

The Global **NEW LIGHT** of MYANMAR

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Photos showcase the PhaungdawU Pagoda (above) and waterfall (below) in Kayin State.

New tourist destinations identified in Kayin State

THE Kayin State Hotels and Tourism Department identified new tourist destinations in the region, including Padonma Cave, PhaungdawU Pagoda, and a waterfall, which will be developed as new travel attractions in Hpa-an City.

The newly developed destination, Padonma Cave, is located in the mountain far south of Tawpon Village, approximately six miles and two furlongs from Hpa-an, and it takes just over 15 minutes to travel by car. Natural water outlets inside Padonma Cave ensure that the water does not dry up, and fish are released into the cave on New Year's Day.

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CBM sells US\$111M, 19M yuan, 79M baht in 3 weeks

THE Central Bank of Myanmar (CBM) sold US\$111 million, 19 million yuan and 79 million baht in the past three weeks.

CBM's notification issued on 14 August revealed a contribution of \$100 million towards the fuel oil sector. CBM announced on 9 August that it would

sell \$6 million, five million yuan and 10 million baht into edible oil, fuel oil and pharmaceutical sectors through online foreign exchange trading platforms in the coming weeks.

CBM sold \$5 million and five million yuan for fuel oil, edible oil and pharma-

ceutical sectors on 2 August, after selling 69 million baht and nine million yuan for those importing edible oil, fertilizer, pharmaceuticals and medical devices on 1 August.

SEE PAGE 2

NATIONAL

Myanmar Gazette

Duty-Assignment of Permanent Secretary/Director-General

THE State Administration Council has concurrently assigned U Zaw Min Aung, Director-General of the Office of the Union Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the Union, to the duties of Permanent Secretary and Director-General at the same organization.



Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 7:00 pm Tuesday, 20 August 2024)

BAY INFERENCE: According to the observations at (17:30) hrs MST today, the low-pressure area over West Bengal, India and adjoining Bangladesh still persists. It is likely to move west-north-westwards and may cross West Bengal, India. Monsoons are weak to moderate over the Andaman Sea and South Bay and moderate elsewhere over the Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL NOON OF THE 21 August 2024: Rain or thundershowers will be scattered in Lower Sagaing, Mandalay, Magway Regions and Northern Shan, Kayah States, fairly widespread in Taninthayi Region and Kachin State and widespread in the remaining Regions and States with the likelihood of isolated heavy falls in Upper Sagaing Region. The degree of certainty is 100%.

THE CONDITION OF CUMULONIMBUS CLOUD: The Cumulonimbus clouds are developing in Nay Pyi Taw, Sagaing, Magway, Bago, Ayeyawady, Taninthayi Regions and Kachin, Shan, Chin, Rakhine, Kayin, and Mon States.

STATE OF THE SEA: The sea will be moderate in Myanmar Waters. Wave height will be about 5-7 feet off and along Myanmar Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Likelihood of increase of rain in Upper Sagaing, Bago Regions and Kachin, Shan, Kayin, and Mon States.

CBM sells US\$111M, 19M yuan, 79M baht in 3 weeks

FROM PAGE 1

CBM injected \$15.4 million and five million yuan into the foreign exchange market in July 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

Trust Double 9 donates rice, oil, and cash to film veterans

ACCORDING to Central Executive Committee Member Academy Aung Khine of the Myanmar Motion Pictures Organization (MMPO), the manufacturers of Trust Double 9 purified water made a second donation of rice, oil, and cash assistance to the Ko Lu Chaw group, senior comedians, and older and middle-aged female actresses of the MMPO on 19 August.

