

The Global **NEW LIGHT** of MYANMAR

Domestic tourists surge in **Ngwetaung Beach** of Ayeyawady Region



Domestic travellers to Ngwetaung Beach in April. It offers a serene and secure getaway for beach enthusiasts.

IN April 2024, Ngwetaung Beach in Hainggyikyun Town, Ngaputaw Township, Ayeyawady Region, welcomed 48,955 domestic travellers, and the tourist numbers are on the rise, as reported by Daw Ni Ni Mar, an executive from the Myanmar Tourism Entrepreneurs Association (Ngwetaung Beach).

Domestic travellers, particularly from Yangon and Nay Pyi Taw

regions, visit Ngwetaung Beach annually, drawn by its proximity to Myat Mawtinsun Pagoda.

“During January, 35,455 domestic travellers visited Ngwetaung Beach, followed by 36,555 in February, 38,955 in March, and 48,955 in April. There’s a consistent increase in domestic tourist influx, with visitors throughout the year. The numbers surge monthly due to summer

school breaks and the Thingyan festival,” Daw Ni Ni Mar explained.

Ngwetaung Beach offers a serene and secure getaway for beach enthusiasts. Services like bicycle and motorboat rentals, as well as horse riding, are available. Furthermore, market stalls have opened, offering local cuisine, accessories, and souvenirs for purchase. — ASH/TKO

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MIC greenlights 7 new foreign, domestic investment businesses

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Inwa honours King Thadoe Minpya: Statue to receive full roundabout decoration, landscaping

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Myanmar Equestrian Federation postpones FEI One-Star Qualification Round-3 due to heatwave

Ayeyawady Region braces for potential natural disasters in coming monsoon

THE Department of Disaster Management in Ayeyawady Region has made preparations for potential natural disasters during the upcoming rainy season.

According to U Min Thein, the region’s director of the department, there are 121 storm shelters across the region capable of accommodating over 60,000 people. Regular emergency drills are conducted to ensure readiness, and rescue and support equipment are readily available for swift distribution.

These storm shelters include various facilities such as schools, monasteries, Dhammayon (community halls for religious purposes), multi-purpose shelters, and cyclone shelters. U Min



Thein highlighted that all shelters are strategically located along convenient transport routes, ensuring efficient access for residents.


District offices maintain a stock of 17 relief supplies, sufficient for 2,600 households, including lifejackets, rainproof tents, lifebuoys, ropes, and boats, for distribution in areas affected by natural disasters. — ASH/NT

Storm shelters in Ayeyawady Region.

NATIONAL

2 special criminal cases and 5 special civil appeal cases heard

A special appeal tribunal consisting of Chief Justice of the Union U Thar Htay and Judges of the Supreme Court of the Union U Kyi Thein, U Thaug Naing, U Thein Ko Ko and Daw Thin Thin Nwet was convened Monday morning at the Supreme Court of the Union and heard two special criminal appeal cases — Nos 1/2024 (Mandalay) and 2/2024 (Bago), and five special civil appeal cases — Nos 41/2023 (Sagaing), 2/2024 (Yangon), 8/2024 (Kachin), 13/2024 (Yangon) and 15/2024 (Mandalay). — MNA



ကမ္ဘာ့ကြက်ခြေနီနေ့
World Red Cross Day

"လူသားချင်းစနစ် အစဉ်ရှင်သန်ရေး
ပိုင်းဝန်းကြိုးပမ်းဆောင်ရွက်ပေး"
"Keeping Humanity Alive"

၂၀၂၄ ခုနှစ်၊ မေလ (၈) ရက်

COVID-19 report, 6 MAY 2024	
NEW TESTS	24,929
NEW CASES	46
CASUALTIES	Nil

Ambassador of Myanmar to Sri Lanka appointed

CHAIRMAN of the State Administration Council Prime Minister of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar appointed Daw Marlar Than Htaik, Director-General of the International Organizations and Economic Department, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka on 7 May 2024. — MNA

U Kyaw Soe Moe appointed as Ambassador of Myanmar to the People's Republic of Bangladesh

CHAIRMAN of the State Administration Council Prime Minister of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar appointed U Kyaw Soe Moe, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the People's Republic of Bangladesh on 7 May 2024. — MNA

88 gem lots sold on 4th day of 59th Myanmar Gems Emporium



Photos show gem merchants evaluating jade lots yesterday.

THE 59th Myanmar Gems Emporium 2024 continued its fourth day on Monday at the Maniyadana Jade Hall in Nay Pyi Taw with the presence of local and foreign merchants.

At the event, the officials inspected the proposed prices for gem lots from No 1 to 160 and announced that 88 lots were sold.

At noon, they opened the proposed prices for jade lots from No 1 to 950 and announced that they would be sold on the fifth day.

The remaining jade lots will be sold till 12 May. — MNA/KTZH

Public Notice

1. The Anti-Corruption Commission has established corruption prevention units within ministries to curb corruption effectively.
2. The ACC used SMS on mobile phones to ask the public who sought services at an office of the department of the relevant ministries via Short Code No "1111" for feedback, including the public feedback programme (PFP).
3. According to the PFP, the proper replies of the citizens via Short Code No "1111" will provide the quality of services of each department and the requirements for corruption prevention to be fixed.
4. Therefore, the public should reply to the questions of the ACC and corruption prevention units of the ministries via SMS at short code "1111". Such doing is a supportive measure for PFP, and the people are urged to cooperate in the operations.

Anti-Corruption Commission

Answer "1111" to fight against corruption
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MIC greenlights 7 new foreign, domestic investment businesses

THE meeting 5/2024 of the Myanmar Investment Commission was held yesterday afternoon at Office No 18 in Nay Pyi Taw. Member of the State Administration Council Deputy Prime Minister and Myanmar Investment Commission Chairman General Mya Tun Oo and members of the commission attended it.

The meeting discussed increasing the capital of the ongoing investment activities, including the industrial

sector, the service sector and the housing development sector and approved seven new foreign and domestic investment projects. The investment amount of these businesses reached US\$9.281 million and over K282.7 billion, which will create 1,423 local employment opportunities.

Among 53 countries and regions that have invested in Myanmar as of the end of April 2024, the most investments came from Singapore, China



SAC Member Deputy Prime Minister Chairman of MIC General Mya Tun Oo presides over the Myanmar Investment Commission meeting 5/2024 yesterday.

and Thailand. Among the 12 economic sectors, the most invested sector is the energy sector, with 28.47 per cent of the total investment, 24.43 per cent of the total investment in the oil

and natural gas sector and 14.47 per cent of the total investment invested in the manufacturing sector.

The Myanmar Investment Commission is verifying and

approving investment proposals submitted by domestic and foreign investors and providing investment services for existing investors under the Myanmar Investment Law. — MNA/TS

Four-point objectives set to develop libraries in Myanmar

THE Myanmar Libraries Development Cooperation Committee organized its coordination meeting in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

Speaking at the event, Union Minister for Information U Maung Maung Ohn, who is also chairman of the committee, said the State Administration Council Chairman is making efforts to accelerate the reading rate and develop the libraries holding the ceremonies to donate books and publications to libraries at the National Library in Nay Pyi Taw and regions/states simultaneously on 10 April, and the events received over K1,000 million and 85,540 books and publications.

The Myanmar Libraries Development Cooperation Committee was organized on 22 April, aiming to carry out the systematic use of cash donations, books, and publications and implement the Prime Min-



Union Minister U Maung Maung Ohn addresses the coordination meeting of the Myanmar Libraries Development Cooperation Committee yesterday.

ister's policy.

There are 6,106 ward and village libraries that conform to five standards across the nation, but now there are only 3,508 libraries, whereas 2,598 have been suspended.

He added that there is a four-point objectives for spend-

ing cash donations, books, and publications effectively. They are to reopen the suspended libraries, establish new libraries, conduct activities to accelerate the public reading rate and distribute the books and publications.

He also said that the Prime

Minister in his speech at the book donation ceremonies held on 3 and 10 April called on the officials, parents, and teachers to make efforts to emerge the youths with five strengths, promote the characteristics of libraries, urge readable people to read and conduct awareness

campaigns as about 70 per cent of the population is rural people, and establish libraries across the nation as the country has 330 townships, 471 towns, totaling 801, 3,485 wards, 23,910 village-tracts and 63,210 villages, and the key role of libraries that can earn literary knowledge to solve the daily challenges.

Deputy Minister U Ye Tint, vice-chairman of the committee, then clarified the library development activities. Committee members discussed the conditions of national libraries in Nay Pyi Taw and Yangon, regional and state libraries, construction of new libraries, reopening of suspended libraries, upgrade work into e-library and library development programmes to be conducted in the 2024-2025 Academic Year.

The Union minister concluded the meeting after hearing the presentations given by the attendees. — MNA/KTZH

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

SAC member pays homage to remains of Namhu Sayadaw in Hopong

STATE Administration Council Member Khun San Lwin, accompanied by relevant officials, paid homage to Sayadaws and monks and donated alms at Namhu Monastery in Kyauktan village-tract, Hopoing Township in Pa-O Self-Administered Zone in Shan State (South) yesterday.

The SAC member and party paid homage to the remains of Namhu Presiding Nayaka Sayadaw Bhaddanta Vayama and offered day meals to Sayadaws and monks.

The Namhu Presiding Nayaka Sayadaw Bhaddanta Vayama is 101 years old and 81 Vasa when he passed away on 26 April.

