

# The Global **NEW LIGHT** of MYANMAR

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**SUNDAY  
EDITION**



Waterfowl at the Indawgyi Lake in Mohnyin Township in April. Indawgyi is the largest lake in Myanmar and the third largest in Southeast Asia.

## Indawgyi Sanctuary records 6,215 waterfowl sightings in April

**T**he Indawgyi Wildlife Sanctuary in Mohnyin Township, Kachin State, has documented 6,215 native and migratory waterfowl this April, according to its Warden U Maung Win.

The researchers monitored the eastern and western banks of the Indawgyi

Lake, Indaw Creek and Naladan Village. They encountered difficulties in documenting the bird population, primarily stemming from the dense presence of algae and flotsam crowding the waters of Indaw Creek.

U Maung Win said: "We've docu-

mented 20 species totalling 4,586 native waterfowl and 21 species comprising 1,629 migratory waterfowl in April. Additionally, we also spotted two white-rumped vultures and 54 Himalayan vultures in April 2023. They're both rare species".

Indawgyi is the largest lake in Myanmar and the third largest in Southeast Asia.

At an elevation of 700 feet above sea level, the natural lake spans 14 miles from south to north and extends seven miles in width. The total area is 314.67 square miles.

The lake's minimal human settlement and protection by the Forest Department ensure a pristine environment and decent water quality. Among the eight Ramsar Wetland Sites in Myanmar, it boasts the highest number of wintering birds. — ASH/NT

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Worker return conditional on factory reopening in post-Thingyan

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Betel price drops in last two days despite rise in Thingyan

### BUSINESS

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Myanmar falls short of green gram export target in FY 2023-2024

# NATIONAL

## Singaung Hill welcomes surge in visitor arrivals

**T**HE number of people who went on vacation to Singaung Hill, one of the tourist attraction sites in Myanmar, has increased, according to those who have visited there.

Located on Kyaukse-Ywangan road near Mandalay, Singaung Hill was crowded during the Thingyan holidays.

During Thingyan, numbers of visitors, from elders to young people around the country, such as Yangon, Mandalay and Taunggyi, come there by car or motorcycle to take a bath in the Zawgyi River, which is near the mountain and go boating and photo shooting, and their visitors are still until now.

“We visited there together with friends in Thingyan. There were a lot of people who took a bath in the Zawgyi River. It is a beautiful place for photo shooting, so there were a lot of people who came to take photos. We had fun. I’m not sure it was thronged because it was Thingyan. People from Yangon, Mandalay and other regions came to take a vacation there,” said one of the visitors to Singaung Hill.

Singaung Hill is located between Mandalay Region’s Kyaukse township and Shan State’s Ywangan township. Through the Yangon-Mandalay Highway, visitors can go there along Hanmyintmo-Ywangan-Taunggyi Road, located beyond Kin village.

People from Mandalay can go on a day trip there.

“There are still visitors until now. People come here for relaxation. Singaung Hill is a new place for relaxation. We invite you to come here to relax. Here, people can enjoy nature. It is a beautiful place. The number of visitors has been larger these years,” said a resident Ko Maung Ko.

The water of Zawgyi is clean, and there are riverfront restaurants where people can take a break while playing water in the river.

It is a must-visit place, especially during this hot summer. Officials warned visitors to take a bath in the river in the morning and evening only. — MT/ZS



Vacationers through the Singaung Hill during the Thingyan holidays.

## Worker return conditional on factory reopening in post-Thingyan

WITH some workers planning to quit their jobs and go abroad, it will not be known until the factories resume operations whether the majority of workers will return to their workplaces.

“Those who have good jobs with good salaries in my factory do not want to go abroad. I don’t know about other factories. It can be different. Going abroad is up to the individual,” said a factory owner.

Since there are precedents of illegal migrant workers getting into trouble, those wishing

to go abroad should try the official route, he said.

“To go abroad, a worker needs language skills, job skills, contacts, and other skills. Some attended Japanese language courses, took the exam, and officially went to Japan or other countries. We heard that some migrants who went there via close contacts have been in trouble. Some came back and got good jobs here. Because of the global village, people have been migrating,” he commented.

Most of the factories in Yangon Region will be closed until 21 April, and some have arranged transport for the workers to and from their hometowns.

“Thingyan holidays will last until 21 April. They will reopen on Monday, 22 April. Some prosperous factories have hired private cars and sent their workers to the places closest to their homes. They will also make the same arrangements for their return. Some didn’t go back to their towns and just stayed here,” he added. — MT/ZN



Garment workers in Yangon Region seen on a transport minitruck.

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.



# NATIONAL

## MoALI Union Minister discusses edible oil zone, cotton expansion

A coordination meeting on implementation of edible oil special zone and expansion of long-staple cotton plantation was held at the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation yesterday. First, Union Minister for Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation U Min Naung instructed the in charges of zones to conduct ground surveys in order to meet the targeted plantation acres and production rate of edible crops. The officials of

departments concerned also need to supervise to achieve exact figures of sown acreage and production rate to manage the policies systematically. Then, the Union minister made proper instructions regarding the need of water and agro chemicals in expanding the long staple cotton plantation, technical assistance to harvest the cottons, reviewing of local production rate and consumption to expand the plantation in respective finan-



A meeting on implementation of edible oil special zone and expansion of long-staple cotton plantation in progress in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

cial year. The directors-general and zones in charge reported on the ongoing work processes and future work plans. The oil crops special zones are being established in seven regions and states in 2024-2025 financial year. — MNA/KTZH



Ayeyawady Region Chief Minister U Tin Maung Win inspects the development of drum seeder production in Pathein, Ayeyawady Region, yesterday.

## Ayeyawady Chief Minister oversees drum seeder production progress

AYEYAWADY Region Chief Minister U Tin Maung Win and officials on 19 April inspected the development of drum seeder production at No 13 Ward Industrial Zone in Pathein ahead of the upcoming monsoon paddy season. The factory officials provided the chief minister with

a detailed walkthrough of the assembly process, from wheel production to the final stage of painting the machines. The chief minister emphasized the region's pivotal role in the agricultural sector and underscored the significance of agricultural machinery and workshops. He urged the officials

to carefully consider the suitability of drum seeders for the region's diverse land and climate conditions while also ensuring affordability. Additionally, he advocated for the advancement of agricultural machinery through research to better assist farmers. — IPRD/NT

## Commerce Ministry boosts export

AS the government is encouraging the country's economy by increasing exports, the Ministry of Commerce and the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry collaborate to improve the export sector: On 20 April, a total of 12,700 tonnes of corn were exported via The Myanmar Terminal – TMT (formerly known as Bo Aung Kyaw Jetty) as part of the government-private collaboration scheme. A total of 6,600 tonnes of corn will also be exported from Ahlon International Port Terminal 3 on 21 April, 2,700 tonnes of corn from Min Htet Min Jetty on 22 April, and another 7,150 tonnes from The Myanmar Terminal, respectively. — MNA/TMT



Export corn bags are loaded at The Myanmar Terminal-TMT, Yangon yesterday.

### Daily newspapers available online

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# NATIONAL



The map shows the site where some pro-terrorists from KNU, KKO (splinter group), and PDFs yesterday collusively attacked the security forces near the No 2 Thai-Myanmar Friendship Bridge in Myawady Township, Kayin State.

## Terrorist groups collusively attack security forces near Thai-Myanmar Friendship Bridge

SOME pro-terrorists from KNU, KKO (splinter group), and PDF terrorists yesterday collusively attacked the security forces near the No 2 Thai-Myanmar Friendship Bridge in Myawady Township, Kayin State. The coalition group apparently employed heavy weapons, drop bombs and excessive strengths against the

security troops. These attacks instilled fear among residents on both sides of the border.

The security forces repelled the assault with air supporting fire, ensuring minimal disruption to border peace. Following “substantial” losses, attackers reportedly withdrew to the western side of the town by 5 pm. — MNA/NT

## Bengalis rally for peace in Sittway Township

SOME of 1,000 Bengalis, comprising both genders, from Bumay village and neighbouring villages peacefully demonstrated along the Bumay market road on the morning of April 20 in Bumay village, Sittway Township, Rakhine State.

During the demonstration, they held placards stating: “We do not want the NUG, AA insurgents who are destroying the peace and stability of the country. We do not want terrorist attacks, fighting, stop firing heavy weapons at residential areas and protect Sittway”. — MNA/TKO



Bengalis from Sittway Township demonstrate at the rally in Sittway yesterday.

