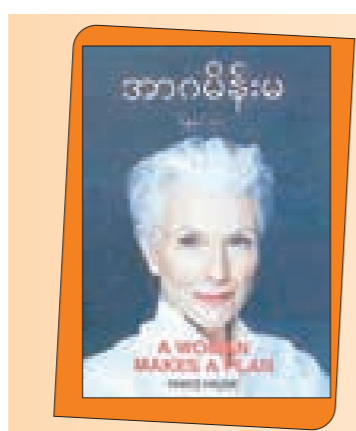
STATE OF THE SEA: Sea will be slight to moderate in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about (4-7) feet in off and along Myanmar Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Likelihood of scattered rain or thundershowers in Upper Sagaing Region and Kachin State.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 31 March 2024: Partly cloudy.

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 31 March 2024: A few cloud.

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 31 March 2024: Partly cloudy.



Book Title - Ahga Mein Ma
(A Woman Makes a Plan by Maye Musk)
Translator - Myu Hnin Wai
Publishing House - Thar Nge
Publication Date - January 2024 (1st Edition)
Price - K8,500

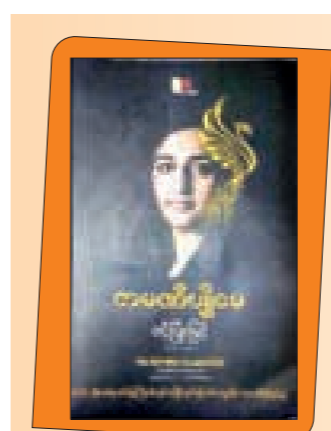
Ahga Mein Ma (A Woman Makes a Plan by Maye Musk)

THIS book is about a 31-year-old single mother with three children who have had to struggle hard to feed the whole family amidst great difficulty. Despite this situation, she has become a world-famous woman. She is nobody but the mother of a top billionaire known as Elon Musk. Her name is Maye Musk. She shared her valuable experiences of how resilient she has been in rising again. Additionally, she has made known to the readers her private life, which involves the incredible adventures of a so-called weaker sex. In other words, she has proved that women are also able, wise, intelligent and tolerant of hardships. She has

nullified and voided the notion that only men can endure tough lives. She has also made people aware that women are not merely things of beauty for men to enjoy their life with and that they are an equal match for men if they are empowered. This book under review deals with advice for a lifetime of adventure, beauty and success. I would like to provide a quotation which says, "An Afrikaans is saying that I grew up with: 'n boer maak 'n plan.'" When Maye Musk decided to make grey hair glamorous, she became an international supermodel and worldwide speaker in her 60s — a far cry from the young divorcee

living in Durban trying to make ends meet to provide for her three children." In this book titled "A Woman Makes a Plan", Maye Musk shares experiences from her life, conveying hard-earned wisdom on career [the harder you work, the luckier you get, family (let the people you love go their own way), health (there is no magic pill), and adventure (make room for discovery, but always be ready for anything). In fact, Maye Musk is unstoppable; she is not just the mother of Elon Musk but has carved a niche for herself even before her son took over the world as a tech genius. According to CA Knowledge,

the 75-year-old Wonder Woman has a net worth of USD 45 million. Although most people would think that she is only a model, she is a dietitian, too. She has indeed been a model for fifty years, appearing on the covers of magazines, including a Time Magazine Health Edition, Women's Day, international editions of Vogue, and Sports Illustrated Swimsuit Issue. Besides Elon Musk, she has two other children, Kimbal Musk and Tosca Musk. This book is divided into 28 chapters and five themes (Beauty, Adventure, Family, Success, Health), each of which contains around 5-6 chapters and reads like a series of essays and stories. Narrated by Maye Musk, she shares her life stories embedded with little tidbits of sincere advice and wisdom. She's certainly led a very interesting life, and it was quite fun reading about her parents who, one day, decided to move from Regina, Saskatchewan, to Pretoria, South Africa, for their beautiful Lil-lac jacaranda trees (among other reasons). As an adult, she moved to nine cities in three countries, and it took a lot of courage and organization to pull off. This book is, in fact, a testament to the fact that hard work pays off.