The Sayadaw served Ho-

pong Jotikayama Ovada Cariya duties, Pa-O literature and culture propagation, Sangha Ovada Cariya, Hopong Thiri Mingala Ovada Cariya, Hopong Pariyatti Palaka examination Ovada Cariya and Myanmar Nagapura Sasana Lankara Samane examination.

The final rites event of Sayadaw was held in Namhu village on 6 May. — MNA/KTZH

SAC Member Khun San Lwin and officials offer donations yesterday in Hopong.



32nd National Monsoon Forum held

THE opening ceremony of the 32nd National Monsoon Forum 2024 was held at the Multi-Hazard Early Warning Centre, Nay Pyi Taw. It was organized by the Department of Meteorology and Hydrology (DMH),

the Ministry of Transport and Communications yesterday.

Director-General Dr Kyaw Moe Oo of the Department of Meteorology and Hydrology delivered the opening remarks. Departmental repre-

sentatives from the Disaster Management, Agriculture Department, Water and other related departments and participants from the Department of Meteorology and Hydrology, totalling 70, attended the forum.

The forum discussed reviewing seasonal outlook for the weather and water level forecasts in the 2024 rainy season (southwest monsoon period), condition of agro-meteorology, terms and terminology of meteorology, seismic disaster in Myanmar, presenting on sectorial lessons learned during the 2023-2024 winter season (northeast monsoon period), sectorial preparedness for the 2024 southwest monsoon season and suggestions for seasonal weather forecasts. — MNA



The 32nd National Monsoon Forum in progress yesterday.

Statement

MYANMA Post, under the Ministry of Transport and Communications, makes efforts to develop libraries across the nation and raise the reading rate of the public. Therefore, it is announced that those who want to donate books to community centres (libraries) established by the Ministry of Information can send books to the libraries free of charge by Myanmar Post.

Daily newspapers available online

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

News and Periodicals Enterprise



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NATIONAL

Inwa honours King Thadoe Minpya: Statue to receive full roundabout decoration, landscaping

A complete roundabout and landscaping with green trees will be developed near the King Thadoe Minpya statue which is an honour to Inwa, said author and archaeologist Bo Shate (Yatnapura).

The image is located between the Oo Ti and Yway Taw Yu gates in front of the drum-shaped city wall where the kings came in and went out in ancient times and the construction of the statue was initiated and organized by the Sitagu Sayadaw.

“There are three layers of terraces to mark three eras of Inwa: King Thadoe Mintaya era, Nyaungyan era and Hsinphyushin King Myaydu era. The King Thadoe Mintaya bronze statue lies on top of these three terraces. The statue faces east. The

lions represent four eras. There are four lions above and below — the first Inwa era lion, the second Inwa era lion of Nyaungyan, the third Inwa era lion of Hsinphyushin King Myaydu, and the fourth Inwa era lion of King Bagyidaw (King Sagaing) or Amrapura era lion,” he said.

The land plot around the statue has been officially bought from the owners in order to make a roundabout, but the construction hasn't been completed yet.

“The roundabout of 100 ft in circumference hasn't been completed. Only an passage at the north-east corner can accommodate a single car. A few days ago, I posted online that I wanted to plant trees, complete the roundabout construction and lay a gravel-filled road, and a rich friend of



King Inwa Thadoe Minpya statue, located between Oo Ti and Yway Taw Yu entrances in front of the drum-shaped city wall.

mine offered to sponsor for it. So, locals, village administrator and I are planning to survey the area, put up posts for the roundabout, make a drivable road around it after filling it with gravels, and plant trees. We have submitted this plan to the Department of Archaeology,” he said.

Since the surrounding area around the King Thadoe Minpya statue appears to be a barren field despite its popularity among people for pre-wedding documentaries, photo shoots and its valuable cultural heritage, they will have to make this plan and after planting trees, the continued growth of the trees through activities such as watering and weeding will be taken care of in cooperation with the residents, he added. — MT/ZN

Royal Thai Embassy to suspend reservation cancelling system as of 7 May



The photo shows people seeking visa applications at the Royal Thai Embassy in Yangon in April.

IN an attempt to protect the reselling of reservation slots, the Royal Thai Embassy will stop the reservation cancelling system as of 7 May, and the appointment booking date will also be substituted, as the embassy said in an announcement on 4 May.

The announcement says the number of applicants for registration of visa reservation has been limited on the basis of each opening day, and a booking is set for one person only.

Currently, there has been inappropriate behaviour of some individuals trying to make reservations as much as possi-

ble by using different passport numbers and fake names in order to get a lot of booking slots, resulting in a high rate of “no show up” of registered applicants on the appointment date, the embassy said.

From 7 May 2024, the embassy stopped the cancellation system so that some individuals who have dishonest behaviour cannot make reservations and resell the reservation slots to other people. The reservation systems will also be changed from opening for making the reservation 30 days in advance to 14 days in advance. Therefore, the applicants are encour-

aged to thoughtfully consider the date of appointment before making a reservation, as the applicants cannot cancel the prior appointment and can make the reservation again after the previous date of appointment.

The applicants who make the reservation before 7 May 2024 can still cancel the booking with the cancellation code or cancellation link in the booking confirmation email. However, the applicants who make the reservation on 7 May 2024 will no longer receive the cancellation code or cancellation link, it said. — MT/ZS

Shan State-produced cabbage sales on the rise

AMONG vegetables, cabbage produced from Shan State has been sold better.

“It is time for demand for Shan State-produced vegetables to rise as vegetable production from other areas has been low. Demand has climbed up now but not better than last year. Both demand and supply are better compared to the previous three months,” said a trader, Ko Sanay Maung Maung, from the Aungban vegetable market.

At the Aungban vegetable market, tomato sales have increased, and some vegetables have been sold well.

“Including tomato, most vegetables, especially Shan

State-produced ones, have been sold well. At present, vegetable production from lower Myanmar has been low; for example, tomato season ended in Monywa,” said an official from the Aungban vegetable wholesale trading centre.

At Aungban vegetable market, French bean and bell pepper prices declined while prices of tomato, snow pea, cauliflower and mustard rose.

“In Aungban, the price of snow peas is good, while the price of French beans slightly falls back, and the price of bell pepper declines, too. Top-grade tomato price has climbed up,” he said. — Thit Taw/ZS



Cabbages and other vegetables produced in Aungban.

NATIONAL

11th Buddhological Knowledge Test final set for 28 May



The eleventh Buddhological Knowledge Test and graduation ceremony.

THE 11th Buddhological Knowledge Test, which assesses contestants' knowledge about the life of Buddha, will culminate in its final stage at the National Theatre on 28 May, as announced by the organizing committee.

Contestants are expected to have a comprehensive understanding of six volumes of Maha Buddhological treaties, along with knowledge in areas such as culture, Buddhological basics, Ab-

hidhamma, Jataka, Theravada Buddhism history, Pali dictionary, and general knowledge relating to the religion. That includes impromptu questions and special prize consideration.

The initial written test will take place on the morning of 24 May, where examinees can opt for their preferred medium from a mobile phone, computer, or tablet. Following this, in the quarter-final, 26 contestants who passed

the initial test will be divided into two groups for further written assessment. The semi-finals will then narrow down the field to six out of ten contestants for progression.

In the final stage, contestants will be evaluated on their oratory skills, proficiency in Pali, and their overall knowledge of Buddhism through verbal questions. Based on this assessment, five winners will be selected. — TWA/NT

Guidelines issued to protect animals from heatstroke

THE Livestock Breeding and Veterinary Department has issued a notification emphasizing the importance of protecting livestock from heatstroke.

The notification advises arranging shelters to shield animals from high temperatures and restricting grazing to the cooler evenings. Animals should be kept in shade areas during the day, provided with ample drinking water, and fed hydrated food to prevent heatstroke. If movement is necessary, the department recommends ensuring access to drinking water and shade areas, stocking up on straw and fresh grass in advance, administering vaccines regularly to prevent infectious diseases, and keeping firefighting equipment such as fire hooks, extinguishers, sand, and water buckets on farms and in food storage areas to mitigate fire risks.

Livestock owners are urged to report any unusual health events to the relevant administrative body, Livestock Breeding and Veterinary Department, or the Myanmar Livestock Federation. — TWA/TKO



The photo shows feeding cows in shade areas.

Fisheries Dept announces 15 storm shelters for fishermen

THE Fisheries Department has allocated 15 storm shelters for fishermen at sea during the rainy season.

These shelters include Mingan Creek in Sittway Township, Rakhine State, Phayonga Island in Pauktaw Township, Ngalepway Creek in Kyaukpyu

Township, Hsingaung Port in Thandwe Township, Andrew Bay, the wharf in Taungup

Township and Amawchaing in Tintaw Village-tract, Gwa Township.



Additionally, there are shelters at Hainggyi Island in Ngaputaw Township, Ayeyawady Region; Chaungwa Village in Pyinkhayaing of Ngaputaw Township; Kadonkani Village in Bogale Township; Wah Island in Ye Township; Middle Moscos and South Moscos islands in

Launglon Township in Taninthayi Region; Taninthayi Island in Myeik Township; and Pyinsabu Island in Kyunsu Township.

The department has also cautioned against fishing near the islands under the guise of seeking shelter from storms. — TWA/NT

Hainggyi Island designated as a shelter.

Singapore accounts for 29% of FDI in Myanmar

SINGAPORE'S foreign direct investment in Myanmar has constituted 29 per cent of overall FDI, pumping in over US\$21 billion from 299 existing projects as of 30 April 2024, the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration's statistics showed.