"Trust Double 9 donated 12 Pyi of rice, 50 ticals of cooking oil, and K50,000 in cash to each of 210 individuals. The original plan was to donate to 100 people, but we wanted to include those with poor health as well. Academy Win Lwin Htet and I



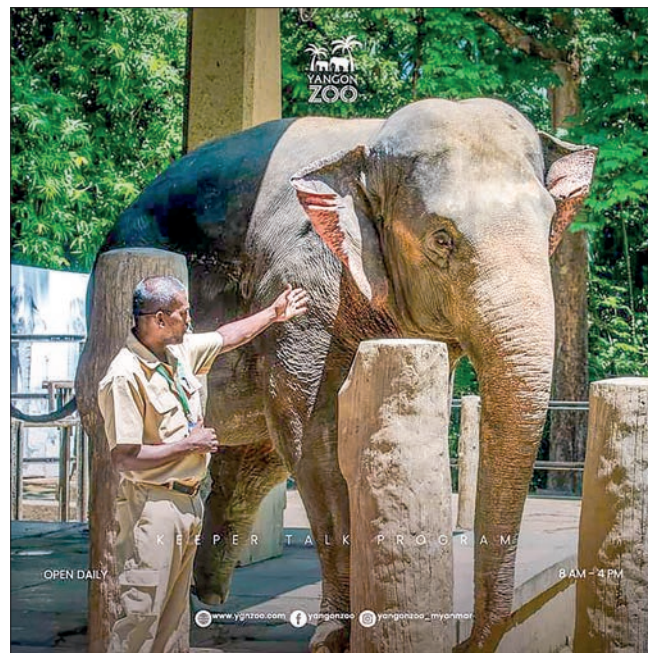
The donation ceremony is in progress on 19 August.

requested that they consider those in poor health, resulting in a total of 210 donations," Academy Aung Khine explained.

The donation was made to

individuals who have worked in the film industry for over 20 years, members of the MMPO, and all associated staff. — ASH/TRKM

Yangon Zoo invites public to 'Keeper Talks' programme



Bengal tiger, zebra and Asian elephant (above photo), which will be featured in 'Keeper Talks'.

YANGON Zoo has invited the public to join the 'Keeper Talks' programme, which is performed from 9:30 am to 3:30 pm every day in the respective animal's cage or yard.

The zoo's keepers will talk about wild animals they have taken care of, about the nature and habitat of wild animals and the chain of living things in an ecosystem.

Keeper talks timetable is: about spot-billed pelican at 9:30 am, Indo-chinese rhesus macaque at 1:30 am, zebra at 11:30 am, Bengal tiger at 1:30 pm, about Asian elephant at 2:30 pm and golden deer at 3:30 pm.

Keeper talks will give knowledge about wild animals and develop awareness of wildlife conservation. Yangon Zoo is open from 8 am to 4 pm every day. — MT/ZS

New tourist destinations identified ...

FROM PAGE 1

In addition, authorities conducted ground surveys to ensure that tourists can visit PhaungdawU Pagoda and the waterfall, which are located in Kyauktaung Village, Hlaingbwe Township, about 24 miles

from Hpa-an. It takes about 45 minutes to travel by bus from Hpa-an, thanks to safe and reliable transportation available in all seasons.

Between 200 and 300 visitors come to PhaungdawU Pagoda and the waterfall every

day, and rice with vegetable curries is served daily to the tourists. Currently, there are 22 tourist destinations in Kayin State and 60 hotels and guesthouses licensed by the government, with a total of 2,159 bedrooms. — TWA/TH

NATIONAL

MoI Union Minister urges employees to strive for soonest operation of Paper Mill (Yeni)

IF raw materials are weak in purification, production procedures will face some problems, harming the quality of finished products, said Union Minister for Industry Dr Charlie Than on his inspection tour of Paper Mill (Yeni) in Yeni of Bago Region yesterday afternoon.

At the paper mill, the Union minister inspected the repairing of machinery to resume running of the 20-tonne packaging paper factory, test-running of machinery and maintenance of the automatic operating systems.

In his meeting with staff and employees, the Union minister instructed officials and employees to use raw materials after systematically purifying them, adding



Union Minister for Industry Dr Charlie Than inspects machinery at Paper Mill (Yeni).

that it is necessary to carry out maintenance and repairs

of machinery strictly in line with the prescribed rules and

standards.

He stressed the need to

buy the necessary machinery to operate the paper mill as quickly as possible. He continued to say that spare parts of machinery and raw materials must be gathered in order to operate the mill without interruption, he added.

