

The Global **NEW LIGHT** of MYANMAR



State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and congregation observe the Five Precepts during the SAC's Waso robe-offering ceremony 2024 in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

State Administration Council holds Waso robe-offering ceremony 2024



The Senior General and his wife offer Waso robes and alms to SSMNC Chairman Thanlyin Minkyaung Sayadaw.

CHAIRMAN of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and his wife Daw Kyu Kyu Hla attended the Waso robe-offering ceremony of SAC for 2024 at Sasana Maha Beikman in the precinct of the Uppatasanti Pagoda in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

The Senior General paid homage to the Buddha image in the Beikman and offered alms in the emerald alms bowl, fruits, flowers, water and oil lights.

Chairman of the State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee Presiding Patron of Thanlyin Minkyaung Sayadaw Aggamaha Pandita Aggamaha Sadhammajotikadhaja Dr Bhaddanta Candima Bhivamsa, and members of the Sangha recited Metta Sutta.

The Senior General and his wife donated Waso robes and alms to Chairman Thanlyin Minkyaung Sayadaw.

SAC Vice-Chairman Deputy Prime Minister Vice-Senior General Soe Win also offered Waso robes and alms to Secretary Presiding Patron of Masoeyein

Taikthit Dhammatheikdi Monastery Sayadaw Aggamaha Pandita Aggamaha Sadhamma jotikadhaja Maha Dhammakathika Bhahujanahitadhara Bhaddanta Vassettha Bhivamsa.

The SAC Secretary and his wife, the Joint Secretary and his wife, council members and their wives and Union-level dignitaries presented Waso robes and offerings to members of the Sangha.

The Secretary Sayadaw delivered a sermon, followed by the sharing of merits gained.

Also present at the ceremony were Ovadacariya Sayadaws of Uppatasanti Pagoda, Union ministers and their wives, the Nay Pyi Taw Council chairman, senior Tatmadaw officers from the Office of the Commander-in-Chief and their wives, the commander of Nay Pyi Taw Command and officials.

After the ceremony, the Senior General and his wife, together with attendees, offered day meals to members of the Sangha. — MNA/TTA

NATIONAL **PAGE 3**



Myanmar, Indian Armed Forces to forge friendly ties

NATIONAL **PAGE 5**



MoIP Union Minister receives UNFPA Representative to Myanmar

NATIONAL **PAGE 6**



June rice exports hit 3-month high at 162,326 tonnes, pocketing US\$84M

NATIONAL

Myanmar, Indian Armed Forces to forge friendly ties

STATE Administration Council Member Chief of the General Staff (Army, Navy and Air) General Maung Maung Aye received Mr Abhay Thakur, Indian Ambassador to Myanmar, in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday afternoon.

During the meeting, they frankly discussed progress in the enhancement of bilateral relations between Myanmar and Indian Armed Forces, further cooperation in peace and

stability and rule of law along the border of both countries, defence activities, trainee exchanges, military collaboration and training programmes.

Lt-Gen Kan Myint Than of the Office of Commander-in-Chief (Army), senior Tatmadaw officers, Indian Defence Attaché Colonel Jaswinder Singh Gill and officials were also present on the occasion. — MNA/KTZH



State Administration Council Member Chief of the General Staff (Army, Navy and Air) General Maung Maung Aye receives Indian Ambassador Mr Abhay Thakur yesterday.

Indian Ambassador calls on Deputy PM MoFA Union Minister



Deputy Prime Minister Union Foreign Affairs Minister U Than Swe and the Indian ambassador shake hands during the latter's call on the former yesterday.

DEPUTY Prime Minister and Union Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Than Swe received Mr Abhay Thakur, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of India

to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

They cordially exchanged views on matters pertaining to the further enhancement of existing friendship as well

as mutually beneficial cooperation between the two countries, and strengthening closer collaboration for the maintenance of peace, stability and law and order along the border between Myanmar and India. — MNA

Myanmar Consulate-General in Chongqing celebrates 2nd anniversary

ACCORDING to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the second anniversary of the opening of the Myanmar Consulate-General in Chongqing, China, was celebrated at the consulate-general on 12 July.

During the ceremony, Myanmar Consul-General U Kyaw Zay Yar Lin delivered a commemorative speech, and Mr Li Ming Quan, Deputy

Director-General of the Foreign Affairs of the Chongqing municipal government, gave a congratulatory speech.

The event was also attended by the deputy director-general of the Culture and Tourism Commission of the Chongqing municipal government, consuls-general based in Chongqing, and other invitees. — ASH/MKKS



Officials who came to the anniversary ceremony of the opening of the Myanmar Consulate-General in Chongqing, China, on 12 July.

Bay of Bengal Condition

Issued at 14:00 hours MST on 16-7-2024

ACCORDING to the observaiton at (13:00) hrs MST today, a low-pressure area may form over Westcentral and adjoining Northwest Bay of Bengal 18-7-2024.

NATIONAL



Deputy Prime Minister MoFA Union Minister U Than Swe shakes hands with the IOM mission chief yesterday.

Deputy PM MoFA Union Minister receives IOM Chief

DEPUTY Prime Minister and Union Minister for Foreign Affairs U Than Swe received Mr Dragan Aleksoski, Chief of Mission of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in Myanmar, who is

leaving upon the completion of his tour of duty in Myanmar, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

During the farewell call, they exchanged views on the progress of IOM's current ac-

tivities in Myanmar and the cooperation between the two sides.

Senior officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were also present at the call. — MNA

MoL Union Minister receives IOM Chief

UNION Minister for Labour U Myint Naung met Mr Dragan Aleksoski, Mission Chief of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to Myanmar, who is about to leave Myanmar after completing his tour of duties, at the ministry in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday afternoon.

During the meeting, the Union minister said that Myanmar migrant workers who are working in various countries can

move and work safely, receiving social protection and care. He also thanked the IOM for providing humanitarian assistance to migrant workers.

They frankly discussed matters of signing an MoU for cooperation in labour issues with IOM and collaboration between the Ministry of Labour and IOM for International labour migration management. — MNA/TS

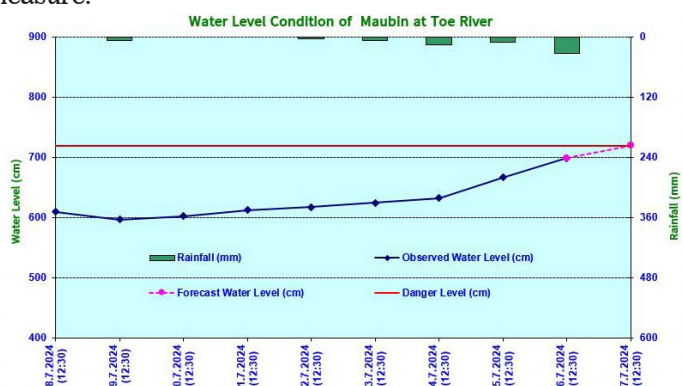


IOM Mission Chief Mr Dragan Aleksoski calls on Union Minister U Myint Naung yesterday.

Flood Warning (Issued at 13:30 hrs MST on 16-7-2024)

ACCORDING to the (12:30) hrs MST observation today, the water level of River at Maubin is observed as about more than ½ foot (21 centimetres) below its danger level. It may reach its danger level during the next one day.

It is especially advised to the people who settle near the banks and low lying areas at Maubin Township to take precaution measure.



Myanmar joins ASEAN Committee in Canberra meeting in Australia

ACCORDING to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Myanmar's Chargé d'Affaires ad interim in Canberra U Thet Tun attended the ASEAN Committee in Canberra (ACC) meeting on 12 July.

The Philippine Embassy, serving as the alternate chair of the ACC, organized the meeting at the Commonwealth Club.

The meeting approved the minutes from the previous meeting (2/2024) held in Canberra. It also discussed ACC activities planned for implementation during the Philip-



Senior officials of the embassies attending the meeting pose for the group documentary photo.

pine Embassy's chairmanship from July to December 2024. Additionally, attendees dis-

cussed the ASEAN Day Reception and the ASEAN-Australia Business Forum. — ASH/TMT

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

NATIONAL

National Security Adviser & Union Minister receives Indian Ambassador

NATIONAL Security Adviser and Union Minister for the State Administration Council Chairman's Office Ministry 1 Admiral Moe Aung met the delegation led by Mr Abhay Thakur at the reception hall of the State Administration Council office in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday afternoon.