Singapore ranked first in the foreign direct investment inflows to Myanmar, followed by China with 25.9 per cent (\$18.89 billion) and Hong Kong SAR with 13.5 per

cent (\$9.84 billion).

The leading countries with significant investments are Singapore, China, Hong Kong (SAR), the UK, Thailand, the Republic of Korea, Viet Nam, Japan, Malaysia and the Netherlands so far.

Singapore-listed companies mainly invest in urban development, real estate, power, and manufacturing sectors.

The power sector made up 27.94 per cent of FDI among the

12 industries, followed by the oil and gas sector, which had 20 per cent, and manufacturing, which had 15.45 per cent.

The FDI flows into power, oil and gas, manufacturing, transport and communications, real estate, hotels and tourism, mining, livestock and fisheries, industrial estate, agriculture, construction and services respectively.

Singapore stood as the larg-

est foreign investor in Myanmar in the previous years, pulling in the FDI of \$1.158 billion in the 2022-2023 FY, \$297 million in the 2021-2022 mini-budget period (Oct-Mar), \$1.85 billion in the FY 2019-2020, \$2.4 billion in the FY 2018-2019, \$724.4 million in the mini-budget period (April-September, 2018), \$2.16 billion in the 2017-2018 FY, \$3.8 billion in the 2016-2017 FY, \$4.25 billion in the 2015-2016 FY, \$4.29 billion in the

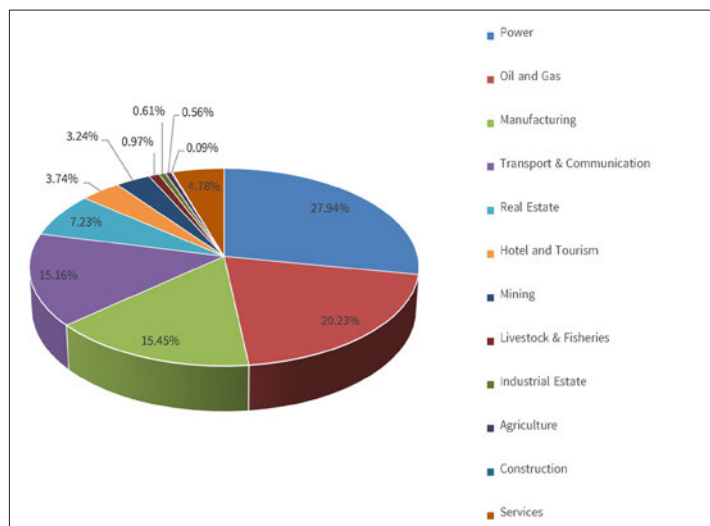
2014-2015 FY, \$2.3 billion in the 2013-2014 FY and \$418 million in the 2012-2013 FY respectively.

Additionally, Singapore emerged as the second largest foreign investor in the Thilawa Special Economic Zone after a top investing Japan.

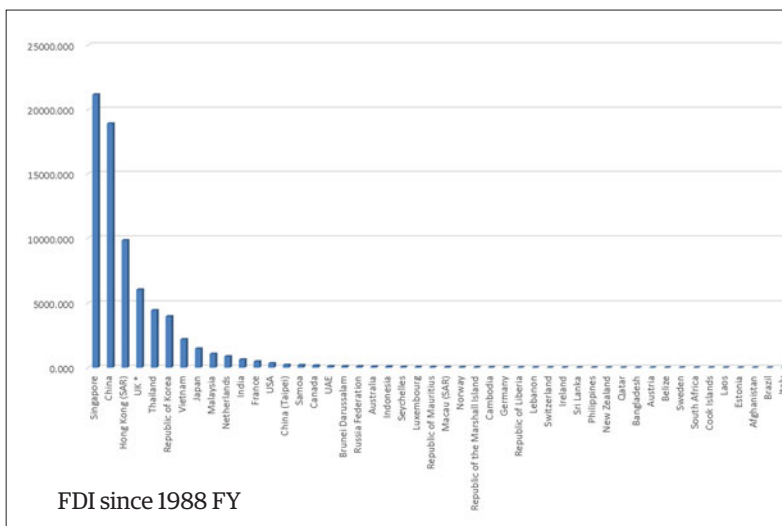
Next, Myanmar attracted foreign direct investments of \$661.6 million in the 2023-2024 financial year (April-March), which showed almost a 60 per cent drop compared with the (\$1.64 billion) of 2022-2023 FY (April- March).

The Myanmar Investment Commission greenlit 71 foreign projects from 14 countries in the past FY. Singapore is the top source of FDI, with \$345 million. China is placed as the second largest investor in Myanmar, with \$225 million.

The power sector topped the FDI line-ups with \$374.525 million by the permitted enterprises this FY, without capital expansion by the existing enterprises, followed by the manufacturing industry with \$151 million. — KK



FDI sector



FDI countries (figures in million). SOURCE DICA

MGE revokes licence of over 600 gem trading licences

MORE than 600 gem trading licences have been cancelled, according to notification released by Myanma Gems Enterprise (MGE).

The licences expired on 31 December 2021, and traders failed to renew them, resulting in revocation.

The revoked licences are 409 gem and jewellery trading licences, 77 rough gemstone and finished products trading licences and 121 licences for finished gems and carvings, totalling 607 licences.

For further detail of those licences, traders can contact the contact numbers (067 3414342, 067 3414382) (Nay Pyi Taw head office), 01 665092 (Yangon), 09 43087569 (Mandalay), 086 2221115 (Mogok), 09 425404928 (Mongshu), (09 455339741) of Lonkhin/Phakant, Mongshu and 074 2522431, 074 2520499 (Myitkyina).

Under the approval of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation, those holding available licences (gems and jewellery trading licence, manufacturing

licence for finished gems and carvings and rough gemstone and finished products trading licence issued by the Myanma 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 Myanma Gems Enterprise of winding down a business with one month's notice prior to ceasing the operation.

Only those holding licences with a two-year expiry can reinstate them with the set penalty starting from 1 April 2024. The licences that expire more than two years at that time will get cancelled, as per the notification.

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

YGN palm oil wholesale reference rate remains unchanged this week



THE wholesale reference rate of palm oil for the Yangon market remains the same at K5,220 per viss this week starting from 6 May, like that of the previous week ending 5 May, according to the Supervisory Committee on edible oil import and distribution.

The Supervisory Committee on Edible Oil Import and Distribution under the Ministry of Commerce has been closely observing the FOB prices in

Malaysia and Indonesia, adding transport costs, tariffs and banking services to decide the wholesale market reference rate for edible oil on a weekly basis.

Nonetheless, the market price is higher than the reference price.

To control overcharging, the Consumer Affairs Department under the Ministry of Commerce informed the consumers of lodging the

complaints for overcharging through the call centre's hotline in late August. The Department urged consumers not to buy palm oil at high prices. The Committee notified that any person who is involved in price gouging and oil storage to attempt market manipulation will face legal action under the Essential Goods and Services Law.

The complaints for overcharging can be lodged over Hot Line: 1535 of the Call Centre of the Consumers Affairs Department or sent to the Facebook Page of the Department and the region and state departments concerned.

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

OPINION

Need to start growing trees at present

THE recent severe impacts of El Niño have provided a stark wake-up call for people around the world, including those in Myanmar. These events have highlighted the critical role of tree planting in mitigating and preventing severe climatic conditions such as extreme heat, untimely rain, strong winds, earthquakes, flooding, inundation, river and creek overflow, landslides, and various types of fires.

Deforestation is a growing problem globally, and Myanmar is no exception. While some forest areas naturally degrade due to various reasons, most are converted into barren plains due to timber extraction, expansion of public residences, land reclamation for farming, industrial expansion, and other factors.

Consequently, forest areas are shrinking year after year, contributing to droughts and water shortages worldwide. Deforestation also leads to the release of CFC gases, which further deplete the ozone layer, exacerbating environmental issues and creating dual fronts of crisis, both in the sky and on the ground.

A saying spreading in the forestry professional realm shows that the best time to plant a tree was thirty years ago. The second best time is today. The same is true for conservation. As such, everybody needs to make collaborative efforts to the preservation of the environment by growing trees so as to save their lives properly. So, everybody should not waste precious time, and they should turn to grow trees for all.

late. Every tree planted today will contribute to better weather conditions tomorrow for everyone. By taking action now, the world can avoid future weather-related problems and create a better future for all.

A saying spreading in the forestry professional realm shows that the best time to plant a tree was thirty years ago. The second best time is today. The same is true for conservation. As such, everybody needs to make collaborative efforts to the preservation of the environment by growing trees so as to save their lives properly. So, everybody should not waste precious time, and they should turn to grow trees for all.

It is crucial for everyone to assess how many trees they have planted and to understand the vital role trees play in saving the planet. People need to consider how to restore natural forest areas in their respective countries and how tree planting can help absorb carbon dioxide and emit oxygen, benefiting all living beings.

It is evident that most people worldwide now understand the impacts of El Niño and the importance of tree planting for saving lives and the environment. Therefore, it is imperative for everyone to recognize the need to plant suitable trees in their countries to improve their environments and prevent global catastrophes.