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09 454 237 515

## Healthcare activities conducted in An, Pyigyidagun townships

A total of 58 local people and IDPs near the surrounding villages of Taungsauk village on An-Padan Road, An Township, Rakhine State, were provided necessary health care by the local medical team of the Western Command.

Officials from the command visited and encouraged the activities and provided 307 households from seven villages on the An-Padan Road with bags of rice, bottles of oil, and



Officers from Western Command provide rice, edible oil and food items to local from Taungsauk village on An-Padan Road, An Township, Rakhine State yesterday.

food items.

Similarly, a local medical team of the Central Command provided 27 local people, 57 nuns and 36 monks from Mogok Meditation Centre, Chanmya Thaya Ward, Pyigyidagun Township, Mandalay Region, with the necessary health checkups and treatment for hypertension, diabetes, respiratory disease, eye disease, dental disease, surgical measures, and gen-

eral diseases.

At the same time, officials conducted health knowledge lectures for the local people. They carried out diagnostic tests using ECG and ultrasound, diabetes and blood sugar tests, and blood group classification for the people.

They also arranged for those who needed to be admitted to the hospital at the local military hospital. — MNA/KZL

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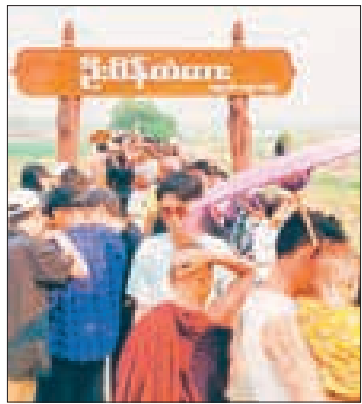


# NATIONAL

## 70,000+ attend Thingyan Festival at Taungthaman Lake & U Bein Bridge

MORE than 70,000 local and foreign visitors participated in the Thingyan festival at Taungthaman Lake in Mandalay Region, where U Bein Bridge is located, according to U Soe Win, secretary of the Taungthaman Lake and U Bein Bridge Preservation Committee.

The Taungthaman Thingyan festival featured water play pavilions, entertainment pavilions, and Satuditha (charity feast for all comers) programmes. Fifty boats were arranged for visitors to enjoy the beauty of the dusk



Visitors flock to Taungthaman Lake in Mandalay Region, where U Bein Bridge is located, during the Thingyan period.

on the lake.

“This area has been crowded since the day before Pre-Thingyan Day. In total, more than 70,000 local and foreign travellers visited the site and participated in the Taungthaman Thingyan. Most of the local visitors came from Yangon, Bago, Nay Pyi Taw and Mandalay,” he said.

The famous destinations of Taungthaman Lake and U Bein Bridge, which are currently busy with local visitors, usually attract the majority of foreign tourists from Thailand, Viet Nam, and the Republic of Korea.

U Bein Bridge spans the Taungthaman Lake and was built in 1211 ME, during the reign of King Bagan, by clerk U Bein, a subordinate of Amara-pura Mayor Bai Sab, using the teak pillars removed from the old capital of Inwa. The length of the bridge is 3,987 feet, and it originally had 1,086 teak pillars with 482 spans. However, after facing several natural disasters, it now only has 447 spans left. — ASH/ZN

## MRTV-4 to air new series ‘No Reason’ from 24 April



The poster of the scenes from the new series ‘Akyang Pyachet Mashi’.

ACCORDING to Actor Shin Mwe La from the series, the MRTV-4 television channel will begin broadcasting a new series titled ‘Akyang Pyachet Mashi’ (No

Reason) starting on 24 April.

The script of the series is written by Hsu Hsu Sabei Phu, Su Lin Lett, and Nay Myo Aung, with Director Nyi Nyi Aung bringing the series to life.

Actor Shin Mwe La described the series saying: “This new series is a comedy featuring young people. Viewers will witness the struggles and lifestyles of two young couples. Please support us.”

Shin Mwe La, Phyio Than-thar Cho (Pepsi), La Pyae, Wai La Yi, Moe Thiri Htet, May Barani and other artistes participated in the series.

Starting on 24 April, the series will be broadcasted every night from Monday to Friday at 7 pm on the MRTV-4 television channel. — ASH/TRKM

## MSME exhibition to be held in Nay Pyi Taw on 1-5 May



Visitors through the previous MSME exhibition event.

THE MSME exhibition is projected to be held in Dekkhinathiri Township within Nay Pyi Taw Council Area from 1 to 5 May, according to Vice-Chair of Union Territory MSME Entrepreneurs Association U Aung Ko Htet.

The five-day event will be held in honour of May Day, which will be held on 1 May 2024. Products of the MSMEs from eight townships in Union

Territory will be involved in the event.

U Aung Ko Htet said, “The MSME exhibition will be held in Dekkhinathiri Market in Lawe District of the Union Territory. In the event, products of the MSMEs and industrial zones from eight townships of Union Territory, departmental booths, and local foods will be displayed with 54 booths.”

The exhibition aims to

promote production, trade, investment and economic development of the MSMEs; to have collaboration between the participants, to exchange views on product quality and innovation techniques, and to penetrate the international market through regional trade promotion by strengthening the coordination among the government, private sectors and MSME industry. — ASH/TMT

## Betel price drops in last two days despite rise in Thingyan

ALTHOUGH the betel price increased during Thingyan, it dropped in the previous two days,



Betel leaves for sale at the Thiri Mingalar market.

according to betel leaf sellers.

The price of the most common betel leaves per viss rose from K9,000-K10,000 to K20,000 during the Thingyan period.

“The most common betel leaf was sold at K18,000 to K20,000 per viss during Thingyan. In some areas, it went up to K25,000. The price came down after Thingyan by K1,000. For the last two days, the price was K17,000 to K18,000,” said a betel retail shop owner.

Betel price may continue to fall in the later period, according to the market.

“To sell during Thingyan, some retailers from small towns bought betel for four or five days. When the stock ran out, the price shot up. Later, it can only go down. Betel price usually falls during the rainy season. In summer, the price goes up, but not very much,” said a betel retailer from Kyaukse Township. — Thit Taw/ZN

# NATIONAL



Officials inspect the yield of 90-day Thai rice by the Shwe May Cooperative Society in January.

## Ninety-day Thai rice yields 151 baskets per acre

THE trial cultivation of 90-day Thai rice in Taikkyi Township produced 151 baskets per acre, according to an official.

The 90-day Thai rice was cultivated in a nursery system in Yadana Hlwan Farm Agricultural and General Cooperative Society Member U Tin Aye's farm last December, and it was carried out using a nursery and direct seeder

system.

There are five agricultural cooperative societies in Taikkyi Township, and the Shwe May Cooperative Society has been cultivating Thai variety rice for 90 days. At the time of harvest, the yield was 151 baskets per acre.

The 90-day Thai rice type of trial planting with good yield takes 120 days from planting

to harvesting, and the Taikkyi Township Cooperative Society has urged farmers it should be planted due to producing good yield.

Shwe May Cooperative Society will distribute seed bags for planting free of charge and offer financial support for cultivation before purchasing the produce. — TWA/TKO

## Weather index-based crop insurance implemented in three regions

MYANMA Insurance, together with the Myanmar Agricultural Development Bank, implemented weather index-based crop insurance in Yangon, Bago and Ayeyawady regions.

From the two ways that will be based on the amount of money invested for cultivation by farmers or the loan to farmers by the government, Myanma Insurance selected the pilot project as the primary insurance policy to ensure that farmers' loans from the State are not lost.

The insurance system is based on rainfall, which is widely implemented in countries that prioritize agriculture, and it is also planned to be paid by the insurance system based on weather index-based insurance. Buying insurance policies may become mandatory for farmers, and the authorities



The photo shows a ceremony of Myanma Insurance providing weather-based insurance in 2019.

expect them to purchase policies for one to two per cent of the loan provided by the government. If there is an inch or more of rain during the test period, compensation will be provided to the affected farms. A total of 40 per cent will be compensated when the rainfall exceeds an inch during the first set period, while 100 per cent

compensation will be provided if rainfall exceeds an inch during the second set period.