Both sides cordially discussed friendship and cooperation between the two countries, increasing the ongoing implementation of the development projects, and cooperation for stability and peace along the border regions of the two countries. — MNA/TS



Indian Ambassador Mr Abhay Thakur calls on Union Minister Admiral Moe Aung yesterday.



The UNFPA Resident Representative calls on Union Minister U Myint Kyaing yesterday.

MoIP Union Minister receives UNFPA Representative to Myanmar

UNION Minister for Immigration and Population U Myint Kyaing met Mr Jaime Nadal Roig, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) Resident Representative to Myanmar and his delegation in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

During the meeting, they emphasized that there has been constant support from UNFPA for correcting the census and population statistics for a long time. They also highlighted the work done on the national census conducted in 2014 with the

joint efforts of the ministry and UNFPA.

The Union minister described the processing of visas and residence permits for international employees from UNFPA.

Efforts to collect the 2024 Census, population statistics obtained and use of information in national development activities and the assistance of UNFPA to Myanmar's development activities were also discussed. — MNA/KZL

U Wunna Han presents Credentials to President of Islamic Republic of Pakistan

U Wunna Han, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, presented his Credentials to Mr Asif Ali Zardari, President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, on 15 July 2024, in Islamabad. — MNA



Beachgoers advised to follow guidelines due to rip currents

PEOPLE travelling to beach areas should pay attention to the instructions of relevant locals and hotels as there are often changes in sea currents with water drag in the rainy season, Chairman U Naung Naung Han of the Myanmar Tourism Entrepreneurs Association was quoted as saying by The Global New Light of Myanmar (GNLM).

“During the rainy season, the flow of water in the sea changes, and there are also different types of rip currents. There are often high waves when it rains. You need to be careful when you go. Since the concerned locals are always staying there, you should listen

to the directions of the locals and the hotels. It's not that you can't go. You shouldn't take any risks or be adventurous, play pranks on each other on the beach. You should go depending on the weather conditions. There are tourists in other countries at this time, not just in this country,” he said

Travel patterns have changed from overcrowded seasonal trips to all-weather travels, even in the rainy season, so there are still visitors on the beaches, and hotels are renting rooms at only 20 to 30 per cent discounted rates.

“In the days before COVID-19, during the rainy season,

hotels used to rent rooms with a discount of 50 per cent, but this year, they set the price only at a little less than usual. As far as I know, the rooms that were rented for K100,000 in the open season are being sold for K70,000 and K80,000, so it is only reduced by 20 or 30 per cent. But there are visitors. Some of the visitors choose this time of the year to relax on the beach as they don't like the crowds,” he said.

During the rainy season, domestic tourists go on day trips, pilgrimages and travel to waterfalls, beaches and overseas destinations, he added. — MT/ZN

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

Shwedagon Pagoda to get gold robe in September



This photo taken on 13 July showcases the Shwedagon Pagoda. **PHOTO: TUN TUN**

ACCORDING to the Shwedagon Pagoda Board of Trustees, a gold robe will be offered to the entire pagoda in September.

Those wishing to partici-

pate in the donation can do so by offering K2.5 million for a pure gold plate of 100 square inches (weighing one tical) and K15 million for a pure gold plate of one square foot

(weighing six ticals).

The gold robe offering at the Shwedagon Pagoda is held every five years, with the most recent event in the 2018-2019 financial year. — TWA/TKO

Skill test candidates must present experience, training certificates

THE Public Overseas Employment Agency (POEA) informed that those planning to take skill tests after passing EPS-TOPIK must show work experience and training certificates.

For the candidates with relevant certificates among those who will take the skill test after passing the Test of Proficiency in Korean (EPS-TOPIK) in construction, agriculture and livestock industry and service Group 2, they were informed to show the documents to the POEA between 9 am to 3 pm on 16 July.

To take a competency test, requirements for a candidate include a minimum of one year experience in the relevant industry, over 120 learning hours at a vocational training and holder of a national-level skill certificate.

In addition, they need to download the specified forms of

required documents from POEA-EPS Facebook, fill them out in advance, and submit the relevant documents of experience, training and certificate for the applied sector (construction, agriculture and livestock, service business Group 2).

If one has no plan to take a competency test, he/she need not apply separately for skill tests, which will be held on 28 July for construction, agriculture and livestock, and from 29 July to 1 August for service Group 2.

Competency tests and personal interviews will be held for those with required documents, and those with no documents are not required to submit them. They need to come and sit for a skill test on the scheduled date. If fraudulent documents are found, the candidate will have to take full responsibility for the consequences, POEA said. — MT/ZS

152 more Myanmar workers sent to South Korea

THROUGH the Public Overseas Employment Agency (POEA), another 152 Myanmar workers were sent to the Republic of Korea on 16 July under the EPS system, according to the Myanmar Embassy in the Republic of Korea.

Of 152, seven new agriculture and livestock workers and 145 new manufacturing workers are included.

After workers arrived at Incheon International Airport from Yangon on Myanmar National Airlines' UB 8301 charter flight, the labour attaché from the embassy in Seoul welcomed and advised them on what they needed to follow.

One hundred and eighty eight manufacturing workers were sent by POEA on 25 June, the day when the Republic of Korea recruited one million foreign workers from 16 countries under the EPS system, according to the embassy.

In May, a total of 170 EPS workers were sent to the Republic of Korea via POEA — 152 new manufacturing workers on 21 May, 146 new manufacturing workers and 24 agriculture and livestock workers on 7 May.

According to the embassy, monthly conveyances of EPS Myanmar workers are a total of 421 under E-9 visa in April, a total of 862 in March and a total of 1,333 under E-9 visa in February. — MT/ZS

June rice exports hit 3-month high at 162,326 tonnes, pocketing US\$84M

IN June of the financial year 2024-2025, 162,325.75 tonnes of rice and broken rice were exported, earning US\$84 million, and this volume is the largest export in the first three months of this financial year, according to the Myanmar Rice Federation (MRF).

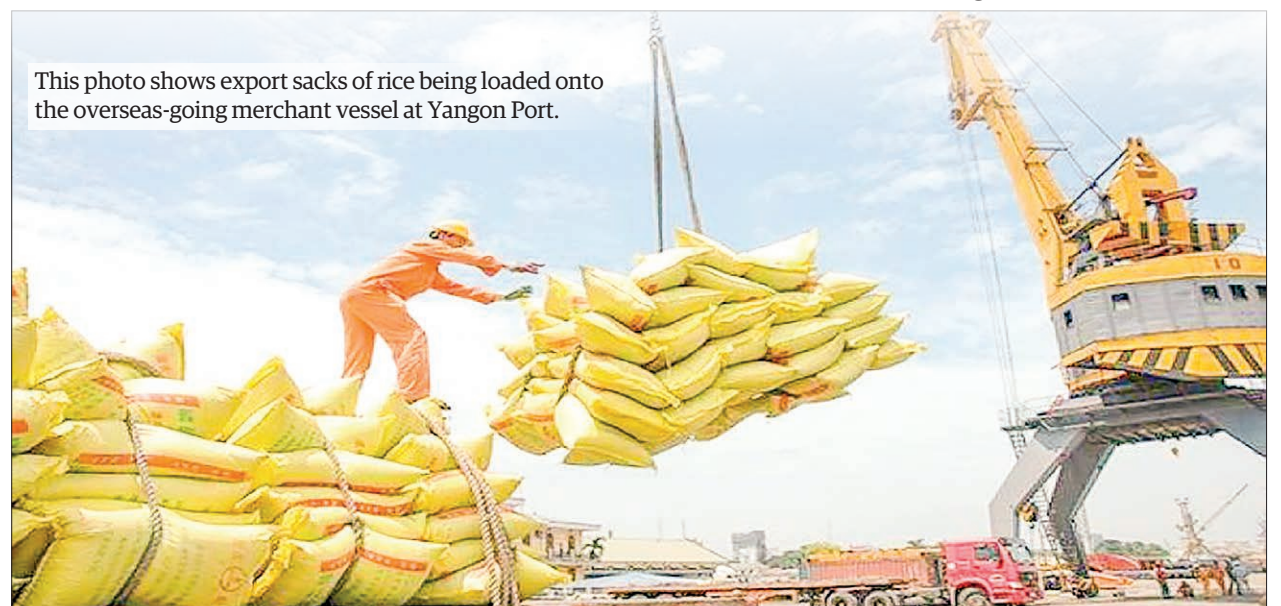
There were 42 rice and broken rice companies in June that exported 96,914.75 tonnes of rice and 65,410 tonnes of broken rice. Over-

seas trade accounted for 153,255.75 tonnes and border trade for 9,070 tonnes.