Book Title - Zarmani Pyo May
(The Girl Who Escaped ISIS) by Andrea C Hoffman & Farida Khalaf
Translator - Wint Pyone Myint
Publishing House - Lin Thit Pyi Sarpay
Publication Date - January 2024 (1st Edition)
Price - K11,000

Zarmani Pyo May (The Girl Who Escaped ISIS) by Andrea C Hoffman & Farida Khalaf

FARIDA was 19 years old and preparing for her last year in school when ISIS descended upon her village, and she was sold into slavery. After making a daring escape, she reunited with her mother and her brothers in an Iraqi refugee camp and was granted asylum in Germany in 2015. A young Yazidi woman, Farida Khalaf was living a normal, sheltered life in northern Iraq during the summer of 2014 when her entire world was upended: her village was attacked by ISIS. All of the men in her

town were killed and the women were taken into slavery. In unprecedented detail, Farida describes her world as it was — at 19, she was living at home with her brothers and parents, finishing her schooling and looking forward to becoming a math teacher — and the hell it became. Held in a slave market in Syria and sold into the homes of several ISIS soldiers, she stubbornly attempts resistance at every turn. Farida is ultimately brought to an ISIS training camp in the middle of the desert,

where she plots an against-all-odds escape for herself and five other girls. A riveting firsthand account of life in captivity and a courageous flight to freedom, this astonishing memoir is also Farida's way of bearing witness, and of ensuring that ISIS does not succeed in crushing her spirit. Her bravery, resilience and hope in the face of unimaginable violence will fascinate and inspire the readers of this book. In this regard, I am, in my capacity as the writer of the re-

view for this book, of the opinion that it would not be inappropriate to quote the reviews by Glamour and The Guardian. "Farida Khalaf's story is harrowing but crucial — especially when it comes to understanding what ISIS actually is and does." — Glamour "As gripping as it is appalling... a compelling testament to the suffering of ordinary people caught up in violence far beyond their control — and to the particularly terrible price it exacts from women." — The Guardian The co-author of this book is Andrea C Hoffmann, who is also a journalist. She specializes in the Middle East and the situation of women in the Muslim countries. She lives in Berlin, Germany. The book was opened with an episode in which the father of Farida taught her how to use a gun. Then, Farida was only 15. Her father was a soldier of the Iraqi Army, so he could use the AK 47 rifle skillfully. Captured and sold into sexual slavery by Islamic State jihadis, the narrator attempted suicide to escape the violence perpetrated against Yazidi girls before eventually fleeing her nightmare.

NATIONAL Entertainment

Sai Sai Kham Leng's debut drama series to air on Channel 7



SAI SAI KHAM LENG'S first TV series, "Hmaw Win Phate Sar" (Magical Invitation Card), will be broadcast starting on 31 March, according to Director Kaung Zan.

The story and plot were created by D D Htet Aung and was directed by Kaung Zan. The HEY Play Application owns the copyrights.

"The series is the copyrights of HEY Play Application. It will be broadcast via Channel 7, the HEY Play Application and the HEY Play YouTube Channel. It is the very first TV series by the academy Sai Sai Kham Leng. The story is about magical-related cases. It starts with a mysterious invitation card.

Those who receive the card cannot retreat whether they want it or not. The audience will see how the card changes their fortune. The main message is that a person cannot avoid their destiny or cannot create as they wish," said director Kaung Zan.

The cast includes Academy Sai Sai Kham Leng, academy Aye Myat Thu, academy Khin Wint Wah, academy Cho Pyone, Khine Hnin Wai, L. Bauk Nuu, Win Khant Moe, Kyaw Htoo, Bay Dar and other artistes.

The series will be aired on Channel 7, HEY Play Application and HEY Play YouTube Channel at 7 pm on Saturday and Sunday starting from 31 March. – ASH/KTZH



Celebrity Brief



Nyi Htut Khaung

ACTOR Nyi Htut Khaung takes the "Min Maung" character in The Offspring movie. Regarding his character, he said, "I am delighted as my fans are worried about me for Min Maung's character. They are also worrying about not getting married to me.



Director Maung Hnin Moe

DIRECTOR Maung Hnin Moe, a pupil of Sayagyi U Thu Kha, is still a patron of the Myanmar Motion Pictures Organization. He attended the 22nd anniversary of the City FM ceremony together with Patrons and executive members of MMPO on 29 March.



Artist Co Su (Mingun)

CO SU'S (MINGUN) The Brushworks on the Hmaing Gaing at 5th Solo exhibition was organized from 29 March to 2 April at the Mandalay Art Gallery in Bahan Township, Yangon. The event will take place from 9 am to 5 pm daily, and those interested in the paintings can contact 09 5402275 for enquiry.



Le Lan

LE LEN, the winner of the Myanmar Star singing contest, is considered a new generation of famous singers, Phyu Phyu Kyaw Thein and Sone Thin Par. Winner Le Len received a K100 million cash prize and K10 million worth of gold star. She expressed her dream that she wants to construct a house for her parents and also wants to make donations.