The insurance rate will be included in the loan for agricultural expenses, and the premium rate will be only K1,000 per acre. When the amount of rain exceeds the specified inch, the farmers will receive compensation. — TWA/MKKS

## NEWS In BRIEF

### Economic development amidst challenges

ON 17 April 2024, the first day of Myanmar New Year, SAC Chairman Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing stated that Myanmar has successfully overcome the difficulties and challenges it faced during the past year. He also expressed confidence that, with the zeal, bravery, and firm belief of its citizens, the government will continue to encounter any challenges in the new year.

Additionally, he emphasized that the government is committed to improving the socioeconomic well-being of all citizens through the efficient utilization of necessary resources, management, and methods.

### Thilawa SEZ solar plant surplus to benefit other factories

ACCORDING to the Myanmar-Japan Thilawa Development Limited (MJTD), the installation of a solar power system capable of producing about 14 megawatts of power in the Thilawa Special Economic Zone is being implemented in stages. After the installation of the solar system, when the power generation capacity of the solar system exceeds the load being used, surplus electricity will be transmitted and distributed to other factories in the Special Economic Zone through the Ministry of Electric Power's lines.

In Thilawa Special Economic Zone, three factories have installed solar systems and are producing and using about two megawatts of electricity. In addition, according to the studies of zone companies, the Ministry of Electric Power is planning to install solar systems and produce electricity up to 14 megawatts.

### Shwemawdaw Pagoda Buddha Pujaniya ceremony opens

THE 2,606<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Buddha Pujaniya opening ceremony of Shwemawdaw Pagoda in Bago Region was held on the 18 April evening, and the patron of the ceremony, Chief Minister U Myo Swe Win, pressed the button and started the opening ceremony. The ceremony is scheduled to be celebrated for ten days, from 18 to 27 April. The Ovadacariya Sayadaws, Bago Region Chief Minister U Myo Swe Win and officials from the regional government attended the ceremony.

The region's government, departments, and generous donors will offer 500 monks rice and other offerings on Full Moon of Tagu.

### Ministry confirms no electricity rate hike

AN official from the ministry responded to the BBC's question about the plan to increase the electricity bill, saying that there is no current plan to increase the electricity bill.

Currently, household electricity bills are set from 1 unit to 30 units at K35 per unit, K50 per unit from 31 units to 50 units, K70 per unit from 51 units to 75 units, K90 per unit from 71 units to 100 units, K110 per unit from 101 units to 150 units, K120 per unit from 151 units to 200 units, K125 per unit for above 200 units. Commercial meters are also being charged at the previous rate. — Htun Htun/TRKM



## Chickpea prices rebound during post-Thingyan holidays

THE chickpea prices bounced back on 20 April after a high influx of new chickpeas in the market drove the prices down before the Thingyan holidays, according to Mandalay wholesale depot figures.

The prices stood at K232,000-257,000 per viss on 20 April. High demand by oil millers and growers who store the seeds for planting in the following season outstripped supply in the market in the second week of January 2024, causing the prices to peak at K287,000-K315,000 per viss on 12 January.

Chickpeas are heavily reliant on domestic consumption. Therefore, the demand for millers is highly correlated with price fluctuation, according to the Mandalay commodity depot.

Chickpeas are commonly cultivated in October-November and harvested in January-April.

It is primarily grown in Bago, Ayeyawady, Sagaing, Magway and Mandalay regions.

The country primarily cultivates paddy, corn, cotton, sugarcane, various pulses and beans. Its second-largest production is pulses and beans, accounting for 33 per cent of agro-produce and covering 20 per cent of growing acres. Among them, black beans, pigeon peas and green grams constitute 72 per cent of bean acreage. Other beans, including peanuts, chickpeas, soybeans, black-eyed beans, butter beans and rice beans, are also grown in the country. Myanmar's agriculture sector is the backbone of the country's economy, and it contributes significantly to the gross domestic product (GDP). Myanmar's pulses are one of the leading agricultural products.

Myanmar ships a small volume of chickpeas to foreign



Chickpeas seen for sale in the market.

markets beyond self-sufficiency. More than 58,000 kilogrammes worth US\$37.478 million were exported to foreign trade part-

ners in the financial year 2023-2024 (April-March), according to the Ministry of Commerce's statistics.

Myanmar exported over 18,000 kilos of beans worth \$13.139 million in the FY 2022-2023. — NN/EM

## Myanmar falls short of green gram export target in FY 2023-2024

MYANMAR failed to meet the export target of 600,000 tonnes for green grams in the financial year 2023-2024 (April-March), with only 500,000 tonnes being exported, the Ministry of Commerce's statistics showed.

Myanmar aimed to export 600,000 tonnes of green grams to external markets last FY, with 150,000 tonnes in each batch, the Ministry of Commerce announced.

Nonetheless, Myanmar conveyed around 503,970

tonnes of green grams to foreign markets in the past FY 2023-2024 beginning 1 April, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

Green grams are exported to China, India, the Netherlands, Ireland, England and Germany through maritime and border trade channels.

The price of green grams from the central Myanmar regions was K1,524,000 per tonne in early

April. It hit a record high of K2,041,000 per tonne in the first week of February.

There is a



wide range of foreign markets for Myanmar's green grams. More than 8,000 tonnes of green grams are sent yearly to the European Union member countries.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation and the Ministry of Commerce have agreed to export the green grams to European countries for bean sprouts starting in 2015. — NN/EM



Green gram plants bear successful fruits in the farm.

## Over 350 gem trading licences to expire in June

A total of 358 gem trading licences are due to expire in June 2024, Myanmar Gems Enterprise notified.

Under the approval of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation, those holding gems and jewellery trading licences, manufacturing licences for finished gems and carvings and trading licences for uncut gemstones and finished products issued by the Myanmar Gems Enterprise need to proceed to the renewal process three months before the expiry date. They must renew them at least one month before the expiry.

Additionally, they can notify Myanmar Gems Enterprise of winding down a business with one month's notice prior to ceasing the operation.

Those who fail to renew their licences and want to resume the business can proceed with the renewal procedure at the departments concerned with Myanmar Gems Enterprise within office hours.

Nonetheless, only those holding licences with a two-year expiry are entitled to reinstate them with the prescribed penalty starting from 1 April 2024. Those licences that expired more than two years ago will get revoked, the Myanmar Gems Enterprise stated.

Licence renewal applications can be processed at Myanmar Gems Enterprise (Nay Pyi Taw), Gems and Jewellery Museums in Yangon Mandalay, mining departments in Mogok, Lonkhin/Phakant, Mongshu and Myitkyina areas, in line with the rules and regulations. — NN/EM



# OPINION

## Utilize libraries to modernize motherland Myanmar

**L**IBRARIES play a pivotal role in the advancement of nations, and Myanmar, our beloved motherland, is no exception. In the journey towards societal progress, it is imperative for individuals to uplift themselves both physically and mentally. This collective effort not only better individual lives but also lays the groundwork for the development of future generations and, subsequently, the entire society.

By recognizing the significance of knowledge dissemination, the people of Myanmar are embracing the power of libraries to broaden their horizons. With regard to sharing knowledge with each other, a number of libraries at different levels have been established in all parts of Myanmar for many years, but most of them have been ruined for various reasons.

Despite challenges such as the decay of existing libraries, efforts have been made to establish and sustain these vital institutions. Many libraries, whether initiated by local communities, in honour of notable figures, or with the support of benefactors, have dutifully served as beacons of knowledge. Whatever it may be, all libraries have dutifully served the dissemination of knowledge to the readers. Thanks to these libraries, readers can apply knowledge from books in practical fields to achieve success in their lives. In fact, libraries are the best tool for people from developing countries.

As individuals strive for personal growth through knowledge, the collective progress of Myanmar becomes inevitable. With each citizen empowered with the tools of education, the nation is poised to embark on a journey towards prosperity and advancement. The seeds of progress sown today in the form of accessible libraries will undoubtedly bear fruit, ushering in a brighter future for generations to come.

Myanmar is witnessing a concerted effort to democratize knowledge. It is incumbent upon every member of society to encourage the younger generations to glean wisdom from the vast treasury of literature. Education derived from this wealth of knowledge serves as a life university, gradually transforming lives and shaping the fabric of society. By embracing learning and leveraging it to improve their lives, individuals contribute to the modernization of their communities and, ultimately, the entire nation.