The destinations of Myanmar's rice exports in June include Indonesia (53,818 tonnes), Italy (12,946 tonnes), Spain (12,920 tonnes), China (5,942 tonnes), Poland (4,125 tonnes) and 13 other countries (7,164 tonnes). Broken rice was exported to Belgium (26,550 tonnes), Indonesia (3,900 tonnes), Lithuania

(650 tonnes), Italy (375 tonnes) and eight other countries (899 tonnes).

In the rice and broken rice sector of the financial year 2024-2025, Myanmar earned US\$55 million from 111,862 tonnes of export in April, US\$36 million from 71,279.5 tonnes of export in May, US\$84 million from 162,325.75 tonnes of export in June, and US\$175 million in total from the export of 345,467.3 tonnes, according to the MRF. — MT/ZN



This photo shows export sacks of rice being loaded onto the overseas-going merchant vessel at Yangon Port.

Organic Expo Dubai, Halal Trade Expo Dubai to be held on 18-20 Nov

THE 22nd Middle East Organic & Natural Products Expo (Organic Expo Dubai) and Halal Trade Expo Dubai which will take place from 18 to 20 November 2024 at Dubai World Trade Centre, welcomes the participation of Myanmar business people, according to the Myanmar Trade

Promotion Organization.

The expo has been a platform for wholesale and retail trade for more than 20 years, inviting distributors from 63 countries to source their organic and natural products. This year's expo will include a 365-day export promotion platform with

digital and offline versions.

Myanmar participants can choose two types of national pavilion: Standard Shell and Group Participation. The standard shell (nine square metres wide) will cost US\$5,549.25 (\$520 per square metre) and the price for the group participation booth

(185 square metres wide) is \$2,625. Individuals who would like to join the 22nd Middle East Organic & Natural Products Expo (Organic Expo Dubai) and Halal Trade Expo Dubai can register through contact number 067 408622 and email event.td.myantrade@gmail.com. — NN/KK

MoC announces Pharma Fair from 17 July

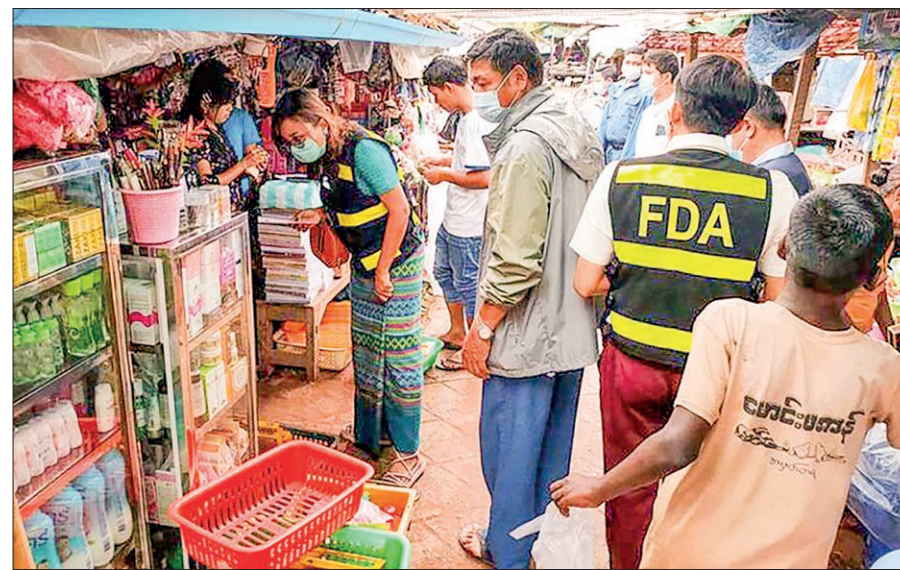
UNDER the guidance of the Ministry of Commerce, pharmaceutical companies led by the Myanmar Pharmaceutical and Medical Device Manufacturer Association (MPMDMA) will directly sell the medicines to consumers at the Myanmar Trade Promotion Organization's office located on the corner of Merchant Road and 30th Street from 9 am to 4 pm every Monday to Saturday starting from 17 July, excluding Sunday and public holidays.

The Ministry of Commerce notified the public of the Pharma Fair in order that they can buy medicines required for their health. — NN/KK



Medications are seen at the pharmacy outlet.

FDA warns 14 hazardous food products for safety risks



FDA officials conduct inspections in the market.

THE Food and Drug Administration (FDA) issued a warning against 14 food products after identifying hazardous substances and chemicals that are harmful to health.

Under the guidance of the Ministry

of Health, FDA has been supervising the market systematically to ensure the quality of products that are considered safe for consumption.

The 14 food products that can be found in markets and school canteens

were found to contain toxic substances, food dyes and prohibited chemicals. High doses of food supplements can result in cancer, stomach, liver and kidney diseases.

Those products are energy drinks (Master brand), dried soya bean (999 brand), jam (Shwe Si brand), Pineapple juice, tamarind juice, strawberry juice, lemon-lime juice, lychee juice and red bull (Miba Myittar fruit juice brand), lime juice (ice lemon brand), shrimp paste (Yadana brand), fermented bean paste (Oo brand), energy drinks (Power Bull brand) and fruity drinks (Popsicle brand).

Food manufacturers and distributors need to comply with rules and regulations. They should avoid unauthorized food dyes and chemicals used as food preservatives. Those violating rules and regulations will face action under Section 28 (A) of National Food Law, Food and Drug Administration stated. — NN/KK

CBM sells 5M yuan to exporters, importers on 15 July

THE Central Bank of Myanmar (CBM) sold five million yuan for exporters and importers on foreign exchange trading platforms on 15 July, after US\$5 million in sales on 10 July.

CBM sold \$5.4 million for those importing edible oil, fertilizer, pharmaceuticals and medical devices on online trading platforms on 3 July and \$5 million for exporters and importers on 2 July.

CBM pumped \$15.4 million and five million yuan into the financial market within 15 days.

CBM injected \$5 million and 40 million baht in June and \$10 million, 30 million baht and 22.5 million yuan into markets in May through online trading platforms.

CBM injected \$3 million, two million yuan and 54 million baht into the

financial market in April. It also sold \$18 million, 12 million yuan and 312 million baht in March, \$77.38 million and 850 million baht in February and \$68.33 million, 313.5 million baht and 4.2 million yuan in January 2024, with a view to curbing the instability in the foreign exchange market and stopping the currency devaluation.

According to CBM's notification on 15 March, it has been joining hands with law enforcement agencies to combat and prosecute those who attempt to manipulate the currency market under the existing laws. CBM allowed authorized dealers (private banks) to operate online foreign exchange trading freely as per the market rate depending on supply and demand, starting from 5 December 2023. — NN/KK



An export-import container vessel.

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OPINION

Successfully initiate green economic development for bolster economy

THE Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) was established on 15 June 2001, in Shanghai, China, with members including Kazakhstan, China, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, India, Pakistan, and Iran. The SCO Charter, signed by the heads of state at a ceremony in St. Petersburg, Russia, in June 2022, came into force on 19 September 2003.

The SCO's primary objectives include enhancing mutual trust and neighbourliness among member countries, promoting cooperation in political, trade, economic, research, technological, and cultural sectors, as well as education, energy, transport, tourism, environmental conservation, and other areas. The organization also focuses on regional security, stability, and peace while advocating for a fair international political and economic landscape based on democratic principles.

As such, member countries need the promotion of green development technologies, enhancement of capacity for human resource development, raising funds, and further regional cooperation in the education and research development sector. The forum issued the plan to initiate regional green development partnership relations and enhancement of sustainable development future.

Commitment to green development is essential for SCO countries and dialogue partners. Myanmar, which joined the SCO as a dialogue partner in 2023, is committed to strengthening partnerships and cooperation among member countries. It emphasizes the importance of initiating green development and a sustainable future for new generations through the efforts of all stakeholders and experts. All SCO countries, dialogue partners, and observer countries must work together harmoniously to improve natural environments, ecosystems, and long-term socioeconomic development. This collective effort should be promoted as a public campaign on a global scale.

Myanmar is actively working towards environmental conservation by designating 10 per cent of its national land as natural conservation areas and 30 per cent as forest reserves to reduce deforestation and combat climate change. Currently, Myanmar has 59 natural conservation areas, including eight ASEAN heritage parks, seven Ramsar sites, two human and biosphere reserves, eight East Asian-Australasian Flyways, and 22 elephant protection-based tourism camps that enhance ecotourism services.