Myanmar citizens, in particular, must understand the critical role of trees and find the best ways to plant suitable trees in their environment as part of conservation efforts. The time to start planting trees is now, and it is not too

From The Taker to The Giver

By Min Zan

LIFE is often likened to a journey, a winding path fraught with unexpected twists and turns. Within this journey, there exist moments of both profound joy and deep sorrow, each shaping our understanding of the world and our place within it. For Ko Kyaw Kha, a man of seventy years, this reflection on life's journey comes as he sits patiently in an office, awaiting the bureaucratic process of registering a bond and transferring his property to his adopted son. In this mundane moment, he is transported back in time, thirty-five years prior, to that very same office with vastly different intentions and circumstances.

In his younger days, Ko Kyaw Kha was a man driven by ambition, deeply immersed in his career within the echelons of government service at the township level. It was during this period that he found himself in a similar office, but with an entirely different purpose – to register a bond for a property bestowed upon him by his aunt over a decade prior. At that juncture in his life, his focus was singularly directed toward the accumulation of material wealth and the cultivation of his own status within society. Yet, amidst the pursuit of personal gain, he overlooked the necessity of official documentation, a critical oversight that would later come to haunt him.

The unregistered bond, a mere administrative formality in his eyes at the time, would soon emerge as a formidable obstacle

when he became embroiled in a legal dispute. This unforeseen predicament served as a stark reminder of the inherent importance of official documentation in matters of property ownership and legal rights. Through this experience, Ko Kyaw Kha learned a profound lesson about the significance of foresight and diligence in safeguarding one's assets and securing their rightful inheritance for future generations.

As he sits in the office, contemplating the passage of time and the myriad experiences that have shaped his life's journey, Ko Kyaw Kha finds solace in the wisdom gained from his past mistakes. In this moment of quiet introspection, he recognizes the transient nature of earthly possessions and the enduring value of lessons learned along the way.

Sitting in the office, amidst the paperwork and bureaucracy, Ko Kyaw Kha finds himself occupying a vastly different role than he did in his youth. No longer is he the driven and ambitious young man relentlessly pursuing personal gain. Instead, he sits as a symbol of maturity and wisdom, preparing to pass on his hard-earned property and assets to his adopted son. This transition from accumulator to bestower marks a significant shift, one that underscores the inevitability of change and evolution in the journey of life.

As Ko Kyaw Kha contemplates this profound transformation, he delves into the deeper

meaning behind these shifts in perspective and priorities. Life, he muses, is a continuous cycle of growth and adaptation, where in our values and aspirations undergo profound metamorphoses over time. What once held paramount importance – such as the acquisition of material wealth and individual success – now pales in comparison to the overarching desire to secure a prosperous and stable future for his beloved family.

With each passing year, the passage of time has bestowed Ko Kyaw Kha with a profound sense of humility and gratitude. He now understands that genuine fulfillment derives not from the accumulation of possessions but rather from the enduring bonds formed with others and the legacy we leave behind. In choosing to entrust his property to his adopted son, he is making a conscious investment in something far more precious than mere material wealth: the perpetuation of familial ties and the perpetuation of love and support across generations.

In relinquishing his possessions, Ko Kyaw Kha is not only ensuring the financial security of his descendants but also cementing his enduring presence in their lives. Through this act of generosity and foresight, he seeks to impart a timeless lesson on the importance of compassion, integrity, and familial solidarity. As he sits in the office, pen-poised to sign the necessary documents, Ko Kyaw Kha finds

solace in the knowledge that his legacy will endure long after he has departed, a testament to the enduring power of love and kinship.

Surrounded by his support system – his lawyer, his son, and a handful of well-wishers – Ko Kyaw Kha finds himself enveloped in a palpable atmosphere of patience and resilience. By the way, here, it is necessary to mention his supporters. The lawyer was his ex-pupil. The other two supporters who would sign the bond about to be registered were also his ex-pupils; one is a doctor, and the other one is an expert in electronics. In the old times, they were just young ones who could afford nothing in social activities, but now, they are mature and reliable persons for Ko Kyaw Kha. He visualized the scenes when they studied the lessons he taught in his tuition classes.

In addition, he saw the two women and two men who were also his ex-pupils at that registration office. As soon as they saw Ko Kyaw Kha and his party, they greeted him and gave him seats in a friendly manner. Despite the bureaucratic hurdles and unforeseen delays that threaten to impede their progress, he remains unwavering in his resolve to navigate through this labyrinthine process until its completion. This gathering serves as a poignant reminder of the invaluable role that solidarity and perseverance play in overcoming life's myriad challenges.

Through the crucible of his own experiences, Ko Kyaw Kha has gleaned invaluable insights into the capricious nature of existence. What once appeared to be a linear trajectory defined by the pursuit of material possessions and societal accolades has metamorphosed into a more nuanced exploration of purpose and significance. He has come to appreciate that while the external trappings of success may fluctuate, the core principles and values that underpin his identity remain resolutely intact, serving as steadfast beacons amidst life's tempestuous seas.

As the minutes stretch into hours, and they continue to await the arrival of the pertinent officer, Ko Kyaw Kha finds himself drawing solace from the broader perspective that his journey has afforded him. In this moment of liminality, he recognizes the ephemeral nature of temporal setbacks and bureaucratic inconveniences, understanding that they are but fleeting chapters in the grand narrative of his life. Each passing moment, each seemingly inconsequential interaction, contributes to the rich tapestry of experiences that constitute his unique existence, weaving together a narrative imbued with resilience, fortitude, and unwavering determination.

In the midst of this protracted wait, Ko Kyaw Kha finds reassurance in the knowledge that this juncture is but a transient interlude in the grand symphony of his life. Armed with the unwaver-



ing support of his loved ones and fortified by the lessons garnered through adversity, he remains steadfast in his commitment to surmounting any obstacle that dares to obstruct his path. For him, this moment serves as a testament to the enduring power of human resilience and the indomitable spirit that propels us forward, even in the face of life's most formidable challenges.

Reflecting on the culmination of his journey, Ko Kyaw Kha finds himself overwhelmed by a profound realization: true wealth transcends the material realm. It is not gauged by the abundance of possessions one amasses but rather by the richness of the connections forged with others and the lasting imprint left upon the world. As he takes pen to paper, finalizing the transfer of his prop-

erty to his son, he is filled with a deep-seated sense of gratitude and contentment that emanates from a life imbued with purpose and meaning.

In this pivotal moment, Ko Kyaw Kha recognizes the intrinsic value of familial bonds and the enduring legacy they impart. By entrusting his wealth to his son, he is not merely bequeathing physical assets but rather nurturing the foundation of a lineage built upon love, integrity, and shared values. It is a testament to the profound impact that individuals can have on the lives of those they hold dear, transcending the boundaries of time and space.

With each stroke of the pen, Ko Kyaw Kha solidifies his commitment to a legacy defined not by material abundance but by

the immeasurable wealth of familial devotion and kinship. As he gazes upon the completed document, he does so with a heart brimming with fulfillment, knowing that his contributions to the world extend far beyond the confines of mere possessions. For in the end, it is the depth of one's relationships and the imprint of one's deeds that genuinely define the measure of a life well lived.

All in all, the first time Ko Kyaw Kha got to that office was as a taker, the one who accepted the properties of his aunt, but after 35 years, when he got there for the second time, he found himself as a giver: the one who would give his properties to his adopted son. Are lives according to natural law? Ko Kyaw Kha sighed silently.



File photo shows discarded food. PHOTO: UN FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION/KYODO

World wasted 20% of food produced in 2022: UN report

Unfortunately, the report showed a worsening trend compared to previous years, with food waste increasing from 931 million tonnes in 2019 to the current figure.

ALMOST a fifth of the food produced globally in 2022 was wasted, even though around a third of humanity is facing hunger, a UN body said in a recent report.

Of the 1.05 billion tonnes of food waste, around 60 per cent came from households, while the food service and retail sectors were responsible for about 28 per

cent and 12 per cent, respectively, according to the UN Environment Programme's Food Waste Index Report.

The report, released in late March, came as the UN body is tracking countries' progress in halving food waste by 2030 under the Sustainable Development Goals. But the figure worsened from 931 million tons of waste in

2019 in its previous report published in 2021.

Japan's food waste reduced by 31 per cent in 2020 from 2008, when comparable data became available, according to the report.

Japan is among only four countries in the Group of 20 major economies as well as the European Union that have waste estimates suitable for tracking

progress towards the target year, the report said.

On average, each person discarded 79 kilogrammes of food annually, equal to 1.3 meals per day for people in the world who are impacted by hunger, with an estimated 29.6 per cent of the global population facing food insecurity, it said.

The issue is also affecting the

climate, as recent data showed that food loss and waste generates eight to 10 per cent of annual global greenhouse gas emissions, almost five times the level of the aviation sector, it said.

"Not only is this a major development issue, but the impacts of such unnecessary waste are causing substantial costs to the climate and nature," UNEP Ex-

ecutive Director Inger Andersen said in a press release.

G20 countries can take a leading role in international cooperation and policy development towards meeting the goal, and can share their expertise with countries just getting started in tackling the issue, the report said.

SOURCE: Kyodo

NATIONAL



Photos show the Pouroing Water at the Bayan Tree Festival at Myathalun Pagoda in 2023.