As individuals strive for personal growth through knowledge, the collective progress of Myanmar becomes inevitable. With each citizen empowered with the tools of education, the nation is poised to embark on a journey towards prosperity and advancement. The seeds of progress sown today in the form of accessible libraries will undoubtedly bear fruit, ushering in a brighter future for generations to come.

### EPISODE: 32

**P**REVIOUSLY, my articles were author-oriented. However, due to some authors contributing to multiple subjects, I've had to transition certain articles to be subject-oriented. According to the index of Records of GSI by La Touche, Dr Fritz Noetling contributed 15 reports covering various subjects to Myanmar Geology, including "Notes on the geology of Wuntho in Upper Burma" in 1894. The Wuntho District is renowned for its gold deposits, with the Kyaukpazat gold mine, the first of its kind in Myanmar, situated in the Wuntho-Bamauk region. I am delighted to provide insight into the Wuntho-Bamauk gold field, drawing from my experience in gold exploration and mining with both foreign and local companies between 2005 and 2014.

### The Geology of Wuntho in Upper Burma

Due to space limitations, I'll summarize the key points of GSI palaeontologist Fritz Noetling's 1894 report, "The Geology of Wuntho in Upper Burma," as follows: -

### Geographical features

The area described in the following pages comprises part of the Wuntho sub-division of the Katha district in Upper Burma. It extends, roughly speaking, between Htygaing on the Irrawaddy and the Mu Valley; in its eastern part only, low hills rise from the surrounding plains, but in its western part, the large massive of the Maingthong hills form a tract of approximately 75 miles in length.

The Maingthong hills, which I partly examined, begin near Lat 23° 45' and Long 90° 20', near the junction of the Daungyu Choung with the Mu River. From this point, the hills extend in a nearly northerly direction, the tract widening out gradually till it reaches its greatest breadth of 30 to 35 miles near Lat. 24° 5'.

It may be said to be limited by the broad valleys of Mu and its tributary, the Nam-Maw, in the west, but its eastern boundary is less sharply defined. In the southern part, the broad Wuntho valley forms the boundary, but further, towards the north, the low hills to the east come quite close up to the central massive, forming for some distance a low watershed between the Meza and Mu River. North of these low hills, the eastern boundary is again well-defined, being formed by the broad valley of the Meza River.

The highest point in this hilly tract is Maingthong Hill (5,510 feet), the southwestern spurs of which have been geologically examined.

The Toung-thon-lon (5,565 feet) at Lat 24° 56' and Long 95° 52' may possibly form the northern continuation of the Maingthong tract, but it was not visited.

### Geological features

I can only give a rough outline of the geological features of this area, owing to almost unsurmountable difficulties which the dense, nearly impenetrable jungle places in the way of geological research. Here and there, a rock protrudes from under the thick vegetable mould that covers the ground everywhere.

# The Burma Circle of the Geological Survey of India and their Contributions to the Geology of Myanmar

By **THAN HTUN (GEOSCIENCE MYANMAR)**

But nothing can be seen of the dip and strike of the strata. The trained eye, however, learns very soon about the jungle from the difference in the surface soil and whether a change like the underlying rocks has taken place.

As far as I could ascertain, only eruptive rocks take part in the formation of the Maingthong hill tract, whilst the surrounding low hills to the east, south, and west of the eruptive mass consist of Miocene beds, both of the lower or Chindwin and the upper or Irrawaddy group. Older formations occur only close to the Irrawaddy River, where the low ridge which runs almost due north, near Htygaing, is formed by mica schists, with an easterly dip; some traces of metamorphosed carboniferous limestone may be seen on the eastern side of the ridge which forms the watershed between the Meza and Mu River; the crest of which is formed by an extensive serpentine dyke.

### Eruptive Rocks

1. Quartz Diorite: The rock which is chiefly developed in the Maingthong hill tract is a crystalline rock which, from its outward appearance, must be placed between granites and quartz diorites. So far as it is known, the quartz diorite occupies chiefly the central part of the tract; it is well seen on the road from Wuntho to Pinlebu, between the villages of Myelin and Hethat, that this so may be seen on the footpath which leads from Wuntho to Myelin, but the locality where I found it best developed is the Tayaw Choung, a feeder of the Yu River; here enormous may be seen in rounded forms covering the slopes. Occasionally, veins of white quartz may be seen in the diorite, but as far as I know, they are not metalliferous.

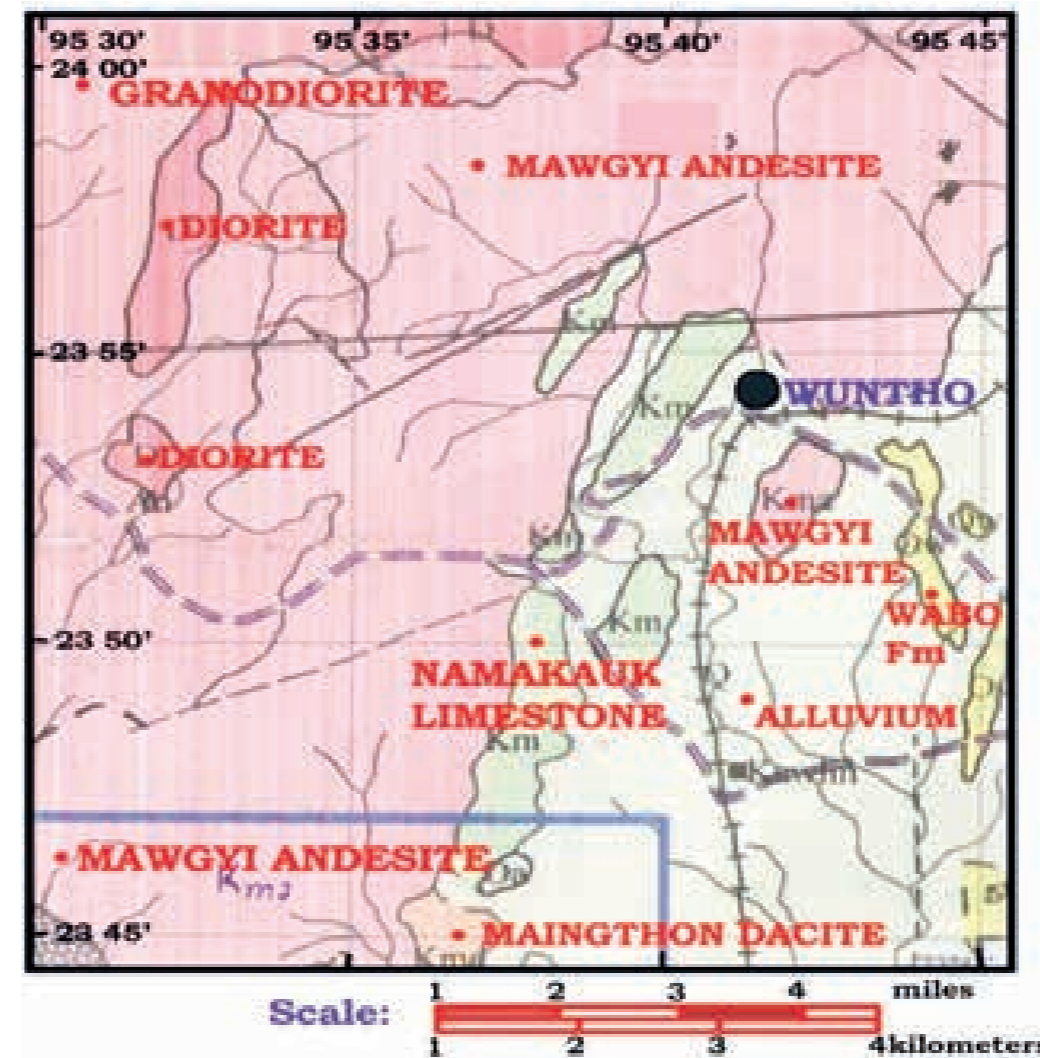
2. A close connection with the diorite occurs, and a hard black rock develops either in homogenous masses or is well stratified. This mode of occurrence may be seen in the Nam-Maw ravine, east of Mawteik; after having passed Mawteik where a truly intrusive rock of the trap can be seen, an exceedingly hard dark rock forms the bed of the river; for about half an hour this rock may be traced without any apparent change being noticed, excepting occasional fissures; then the rock disappears beneath the jungle, and when it crops out again, it is apparently of the same type, but now well stratified. The strike is 45° N E-S W and the dip is 45° W. It is crossed by a system of jointing, running 340° N N W-S S E and dipping 62° E.