Phoo Sone

ACTRESS Phoo Sone was appraised by her fans for her best acting skills in The Offspring movie. She also did well in the "Laung" series and took the Daw Baby character in The Offspring movie. She attended Abhidhamma courses and took the test. She entered the 18th meditation course at 18th-miles from Tawya Yeiktha in early March. Actress Phoo Sone (aka) Daw Tin Zar Saint Saint Zun submitted The Explanation of Dhammika Sutta research paper containing 120 pages for a Master of Art at the University of Wisdom Land.

Wyne Lay

SINGER Wynne Lay released a new version of "Aein Met Saytaman" song with Phyo Zaw Lin. The song was composed by Ko Than Kyaw. Bhone Han directed the MV. Singer Wynne Lay also welcomed the coming Thingyan with songs together with Zaw Paing and OLD FRAME MUSIC BAND at Overtime Bar & BBQ in Mingaladon Township on 30 March. – Htun Htun/KTZH



Rome tightens security over Easter weekend

The Italian capital is increasing security measures, particularly after the recent terror attack in Moscow, with 600 additional police officers deployed across the city and restrictions placed on motor vehicle access to key areas.

THE Italian capital will heighten security measures over the Easter weekend, adding to an already-heavier police presence following the 22 March terror attack in Moscow.

Italy was among a handful of European states to bolster security at key transport hubs and cultural sites in the wake of the deadly assault on a concert

hall in the suburbs of Moscow that left at least 140 dead.

In the lead-up to Easter Sunday, security is being stepped up further with 600 extra police officers — many in plain clothes — posted around the city, along with heightened security. The Ministry of the Interior has also released guidelines limiting access to key ar-

reas for certain types of motor vehicles.

The bulk of the security efforts will be centred on the Vatican City, a Catholic micro-state surrounded by Rome. The Easter celebrations from Friday to Monday are expected to draw large crowds to Rome and the Vatican and will be broadcast around the world. — Xinhua



A photograph taken on 30 March 2021 shows a Easter chocolate egg painted like a painting of US artist Keith Haring in order to pay him a tribute and made by pastry chef Walter Musco, in his pastry shop "Pasticceria Bompiani", in Rome on 30 March 2021. **PHOTO: PIX FOR VISUAL PURPOSE/VINCENZO PINTO / AFP / FILE**

France to bring back remains of colonial soldiers from Viet Nam



Former French prime minister Edouard Philippe lays a wreath at the French memorial in Dien Bien Phu, Viet Nam, on 3 November 2018. **PHOTO: JEWEL SAMAD, AFP/FILE**

FRANCE is to repatriate from Viet Nam the bodies of six soldiers who died in Dien Bien Phu, the country's last stand in colonial Indochina, the defence ministry said.

The operation will happen "in the coming days", the statement added.

Dien Bien Phu in northern

Viet Nam was the site of an epic battle against Vietnamese communist forces in 1954 that spelt the end of France's colonial empire in Indochina.

Vietnamese fighters hemmed in French forces — equipped with superior weapons — and bombarded them with heavy artillery.

The ferocious battle in the rugged, remote valley killed thousands of soldiers on both sides in under two months.

The existence of the six bodies, "conserved in three different locations", had been reported to the French embassy in Viet Nam in 2012, 2021 and 2022, the ministry said. — AFP

Bulgaria, Romania take first steps into Europe's vast visa-free zone

AFTER 13 years of waiting, Bulgaria and Romania are to partially join the Europe's vast Schengen area of free movement on Sunday, opening up travel by air and sea without border checks.

But land border controls will remain in place due to Austria's opposition to the eastern European countries becoming full members of the Schengen zone for fear of an influx of asylum seekers.

Despite the partial membership, the lifting of controls at the two countries' air and sea borders is of significant symbolic value.

Admission to Schengen is an "important milestone" for Bulgaria and Romania, symbolising a "question of dignity, of belonging to the European Union", accord-

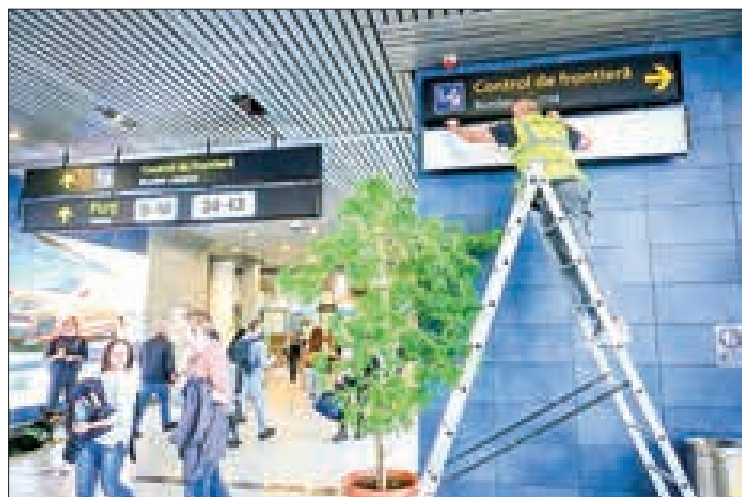
ing to foreign policy analyst Stefan Popescu.