Myanmar also cooperates with international and regional countries in implementing international agreements such as the Stockholm Declaration of 1972, the 1992 Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, the Environmental Conservation and Development Programme-21, the 1992 Convention on Biological Diversity, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and the 2015 Paris Agreement.

By reaffirming commitments to green development, the SCO aims to foster sustainable growth and a harmonious relationship with nature. The collaborative efforts of member countries and dialogue partners are crucial in achieving these goals and ensuring a prosperous and environmentally conscious future for all.

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KICKING off from the speech in Kazakhstan to build an economic belt along the ancient Silk Road linking China and Europe, to talking about a maritime Silk Road plan in Indonesia, right after President Xi assumed power in 2012, One Belt, One Road has been the brainchild of his, to eventually build concrete support for China's Global Development, Global Security and Global Civilization initiatives across the globe. A common prosperity for all through peaceful co-existence while building the much-needed soft power that would rival that of the West.

For readers who need a short revision on these three key initiatives, the first one, Global Development Initiative core idea was to adhere to the people-centred approach, with its primary purpose being to overcome the challenges posed by the pandemic and accelerate the implementation of the UN's 2030 Agenda (Sustainable Development seek to end poverty and hunger, realize the human rights of all, achieve gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, and ensure the lasting protection of the planet and its natural resources). The Global Security Initiative is meant to uphold the principle of indivisible security, build a balanced, effective and sustainable security architecture, and oppose the building of national security on the basis of insecurity in other countries. The last, Global Civilization Initiative advocates respect for the diversity of civilizations, the common values of humanity, the importance of inheritance and innovation of civilizations, as well as robust international people-to-people exchanges and cooperation.

Even with all the good plans, refinements are called for to incorporate 'the weather and the terrain' (Sun Tzu). From the start, the monikers Economic Belt, Ancient Silk Road, Maritime Silk Road, and One Belt One Road sounded a tad too China-centric, and hence the English version of BRI (Belt and Road Initiative). Originally designed in part to link backwaters of modern China such as Ningxia and Gansu to new markets in Eurasia through a network of road, rail and nautical links, BRI is seen essentially as Xi Jinping's global spanning infrastructure scheme by many

developing countries. Under this Xi signature foreign policy, China had laid thousands of miles of tarmac and poured oceans of concrete, building ports, pipelines and pavements across the globe. BRI has already celebrated its 10th anniversary in 2023.

From 2000 to 2021 over a twenty-year period, China funded more than 20,000 infrastructure projects, many under BRI, across 165 countries with aid or credit worth \$1.3 trillion. And it's not over yet. Still, many more Chinese government-related entities are extending credit to the developing world today. Lending around \$80 billion a year, China remains the single largest source of international development finance in this world of ours.

TIME TO REVAMP THE BRI?

By U AC



Picture shows the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road, collectively known as the Belt and Road initiative.
PHOTO: XINHUA

developing countries. Under this Xi signature foreign policy, China had laid thousands of miles of tarmac and poured oceans of concrete, building ports, pipelines and pavements across the globe. BRI has already celebrated its 10th anniversary in 2023.

Some stats

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Cambodia might have built the expressway from its capital to the south beach without BRI, Laos might have accomplished the high-speed train link from its capital to Kunming, the State capital of Yunnan, but realistically, does any country really come into your mind, who would be so will-

ing born out of the necessity to accommodate large state-owned enterprises, suffering from overcapacity at home. They said the government was helping them survive by giving them projects to do and helping them make money in the region. They could not be more wrong. Think of China, which has plans for the next 50 years, promises to be carbon neutral by the year 2060, and mapped out in detail to replace coal power plants with many nuclear power plants within the next couple of years, as having no plan was naive at best and at worst, totally ignorant of how politburo, CPC or the government functions in the mainland.

Another charge is how not all countries are willingly embracing the BRI in South East Asia. Indonesia got the biggest share of the BRI and its last President Jokowi was using it to promote his own economic agenda. Cambodia and Laos embraced BRI very willingly. Vietnamese, wary of China's intentions, largely avoided the BRI. Malaysia has troubled engagements with BRI, yet politicians there are keeping

60 to 70 million Chinese diasporas in neighbouring Southeast Asian countries, many BRI projects have gone well, building roads, rail tracks and power plants, bringing many backward countries into the modern world and letting the populace enjoy the triumphs of twenty-first-century infrastructure and amenities. For example, the new Phnom Penh-Sihanoukville expressway in Cambodia cut the journey from the capital to the coastal south from five hours to two. The traffic may be sparse at present, based on our recent expedition but it did reflect the country as one willing to do the needful to keep abreast of developments in other contemporary states.

On average, BRI investments were in excess of \$10 billion per year over the past 20 years. China claimed that 420,000 jobs have been created in BRI countries and 40 million people lifted out of poverty thanks to BRI-generated growth, over the past ten years.

Detractors

Critics first accused BRI of having no grand plans and hav-

ing born out of the necessity to accommodate large state-owned enterprises, suffering from overcapacity at home. They said the government was helping them survive by giving them projects to do and helping them make money in the region. They could not be more wrong. Think of China, which has plans for the next 50 years, promises to be carbon neutral by the year 2060, and mapped out in detail to replace coal power plants with many nuclear power plants within the next couple of years, as having no plan was naive at best and at worst, totally ignorant of how politburo, CPC or the government functions in the mainland.

Another charge is how not all countries are willingly embracing the BRI in South East Asia. Indonesia got the biggest share of the BRI and its last President Jokowi was using it to promote his own economic agenda. Cambodia and Laos embraced BRI very willingly. Vietnamese, wary of China's intentions, largely avoided the BRI. Malaysia has troubled engagements with BRI, yet politicians there are keeping

silent for fear of repercussions. West-leaning Philippines with its ASEAN CIA headquarters in Manila is not so eager for BRI projects either. The strongest criticism of BRI remains the fact that the scheme has contributed to dangerous debt levels in poorer countries and plenty of white elephants, in terms of under-utilized highways, bridges, ports, hubs, airports and railways. Africa has soaked up a larger share of BRI lending, as there is no real and benevolent patron of major infrastructure projects in their war-torn countries prior to China. Unfortunately, infrastructure needs in these countries were very much insatiable. The more you wanted your country's infrastructure to develop as fast as possible, the more debt you ended up taking on. As countries become laden with debt, many loans have turned sour. Africa has become a financial quagmire. At present, the top eight debtors to China include Pakistan, Angola, Sri Lanka, Ethiopia, Kenya, Zambia, Bangladesh and Laos. The majority of these eight countries are now having to restructure their debts as their national income turns out to be grossly insufficient to service the borrowings. As BRI projects are not solely in their countries, there is nil possibility of any debt waiver in sight, regardless of how benevolent China wants to be.

Whatever the critics might say, there is no denying that BRI is an attractive no-string-attached investment. With the proven capacity to implement projects at incredible speeds, e.g., a 1,000-bed hospital built within a week during Covid, BRI recipient countries can be confident of the swift execution of their projects, with quick access to Chinese finance, know-how and construction teams.

The legacy of BRI in South East Asia looks to be deep with enduring impacts across the region. Contrary to what the detractors said, most countries seem to be in love with the BRI. Even 18 of 27 members of the European Union have signed up to the BRI.

What has changed

After ten years of BRI, South East Asia countries become more cautious and confident in their commercial dealings with China, getting towards the efficient

end of their learning curves. Now many are preferring and advocating for a different sort of Chinese investments, in technology, renewable energy, electric vehicles, mobile phones, communication equipment, military hardware, etc.

China is the main trading partner to more than 120 countries. It has provided \$240 billion since 2016, in emergency funding of the sort IMF specializes in, to countries in need. Over the past five years, it has also overtaken Russia as the main source of weapons for sub-Saharan Africa. One of the major attractions of partnering with China has been its disdain for value-based interactions. It preaches non-interference. It does not add ideology to its BRI arrangements. Based on the latest survey, 50 per cent of people in Africa see China as having a positive impact on its development. The warnings and interferences by Western governments to the Global South have fallen on deaf ears.

150 countries have so far signed on to the BRI scheme. China's inclusive model respects the political and legal traditions of different countries, unlike judgmental Western democracies. Chinese-sponsored projects may also appeal to countries that resent US bullying and the EU colonial legacy.

The popularity of BRI has become a prickle in itself. With so many countries taking up loans for the projects, 75 per cent of BRI loans have principal maturity before 2030. And these countries may not have funds to repay those principals. Hence, bilateral debt restructuring deals taking place with many countries right now.