Magway Myathalun Pagoda to host Vesak Day rice offering and banyan tree watering festival



THE Myathalun Pagoda's Board of Trustees has announced that the rice offering ceremony for over 1,000 monks and the watering of the banyan tree festival will take place at

the Magway Myathalun Pagoda on Vesak Day (Full Moon Day of Kason). The festival will be organized by the Rice Offering Festival Committee in Magway

region, in collaboration with donors from various departments and townships, on the morning of 22 May. U Ohn Kyaing, a member of the Myathalun Pagoda's

Board of Trustees, stated, "On Vesak Day morning, there will be a rice offering ceremony at the Myathalun Pagoda. We will provide offerings to over 1,000 monks from the mon-

asteries. In the evening, we will celebrate Vesak Day by watering the banyan trees in the pagoda's precinct, as we have done in previous years." — ASH/TRKM

Myanmar Equestrian Federation postpones FEI One-Star Qualification Round 3 due to heatwave

U Win Aung, the News and Information Officer from the Myanmar Equestrian Federation, announced the postponement of the FEI One Star Qualification Round-3, a long-distance equestrian event scheduled for 30 May, to the end of June due to the hot weather.



Photos show some equestrian athletes practising in the horse race court.

"Clubs intending to take training for the competition must register a month in advance. While the registration list is still incomplete, several clubs have already signed up. Competition time has not yet arrived, and currently, five to ten clubs are registered with the Federation," stated U Win Aung.

The FEI One Star Qualification Round 1 covers a 50-kilometre journey, while Round 2 extends to 75 km. Round 3, however, spans 85 km. Equestrian competition, recognized as an Olympic sport, has seen success in international arenas. The Myanmar Equestrian Federation aims to foster emerging talent and enable participation in the Southeast Asian Games in Thailand in 2025 through this competition. — ASH/MKKS



One-stop mobile application for buying and selling property



Demonstration on using Myanmar Property Dealer (MPD) application.

ONE-STOP services for property sales and services are now available with a mobile application, according to Myanmar Property Dealer, which has developed the application.

The application is called Myanmar Property Dealer (MPD) and will allow direct communication between sellers and buyers.

"Most property applications have a fee. Some sell in packages. The main advantage of using our app is that we don't sell it. Anyone can download it for free from the Play Store. After filling in the required data, you can use this app as you like. To sell a house or an apartment, the owner needs to enter his phone number. Anyone interested can contact him. There is no middleman, and it is direct communication between the seller and the buyer," said Ko Salai Kyaw Myo Tun from Myanmar Property Dealer.

The app is available in Myanmar,

English, and Chinese, and foreigners looking for property can also find it on this application. In addition, users can safely store data, such as property information, activities, and history records, in one place.

"Another point is the user classification, such as normal users who sell their own houses and agent users who can use this app like a project. An agent user can open an admin account, under which three supervisor accounts can be created. There can be many promoters under an agent. So, the agent can check and control which promoter is doing what, writing which posts or if they are circumventing the system to gain an unfair advantage. You can see the latest property news and interviews. No other news is available. Just property news," he explained. Interested users on iOS, Android, or any mobile phone can download this app for free from the respective Play Store. — Thit Taw/ZN

Japan left to rethink COVID grants as telework facilities empty out

JAPANESE municipalities are increasingly being left to rethink the use of coronavirus-era government subsidies as remote work facilities built with the funding are falling into disuse, a survey by Kyodo News found Sunday.

Since the legal status of COVID-19 was downgraded to the same category as seasonal influenza a year ago, some facilities have already been forced to close due to dwindling usage, while others have been repurposed, hosting events such as matchmaking gatherings.

The central government has budgeted a total of over 18 trillion yen (\$117.6 billion) in extraordinary subsidies since fiscal 2020 following the out-

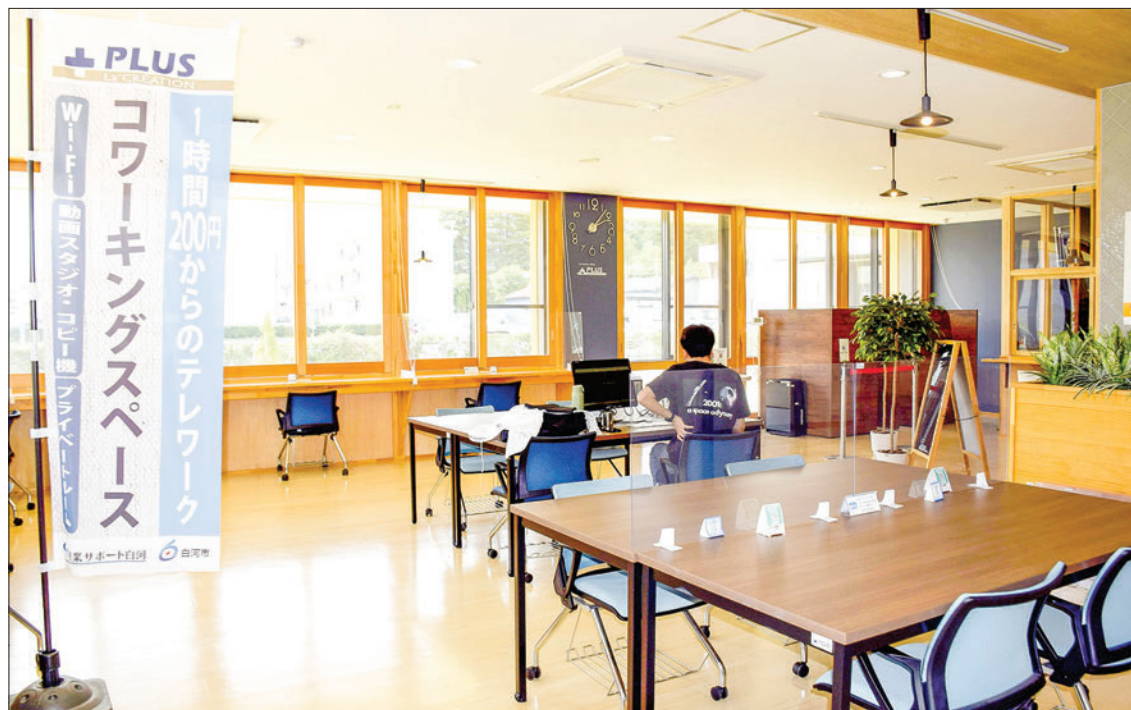
break of the pandemic.

Uwajima in Ehime Prefecture, western Japan, spent 1.1 million yen to open a “workation” facility in March 2021, which allowed employees to work while travelling. However, the space only attracted five users in fiscal 2021 due to its inconvenient location.

The facility was not used at all from fiscal 2022 to 2023, leading to its closure at the beginning of this year.

Shirakawa in Fukushima Prefecture, northeastern Japan, spent 160 million yen in fiscal 2020 to build a communal working space, but daily visitors only number in the single digits, the survey found.

Elsewhere in the prefecture, subsidies to renovate an



The photo taken on 30 April 2024 shows a communal working space in Shirakawa, Fukushima Prefecture. **PHOTO: KYODO**

existing community centre in Aizubange into a remote work facility have failed to attract more than a trickle of visitors.

“In rural areas, going to the office has become the norm (again),” an Aizubange munic-

ipal official said.

Motohiro Sato, a professor at Hitotsubashi University’s Graduate School of Economics, said, “The policies of many municipalities are simply imitations of those of other regional

governments and do not meet their own local circumstances and needs.”

Sato also emphasized the need for human resource development in each municipality. —Kyodo

Madonna wows Rio with ‘Celebration Tour’ finale



US pop star Madonna performs onstage during a free concert at Copacabana beach in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, on 4 May 2024. **PHOTO: AFP**

POP idol Madonna gave it all in Rio de Janeiro as she looked back on her four-decade career in a historic show before throngs of joyful fans jammed onto Brazil’s famed Copacabana beach on Saturday night.

The 65-year-old singer walked down an elevated bridge from the Copacabana Palace hotel shortly after 10:30 pm (0130 GMT Sunday) to a massive stage for one of the most important shows of her career.

Dressed all in black, Madonna broke into her hit “Nothing Really Matters” at the start of a burst of brute energy.

“Rio, here we are in the most beautiful place in the world,” she said at the start of a performance that brought the giddy Brazilian audience to its feet.

The show marked the final stop on her “Celebration Tour” noting her 40 years atop pop charts, in a free event that drew

an estimated 1.6 million people from across Brazil, according to the city tourism office.

Billed as a “historic” show, it blended music and dance with cabaret. Madonna showcased her versatility with dozens of set and costume changes, spectacular lights and many giant screens along the beach.

She went from being dressed as a schoolgirl in a miniskirt to an irreverent Christian in a black cape while luminous crosses circled around her during “Like a Prayer,” a song that cost her excommunication from the Catholic Church.

Live To Tell

Madonna was joined on stage during the performance of her hit “Vogue” by Brazilian singer Anitta, who is known for taking Carioca funk — the soundtrack of Rio’s favelas — to the rest of the world.

With “Live To Tell”, she paid tribute to AIDS victims, including Freddie Mercury and the legendary Brazilian musician Cazuza. — AFP

Gastronomy festival on Seine marks 60th anniversary of China-France ties

FRENCH scallops with pineapple, Brittany lobster with fried rice, and mille-feuille of red fruits with Bourbon vanilla are just a few of the signature dishes featured at a Sino-French gastronomy festival, set aboard a boat along the Seine.

Around 70 guests, including representatives from governments, cultural circles and culinary industries in China and France, embarked on the culinary journey Saturday evening.

The festival is one of this year’s premium cultural exchange events between China and France as the two countries celebrate the 60th anniversary of diplomatic relations.

At the opening of the gastronomy festival, renowned Cantonese cuisine chef Ku Chi Fai from China and French Michelin-starred chef Regis Douysset served the guests seasonal ingredients such as truffles, white asparagus, and pineapples, blending the characteristics of Chinese and French cuisines.