"Any Romanian who had to walk down a lane separate from other European citizens felt being treated differently," he told AFP.

Ivan Petrov, a 35-year-old Bulgarian marketing executive who lives in France, said he was enthusiastic about less stressful travelling and the time he would be able to save.

And they were 29

With Bulgaria and Romania joining from Sunday, the Schengen zone will comprise 29 members — 25 of the 27 European Union member states, as well as Switzerland, Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein. — AFP



A Romanian worker changes the signs for passengers at Henri Coanda International Airport ahead of Romania and Bulgaria taking a first step into the Schengen visa free travel area on Sunday. **PHOTO: AFP**

Number of illegal immigrants climbs 37% to 13.7 million under Biden

As the influx of illegal immigrants into the US continues unabated, concerns are being raised about America's ability to absorb them, especially given the Biden ad-

ministration's apparent lack of a coherent strategy to address the ongoing crisis.

The Biden administration's lax approach in tackling the surge

of illegal immigrants into the US is upsetting immigration demographics and leading to a decline in education levels, as revealed by a report on Thursday. — SPUTNIK

ECONOMY WORLD



This expansion, covering road and railway transport, as well as the forestry and timber sectors, marks the first since the programme's inception in 2019. **PHOTO: KYODO**

Japan expands foreign worker visa programme to address driver shortage

The government plans to admit up to 820,000 foreigners under its skilled worker visa in the next five fiscal years, more than double the previous estimate for the five years through fiscal 2023.

THE Japanese government on Friday added four new industries to its foreign skilled worker visa programme as it moves to address the nation's driver shortage by allowing more people access to stays of up to five years, according to Japanese news agency, Kyodo News.

The expansion of visa programme, covering road and railway transport as well as the forestry and timber sectors, is the first since the system was

introduced in 2019.

Japan's need for foreign labour has risen due in part to its declining birthrate. There are also concerns about pronounced shortages in the transportation and logistics industries which are likely to be exacerbated once a new limit to overtime hours for drivers begins in April, in what is known as the "2024 problem".

The government said Japan plans to admit up to 820,000

foreigners under its skilled worker visa in the next five fiscal years from April, more than double the number it had estimated would have been accepted in the five years through fiscal 2023 ending March.

After soliciting public opinions over the reform, the government will revise related rules, including Justice Ministry ordinances, to begin accepting skilled foreigners in the four sectors. — ANI

China sees increased industrialized patents from enterprises

Ge highlighted that the industrialization rate in state-level high-tech enterprises reached 57.6 per cent in 2023, up by 1.5 percentage points from the previous year.



Visitors watch a robot making coffee during the 23rd China International Industry Fair, themed "Digital Economy & Industrial Decarbonization," in east China's Shanghai, 19 September 2023. **PHOTO: FANG ZHE/XINHUA**

THE industrialization rate of invention patents held by Chinese enterprises has surpassed 50 per cent for the first time, China's top intellectual property (IP) regulator said on Friday.

The industrialization rate in 2023 has reached 51.3 per cent, 3.2 percentage points up from the previous year. It has maintained a consistent upward trend for five consecutive years, said Ge Shu, a senior official at

the China National Intellectual Property Administration, citing data from the country's latest patent report.

Ge highlighted that the level of patent industrialization in high-tech enterprises had also increased. He said the industrialization rate in state-level high-tech enterprises had reached 57.6 per cent in 2023, which was 1.5 percentage points higher than the previous year. — Xinhua

In Canada's Quebec, residents miffed over mining boom



Residents of the Canadian town of Saint-Elie-de-Caxton are upset with an explosion in mining claims, including under their own homes. **PHOTO: AFP**

CANADA'S Quebec province is rich with minerals needed for everything from electric cars to cell phones, but residents living atop the potential windfall are worried their backyards will be dug up — and they won't get a dime.