Meanwhile, rivals are catching up. India has stepped up its efforts for more engagement in Africa. The number of Indian embassies in Africa has increased from 25 to 42 between 2012 to 2022. It continued to remain the continent's fourth-largest trading partner and its fifth-largest FDI source. India cannot offer as much funding or credit as China, so instead, it focuses on offering its home-grown stack of digital platforms, from national ID card management systems to health-care management systems. India worries more about China-led Asia than the US-led world. While China may be a supermarket for developing countries offering

everything under the sun, India acts as an IT store for its offerings to the developing world. The rest of the countries are not resting on their laurels either. They are akin to boutiques; gulf states offering renewable energy, Brazil putting forward food security and South Africa advancing itself as a moral leader. Once China extended its vision onto Africa, not only did its BRIC rivals act, but also the US and EU responded. The US and the OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development) already spent more than \$200 billion per annum in overseas aid. They attempted to blunt China's salient into Africa. As of today, the West still leads in Africa. The total trade between Africa and the West (US and EU) is still greater than its trade with China. (Source: IMF). Regardless of BRI's success, China is unlikely to upend US defence and military partnerships with 76 countries, such as those treaties with Europe, Japan, Korea, or Australia.

Another factor to consider would be waning enthusiasm at home. The Chinese at home see China as exceptionally benevolent and grumble about foreigners who accuse BRI of advancing their own 'aggressive goals'. Chinese people are used to the spirit of sacrifice. But from the perspective of an ordinary person, it is certainly not necessary to spend a lot of money in a faraway foreign place like Africa. Inadequate returns over ten years of large investments in poorer countries make them cast their doubts on the long-term feasibility of such goodwill of their nation. Thus, the BRI scheme is now shrinking. Some citizens even thought of BRI as free money to foreigners. The dissent may not be loud while the domestic economy is booming, but it might become widespread with a slowing economy at home. For a country that values security and stability above all else, this may not be good news.

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SEE PAGE 11

NATIONAL

Efforts to combat illegal trade strengthened nationwide

UNDER the oversight of the Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee, efforts to prevent and prosecute illegal trade are continuing effectively within the bounds of the law.

Between 8, 9, and 13 July, a combined team led by the Kayin State Illegal Trade Eradication Special Task Force conducted inspections resulting in seizures: 178 kilogrammes of Thai-made tapioca balls (valued at K124,600) near the Mebaung market on the Hpa-an-Hlaingbwe Road; a Nissan Diesel truck (worth approximately K35 million) transporting 1,396 18-litre bottles of palm oil (worth approximately K100.512 million) near Hteepoekalon village on the Myinegyingyu-Shwegon-Hpa-an Road; and a King Long bus (worth approximately K25 million) carrying goods (worth approximately K2.9 million), including 40 used Lenovo laptops, at Thanlwin checkpoint.

The action was taken following Customs Procedures.

On 15 July, a combined team managed by the Yangon Region Illegal Trade Eradication Special Task Force conducted inspections and seized an unregistered Toyota Mark II (worth approximately K4.5 million) in Insein

Township and an unregistered Suzuki Wagon (worth approximately K3.5 million) in Shwepyitha Township. The action was taken under the Import-Export Law.

Simultaneously, a combined team managed by the Taninthayi Region Illegal Trade Eradication

Special Task Force inspected and seized 23 unregistered vehicles — five Honda Fit, three Toyota Mark X, two Toyota Crown, two Nissan Wingroad, two Nissan AD Van, two Toyota Wish, two Daihatsu, one Toyota Caldina, one Honda Insight, one Honda CRV, one Toyota Probox, and

one Isuzu D-Max (estimated total value of K151.5 million) — in Myeik District and Dawei District, along with an unregistered Honda Click motorbike valued at K4 million in Kawthoung. The action was taken under the Import-Export Law.

On 16 July, a combined team managed by the Ayeyawady Region Illegal Trade Eradication Special Task Force conducted inspections and seized illegally imported fuel, including 2,115 gallons of diesel and 1,125 gallons of gasoline (worth approximately K36.513 million), from a vessel in Pathein Township. The action was taken under the Petroleum and Petroleum Product Law.

The Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee reported 32 arrests made on 8, 9, 13, 15, and 16 July, resulting in the seizure of illegal goods worth approximately K363.549 million. — MNA/TMT



Photos show confiscated illegal items and vehicle in Kayin State.

CRIME NEWS

Drugs worth K16.8B seized in PyinOoLwin

MYANMAR Police Force confiscated a total of 11.2 million stimulant tablets worth K16.8 billion in PyinOoLwin, Mandalay Region, this week.

A combined force of the anti-narcotic police stopped and searched a 22-wheel vehicle driven by Min Zaw and Min Ko onboard near Watwun Village, PyinOoLwin Town-

ship, Mandalay Region, at 6:30 am on 14 July and found 3.95 million pills of drugs on the vehicle.

According to further investigation, the police also seized 7.25 million stimulant tablets from an 18-wheel vehicle driven by Maung Nge (aka Kyaw Gyi) on the bypass road, Ward 14, PyinOoLwin, at 10:30

am on the same day.

Thus, the police confiscated 11.2 million stimulant worth K16.8 billion, which were to be carried from Shan State (North) to Mandalay Region.

The action was taken against offenders and further investigation is being made for those who were involved in the case. — MNA/KZL

Police seize K275M worth of Happy Water in Tachilek

ACCORDING to the Myanmar Police Force, K275 million worth of Happy Water was seized in eastern Shan State.

Acting on a tip-off, the combined drug enforcement task force inspected a Mitsubishi Outlander in Tachilek Township on 15 July and seized 2.5 kilogrammes of Happy Water together with two offenders.

These two offenders involved in drug cases were charged under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law, and further investigations were underway. — MNA/KTZH



Offenders are seen alongside seized drugs and a saloon.

Counter-argument to false information

Malicious media intentionally spread fake news



This screenshot validates misinformation.

MALICIOUS media outlets are spreading false information on social media, claiming that security forces launched attacks using heavy weapons resulting in two civilians dead and 14 hurt in Lapoh village, Gangaw Township in Magway Region on 13 July.

Civilians reported on 13 July to security forces that PDF terrorists gathered in the vicinity of Lapoh village. Upon a tip-off,

security force members conducted a counterattack using heavy weapons, and terrorists died. In the same evening, terrorists attacked the regional station using drones and they retreated amid counter-terrorism attacks, according to a security official.

Fake news was reportedly circulated through malicious media, defaming security forces. — MNA/KTZH

ARTICLE/ENVIRON

Time to Revamp the BRI?

FROM PAGE 9

Maybe it's worth inviting the world to hitch a hike on the 'express train of China's development' again, in the redesigned version of BRI. Unhappiness in foreign lands, particularly due to their own struggle with BRI debts, has to be addressed. Local hopes of BRI fuelled boom have also faded. One BRI advisor to the government even recommended emphasizing the scheme's benefits to ordinary Chinese back home, with concrete examples, to continue to garner support for BRI among people.

Hence, smaller projects with large ambitions are in fashion now. Changing politics in recipient countries makes it more difficult for these countries to accept large projects too. Smaller projects generate benefits quickly and give local people a greater sense of ownership.

On the supply side, China is in search of global finance for BRI, including those from rich Muslim countries, with deep-pocket sovereign funds. Saudi joining BRICS and reconciling with Iran, with China's backing, was, therefore, very important. The focus has also shifted from the breadth and spread of the projects to increasingly on governance, seeing structure, systems and standards as the keys to sustainable development.

The new developing world is not just looking for China's funds and project implementation prowess. First, they knew China had become a scientific

superpower. From the creation of an artificial sun, through fusion, to landing on the moon, they know Chinese technology is at par, if not better than the US and the West. What most of them still may not be aware of is that China now has the highest share of global high-quality, high-impact science papers and China is the leader in many scientific fields ranging from material science and chemistry to engineering and computer science. These factors are going to alter the world's scientific leadership in the foreseeable future. So, China's money is not the only thing in demand now.

Take AI (Artificial Intelligence) for example. China now contributes to around 40 per cent of the world's research papers on AI, compared to ten per cent for the United States and 15 per cent for Europe. Especially in areas such as computer vision and robotics, China has a significant lead in research and development. Growth in the quality and quantity of Chinese science is unlikely to stop anytime soon. The government has just announced a ten per cent increase in funding for science and technology research in 2024. Chinese universities are producing eight times more engineering and science graduates than their US counterparts.

These are the areas in which developing countries cannot catch up on their own merits. They have neither the capacity nor the capabilities to master science and technology

on their own. Now, there is an opportunity to reshape the BRI and upgrade the uptake of it once and for all. China can start by how to effectively share some of its scientific know-how.