Mr Holland describes this rock as follows: - A compact bluish-green rock breaking with a semi-conchoidal fracture, studded with minute grains of magnetic pyrites and pyrrhotite, the last-named minerals occurring also in irreg-

ular patches. Specific gravity 2.86. Under the microscope, the rock presents the characteristics of a volcanic agglomerate rather than an ordinary lava or dyke rock. Fragments of plagioclase feldspars, hornblende, and augite

Holland, the same composition as that from Mawteik which is not less than 28 miles in a straight line distant from that place. Here, the simultaneous occurrence of the stratified and the non-stratified rock exhibits the following characteristics: -

A coarser-grained rock than that from



Sketch geology map of Wuntho Area. Source: Than Htun 2005

in all stages of decomposition are mixed with opaque grains of magnetite and pyrites in a microlithic groundmass. It contains a trace of gold, not enough for estimation. He further remarks that only the occurrence in the field can decide exactly the origin of the rock, but from the microscope alone, it seems to be a consolidated volcanic ash.

This hardened volcanic ash may be seen all along the outskirts of the Maingthong hill tract forming the surrounding region particularly; I first noticed it near Padeingon, about 15 miles in a straight line north of Wuntho, and from there I traced it all along the lower hills which form the outskirts via Pinlon, Kyaungon, as far as Wuntho; on the road from Wuntho to Pinlebu between the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> mile where there are extensive old gold-diggings, this hardened volcanic ash shows, according to Mr.

Mawteik, presenting the characteristics of a compact and altered agglomerate. There is considerable development of epidotes at the expense of decomposing felspathic material in large quantities. Undoubtedly, subsequent eruptions produced dykes, which intruded into the surrounding ash masses, and these dykes chiefly attract our attention. They were of two types- one, closely allied in composition to the diorite; the second, chiefly consisting of felspathic quartz, which contains a more or less considerable quantity of auriferous pyrites.

(a) Pyritic Veins (auriferous): Beginning from the north, the following localities are known where these veins occur: - 1. Gwegyi, 2. Toungni near Padeingon, 3. Chouk-paza-doung, close to Padeingon, 4. Theindoo-choung, near Pinlon, 5. Mayutha. All these places are quite

close to each other; the distance from Mayutha to Gwegyi being not more than 12 miles in a beeline. So far as it has been observed, the veins do not run in any particular direction, but I may be wrong here. The thickest vein which I have seen is that of Toungni; the ore contained a comparatively small quantity of pyrites; on the assay, it yielded four dwt 15 grs of gold to the tonne. The ore from Chouk-paza-doung, which occurs in a vein of about 9 to 12 inches in thickness, is much richer in pyrites, but it yielded only 1 dwt 7 grs of gold. Typical localities of the second mode of occurrence of the pyrites are- 1. Gotama Hill near Wepone, north of Wuntho, 2. Kyoukpyu, between the VII and VIII miles on the road from Wuntho to Pinlebu, 3. Nam-Maw east of Mawteik, Pinlebu Sub-division.

(b) Galeniferous veins (argentiferous): Besides the pyritic ore, a galeniferous vein of Cerussite occurs on the western side of the Maingthong hill tract under very similar circumstances. The first locality where I found it is called Kaydwin (Kay-lead, dwin-mine), situated in the ravine of the Nam-Maw, east of Mawteik and still further to the east from the place where the pyritic ash had been observed. The thickness varies, but on average, it is not less than 4 feet. The cracks of this vein are filled with Cerussite veins, which form thin layers encrusting the rock. According to Mr Holland, it yielded 69.1 per cent lead and 33 oz. 16 dwt. 4grs. of silver to the ton of lead.

(c) Salt springs: Another remarkable occurrence within the area of volcanic ash on the western side of the Maingthong hill tract is salt springs. Such places are Kyatngat, Kaydwin, Taungmaw, Natdaw, Mangyi, the Nammaw Ravine, and six other places.

### The Younger Formations

Maingthong hill tract is surrounded by tertiary strata, which in no way differ from those observed elsewhere in Burma. On the western side, the older tertiaries or Chindwin group may be traced for a long distance; it is followed by the upper tertiaries, the Irrawaddy sandstone that extends to the west as far as the Chindwin. On the eastern side, there are numerous outcrops of coal seams, which, beginning north, run as follows: -

1. Choukpya Chong between Mansigale and Pinmu.
2. Tabawda Chong is a feeder of the Tayaw Chong, about three miles southwest of Mansigale.
3. Milaunggon, east of Pinlebu.
4. Subokom, about 34<sup>th</sup> mile from Wuntho.

5. Mounkaw Stream is near Yuyinbyet village and south of Pinlebu.
6. Wetabin Chong is about one mile west of Engwe village on the Yu River.

### Economic value of the minerals

1. General Conditions: As regards accessibility, there can be no doubt that the opening of the railway line to Wuntho has greatly facilitated mining enterprise in those parts of Burma. Without the railway, mining in such a country would be out of the question altogether; the forty-odd miles from Htygaing, the nearest river station, to Wuntho, across the country, which is a swamp for the greater part of the year, would never permit any mining enterprise. To sum up, accessibility in all cases, except the coal and lead mines, is fairly good. Water and fuel were plentiful; the local supply of labour was next to none.
2. Value of the Minerals: The value of the different minerals which are likely to be exploited. These are-
  - i. Auriferous pyrites: But my opinion is that I do not believe that the occurrence of metallic gold at the outcrop of these lodes will continue to any great depth. Sooner or later, it will disappear and be replaced by undecomposed iron pyrites.
  - ii. Argentiferous Cerussite: The results of the analysis prove that this is a precious ore, but it remains doubtful whether these ores could be worked profitably under the present conditions of railway communication and costly labour.
  - iii. Coal: According to the analysis, coal is of good quality, but not mainly from Kabwet or Chindwin.
  - iv. Salt: I have already stated that these springs are almost always found along the stream beds, and the natives have overcome the difficulty of obtaining a strong brine for evaporation in a most ingenious way.

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# NATIONAL Entertainment

## Shwe Tha Mee donates basic foodstuffs in Dagon Myothit (Seikkan) Tsp

ACTRESS Shwe Tha Mee donated basic foodstuffs for 200 households in Ward 67 of Dagon Myothit (Seikkan) Township of Yangon Region on 18 April.

The intention of food donations consisting of rice, cooking oil, salt, and onion was to provide for 200 households with low incomes.

"My donation marks the new year and my birthday, so I discussed with Ma Aye Thida how to donate in this ward. Each household gets three pyi

of rice, 50 ticals of cooking oil, 25 ticals of salt and 50 ticals of onion," said the actress.

Currently, the actress is famous for her movies broadcasting via Maha Application, and she works with Maha Application and Hey Play Application. – ASH/KTZH

The photo shows actress Shwe Tha Mee, who donates foodstuffs.



### Yu Dar

WRITER Yu Dar, who released her new novel 'My One and Only' in February, made wishes to all on her Facebook page on the first day of Myanmar New Year, saying, may all you have a promising new year without any negative ones of the previous year and may all you free from certain diseases and be peaceful.



## Celebrity Brief



### Yadana Bo

THE staging ceremony of offertory (coconut and three bunches of bananas in a large pot) for 'Si Mee Htain Htain Linn Par Loh Ma Hnin Doh Aein' movie was made at Kyaikkasan pagoda on 17 April. The novel and script were made by Henry Saw Tun and director Aung Chan Lu, and the stars are Min Bhone Myat, Min Hein, Min Thu, Aung Lay, Aye Thandar Bo, Thondray Oo, and Yadana Bo, who will take Ma Hnin character. Yadana Bo will act at different age stages, from childhood to old age. She said she received the trust of others for her outstanding acting skills for Thu Chit Khin, Thet Htar San and Mani Sitt characters.



### Wana

SINGER Wana, who is famous for his song 'Anee Sone Lu', sang the song of singer Anaing at a reception, and the video clip spread online on 19 April. His fans were satisfied with his talent and made positive comments to him.



### Thet Mon Myint

ACTRESS Thet Mon Myint made an April Fool's prank on her fans, making a post "It's a girl!" on 1 April. The next day, she said she was kidding and thanked those who sent congratulations. She also extended her New Year wishes to her fans.