In recent months, tens of thousands of mining exploration permits have been issued in the province amid a global rush for critical and strategic minerals such as graphite, lithium, zinc, nickel and cobalt. — AFP

Biden administration approves US\$60 mln in aid after Baltimore bridge disaster

United States President Joe Biden's administration has approved US\$60 million in emergency funds to support cleanup and reconstruction efforts in the Francis Scott Key Bridge disaster in Maryland's Baltimore, Al Jazeera reported on Friday.

The Federal Highway Administration said on Thursday it provided the "quick release" funds to rebuild the collapsed bridge within hours of receiving a request from the Maryland Department of Transport.

The swift disbursement of the funds came after Biden earlier this week said he had directed the government to "move heaven and earth" to quickly rebuild the bridge, which collapsed on Tuesday after being struck by a cargo ship.

"No one will ever forget the shocking images of a container vessel striking the Francis Scott Key Bridge, causing its collapse and the tragic loss of six people," US Transport Secretary Pete Buttigieg said in a statement. — ANI

Indian navy says intercepted hijacked vessel near Somalia

INDIA'S navy said Friday it intercepted a fishing vessel in the Arabian Sea after a suspected hijacking, its latest anti-piracy operation after a spate of regional attacks on shipping.

Two Indian vessels had approached the Iranian-flagged FV Al Kamar 786 around 165 kilometres (100 miles) southwest of the Yemeni island of Socotra, not far from the eastern tip of Somalia. An operation was "currently underway by the Indian Navy towards rescue of hijacked FV & its crew", the navy said in a statement posted on X, formerly Twitter. The statement added

that nine armed pirates were believed to have taken over the vessel. It did not say how many crew members were aboard.

India's navy has been deployed continuously off Somalia since 2008.

It stepped up anti-piracy efforts last year following a surge in maritime assaults, including in the Arabian Sea and by Yemen's Iran-backed Huthi rebels in the Red Sea.

This month, the Indian navy rescued 19 crew members off the Maltese-flagged cargo ship MV Ruen, which had been hijacked by Somali pirates in December. — ANI



Based on the inputs on a potential piracy incident onboard the Iranian 'FV Al Kamar 786' late evening on 28 March, two Indian Naval ships, mission deployed in the Arabian Sea for maritime security operations were diverted to intercept the hijacked fishing vessel. The hijacked FV has been intercepted on 29 March. **PHOTO: ANI**

'Daunting task' - Cranes arrive to clear Baltimore bridge debris

THREE heavy lift floating cranes arrived in Baltimore harbour on Friday to begin what Maryland's governor described as a "remarkably complex operation" to clear crumpled girders from a collapsed bridge taken down by an errant container ship.

"To see it up close, you realize just how daunting a task this is," Maryland Governor Wes Moore told

a news conference after touring the disaster scene in a boat.

Migrant groups meantime honoured the six Latino construction workers who lost their lives when the Dali container ship struck the Francis Scott Key Bridge long before dawn Tuesday, toppling it with stunning speed. The six were part of a pothole repair team. — AFP

RMB retains 4th spot as currency for global payments: SWIFT

The RMB accounted for 4 per cent of global payments by value last month.

THE Chinese currency renminbi (RMB), or the yuan, retained its spot as the fourth most active currency for global payments by value in February, according to a report.

The RMB's global share stood at four per cent last month, a report from the Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial (SWIFT) said. SWIFT is a global provider of financial messaging

services. The RMB payments value decreased 20.47 per cent compared to January, while in general all payments currencies decreased by 10.37 per cent, the SWIFT said.

In terms of international payments excluding payments within the Eurozone, the RMB ranked fifth with a share of 2.78 per cent in February.

China's Hong Kong Special Administrative



Woman shows banknotes and coins included in the 2019 edition of the fifth series of the renminbi. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

Region is the largest market for offshore RMB transactions, taking up 79.9 per cent, followed by Britain at 5.37 per cent and Singapore at 3.39 per cent, the report said. — Xinhua

Food shortages leave Cubans in anguish over next meal

ONE thought lingers all day in the mind of Diana Ruiz: How will the Cuban mother feed her six-year-old son, a dilemma faced by parents across an island hit by blackouts and food shortages.

"The first thing I say when I get out of bed is, what am I going to give my son to eat? And when I go to bed, what can I give him for a snack, or for his breakfast?" Ruiz tells AFP from her home in Nuevo

Vedado, a central district in Havana. The 31-year-old Ruiz, who is four months pregnant, moves in the narrow space between her cupboard, which holds some rice and a few rolls of bread, and a fridge containing more rice, a pot with a little stewed meat, containers of water and some juice. "That's all there is," she says hopelessly in her house where she also lives with her blind father. — AFP



A man with a banana cart in Havana, Cuba on 26 January 2022. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

Shanghai home to 92,000 5G base stations

CHINA'S financial hub Shanghai has built 92,000 5G base stations so far, local authorities said on Friday. By the end of 2023, 38.5 per cent of the city's mobile communication base stations were 5G base stations. Shanghai recorded a total of over 18.7 million 5G mobile phone users during this period, up nearly 40 per cent year on year, and accounting for 40.8 per cent of Shanghai's total

mobile phone users, according to the Shanghai Communications Administration.