Chinese philosopher Lao Tzu once said 'Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day. Teach him how to fish and you feed him for a lifetime. While the United States goes low by restricting its science, banning and sanctioning Huawei, and denying Chinese students from top science universities, China can go high by being benevolent, decent, thoughtful and keeping up to its 'shared prosperity' motto by not just financing and funding the hardware but also supporting and underwriting the software through the promotion of scientific development of BRI current and potential recipients.

The soft power deal

A significant and intangible benefit of BRI would be a visible increase in China's soft power, especially as the de facto leader of the Global South. Not only President Xi but also Modiji and Luis Inacio Lula da Silva wanted to be the voice of the Global South.

Pardee Centre for International Futures (PCIF) at the University of Denver, USA has developed a power matrix named Formal Bilateral Influence Capacity (FBIC), to track relational power in the international system. It is measured by two dimensions, bandwidth and dependence. The former refers

to the extent of connections back and forth, the volume of trade, diplomatic representations, etc., while the latter quantifies how much the smaller country needs the bigger country's arms, loans, investments, etc. Even without statistics to back it up, it can easily be seen why China's influence capacity or soft power is at the very top.

Based on PCIF, from 1992 to 2020 the number of countries over which China had more influence than the United States almost doubled from 33 to 61. China is already the leader and a part of the global south, an enlarged family of developing countries, that believe in true multilateralism and universal values of common prosperity. BRI is an integral part of building that influence.

Two-thirds of Chinese financing (most of them through BRI) went to 'toss-up' countries, where neither China nor the United States clearly holds sway. Based on voting and funding records, if such a government increased its share of votes at the UN General Assembly that aligns with China by ten per cent points, it can expect a 276 per cent increase, on average, in financing from Beijing. From the year 2000 to 2021-, low- and mid-income countries voted on decisions with China 75 per cent of the time at the UN General Assembly. Talking about money and influence intertwining in modern politics!

When all is said and done, the mega BRI projects may have

added much to the national debt but it did lower the cost of transport and logistics across the land and the sea. It may seem like white elephants currently, but the countries now have infrastructures that they can be proud of and show off to attract foreign investors. The Chinese may have implemented the projects, but these works created job and learning opportunities for many developing countries, helping restrict the outflow of talent to the developed world. The recipient country governments may not be democratic, measured by the Western standards of yardsticks, yet it is a reflection of a government continuing to fight for economic opportunities and promote the public interests. Any successful project completion implies a country that provides for the poor, works for working families, helps out in the heartland and revitalizes the rural landscape. At the end of the day, for those rushing to join the global growth circus and break out of the poverty cycle, they simply have to choose development over democracy, country over regional rights, hope over infighting, determination over indecision and economy over freedom of expression, and finally, people over politics. Life is a matter of choices. Every choice you make makes you. As the Knight guarding the Holy Grail (Jones and the Last Crusade) said: "But choose wisely, for while the true Grail will bring your life, the false Grail will take it from you!"

World's rarest whale washes up on New Zealand beach

THE body of a spade-toothed whale — a species so rare it has never been seen alive — appears to have washed up on a New Zealand beach, scientists say.

The remains of the obscure, five-metre (16.4 foot) long, beaked creature were found near a river mouth in southern Otago province on 4 July, government researchers said.

It was identified by marine-mammal experts from New

Zealand's Department of Conservation and the national museum, Te Papa, as a male spade-toothed whale.

A DNA investigation has been launched to confirm its classification, the scientists said.

"Spade-toothed whales are one of the most poorly known large mammalian species of modern times," said the conservation department's coastal Otago operations manager, Gabe Davies. — AFP



A handout photo taken on 5 July 2024 and received on 16 July from the New Zealand Department of Conservation shows rangers Jim Fyfe (L) and Tumai Cassidy walking beside what appears to be the carcass of a rare spade-toothed whale after it was discovered washed ashore on a beach near Taieri Mouth in New Zealand's southern Otago province. **PHOTO: HANDOUT / NEW ZEALAND DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION / AFP**

ECONOMY WORLD

Thailand targets 7.5% tourism revenue growth for 2025

THAILAND targets at least 7.5 per cent growth in its vital tourism industry for 2025, aiming to generate a revenue of 3.4 trillion baht (about US\$94.16 billion), the country's tourism agency said on Monday.

With a transformation into high-value tourism, the kingdom will focus on upgrading its tourism supply chain to better accommodate high-quality tourists, along with promoting sustainable standards and charming destinations to ensure a fair and equitable distribution of income, Minister of Tourism and Sports Serm Sak Pongpanit told a news conference.

Effective Monday, Thailand expanded its visa-free entry scheme to include citizens from 93 countries and territories, allowing them to stay for up to 60 days without a visa, while those from 31 countries and territories are now eligible for visas on ar-



Tourists look at the view from the top deck of a tourist commuter boat on the Chao Praya River in Bangkok on 27 December 2023. PHOTO: AFP

rival.

As the visa exemption meas-

ure helps improve the ease of travel and travel frequency, Tour-

ism Authority of Thailand (TAT) will continue its push to increase

seat capacity on current routes and new routes, as well as for both regular and charter flights, while promoting hidden-gem cities and Thai charms that align with tourists' needs, said TAT Governor Thapanee Kiatphai-bool. Thapanee said 2025 marks the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Thailand and China, and the TAT will host multi-level celebratory activities, including inviting world-renowned influencers and celebrities to Thailand, along with organizing joint promotions with partners and offering special deals for Chinese tourists. With 3.58 million arrivals, Chinese tourists have made up the largest source market for Thailand so far this year. The kingdom has received over 18.2 million foreign tourists, on course to meet the year-end target of 36.7 million inbound visitors, Ministry of Tourism and Sports data showed. — Xinhua

Quota for big Pacific bluefin tuna to rise 50% amid stock recovery

AN international body managing Pacific bluefin tuna stocks agreed Tuesday to raise the annual quota for catching the fish, typically consumed as sashimi and sushi, by 50 per cent for those weighing 30 kilogrammes or more, as their numbers have been rebound-

ing, the Japanese Fisheries Agency said.

As the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission's Northern Committee wrapped up a two-day meeting in the northern Japanese city of Kushiro in Hokkaido, it also decided to increase the world-

wide catch limit by 10 per cent for smaller sizes of the fish.

The decision will be formalized at the WCPFC's annual conference starting in late November, and the changes are expected to go into effect next year.

Japan's quota for large fish will increase to 8,421 tonnes, up by 2,807 tonnes, and that for small fish will rise to 4,407 tonnes, up by 400 tonnes.

The current supply of Pacific bluefin tuna in Japan, a major tuna consumer, stands at around 30,000 tonnes per year, including imports, and the expanded quota is expected to help push down prices for bluefin tuna in the country, the agency said at a briefing in the city.

However, one of its officials also said it is difficult to predict price movements at this time.

The total annual quotas will increase to 11,869 tonnes for large fish and to 5,125 tonnes for small fish. — Xinhua



File photo shows bluefin tuna unloaded at a port in Sakaiminato, Tottori Prefecture, western Japan, in May 2024. PHOTO: KYODO

NEWS IN BRIEF

Cambodia records 16.5% rise in garment, footwear, travel goods export in H1

CAMBODIA exported US\$6,246 million worth of garments, footwear and travel goods (GFTs) in the first half of 2024, up 16.5 per cent from \$5,360 million over the same period last year, said a Ministry of Commerce's report on Tuesday.

Garments accounted for \$4,569 million during the January-June period this year, up 18.4 per cent from \$3,858.5 million over the same period last year, the report said. Footwear represented \$774 million, up 10.4 per cent from \$700.6 million, while travel goods absorbed \$903 million, up 12.7 per cent from \$801 million, the report added.

The World Bank said in its economic update last month that the GFT sector would be one of the major contributors to Cambodia's economic growth this year, which was predicted at 5.8 per cent. — Xinhua

New Zealand's central bank collects public opinion on digital cash

THE Reserve Bank of New Zealand (RBNZ) has been soliciting public opinion of having an electronic version of cash in the country, issued by the Reserve Bank. Digital cash provides people with an alternative, instant, safe, low-cost way of paying for everyday needs without a bank account, it said in a statement on Tuesday.

The Reserve Bank is planning for a future in New Zealand that has less cash, but not one that is cash-less, it said. "We will keep cash (banknotes and coins) for as long as people want to use them to pay for everyday things," the statement said.