### Khine Thin Kyi-San Hteik Htar Oo

ACTRESS Khine Thin Kyi donated K315,000 worth of Terrazo (45 square feet) at Thiri Mingala Kaba Aye pagoda together with her husband U Khant Naing Ko, and daughter San Hteik Htar Oo on 19 April. – Htun Htun/KTZH



### Director Wyne

THE new movie 'Takote Taya', directed by director Academy Wyne, will be screened across the nation in May. It is the novel of 'Hmyar Sitthi', and artistes are Kyaw Htet Aung, Moe Hay Ko, Htet Htet Tun, Ban-yar Bhone Pyae, Nyi Nanda, Moe Kham and others. One of the fans of actress Moe Hay Ko, who watched the trailer of 'Takote Taya', made a positive comment to Moe Hay Ko for her excellent acting skills.

# WORLD

## EU, Finnish leaders call for de-escalation amid Iran-Israel tensions

*Von der Leyen stressed the importance of stabilizing the area, while Orpo expressed hope that both sides would avoid retaliatory actions.*

EUROPEAN Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and Finnish Prime Minister Petteri Orpo on Friday urged de-escalation amid Iran-Israel tensions.

They made these comments at a press conference held at southeastern Finland's Lappeenranta airport on Fri-

day. The event followed a visit to the Finnish eastern border near the town of Imatra.

"We must do everything possible to ensure that all sides refrain from escalating the situation in the region," said von der Leyen. She emphasized the necessity for stabilizing in the region.

Orpo expressed hope that both sides would avoid retaliatory attacks.

According to local media reports, the purpose of their visit to the eastern border was to inspect a pilot fence, about three kilometres long, built near the Imatra border crossing. — Xinhua



European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen (L) and Finnish Prime Minister Petteri Orpo attend a press conference at Lappeenranta airport, southeastern Finland, on 19 April 2024. **PHOTO: LAURI HEIKKINEN/PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE/HANDOUT VIA XINHUA**

## US: Opening statements in Donald Trump's hush-money trial set for Monday



Trump's charges stem from allegations of falsifying business records linked to a hush-money arrangement with an adult film actress before the 2016 election. **PHOTO: ANI**

A jury is set to hear opening statements on Monday on whether former US President Donald Trump falsified bank records to hide an alleged affair from people in the 2016 election, The Washington Post reported.

The trial began this week with a speedy but emotional jury selection. A few potential jurors cried as they considered whether they could handle the first-ever trial of a former president.

Trump is accused of falsifying business records related to a hush-money deal with an adult film actress made ahead of the 2016 election, The Hill reported. He has pleaded not guilty.

New York Supreme Court Justice Juan Merchan expressed gratitude to the participants for

their bravery as several shared painful details regarding their pasts in front of reporters during the jury screening process, according to The Washington Post report. He praised others for their honesty in their statement that the former US President's rhetoric would make it difficult for them to judge Trump fairly.

Through questions created to remove bias among the jury pool, the two sides have begun to indicate their trial strategies. Assistant District Attorney Joshua Steinglass told prospective jurors that the government would prove bank fraud and an implicit conspiracy to "commit election fraud" and "pull the wool over the eyes of the American voters". — ANI

## Venezuela rejects US attempt to "control" its oil industry

*Gil reaffirmed Venezuela's commitment to maintaining its sovereignty and asserted its determination to remain independent, regardless of any unilateral measures imposed upon it by foreign entities.*

VENEZUELA on Thursday again rejected "the United States government's intention to monitor, protect, control and manipulate the Venezuelan oil industry".

At a press conference, Foreign Affairs Minister Yvan Gil read a statement confirm-

ing that "Venezuela will never recognize and accept" the "illegal policy of imposing coercive measures and licences" against the South American nation by the United States.

The US government released a new "licence" on Wednesday, reinstating some

of the sanctions against Venezuela that had been eased in October last year.

Venezuela "reminds the entire world that with or without licences, with or without unilateral coercive measures, it is determined to be a free nation," Gil said. — Xinhua



A worker from Petroleos de Venezuela operates machinery in front of the Fortune oil tanker, docked at the El Palito Refinery, Carabobo state, Venezuela, on 25 May 2020. **PHOTO: MARCOS SALGADO/XINHUA**



# ECONOMY WORLD

## Streamlined logistics allow landlocked regions to expand global reach

*Nanchang International Land Port (NILP) in Nanchang, Jiangxi Province, China, operates at full capacity daily, facilitating seamless logistics operations with fully loaded freight trains departing for various destinations, including Nansha Port in Guangzhou.*



Aerial photo taken on 17 February 2020 shows a China-Europe freight train fully loaded with auto parts, mechanical facilities and garments bound for Moscow of Russia and Minsk of Belarus waiting for departure at Xiangtang railway port in Nanchang, east China's Jiangxi Province. **PHOTO: HU CHENHUAN/XINHUA**

At first light, an eastern Chinese logistics hub is already operating in full swing. Cranes and trucks can be seen passing containers back and forth, and fully loaded freight trains set off for various destinations.

This bustling scene unfolds daily at Nanchang International Land Port (NILP) in Nanchang, the capital of

Jiangxi Province. On one train, vehicles are loaded for transport to Nansha Port in the coastal city of Guangzhou, from where they will be shipped around the world.

"All declaration, inspection and approval procedures have been completed at the NILP for these vehicles," said Leng Zhiqiang, director

of the local port-economy development department. "Upon arrival at Guangzhou, they can be shipped immediately, without having to undergo additional checks." China has made strides in promoting cross-regional customs clearance integration in recent years, as part of its efforts to bolster connectivity. — Xinhua

## ADB projects 2024, 2025 growth in developing Asia economies at 4.9%

*The Asian Development Bank forecasts that developing Asian economies will grow by 4.9 per cent in 2025, driven by robust domestic demand, goods exports, and tourism recovery.*

DEVELOPING Asian economies are projected to grow by 4.9 per cent this year and in 2025, the Asian Development Bank said on 4 April, citing robust domestic demand as well as continued recovery in goods exports and tourism.

The Manila-based lender's latest outlook indicates stronger growth in South Asia and Southeast Asia.

India is forecast to maintain its position as a major growth engine in Asia due to strong investment, recovering consumption and gains in electronics and services exports, the ADB said, projecting a 7.0-per-cent growth for the country this year and 7.2

per cent next year.

According to the ADB, Developing Asia, a grouping of 46 countries and territories in Asia and the Pacific, excluding Japan, Australia and New Zealand, would see its inflation drop to 3.2 per cent this year and 3.0 per cent in 2025, from 3.3 per cent last year, owing to monetary policies remaining tight in many member economies.

The ADB warns of worsening geopolitical tensions and conflict, including attacks on cargo vessels in the Red Sea by the Iran-backed Houthis, and extreme weather, among others, as potential risks to growth. — Kyodo



India is forecast to maintain its position as a major growth engine in Asia due to strong investment, recovering consumption and gains in electronics and services exports. Connaught Place, officially Rajiv Chowk, is a major economic hub in New Delhi, India. **PHOTO: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS**



Photo taken on 21 September 2022 shows Greece's only liquefied natural gas (LNG) terminal on the islet of Revithoussa near Athens. **PHOTO: MARIOS LOLOS/XINHUA**

## US benefits from energy price hikes, unlike Europe - IMF chief

A recent spike in energy prices benefited the US economy but harmed Europe, International Monetary Fund (IMF) Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva said on Thursday.

"The US has benefited from more favourable conditions in terms of energy prices, something that has been quite a serious factor for Europe, not a positive factor for Europe," Georgieva

told reporters, when asked why the US economy is doing better than Europe's.

An influx of foreign labor force also helps the US economy, despite creating domestic migration issues, the IMF chief added.

"Not everybody who crosses the border adds positively to the economy, but that labour supply also gave the US another comparative advantage," she stated.

Georgieva pointed out that the influx of labour force allows salaries to stay at their current levels because there is no strong pressure on wage growth due to the lack of workers. Among other factors that help the US economy, the IMF chief highlighted its focus on innovation. Europe still has work to do to unleash the power of innovation, Georgieva said. — SPUTNIK

## P&G profits rise despite hit from Middle East tensions

PROCTER & Gamble reported higher profits Friday, citing strong demand in the United States and many European markets that offset weakness elsewhere due to Middle East tensions and a lackluster performance in China.