Meanwhile, more than 11.5 million households in Shanghai had access to the internet through fibre-optic cables in 2023, of which about 2.7 million households could browse the internet with a fixed broadband speed of 1,000 Mbps or above, said the administration. — Xinhua

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V ISEACO WISDOM VOY.NO. (114N)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V ISEACO WISDOM VOY.NO. (114N)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **31-3-2024** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **AWPT** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.

Phone No: **2301185**

**Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority**

Agent For:

M/S NEW GOLDEN SEA LINES

ROLLING UPDATES

WORLD

European Space Agency Director praises ISRO's remarkable space achievements

European Space Agency Director-General Josef Aschbacher praised the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) for its recent successful launches, particularly in lunar exploration, describing India's achievements in space as "astonishing".



The meeting, held on 26 and 27 March 2024, emphasized the importance of enhancing collaboration with international partners. **PHOTO: ANI**

DIRECTOR-GENERAL of European Space Agency (ESA), Josef Aschbacher, heaped praise on the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) for its recent successful launches and said that India's accomplishments in space and especially in lunar exploration is 'astonishing'.

Aschbacher posted an appreciation post on X, after ESA hosted its 323rd Council meeting in Paris which was attended by the ISRO Chairman, S Somanath.

ESA Member States met in Paris, France, for the 323rd session of the ESA Council on 26 and 27 March 2024.

The European scientist also underscored that the significance of strengthening ties and deepening cooperation with international partners cannot be underestimated.

"What India is accomplishing in space — especially in Lunar exploration — is astonishing. We hosted ISRO's Chairman, Dr S Somanath at ESA Council today. It was a

milestone occasion for Delegates to learn more about current and future plans for ESA-ISRO cooperation," he posted on X.

What India is accomplishing in space — especially in Lunar exploration — is astonishing. Additionally, Astronaut Thomas Pesquet also shared about meeting with the ISRO chairman and the ESA Director and said that they witnessed enthusiastic exchanges between the two leaders. — ANI

Navigating crossroads: Global oil, mobility sectors at critical juncture in 2024

IN 2024, the global oil and mobility sectors find themselves at a pivotal crossroads, navigating through a labyrinth of intricate

geopolitical, technological, and economic dynamics. According to S&P Global Commodity Insights, this juncture presents

a moment of profound significance, as these industries confront a myriad of challenges and opportunities that are poised to redefine their very landscape.

From geopolitical tensions to rapid technological advancements and shifting economic paradigms, the year ahead holds the promise of transformative change, setting the stage for a new era in the realms of oil and mobility. The OPEC+ alliance stands at a crossroads, confronted with the challenge of navigating between curtailing oil supply to boost prices and defending market share amidst escalating conflicts and burgeoning output from the Americas. — ANI



Working oil pumpjacks dot the landscape on oilfields on the outskirts of Taft, Kern County, California on 21 September 2023. **PHOTO: IMAGE FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSE/ FREDERIC J. BROWN**

Refugees caught up in Paris clean-up drive

"THE police arrived at 7 am and said to us 'get in the bus'," Ali, a refugee from war-torn Sudan, remembers of the morning that police raided the squat he was living in last April in northern Paris along with 500 other migrants.

Despite having a job and refugee status, he was ordered on to the vehicle.

"We didn't have any choice,"

he explained. Along with others scooped up at the disaffected office building, he was told he was being sent by bus to Toulouse — a nearly 700-kilometre (435-mile) trip of seven or eight hours to the southwest.

"They (the police) went from room to room to tell us to get out, then they took our identity documents and said 'get in the bus',"

he added in an interview with AFP. "It was impossible to get out of it. They were saying we had to hurry up."

Ali, who has a job as a cleaner at Disneyland Paris earning 1,400 euros (\$1,500) a month, had been caught up in the French government's policy of sending migrants from the capital to regional towns. — AFP

TOP STORIES

Thai crane collapse kills seven: police

SEVEN people were killed when a crane fell during construction work at a factory in Thailand on Friday, police said.