The RBNZ is currently in the second stage of a multi-year project to consider the use of digital cash after developing some principles and design options, it said, adding that New Zealanders are encouraged to share their views on them. — Xinhua

Humanoid robot industry gains momentum, boosting China's economy

IN an automotive factory, silver humanoid robots stride along assembly lines, conducting tasks once performed exclusively by humans -- from car scanning to seatbelt inspection and affixing la-

bels onto vehicles.

This is not a scene from a sci-fi movie, but a collaboration between UBTECH, a Shenzhen-based robotics firm, and Chinese electric car-maker NIO, highlighting

the rapid advancement in China's humanoid robot industry.

As competition intensifies among manufacturers, humanoid robots are increasingly being integrated into various

sectors, with industrial applications leading the charge.

Earlier this month, UBTECH announced it would work with FAW-Volkswagen, one of China's earliest joint venture automakers, to develop an unmanned car factory. This initiative aims to deploy UBTECH's industrial humanoid robot, Walker S, at FAW-Volkswagen's plant in east China's Qingdao, where the robot will undertake tasks such as bolt tightening, component assembly, and handling automotive parts.

Experts consider industrial manufacturing, commercial services, and family companionship the primary applications for humanoid robots. Among these, industrial manufacturing is poised to lead the way. — Xinhua



A group of humanoid robots are on display at the entrance of an exhibition of the three-day World Artificial Intelligence Conference (WAIC) 2024 in Shanghai, east China, 4 July 2024. PHOTO: XINHUA

Environmental approval granted for Australian plan to export solar electricity to Singapore

AUTHORITIES in Australia's Northern Territory (NT) have granted environmental approval for the world's largest renewable energy and transmission project.

The NT government and NT Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) on Tuesday granted principal environmental approval for SunCable's Australia-Asia PowerLink (AAPowerLink) project.

The project aims to supply renewable energy to customers in Darwin, capital of the NT, and also to Singapore via a 4,300 kilometres undersea cable from the early 2030s onwards.

Over two stages of development SunCable is aiming to develop the world's largest renewable energy precinct and deliver up to four gigawatts (GW) of electricity to Darwin and 1.75GW to Singapore.

According to SunCable the AAPowerLink is the world's largest renewable energy and transmission project in development.

Electricity will be generated and stored at a solar farm with a generation

capacity of up to 10GW in the Barkly region of the NT over 600 kilometres south of Darwin before being transmitted to Darwin and on to Singapore.

Environmental approval has been granted for the generation and storage site, a High Voltage Direct Current (HVDC) transmission line from the precinct to Darwin, a Darwin converter station and an undersea HVDC cable from the converter to the end of Australian territorial waters at the border with Indonesia.

Cameron Garnsworthy, managing director of SunCable, said in a statement that the approval would provide significant momentum to the project.

"SunCable is founded with the belief that Australia can lead the world's energy transition," he said.

"AAPowerLink presents a unique opportunity for the Northern Territory to be at the forefront of this global shift through the development of its world-class renewable energy resources to supply customers in Darwin and Singapore with 24/7 green electricity." — Xinhua

Japan likely spends 2 tln yen Friday on currency market intervention

JAPAN likely spent around two trillion yen (US\$13 billion) to shore up the yen against the US dollar last Friday, reinforcing market speculation that authorities intervened in the currency market for a second

day, according to market sources and central bank data released Tuesday.

The government has remained silent on whether it stepped into the market, leaving financial markets guessing. But the data

suggested that Japan may have spent over five trillion yen in the latest cycle of interventions, helping lift the Japanese currency from a 37-year low near the 162 line.

The estimated size

of an intervention is calculated by looking at the difference between market estimates of changes in the Bank of Japan's current account balance and data released by the central bank. — Kyodo

S Korea's auto export falls in June

SOUTH Korea's automotive export turned downward in three months due to lower global demand for eco-friendly vehicles, government data showed Tuesday.

Car shipment shrank 0.4 per cent from a year earlier to US\$6.2 billion in June after growing for the past two months, according to the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy.

For the first six months

of this year, the automotive shipment reached \$37.01 billion, up 3.8 per cent compared to the same period of last year.

The number of exported vehicles was 252,360 in June, up 5.0 per cent from a year earlier. Export for eco-friendly cars declined 16.2 per cent to \$1.85 billion last month, and auto parts shipment reduced 11.6 per cent to \$1.76 billion. — Xinhua

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V UNI-ACTIVE VOY.NO. (774N)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V UNI-ACTIVE VOY.NO. (774N)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **17-7-2024** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **AWPT** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S EVERGREEN MARINE (ASIA) PTE., LTD

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V MSC SUPARNA F VOY.NO. (SB426A)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V MSC SUPARNA F VOY.NO. (SB426A)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **17-7-2024** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **AWPT** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S MEDITERRANEAN SHIPPING COMPANY S.A

ROLLING UPDATES

WORLD

JD Vance is Trump's bold choice for VP, but can he win?



US former President and 2024 Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump pumps his fist during the first day of the 2024 Republican National Convention at the Fiserv Forum in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, 15 July 2024. **PHOTO: AFP**

DONALD Trump has put a youthful, loyal gladiator for his Make America Great Again movement on the Republican ticket, hoping JD Vance's transformation from blue-collar Rust Belter to senator can help him secure victory.

A White House candidate often chooses a vice-presidential running mate who can appeal

to new categories of voters or compensate for acknowledged weaknesses in terms of image or policy.

Trump, though, tapped a conservative white man like himself, from a state he already had every chance of winning.

"We're ecstatic," Alex Triantafyllou, chairman of the Ohio Republican Party, said on the

Republican National Convention floor minutes after Vance was announced as Trump's VP choice, calling him a "great addition" to the ticket.

Vance has "lived that experience" shared by millions of working-class and middle-class Americans, he said.

But will Trump's plan work? — AFP

Death toll rises to 40 from rainstorms, flash floods in east Afghanistan

THE death toll from rainstorms and flooding in eastern Afghanistan's Nangarhar province has risen to 40 and the number of injured has reached 347, the country's Ministry of Public Health reported Tuesday.

Health workers were dispatched to the affected areas for treating the injured, said Sharafat Zaman Amarkhil, spokesman for the ministry, adding that the casualties of the mishap are expected to rise.

The sudden natural disaster took place Monday afternoon and caused heavy fatalities and financial damages in Jalalabad the provincial

capital, Sukh Rod District and their neighbouring areas in the province bordering Pakistan.

Similarly, five people were

killed as flash floods swept away most parts of eastern Afghanistan's Kunar province on Monday morning. — Xinhua



Flash floods gush across a valley after heavy rainfall at Qala area in Dara district, Panjshir province on 15 July 2024. **PHOTO: AF**

EU and Britain hold first talks to 'reset' ties after UK vote

TOP officials from Britain and the European Union on Monday held their first face-to-face talks in Brussels as the new Labour government looks to "reset" ties after Brexit.

Britain's new Prime Minister Keir Starmer — who won a huge majority at elections this month — has vowed to turn a page with the EU after years of bad blood under the previous Conservative government.

In a first step, Britain's minister for EU relations Nick Thomas-Symonds had a sit-down with Brussels' pointman on ties with the UK Maros Sefcovic.

"As we work to reset the relationship, we discussed strengthening security and economic cooperation — to create a safer and more prosperous Europe," Thomas-Symonds wrote on X.

Sefcovic described the meeting as constructive and said he was "looking forward to our cooperation".

Britain's new prime minister has vowed to reduce trade frictions with the EU, and forge closer security arrangements.

But Starmer is also adamant his government will never reverse Brexit nor seek to be part of the European single market. — AFP

NEWS UPDATES

Lao president calls for urgent action to address economic woes

LAO President Thongloun Sisoulith has instructed the government to urgently address economic and financial difficulties, especially those related to fluctuating currency exchange rates and high inflation.

President Thongloun issued the order during an open government meeting, held from Monday to Wednesday, attended by cabinet members, the mayor of Vientiane, and provincial governors, Lao National Radio reported on Tuesday.

The Lao government must put in place conditions that will sustain an acceptable rate of inflation and living costs to resolve the country's ongoing financial problems and ease the burden on ordinary people, said Thongloun. — Xinhua

Japan completes 7th round of Fukushima treated water discharge

THE operator of the crippled Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant on Tuesday completed its seventh round of treated radioactive water discharge into the ocean.

Tokyo Electric Power Company Holdings Inc released around 7,800 tonnes of water in the latest round, which started on 28 June, with the operator saying no abnormal tritium levels were detected in nearby waters.