P&G — the consumer products giant that makes Tide detergent, Bounty paper towel and Gillette razors, among many others — had flat volume in the just-completed quarter but a three percent rise in price that helped produce a slight increase in overall sales.

Chief Financial Officer Andre Schulten described consumption as “very strong” in the United States and in leading European markets.

But he said sales in the Middle East were pressured by conflict in the region, while China sales were down 10 per

cent, excluding the effect of currency changes and acquisition.

Despite price hikes over the last few years, “consumers are not trading down within the US,” he said, arguing that shoppers stick with known products because of reliability.

Profits in the quarter rose 11 per cent to \$3.8 billion, while revenues increased one per cent to \$20.2 billion.

In China, Schulten noted “weak underlying market conditions” as well as lagging sales of SK-II premium skin care, which has been affected by anti-Japan sentiment.

Schulten said the company has nevertheless seen some improvement in the world’s second biggest economy, but that it will take another quarter or two for sales to return to growth. — AFP

## Air India suspends flights to and from Tel Aviv until 30 April amid escalating tensions in Middle East

*Amid escalating tensions in the Middle East, Air India has announced the suspension of flights to and from Tel Aviv until 30 April 2024, prioritizing the safety of passengers and crew members.*

AMID escalating tensions in the Middle East, Air India announced to suspend flights to and from Tel Aviv until 30 April assuring the safety of their customers and crew members.

Sharing on their social media platform X, Air India stated, “Our flights to and from Tel Aviv will remain suspended until 30 April 2024, in view of the emerging situation in the Middle East.” They further emphasized that the airline is extending support to their passengers who have confirmed bookings, adding that a one-time waiver on rescheduling and cancellation charges will be provided.

“We are continuously monitoring the situation



Travellers are seen at Ben Gurion International Airport near Tel Aviv, Israel, 8 October 2023. PHOTO: CHEN JUNQING/XINHUA

and are extending support to our passengers who have confirmed bookings for travel to and from Tel Aviv during this period,

with a one-time waiver on rescheduling and cancellation charges,” they stated.

Israel launched missile strikes against Tehran

during the early hours of Friday morning (local time), ABC News reported citing a senior US official. — ANI

## German housing crisis continues with sharp slump in building permits

*Tim-Oliver Mueller, chief executive of the Federation of the German Construction Industry, highlighted Germany’s consistent failure to meet its housing construction targets, expressing limited expectations for improvement this year.*

GERMANY’S housing crisis persists, with an 18.3 per cent year-on-year decrease in residential building permits for February, the Federal Statistical Office (Destatis) said on Thursday.

The downward trend in recent years continues, with only 18,200 apartments granted building permits in February. Destatis reports show a significant 35.1-per-cent decline compared to the same month in 2022.



A construction site is seen in Berlin, capital of Germany, on 30 July 2021. PHOTO: STEFAN ZEITZ/XINHUA/FILE

“There seems to be no end to this downward

spiral,” remarked Felix Pakleppa, chief executive

of the German Construction Confederation (ZDB), a leading association of the country’s construction industry. He described the situation as tragic.

According to Tim-Oliver Mueller, chief executive of the Federation of the German Construction Industry, Germany has consistently fallen short of its official housing construction targets, with limited expectations for improvement this year. — Xinhua

### CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V MSC SUPARNA F VOY.NO. (SB414A)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V MSC SUPARNA F VOY.NO. (SB414A) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 21-4-2024 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.

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# ROLLING UPDATES

## WORLD

## Japan eyes launch of new dialogue framework on intl AI regulations

*This initiative aims to garner broader support for the "Hiroshima AI Process", an effort launched last year by the Group of Seven nations to facilitate discussions on establishing global regulations.*



An AI-assisted humanoid robot at information desk at a shopping mall. **PHOTO: PIX FOR VISUAL PURPOSE/KYODO**

JAPAN is considering establishing a new framework for dialogue involving like-minded nations to discuss international regulations on the appropriate use of generative artificial intelligence technology, a government source said Saturday.

Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida is expected to reveal the plan to launch a "Friends" meeting on AI issues at a ministerial council meeting of the Organization

for Economic Cooperation and Development scheduled for 2 to 3 May in Paris, the source said.

Through the framework, Japan will call for wider support for the "Hiroshima AI Process," an initiative launched last year by the Group of Seven nations to facilitate discussions on the creation of global rules, according to the source.

The move comes as the world has been looking into how to harness rapidly developing

generative AI tools, including ChatGPT, while fears grow that the spread of disinformation through the misuse of AI could threaten democracy and political stability.

The source said Japan aims to play a leading role in international AI rulemaking that would push for both the development of the technology and its regulation.

The creation of the Hiroshima AI Process was agreed at the G7 summit chaired by Kishida in Hiroshima in May.

In December, G7 digital ministers drew up a comprehensive policy framework of the process and this was agreed by the G7 leaders during a teleconference the same month. It is the first overall international scheme that includes guiding principles and a code of conduct not only for developers but also for users. The nonbinding guidelines are aimed at promoting safe, secure and trustworthy advanced AI systems, according to the Japanese government. — Kyodo

## Israel-Hamas talks on ceasefire, hostage deal on brink of collapse: Reports

THERE is a possibility that Israel and Palestinian movement Hamas will discontinue their talks in Qatar on a ceasefire and hostage release deal, The Wall Street Journal reported on Saturday, citing an unnamed Arab official familiar with the matter.

On Wednesday, NBC News reported, citing a senior Arab diplomat, that the Israeli-Hamas truce talks were 'almost frozen'. On Thursday, Hamas political bureau member Husam Badran told Sputnik that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was not seeking a political settlement of the conflict. The Hamas political bureau is looking to move its headquarters from Qatar to another Arab country, which will

likely disrupt the current Israel-Hamas negotiation, the newspaper reported. The Palestinian movement has already turned to at least two alternative countries to host its political headquarters, including Oman, according to the report. On 7 April, a new round of the Israeli-Hamas talks started in the Egyptian capital of Cairo. The ceasefire proposal made at the talks provided for the release of 40 Israeli hostages in exchange for 900 Palestinian prisoners as a part of a three-stage plan adopted by international mediators. Hamas largely rejected the proposal, saying it would present its own plan for a permanent end to the conflict in the region.— SPUTNIK



A woman holds a sign during a protest rally against the war in Gaza and calling for a ceasefire, in Tel Aviv, Israel, on 24 February 2024. **PHOTO: JAMAL AWAD/XINHUA**



US soldiers and East Africa Response Force soldiers depart a US Air Force C-130 Hercules aircraft in Juba, Sudan, 18 December 2013. The US State Department requested the assistance of US military forces in evacuating personnel from the embassy in Juba to Nairobi, Kenya, amid political and ethnic violence in South Sudan. **PHOTO: MICAH THEURICH, USAF/SPUTNIK/FILE**

## US to withdraw 1,000 troops from Niger in coming months: Reports

THE United States will withdraw 1,000 US military personnel from the West African country in the coming months, the New York Times reported.

The report said on Friday that the US government had notified the transitional government in Niger about its plan.

According to the Washington Post, State Department Deputy Secretary Kurt Campbell met with Niger's prime minister earlier in the day and accepted the government's demand.

The report noted that this move will transform the United

States' counterterrorism posture in West Africa.

Last month, a spokesperson for the Nigerien military said that the country's transitional government, which took power in last July, ended the military agreement with immediate effect, citing the interests of the Nigerien people.

Niger's Interior Ministry recently said the United States had promised to submit a plan for the "disengagement" of troops from the West African country after Niamey ended its military pact with Washington. — SPUTNIK

# SPORTS

## Japan book quarterfinal spot at U-23 Asian Cup

*Despite making seven changes to the starting lineup from their previous match, Japan's Seiji Kimura and Sota Kawasaki scored headers in the 27<sup>th</sup> and 66<sup>th</sup> minutes, respectively, leading to victory at Jassim bin Hamad Stadium in Doha.*

JAPAN secured a quarterfinal place at the under-23 Asian Cup men's football tournament with a 2-0 victory over the United Arab Emirates on Friday.

Japan's second win in as many games guaranteed that they will finish in the top two with South Korea in four-team Group B at the qualifying event for this summer's Paris Olympics.