Sharing his ideas and stories behind the menu, Ku said that Chinese cuisine has its unique charm yet faces challenges and cultural barriers as it seeks to gain international popularity. These include using foreign ingredients, adapting to different dietary habits and the demand for innovations.

On the sidelines of the feast were traditional cultural and artistic performances staged by Chinese and French artists, including zither — known as “guzheng” in Chinese — and violin duets, and a collaborative rendition of a French song accompanied by Chinese dance. — Xinhua

ECONOMY WORLD



A woman holds an umbrella to protect herself from the sun while tending to buffalo next to a rice paddy field in Viet Nam's Dien Bien province on 4 May 2024. **PHOTO: AFP**

Viet Nam's export rice prices return to world's top position

PRICES of the Vietnamese rice in the global market rose by three to eight US dollars per tonne last week, helping the Southeast Asian country return to the top position in terms of export rice prices, Vietnam News Agency reported Monday, citing the Vietnam Food Association.

The price for Viet Nam's five per cent broken rice, at 585 dollars per tonne, is higher than the same type of Thailand by three dollars per tonne, and 10 dollars per tonne higher than the same product of Pakistan, said the association.

The Viet Nam's 25 per cent broken rice and 100 per cent broken rice are priced at 555 dollars and 470 dollars per tonne, respectively. Viet Nam earned 2.08 billion dollars in the first four months of this year from exporting 3.23 million tonnes of rice, up 36.5 per cent in value and 11.7 per cent in volume over the same period last year, according to the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development.

Viet Nam's rice output is expected to reach 43 million tonnes in 2024, which is able to ensure domestic consumption and meet the export demand of more than 8 million tonnes, said the ministry. — Xinhua

Stocks rise on renewed hopes of rate cuts



This photo taken on 2 May 2024 shows a general view of the outside of the Tokyo Stock Exchange (TSE) headquarters building in the Nihonbashi area of Tokyo. **PHOTO: AFP**

EUROPEAN and Asian stock markets rose on Monday on renewed optimism that the US Federal Reserve will cut interest rates this year.

Stock exchanges in Hong Kong and Shanghai closed up, while Paris and Frankfurt pushed higher at around midday in holiday-thinned trading. London and Tokyo were shut. Investors welcomed data on Friday that showed US job growth had slowed in April, raising hopes that the Fed will lower rates in September.

"The Fed won't be in a position to cut its interest rates right away, but is given a higher chance to do so a bit earlier than what

was expected at the start of last week," said Swissquote bank analyst Ipek Ozkardeskaya.

She put the odds of a September cut at 67 per cent.

But she cautioned that the timing "would be a politically uncomfortable time for the Fed" as it would come ahead of the November presidential election.

"No-one at the Fed wants to be pointed at for manipulating the (election) results," she explained.

Investors have also lifted their outlook on how many rate cuts there would be, although the two priced in are still well short of the six envisaged at the start of the year. — AFP

Cambodia seeks collaboration from Chinese tech firm to boost digital tourism

CAMBODIAN Minister of Tourism Sok Soken on Monday sought collaboration from Huawei Technologies to boost the kingdom's digital tourism initiatives, said a news release from the Ministry of Tourism.

Soken met Tao Guangyao, chief executive officer of Huawei Technologies (Cambodia) Co, Ltd, and outlined his vision to strengthen collaboration efforts between the ministry and Huawei, particularly in advancing digital tourism initiatives.

Tourism is one of the four pillars supporting the Southeast Asian country's economy.

The kingdom attracted a total of 1.58 million

international tourists in the first quarter of 2024, up 22.5 per cent from 1.29 million in the same period 2023, said the ministry's latest report.

Cambodia is famous for four world heritage sites, namely the Angkor Archaeological Park in northwest Siem Reap province, the Temple Zone of Sambor Prei Kuk in central Kampong Thom province, and the Temple of Preah Vihear and the Koh Ker archaeological site in northwest Preah Vihear province.

Besides, it has a pristine coastline stretching in the length of about 450 kilometres in four southwest provinces of Preah Sihanouk, Kampot, Kep and Koh Kong. — Xinhua

NEWS IN BRIEF

Singapore's private economy expands for 14 consecutive months

THE seasonally adjusted S&P Global Singapore Purchasing Managers' Index posted 52.6 in April, marking the Singaporean private business condition's continued improving for 14 straight months, the S&P Global said Monday. New orders continued to expand for 16 straight months on the back of better underlying demand conditions, it said.

Business sentiment improved among Singaporean private firms in April, and the confidence rose to the highest since last November. — Xinhua

Sri Lanka's trade grows in Q1

SRI Lanka's import increased by 12.9 per cent and export by 5.7 per cent in the first three months of this year, compared to a year earlier, State Minister of Finance Ranjith Siyambalapitiya said on Monday.

According to a statement from his office, agricultural exports grew by 5.1 per cent and industrial exports by 6 per cent year on year during the first quarter, noting Sri Lanka's economy benefited from an expansion in manufacturing, industrial and tourism sectors in the cited period. — Xinhua

Audi builds first charging hub outside of Europe in Tokyo in EV push

AUDI AG has set up its first electric vehicle charging hub outside of Europe in central Tokyo to spur use of all-electric cars in a country slow to embrace the technology.

The facility, the seventh by the automaker, opened in late April next to its dealership in Kioicho, a district close to many offices, commercial facilities and government buildings, offering four charging points with 150-kilowatt capabilities, the maker of the Q4 e-tron sport utility vehicle said.

The automaker already has six charging hubs, located in the German cities of Nuremberg, Berlin, Munich and Frankfurt, as well as in Salzburg, Austria, and Zurich, Switzerland.

The Japan unit of the automaker said it plans to set up another one in Tokyo's Shiba Koen district near Tokyo Tower soon.

"It's hard for many people to imagine a life with an EV without charging equipment close to home," Audi Japan President Matthias Schepers said in a recent interview in Japanese, adding the charging hub helps people experience such a life first-hand.

Quick charging at the city centre is the key to prompting more people to convert to EVs, as many potential buyers, most of whom are affluent city dwellers, balk at purchasing the vehicles due to a lack of fast charging points in urban areas and at their condos, he said. — Kyodo



Matthias Schepers, president of the Japanese unit of Audi AG, charges an electric car at the company's first electric vehicle charging hub outside of Europe in Tokyo on 25 April 2024. PHOTO: KYODO

Consumer-friendly business allows foreigners to make payments easily

IN the Blue Harbor international shopping park in Beijing's Chaoyang District, Rana, a Pakistani national visiting China for the first time, said he had a great experience using Pakistan's NayaPay mobile app to pay for items.

"It's really convenient to be able to scan and pay like in my home country," he said.

Rana visited a supermarket, savored Beijing's famous roast duck, drank milk tea, and purchased several Beijing specialties and panda toys. He was able to pay for everything during his visit by scanning a code on his mobile phone, without needing to download a new application. Rana said he experienced the great convenience of China's advanced mobile phone payment system.

It was China's expanding circle of overseas app payment partners that enabled Rana's mobile phone tour of Beijing. Recently, NayaPay announced that it would support payments in China through Ant Group's cross-border payment service, Alipay+.

Blue Harbour is one of NayaPay's cooperative partners, and is building itself into an "inbound,



Pakistani tourist Rana uses Pakistan's NayaPay mobile app to pay the bill at a restaurant in the Blue Harbor international shopping park in Chaoyang District of Beijing, capital of China, 8 April 2024. PHOTO: XINHUA

consumer-friendly business circle".

A number of companies in the domestic and overseas payment, financial and business services sectors have also worked together to launch a plan to build an inbound, consumer-friendly business circle in Blue Harbour, also pledging to provide more convenient services for inbound payments in major cities focusing on business and tourism.

In recent years, China's government and financial institutions have implemented a series of

practical measures to meet the diversified payment services needs of foreigners in China.

At the beginning of this year, the Chinese government said that it would make it more convenient for foreigners to work, study and travel in China, while optimizing its payment services.

Beijing, the Chinese capital, plans to expand the service coverage of overseas bank cards in the city by the end of June. It is expected to establish payment facilities in its three, four and five-star hotels,

and at tourist attractions at or above the 3A level.

In Blue Harbour, convenient Alipay+ payment guides are easy to spot on shop counters, and friendly English signs remind foreign tourists to link their international Visa cards or overseas e-wallets to China's mobile payment services.

"Now, even the small shops selling pigeon food here can do cross-border business with QR codes," said Zhang Xiaofei, general manager of the Blue Harbour business area. — Xinhua

<p>CLAIMS DAY NOTICE M.V SITC QIUMING VOY.NO. (2406S)</p> <p>Consignees of cargo carried on M.V SITC QIUMING VOY.NO. (2406S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 6-5-2024 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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day. Phone No: 2301185</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Shipping Agency Department Myanma Port Authority</p> <p>Agent For: M/S SITC CONTAINER LINE CO., LTD</p>	<p>CLAIMS DAY NOTICE M.V ISEACO GENESIS VOY.NO. (224N)</p> <p>Consignees of cargo carried on M.V ISEACO GENESIS VOY.NO. (224N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 7-5-2024 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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day. Phone No: 2301185</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Shipping Agency Department Myanma Port Authority</p> <p>Agent For: M/S NEW GOLDEN SEA LINES</p>	<p>CLAIMS DAY NOTICE M.V MCL 14 VOY.NO. (05-02)</p> <p>Consignees of cargo carried on M.V MCL 14 VOY. NO. (05-02) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 7-5-2024 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of TMIT where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day. Phone No: 2301185</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Shipping Agency Department Myanma Port Authority</p> <p>Agent For: M/S UNIVERSE LOGISTICS INTERNATIONAL CO LTD</p>
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ROLLING UPDATES: WORLD

Brazil mounts frantic rescue effort as flooding kills at least 78

AUTHORITIES in southern Brazil scrambled Sunday to rescue people from raging floods and mudslides in what has become the region's largest ever climate catastrophe, with at least 78 dead and 115,000 forced from their homes.