While the latest water release is the seventh overall, it marked the third of seven discharge rounds planned for fiscal 2024.

Prior to discharge, water used to cool melted fuel at the plant is passed through an advanced liquid processing system that removes most radionuclides apart from tritium.

TEPCO detected 18 becquerels of tritium per litre from seawater sampled from the facility's outlet, below its own limit of 700 becquerels required for the discharge to be halted and far under the World Health Organization's limit of 10,000 becquerels for drinking water. — Kyodo

SPORTS

Myanmar to compete in World Dragon Boat Championship

MYANMAR boat racing team will take part in the World Dragon Boat Championship 2025, hosted by China, as stated by the Myanmar Rowing and Canoeing Federation.

The championship will run in September, featuring six events including 200-metre, 500-metre and 2000-metre races.

Two rounds of qualifiers

for the championship will be conducted and team Myanmar will compete in the first round qualifiers.

Two teams with the best records in the first-round qualifiers will be allowed to compete in the World Dragon Boat Championship. In addition, the remaining participating teams will compete in the second-round qualifiers to



This photo shows the World Dragon Boat Championship 2019 in Thailand.

be held in the Philippines, and 10 competing teams will be selected.

The World Dragon Boat Championship will be held with a total of 12 teams. — TWA/KZL

Tens of thousands to welcome Mbappe to Real Madrid



A man stands next to the newly launched jersey of French footballer Kylian Mbappe at the Real Madrid's official store in the Santiago Bernabeu stadium in Madrid on 11 July 2024. PHOTO: AFP

STILL celebrating Spain's Euro 2024 triumph, Real Madrid fans will have even more to cheer Tuesday as French superstar Kylian Mbappe is

officially presented to a packed-out Santiago Bernabeu stadium.

With an expected attendance of 85,000, the stadium will be packed

to the rafters for Mbappe's first appearance before fans in what should beat the record set 15 years ago by Cristiano Ronaldo.

Although the tickets are free, they were snapped up rapidly with some fans reportedly trying to resell them to take advantage of the hype surrounding the arrival of the world's best striker.

During the morning, Mbappe will sign his new five-season contract with Real president Florentino Perez before entering the stadium at midday (1000 GMT) to greet fans after which he will hold a press conference.

Although his new teammates began training on Monday, the striker, who captained France during the Euros, will have a few more days off before kicking off his season in the Spanish capital. — AFP

Southgate quits as England manager

GARETH Southgate said on Tuesday he was resigning as England manager, two days after they lost to Spain in the Euro 2024 final.

"It's time for change, and for a new chapter. Sunday's final in Berlin against Spain was my final game as England manager," Southgate said in a statement.

Names immediately bandied around as 53-year-old Southgate's successor are Newcastle manager Eddie Howe, and two former Chelsea handlers, Graham Potter and

Mauricio Pochettino.

Football Association CEO Mark Bullingham said Southgate had "made the impossible job possible". Southgate took over in 2016 when England's fortunes were at a low ebb, having exited the Euros after defeat to Iceland and then Sam Allardyce had to resign over a scandal.

In the last four tournaments Southgate led England to three semifinals and two finals. — AFP



England's head coach Gareth Southgate reacts after the UEFA Euro 2024 final football match between Spain and England at the Olympiastadion in Berlin on 14 July 2024. PHOTO: AFP

Myanma Lethwei stars to challenge US, Thai fighters

THE Great Lethwei TGL-7 event showcased the Myanma Lethwei (traditional boxing), with the challenges of Myanmar Lethwei fighters versus the fighters from the United States and Thailand at 3:30 pm Myanmar Standard Time on 21 July.

Kyaw Swar Win (Myanmar) will take on Bradpasto (USA) in the middleweight bout or main event while Yan Naing Tun (Myanmar) will face Neran (Thailand) in the co-main event or welterweight event.

"The player I will be fighting is a foreigner. Therefore, I have prepared myself to be perfect as the fans have requested. He is taller than me. He is an experienced player. He is about four years older than me. He is stronger in the MMA division than he fought in ONE. I am short in stature, so I have to prepare carefully and train. I'm training to beat him. I'll prove it with my work", said Kyaw Swar Win.

"I'm ready to fight at TGL-7. I won't be like the fighters he's faced before. I've prepared for some unexpected attacks. I believe I can do it. I'm also thinking about knocking him out. I expect this fight to be rough. He's an all-rounder. I've seen his previous fights as well. This competition will be my first Lethwei fight, so I am very excited. I have been waiting for the Lethwei competition before. I trained at Tiger Muay Thai Club. I am from Sleepy Hollow, New York City, USA," said Bradpasto.

This Lethwei championship will be broadcast live on Canal+ Sports 1 and Canal+ Application. — Arkar Linn/KZL



JD Vance is Trump's bold choice for VP, but can he win?
PAGE 14



WORLD



A Long March-2C carrier rocket carrying a test satellite blasts off from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Centre in northwest China on 9 July 2023. The satellite was launched at 7 pm (Beijing Time) and entered the planned orbit. It will carry out test missions for satellite internet technologies. PHOTO: XINHUA

Satellite internet takes off in China, offering new horizons for connectivity

IN the remote and rugged Yulong Naxi Autonomous County, southwest China's Yunnan Province, the deployment of ground base stations was once a difficult task. Local power grid staff often struggled with unstable signals, sluggish internet speeds and poor connectivity. But those issues are things of the past. Power inspectors can now easily transmit real-time videos, instructions and other data to a monitoring centre located 500 kilometres away, a technological advancement that comes from satellite internet.

Not only in the deep mountains but also out at sea and up in the air, people can now savor the joy of web surfing on satellite internet. The industry has been booming

in China, frequently capturing national headlines with its progress, from establishing the first high-orbit satellite internet to launching the first medium-Earth-orbit communication satellite. In May, the space-based technology service was introduced and tested in Thailand, showcasing its global potential.

Satellite internet is a type of internet connection that involves satellites in space playing the role of the base station on the ground. Each satellite can serve as a mobile base station, providing users worldwide with convenient internet access services. The initial use of satellite communication was primarily for transoceanic TV broadcasting and long-distance telephone

calls. However, we have now entered the era of satellite internet, where personal broadband access takes centre stage, according to He Shanbao, a researcher at Beijing Information Science and Technology University.

The current coverage of mobile internet only reaches a small portion of the Earth's surface. Access to the internet in deserts, oceans and jungles has to rely on satellite connections. Moreover, during natural disasters when ground base stations are damaged, satellite communications become particularly crucial, said Yin Haoqiong, a senior researcher from China Satellite Communications Co Ltd. — Xinhua

'Super spicy' crisps land Japan schoolkids in hospital

FOURTEEN Japanese high school students were taken to hospital Tuesday after eating "super spicy" potato chips, local media said.

More than 30 pupils at a Tokyo high school were reportedly sharing the crisps during recess when some started complaining of nausea and acute pain around their mouths.

Fourteen of them were rushed to hospital, with all conscious but at least one feeling so ill they had to be transported on a wheelchair, Fuji TV said.

The broadcaster said a male student brought the crisps to the school "just for fun" because he had eaten them before and found them "super spicy".

The crisps concerned have the brand name "R 18+ Curry Chips", media outlets including Asahi Shimbun and Fuji TV said.

According to the manufacturer's website, under-18s are "banned" from eating the crisps, which are "so spicy that they might cause you pain".

A hefty amount of extremely hot pepper known as "ghost pepper" is used as ingredients, the firm says on its website.

Those with high blood pressure and weak stomachs "are absolutely prohibited" from taking bites, and those who are "timid and have no guts" are also discouraged, the website warns.

Tokyo emergency services, the school and the chip maker were not immediately available for comment when contacted by AFP.— AFP

BRICS countries support creation of joint geological platform

BRICS countries have supported the idea of establishing a joint geological platform presented by the head of the Russian Federal Agency for Mineral Resources (Rosnedra) Yevgeny Petrov, the federal agency said on Tuesday.

"At the round table, Yevgeny Petrov presented the platform and described all the specifics

of working with it... Heads of the geological agencies of BRICS countries noted the importance of the platform for cooperation between countries and supported its creation," Rosnedra said in a statement following a three-day round table of BRICS heads of geological services.

The platform will provide for knowledge sharing, techno-

logical development, exchange of practical experience and holding joint events, the statement read, adding that the concept implies the creation of the coordination council, joint projects commission, council on technology transfer as well as the working group on the most important minerals and other experts and task groups. — Sputnik



PHOTO: SPUTNIK