After Japan manager Go Oiwa made seven changes to his starting eleven from Tuesday's 1-0 opening win over China, Seiji Kimura and Sota Kawasaki scored with headers in the 27<sup>th</sup>

and 66<sup>th</sup> minutes, respectively, at Jassim bin Hamad Stadium in Doha. "We had created many chances with crosses, so I knew our second goal was coming," said Kawasaki, who headed in a cross from Ayumu Ohata, leaving UAE goalkeeper Khaled Tawhid stranded. Japan, bidding for their eighth consecutive Olympic appearance, will close out the group stage Monday against South Korea, who beat China 2-0 earlier Friday thanks to a brace from Lee Young Jun. China and the UAE were eliminated after both suffered back-to-back defeats. — Kyodo



Kuryu Matsuki (L) shoots during the second half of Japan's under-23 Asian Cup football group-stage match against the United Arab Emirates on 19 April 2024 at Jassim bin Hamad Stadium in Doha. **PHOTO: KYODO**

## MNL announce fixtures for Myanmar Women's League 2024

THE Myanmar National League Committee announced the fixtures for the Myanmar Women's League 2024 season to launch on 7 May.

The tourney features defending champion Myawady, ISPE FC, Thitsa Arman FC, Yangon United, Ayeyawady United, Shan United and YREO FC.

According to the fixture, the first round of the tourney will be held from 7 May to 11 June, while the second round

will run from 17 July to 20 August, and the third round will run from 6 September to 8 November.

Myawady United will play against Yangon United as an opener at Padonma Stadium in Yangon on 7 May, while Ayeyawady United will take on Thitsa Arman FC at Salin Stadium at the same time.

On the next day, Shan United will face

ISPE FC at Salin Stadium. The football matches of the Myanmar Women's League will be mainly held at Salin and Padonma stadiums, and some matches will be held at the Yangon United Sports Complex.

The Myanmar Women's League is being held for the sixth season this year, and in the five times it has been held, the Myawady team has won the cup three times, and ISPE FC has won the championship twice. — Ko Nyi Lay/KZL



The Myanmar Women's League is a popular domestic football competition for women footballers. **PHOTO: MWL**

## Bryan leads in Puntacana as Lower surges

WESLEY Bryan held a one-stroke lead at the PGA Tour's Puntacana Championship after shooting a six-under 66 second round on Friday.

Bryan had a three-shot lead overnight but saw his advantage cut after an excellent eight-under 64 from Justin

Lower.

The tournament on the Corales course at the Puntacana Resort and Club in the Dominican Republic is opposite the RBC Heritage tournament at Hilton Head on the PGA Tour schedule.

Bryan's efforts were un-

dermined by a bogey on his eighth hole, the 17<sup>th</sup> and again on the third, but he finished his round in style.

An eagle on the par-5 seventh was followed by birdies on his last two holes, leaving the American in confident mood.

— AFP

## S Korea beat China in U23 Asian Cup

*With this victory, South Korea secured a spot in the knockout stage, while China, suffering their second consecutive defeat, faces near elimination.*

LEE Young-jun took a brace as South Korea beat China 2-0 in the second round of group stage at the U23 Asian Cup on Friday.

South Korea advanced to the knockout stage after the win, while China, having lost two in a row, has almost been eliminated.

Lee, 20, gave South Korea the lead in the 34<sup>th</sup> minute with a sharp angle shot in the box, before securing the victory for Taeguk Warriors in the 69<sup>th</sup> minute with a quick counterattack.

After losing to 10-man Japan in the opening round, China tried to take three points against

South Korea, but Chinese youngsters didn't take their scoring chances. China has claimed only one victory since the tournament's inception in 2014, and they will take on the United Arab Emirates next Monday.

The U23 Asian Cup, which features 16 teams in four groups, is a qualification tournament for the Paris Olympics. The top three finishers at the U23 Asian Cup will directly qualify for the Olympics, while the fourth-placed team will face Guinea in a play-off for the last Olympic spot. — Xinhua

Tao Qianglong (R) of China vies with Eom Ji Sung of South Korea during the Group B match between China and South Korea at AFC U23 Asian Cup Qatar 2024 football tournament in Doha, Qatar, on 19 April 2024. **PHOTO: NIKKU/XINHUA**





## Young actors from BRICS+ nations to undergo professional training at theatre university in Russia

*Various esteemed institutions from participating nations, such as the Beijing Film Academy, the Bangalore University Film Academy from India, and others, have been invited to participate in the programme.*



Expressing enthusiasm for Russia's creative achievements, the extensive network of cultural and educational partners in BRICS+ countries is offering an internship for young theatre and film actors. **PHOTO: ANI**

This year several young cinema and drama theatre artists from the BRICS+ nations will receive professional training in Moscow. This is a new programme in the InteRussia internship cycle of the Gorchakov Foundation for Public Diplomacy, developed in the year of Russia's BRICS Chairmanship in cooperation with the TV BRICS International Media Network and the Russian Institute of Theatre Art – GITIS, reported by TV BRICS. Representatives of India, China, South Africa, Egypt, Argentina, Venezuela, and Cuba were among the first to indicate their interest in enrolling in the course. Sharing more details about it, Janna Tolstikov, CEO of TV BRICS said, "TV BRICS has an extensive network of cultural and educational

partners in the BRICS+ countries. Given the high interest and sincere respect of foreign colleagues for Russia's creative achievements, we offered to hold an internship for young theatre and film actors".

She added, "The Beijing Film Academy, the Central Academy of Dramatic Art and University of Communication of China, the Bangalore University Film Academy from India, Lefra Productions, the largest theatre event organiser in South Africa, the Higher Institute of Cinematography of Egypt, the Cesar Rengifo Children and Youth Theatre from Venezuela, the Bicentenario Theatre of Argentina, and the Institute of Cinematography of Cuba have already been invited to participate". — ANI



Alia shares her gratitude on Instagram, thanking Tom Harper for his kind words. **PHOTO: ANI**

## "Feels honoured," says Alia as she features on Time's 100 Most Influential list

ACTOR Alia Bhatt is elated as she has made it to Time's 100 most influential people of 2024 list. Director of 'Heart of Stone', Tom Harper, who collaborated with Alia on her first movie, wrote an article in the magazine praising her as a "truly international star".

Reacting to it, Alia took to her Instagram and wrote, "Honoured to be a part of the TIME100 @time.

Thank you dearest TomHarper for your kind kind words." Last year, Alia bagged several important awards including first National Film Award for her performance in Sanjay Leela Bhansali's directorial 'Gangubai Kathiawadi'. In 2023, she also made her Hollywood debut with 'Heart of Stone'. Indian-origin actor Dev Patel and wrestler Sakshi Malik also featured in the list. Dev's profile was written by Get Out and Nope actor Daniel Kaluuya.

"Dev radiates goodness. His humanity shines through every time he graces the screen, leaving you no choice but to root for him even when his character is doing something foul; his presence makes you understand where he's coming from," he wrote and praised Dev's latest release, Monkey Man. — ANI



Travel routes to Xinjiang, Zhangjiajie, and the Three Gorges Reservoir are popular. A cruise ship sails through the Wuxia Gorge, one of the Three Gorges on the Yangtze River, in Wushan County, southwest China's Chongqing Municipality. **PHOTO: XINHUA/FILE**

## China travel fair kicks off in Singapore

*Li Liangyi, president of China Express Travel, highlighted a consistent increase in customer numbers to China in recent months, particularly to destinations such as Xinjiang, Zhangjiajie, and the Three Gorges Reservoir.*

THE China Travel Fair 2024 kicked off at Singapore's Suntec Convention and Exhibition Centre on Friday.

Held by the China National Tourist Office in Singapore, the three-day event attracts 16 local travel agencies as well as several

airlines from both countries.

Travel agencies are introducing deep travel packages, such as 11- or 12-day trips, to customers as a mutual visa-exemption arrangement in February enables Singaporeans to stay in China for up to 30 days. "I am interested in

Chongqing. It deserves a trip as an internet celebrity '3D mountain city'. The hot pot also attracts me," said a customer at the fair.

"We saw a steady growth in customers to China in recent months. Travel routes to Xinjiang, Zhangjiajie, and the Three Gorges Reservoir are popular," said Li Liangyi, president of China Express Travel. Li noted that increasing flights between Singapore and China will unleash the potential for tourism in the future. — Xinhua