Entire cities were underwater, with thousands of people cut off from the world by the floodwater, brought by days of torrential rains.

In Porto Alegre, the capital of Rio Grande do Sul state, residents stood on rooftops hoping to be rescued as others in canoes or small boats navigated streets that have become rivers.

After what one climatologist called "a disastrous cocktail" of climate change and the El Nino effect, more than 3,000 soldiers, firefighters and other rescuers were trying to reach residents, who were in many cases trapped without basic supplies such as running water or electricity.

Civil defence officials said at least 105 people were missing in the latest of a string of catastrophic weather events to hit the South American giant.

"It looks like a scene out of a



Aerial view showing houses destroyed by floods in Roca Sales, Rio Grande do Sul state, Brazil, on 5 May 2024. **PHOTO: AFP**

war, and after it is over it will require a post-war approach," Rio Grande do Sul governor Eduardo Leite said, flanked by President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva and several government ministers.

Lula promised the government would provide all necessary resources for reconstruction.

Besides Porto Alegre, another 341 towns and villages have

been hit by the flooding.

Soldiers are setting up field hospitals after hundreds of patients had to be evacuated from regular hospitals, while civilians have also formed vol-

unteer groups to gather basic supplies, including life jackets, water and fuel.

"Everyone helps in their own way, as they can," said Luis Eduardo da Silva, a 32-year-old volunteer.

The Guaiba River, which flows through the city of 1.4 million people, reached a record high level of 5.3 metres (17.4 feet), according to the local municipality, well above the historic peak of 4.76 metres that had stood as a record since devastating 1941 floods.

"Rio Grande do Sul has always been a meeting point between tropical and polar air masses," climatologist Francisco Eliseu Aquino told AFP.

"But these interactions intensified with climate change" to create "a disastrous cocktail that makes the atmosphere more unstable and encourages storms".

Rosana Custodio, a 37-year-old nurse, fled her flooded Porto Alegre home with her husband and three children.

"During the night on Thursday the waters began to rise very quickly," she told AFP via a WhatsApp message. — AFP

BRIEF: WORLD

Panama's Electoral Tribunal declares Mulino winner of presidential elections

PANAMA'S Electoral Tribunal late Sunday declared Jose Raul Mulino, the candidate of the opposition alliance comprised of the Realizing Goals party and Alianza movement, as the winner of the presidential elections after a preliminary count of more than 85 per cent of voting stations.

Mulino entered the race as the running mate of former president Ricardo Martinelli (2009-2014) but became a candidate in his own right after Martinelli was disqualified from running in March due to a conviction related to money laundering. On Sunday, the head of the Electoral Tribunal Alfredo Junca confirmed via a video call to Mulino that he was the preliminary winner of the presidential race in the 2024 general elections.

Junca congratulated Mulino and invited him to attend a plenary session of the tribunal on Sunday evening. — Xinhua

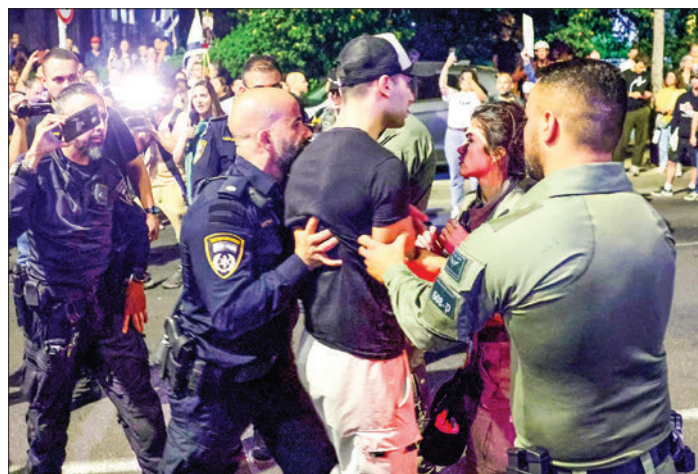
1 killed in apartment fire in Singapore

SINGAPORE'S Civil Defence Force said on Monday that one was killed in a building fire at Block 76, Lor Limau, earlier in the morning.

Firefighters conducted forcible entry into the unit and rescued two in the kitchen area. Another person was confirmed dead inside a bedroom.

The cause of the fire is under investigation. — Xinhua

Israel orders evacuation from Rafah area in south Gaza



Members of Israel's security forces detain a man during a protest by relatives and supporters of hostages taken captive by Palestinian militants in Gaza during the 7 October attacks, in the coastal city of Tel Aviv on 4 May 2024 amid the ongoing conflict in the Gaza Strip between Israel and the Palestinian militant Hamas group. **PHOTO: AFP**

ISRAEL'S military on Monday called for the evacuation of Palestinians from eastern Rafah, ahead of a long-threatened ground invasion of the southern Gaza city, the prospect of which has triggered widespread global alarm.

The evacuation announcement followed intensified disagreement between Israel and Hamas over the Islamist group's demands to end the seven-month war, during weekend talks in Cairo.

Consultations between

two other mediators, the United States and Qatar, were expected on Monday in Doha.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has vowed to invade Rafah regardless of any truce, and despite concerns from the United States, other countries and aid groups.

The "limited" and temporary evacuation order aimed "to get people out of harm's way" and followed a rocket strike on Sunday that Israel's military said came from an area adjacent to Rafah and killed four soldiers.

"An Israeli offensive in Rafah would mean more civilian suffering and deaths," said the main aid agency in Gaza, the United Nations Agency for Palestine Refugees, UNRWA.

It added that it "is not evacuating." When asked how many people should move, a military spokesman said: "The estimate is around 100,000 people." — AFP

SPORTS

Myanmar Women's League to begin on 7 May

THE Myanmar Women's League will be launched on 7 May as the week one matches will start on 7 and 8 May, as stated by the Myanmar Football Federation.

Defending champions Myawady FC, ISPE FC, Thitsar Arman FC, Yangon United, YREO FC, Shan United and Ayeyawady United are competing in the tourney. As a Week-1 match, Myawady FC will take on Yangon United at Padonma Stadium on 7 May, while Shan United will face ISPE FC at Salin Stadium on

8 May.

The first round matches will be played from 7 May to 11 June at Padonma Stadium, Salin Stadium and Yangon United Sports Complex.

Among the seven teams that will compete in the Myanmar Women's League Tournament this season, some players from the old teams have changed teams, and some new players have been recruited.

Of the two new teams, Shan United FC is mainly made up of players

from the local Shan State and is made up of fresh players, while Ayeyawady United has recruited elite-level players.

Myanmar national team players San Thaw Thaw, Naw Htet Htet Wai and Zun Yuya Oo will play for the team Ayeyawady, as stated by the Myanmar Football Federation.

This season's Myanmar Women's League will be held from 7 May to 8 November. Myawady FC has won three times, and ISPE FC won twice in the Myanmar Women's League. — Ko Nyi Lay/KZL



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

Myanmar U-16 youth team under training for AFF U-16 Championship



Players of Myanmar U-16 team seen in a physical exercise. PHOTO: MFF

PLAYERS of Myanmar U16 youth football team are under training to take part in the AFF U-16 Championship to be held in the coming June.

They started training sessions in March, but 31 preliminary selected players on the team were approved in late April. The players did not take holidays from the training session even in the Thingyan period. Those players came from football academies and those outstanding players from the FIFA-MFF U-15 League. They passed two trials and a physical fitness examination. Currently, the Myanmar U-16 team is under the control of Head

Coach Japanese Mitami.

The ASEAN U-16 Championship will take place from 21 June to 4 July this year. Currently, the team competes in tune-up matches with local teams on Wednesdays and Saturdays despite a lack of chance to play international tune-up matches.

The youth squad is formed with outstanding players from MFF Academy-Mandalay, Nay Pyi Taw Academy, Yamana Club, Yangon Focus Club, Rakhine United, Soccer Care, Sagaing United, Shan United, MFF Academy-Yangon, City Shwepyitha, and Royal Yangon Thet Lon FC. — Ko Nyi Lay/TTA

Rublev crowned winner of Madrid Open after tense win over Auger-Aliassime



Winner Andrey Rublev of Russia celebrates during the awarding ceremony for the Men's Singles event at the Madrid Open tennis tournament in Madrid, Spain, 5 May 2024. PHOTO: XINHUA

ANDREY Rublev won a tense Madrid Open final 4-6, 7-5, 7-5 against Felix Auger-Aliassime on Sunday evening.

Rublev, struggled with a virus in the opening games, was below his best in the first set, which his unseeded rival claimed 6-4, but that was the sign for the seventh seed to take control of the match.

Auger-Aliassime has struggled for form in recent months, and the only break points he managed to force were in the first set.