The Union minister emphasized conducting refresher courses for staff and employees to increase their skillfulness in production procedures and managing the multiplier courses on maintenance and servicing of machinery for employees.

During the visit, the Union minister gave instructions to service personnel on how to perform the assigned duties in unison. — MNA/TTA

Myanmar attends briefing of 3rd plenary session of 20th Central Committee of CPC

ACCORDING to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Daw Khaing Su Linn, Myanmar Consul-General in Nanning, attended a briefing on the Third Plenary Session of the 20th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China held in Nanning on 16 August.

Mr Liu Ning, Secretary of the CPC Guangxi Committee and Chairman of the Standing Committee of the Guangxi

People's Congress, provided an overview of the Third Plenary Session at Liyuan Resort.

During the briefing, Secretary Liu Ning outlined the goals, objectives, and reform measures adopted over the next five years, as well as the plans to be implemented by the Guangxi government.

In the subsequent discussion with Consuls-General, the

Myanmar Consul-General expressed confidence that China will achieve the strategies and policies approved at the meeting. She also reaffirmed Myanmar's commitment to continuing its cooperation with China as both a good neighbour and a strategic partner, particularly in implementing the reform measures and enhancing bilateral relations. — ASH/TMT



Myanmar Consul-General in Nanning Daw Khaing Su Linn attends the briefing.

ME in Malaysia releases list of approved passport applicants

THE Myanmar Embassy in Malaysia announced the list of persons approved to apply for a new passport.

Out of new passport applicants along with original Citizenship Scrutiny Card and copy of the household list, the embassy released the list of approved persons who submitted from 29 January to 2 February and from 5 February to 9 February 2024.

Of 668 applications submitted as of 29 January to 2 February 2024, including Saw Chit Nay Toe, who identified himself as a Myanmar national and worked in Malaysia, 393 Myanmar nationals whose personal information is correct were approved. Of 656 applications submitted from 5 February to 9 February 2024, including Min Zaw Oo, who identified himself as a Myanmar national and working in Malaysia, 380

Myanmar nationals and 147 Myanmar nationals were approved.

The embassy also released a list of 118 whose personal information is incorrect out of 656 Myanmar nationals submitted as of 5 February to 9 February 2024.

Applicants can check whether their names are included or not at the announcement section of www.myanmarembassykl.org, and those who are included can seek an appointment date at <https://www.mekl.org> and can come to take out their passport on their appointment date, it said.

The original CSC (citizenship scrutiny card), copy of the household list, and copy of the resume issued by the embassy are required to be brought to the embassy. — MT/ZS

NATIONAL

YEZIN Agricultural University in Zeyathiri Township, Nay Pyi Taw Council Area, is preparing for its centenary celebration, scheduled for December this year. The university, founded on 22 December 1924, will mark its 100th anniversary on 22 December 2024, with various preparations already underway.

“Preliminary arrangements for the centenary celebration in December are ongoing. We are constructing the Centenary Hall at the university, and a grand opening ceremony will be part of the full programme. The main celebrations will be held at the Convocation Hall,” said Dr Nay Myo Aung, Head of the Administration Department at Yezin Agricultural University.

Agricultural education at the college level in Myanmar began in 1924 with the establishment of the Agricultural College and Research Institute

Yezin Agri University prepares for December centenary celebration



Yezin Agricultural University in Nay Pyi Taw Council Area.

in Mandalay, offering a three-year diploma course. In 1938, the college became a constituent college of Rangoon University,

where students who had passed the Intermediate of Science examination were admitted to the agricultural course and con-

ferred a BSc (Agriculture) degree after two years of study. In 1947, the college was upgraded to the Faculty of Agriculture in

Mandalay under the administration of Rangoon University. The two-year agricultural course was extended to three years in 1955, and a BSc (Sericulture) degree was also introduced that year. The Faculty of Agriculture was further elevated to a separate university, known as the Institute of Agriculture, in 1964.