The accident happened in Rayong province, south of the capital Bangkok, at around 4:00 pm (0900 GMT), local police chief Chaipong Sangpongchai told AFP. "The accident occurred during the construction of a factory to make metal chimneys," he said.

Local media reported that all victims were factory workers.

Construction accidents are common across Thailand, with business operators often ignoring safety requirements and operating without permits. — AFP

Several people taken hostage in Dutch town: police

SEVERAL people have been taken hostage in a town in central Netherlands Saturday, according to police, with houses evacuated and the town centre closed down. "A hostage situation involving several people is underway in a building in the centre" of the town of Ede, police said in a statement on X, formerly Twitter. — AFP



France logged 167,000 requests for asylum last year. **PHOTO: DIMITAR DILKOFF/AFP**

SPORTS

MFF Elective Congress 2024 held

THE Myanmar Football Federation Elective Congress 2024 was convened at Novotel Yangon Max Hotel in Yangon yesterday.

During the event, Myanmar Football Federation President U Zaw Zaw delivered a speech. Next, MFF Elective Congress Commission Chairman U Tin Aung (former goalkeeper) explained the election procedures.

In the football, a president and three vice-presidents, two male and one female, and 15 executives were elected, and one futsal and beach soccer representative and three representatives from the region and state of Upper Myanmar were chosen by 41 voters.

After the voting, Myanmar Football Federation President U Zaw Zaw presented a medal to the former President of the Federation U Thaung Htike with in recognition of his efforts for Myanmar football.

The President of the Myanmar



The MFF Elective Congress is held at Yangon Novotel Max Hotel in Yangon on 30 March 2024. **PHOTO: THAW GYI**

Football Federation then announced that the executive committee unanimously elected U Aung Ko Win and Dr Sai Sam Tun as patrons of the Myanmar Football Federation.

The programme of honour-

ing the famous former Myanmar national team footballers who achieved success up to the level of the Asian Championship continued, and the president of the federation, U Zaw Zaw, honoured a former Myanmar national team

player U Soe Myint, with a monthly honorarium in perpetuity on behalf of the players.

Afterwards ASEAN Football Federation President Maj-Gen Khiev Sameth congratulated the Myanmar Football Federation

(MFF) for successfully holding the MFF Elective Congress 2024. Then, MFF President U Zaw Zaw expressed his gratitude on behalf of the new executive committee and adjourned the conference. — Ko Nyi Lay/KZL

Restored Versailles Sun God adds gilt to Olympic equestrianism

A significant aspect of the preparations is the regilding of the Fountain of Apollo, which serves as a centrepiece.



The restored Apollo fountain at Versailles spouts again. **PHOTO: AFP**

THE Chateau of Versailles will provide one of the most elegant Olympic backdrops when the equestrian competitions canter through its famous park, but with less than four months to go to the Paris Games, it is a muddy building site.

The project has involved moving hundreds of tonnes of earth to build a 5.3-kilometre cross-country course and

erecting temporary grandstands for spectators, but the centrepiece was the regilding of the spectacular Fountain of Apollo. The pentathlon will also be held on the grounds.

On Friday, accompanied by baroque music, the gleaming restored statue of the Sun God, a symbol of the Sun King Louis XIV, was lowered back into the water at a media

event.

The 1671 statue by Jean-Baptiste Tuby shows Apollo in a chariot drawn by four horses, flanked by his descendant Phaeton and dolphins.

Horses were an integral part of daily life at Versailles — the stables opposite the chateau housed 1,500 horses. They will be celebrated in an exhibition from 2 July. — AFP



The clash between Manchester City and Arsenal is particularly significant, with Arsenal holding a slim one-point lead over City at the top of the table. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

Sunday big day in Premier League title race

THE two games that will help decide the destiny of this season's Premier League title are both played on Sunday, meaning fans of Manchester City, Arsenal and Liverpool have to be patient while everyone else battles it out either to qualify for Europe or avoid relegation on Saturday.

The meeting between Manchester City and Arsenal promises to have everything, with Arsenal holding a one-point lead over

City at the top of the table.

The break hasn't been kind to Pep Guardiola's side, with Kyle Walker and John Stones injured while playing for England, while Manuel Akanji picked up a knock with Switzerland.

Walker and Akanji could be fit for Sunday, but Stones is unlikely to be risked, especially with a UEFA Champions League quarterfinal against Real Madrid on 9 April. — Xinhua



People visit snow-covered Mount Changbaishan in northeast China's Jilin Province, 7 March 2021. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

China home to 47 UNESCO Global Geoparks

One of the newly designated sites is the Mount Changbaishan Geopark in Jilin Province, covering over 2,700 square kilometres.