As the game progressed, Rublev looked to be increasingly in control, as he held his serve with relative ease, but despite having numerous games where he held the advantage of Auger-Aliassime's serve, he was unable to make it count. — Xinhua

Shan United to compete in 2024-2025 ASEAN Club Championship

SHAN United is representing the Myanmar slates in taking part in the 2024-2025 ASEAN Club Championship, which will resume this year.

The ASEAN Football Federation allows 12 clubs for the final stage and four clubs in the play-off stage. Shan United has to compete in the play-off stage. Two of the four clubs in the play-off stage will be allowed to advance to the final stage, and they will take part in the championship with ten more clubs. Shan United has been allowed to compete in the championship as it clinched the



Players of Shan United are grasping the chance to take part in the 2024-2025 ASEAN Club Championship, as seen in a training session. PHOTO: THAW GYI

title in the 2023 MNL tournament.

In the final stage, two clubs each from Thailand, Viet Nam, Indonesia and Malaysia and one each from the Philippines and Singapore will have a chance to participate directly in the championship. One football club, each from Myanmar, Cambodia, Brunei, and Lao, have to join the play-off matches, and two of them will qualify for the final stage.

There are six clubs, each in two groups, and they will have to play home and away matches. The draw-lot ceremony for the play-off stage and final stage will be held in Viet Nam on 9 May, with the participation of some officials from Shan United.

The 2024-2025 ASEAN Club Championship will last from 17 July 2024 to 21 May 2025. Finance/Revenue Club representing Myanmar had the chance to take part in the championship two times. Finance/Revenue Club withdrew from the championship in 2003. The club competed in the championship in 2005 but dropped out from the group stage. — Ko Nyi Lay/TTA

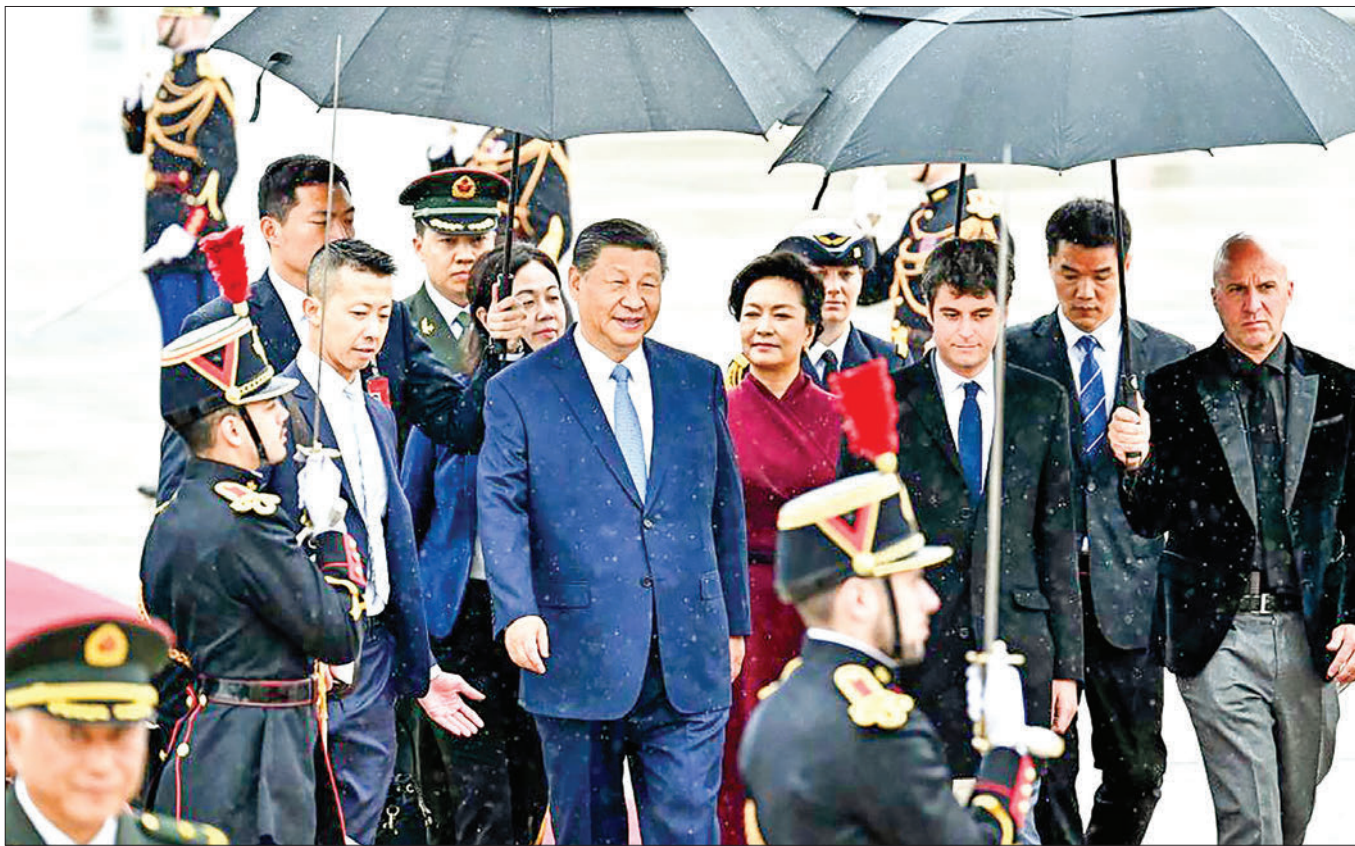
Brazil mounts frantic rescue effort as flooding kills at least 78

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WORLD

China, France poised to bolster ties amid shifting global landscapes



Chinese President Xi Jinping arrives in Paris for a state visit to France at the invitation of French President Emmanuel Macron, 5 May 2024. Xi was received by French Prime Minister Gabriel Attal at Paris Orly airport upon arrival. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

CHINESE President Xi Jinping arrived here Sunday for a state visit to France, with the two sides poised to bolster bilateral ties and reiterate their commitment to fortifying their partnership amid shifting global landscapes.

The discussions and agreements during Xi's third state visit to France, following visits in 2014 and 2019, are expected to encompass a broad spectrum of critical areas. From trade and investment to innovation and cultural exchange, the agenda reflects the comprehensive nature of the bilateral relationship between China and France.

Meanwhile, the visit will go beyond being bilateral. Dialogues on international and regional issues of mutual concern,

as well as multilateral cooperation, are anticipated. This emphasizes the enduring tradition of both nations' shared dedication to addressing complex challenges through collaborative diplomatic endeavours.

Noting that multilateralism appears to be "the most effective way of resolving most of the problems of our multipolar world," former French Prime Minister Laurent Fabius said that France and China share "certain similar, if not identical, visions of global governance".

In a signed article published Sunday in French media *Le Figaro*, Xi noted that the longer the Ukraine crisis drags on, the greater harm it will do to Europe and the world.

"China hopes that peace and stability will return to Europe at an early date. We stand ready to work with France and the whole international community to find a reasonable way out of the crisis," Xi said in the article.

As to the ongoing Palestinian-Israeli conflict, Xi noted in the article that China and France have many in common on the Palestine-Israel issue. "It is thus critical that we strengthen cooperation and help restore peace in the Middle East."

This visit, Xi's first trip to Europe in nearly five years, coincides with the 60th anniversary of establishing diplomatic ties between China and France, a milestone event in China-Western relations. — Xinhua

Russian Missile drills linked to NATO threat of troop deployment to Ukraine - Kremlin

STATEMENTS by the French President, UK officials and a representative of the US Senate about their readiness and intention to send military personnel to Ukraine require special attention and special measures, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said on Monday, commenting on military drills announced by the Russian Defence Ministry.

"Actually, this is stated exhaustively in the statement of the Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation. There is nothing to add there. If you ask me what statements of Western representatives we are talking about, it is obvious that we are talking about the statement of Mr Macron and the statement of the British representatives. You you know, they also added a representative of the US Senate, if I'm not mistaken, who spoke of readiness and even intention to send armed contingents to Ukraine, that is, to actually expose NATO soldiers to the Russian military," Peskov said in response to a question on whether the announced exercises were connected to the threats.

"They require special attention and special measures," he added.

Earlier in the day, the ministry said that the General Staff of the Russian armed forces had started preparations for holding exercises in the near future with missile units of the Southern Military District, involving aviation, as well as naval forces, in order to increase the readiness of non-strategic nuclear forces to carry out combat missions. During the exercises, the Russian armed forces will practice a set of activities for the preparation and use of non-strategic nuclear weapons, the ministry said. — Sputnik



The 9K720 Iskander-M ballistic missile system participates in electronic launch drills conducted by the Baltic Fleet in the Kaliningrad Region, Russia. **PHOTO: SPUTNIK**

IAEA chief due in Iran as concern grows over nuclear activity

UN atomic watchdog chief Rafael Grossi is set to arrive in Iran on Monday, where he is expected to speak at a conference and meet officials for talks on Tehran's nuclear programme.

The visit comes at a time of heightened regional tensions and with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) criticizing Iran for lack of coop-

eration on inspections and other outstanding issues.

Grossi, head of the IAEA, is expected to deliver a speech at Iran's first International Conference on Nuclear Science and Technology. The three-day event, which starts on Monday, is being held in Isfahan province, home to the Natanz uranium enrichment plant and where

strikes attributed to Israel hit last month.

The IAEA and Iranian officials reported "no damage" to nuclear facilities after the reported attack on Isfahan, widely seen as Israel's response to Iran's first-ever direct attack on its arch foe days earlier, which itself was a retaliation for a deadly strike on Tehran's Damascus consulate. — AFP