With six Chinese geoparks newly designated as Global Geoparks by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) on Wednesday, China is now home to 47 Global Geoparks.

Among the newly design-

ated sites, the Mount Changbaishan Geopark in northeast China's Jilin Province covers an area of over 2,700 square kilometres. It hosts dramatic landforms and diverse rock types that document significant multiphase volcanic eruptions. In 2023 alone, the Mount Chang-

baishan scenic area received some 2.75 million tourists, a record high, according to local authorities.

The five other Chinese geoparks newly added this time are Enshi Grand Canyon-Tenglongdong Cave Geopark in Hubei Province, Linxia Geopark in Gansu Province, Longyan Geopark in Fujian Province, Wugongshan Geopark in Jiangxi Province and Xingyi Geopark in Guizhou Province. — Xinhua

Madonna to end 'Celebration' tour with free Copacabana show

MADONNA will perform a free mega-concert in May on Rio de Janeiro's Copacabana beach to close out her "Celebration" tour, the singer and organizers have announced.

Calling it her "biggest show yet", a statement on the pop icon's website said the concert is meant as a "thank you to her fans for celebrating more than four decades of her music".

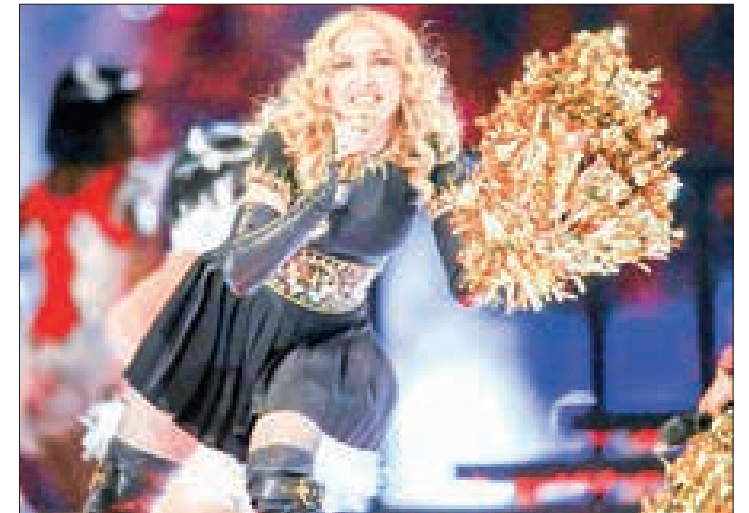
The 65-year-old, whose greatest hits include such classics as "Like A Virgin" and "Material Girl", last performed in Brazil in 2012. The 4 May mega-show will be her only concert in South America under her "Celebration" tour, which has taken her to more than a dozen countries and is meant to honor her 40-year career.

Organizers said that the show will have similarities with the New Year's Eve "Reveillon" parties held on the beaches of Rio.

In 2006, a Rolling Stones show in Copacabana attracted between 1.2 and 1.5 million people, according to estimates at the time.

The "Celebration" tour is now in North America, with three April performances in Miami and five in Mexico City, the only Latin American stop before Rio.

Madonna, who has won seven Grammy Awards and sold more than 300 million records worldwide, has additionally taken on acting, film directing and various business ventures over the years. — AFP



Madonna performs during a Super Bowl halftime show in February 2012 in Indianapolis, Indiana. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

Rovanpera roars ahead as Toyota dominate Safari Rally

Racing for Toyota, Rovanner, the winner of the African race in 2022, excelled despite challenging conditions in the East African savannah.

DOUBLE reigning world champion Kalle Rovanner powered ahead at the Safari Rally Kenya on Friday winning all six stages as his Hyundai rivals suffered mechanical problems.

The 23-year-old Finn is competing in just a few WRC world championship events this year and had been sitting third after Thursday's 'super special'.

The Toyota driver, winner of the Afri-



World champion Kalle Rovanner swept all six special stages in his Toyota GR Yaris on Friday. **PHOTO: AFP**

can race in 2022, had a perfect day despite the difficult conditions in the East African savannah.

The Safari Rally, third round of 13 in the championship, is considered the most difficult, and this year it takes place during the rainy season which makes the tracks difficult to navigate.

But Rovanner pulled out all the stops after failing to finish last month in Sweden, opening up a lead of around one minute on Toyota teammates Elfyn Evans of Wales and Japan's Takamoto Katsuta.

Championship leader Thierry Neuville had led overnight but suffered as he opened the track first ahead of his rivals.

After hitting a stone, the 35-year-old Belgian had a puncture and lost parts of the bodywork which had been torn off in the impact. — AFP