Over the past 100 years, from 1924 to 2024, the university has awarded degrees in various agricultural disciplines: 12,983 people obtained a degree in Agricultural Science (BAgrSc), 65 people earned a postgraduate diploma (Postgrad DipAgSc), ten people received a Master of Philosophy degree (MPhil), 668 people obtained a Master of Science degree (MAgrSc), six people earned research-based doctoral degrees (PhD by Research), and 77 people were awarded doctorate degrees (PhD). — ASH/MKKS

MNHRC inspects Htantabin Police Lock-ups and Court Detention Centres



Commissioner U Kyaw Myint looks into the police lock-up in Htantabin Township.

THE inspection team, led by U Kyaw Myint, Member of the Myanmar National Human Rights Commission (MNHRC), yesterday inspected Myo Ma Police Lock-ups

and Court Detention Centres in Htantabin Township, Yangon Region, in accordance with Sections 43 and 44 of the Commission Law.

The inspection team met

detainees while inspecting the police lock-up and court detention centre and enquired about the living and dining conditions of detainees during the remand period, whether detainees had been subjected to torture during the investigation, whether they were allowed to meet their families, and their conditions for food and drink during court appearances. The team also inspected the cleanliness of the lock-ups, including the use of sewage systems, and examined whether the detainees had access to meetings with lawyers.

MNHRC will inform the relevant department of its findings and recommendations for necessary actions under the MNHRC law. — MNHRC

Rail resumes on Pathein-Hinthada-Kyangin line after flood disruptions

MYANMA Railways suspended train services starting on 27 July due to heavy rainfalls that flooded the railways in Kyaunggon, Kangvidaunt and Yekyi townships, Ayeyawady Region, along the Pathein-Hinthada-Kyangin section.

According to the measurement made on 19 August, the water level decreased one inch

below the railway track along the Zayethla-Yekyi section, and officials approved that it was usable. The railway section reopened at 9 am on 19 August, and trains on the Pathein-Hinthada-Kyangin route resumed yesterday.

Moreover, the up and down trains to and from Pathein-Hinthada-Kyangin will resume on 21 August. — MNA/KTZH



Repair work is seen on the Pathein-Hinthada-Kyangin section.

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NATIONAL

Nationwide illegal trade crackdown seizes goods worth K808M

UNDER the supervision of the Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee, efforts to combat illegal trade continue effectively in accordance with the law.

On 18 August, a combined team managed by the Kayin State Illegal Trade Eradication Special Task Force conducted inspections. It seized five commodities worth approximately K25.5 million, including Thai-made Smart fabric softener 1,200 packs, and one Nissan Condor truck worth approximately K25 million near Naunglon Village, Hpa-an Township. The action was taken in line with Customs procedures.

Likewise, a combined team managed by the Bago Region Illegal Trade Eradication Special Task Force conducted inspections on 18 August. It seized three commodities worth ap-

proximately K3.8 million, including a total of 180 bottles of 5-litre vegetable cooking oil produced by Thailand and one Jinbei mini-bus valued at K30 million in DaikU. On 19 August, the team also seized two commodities worth approximately K2.28 million, including 900 packs of Thai-made Yum Yum instant noodles and one KIA Bongo worth K20 million near Phayargyi Township. The action was taken as per Customs procedures. On 20 August, the team seized a total of 2.333 tonnes of illegal timber worth approximately K1.244 million within Taungoo and Bago districts, and the action was taken under the Forest Law.

On 19 August, a combined team managed by the Sagaing Region Illegal Trade Eradication Special Task Force conducted inspections. It seized an un-

registered Honda Fit valued at approximately K8.5 million at the Yadanabon checkpoint in Sagaing Township and eight unregistered motorbikes worth approximately K700,000 in Monywa Township. The action was taken under the Import-Export Law.

On 19 August, a combined team managed by the Customs Department conducted inspections. It seized six China-made ITEL mobile phones worth K900,000 at the Yangon Airport (warehouse), four commodities worth approximately K333.6

million, including 610 Chigo air conditioners, at the Myanmar Industrial Port, four commodities worth approximately K353.68 million, including 8,593 female coats, at the TMT Port. The action was carried out according to Customs procedures.

On 20 August, a combined team managed by the Nay Pyi Taw Council Illegal Trade Eradication Special Task Force conducted inspections. It seized 2.629 tonnes of illegal timber worth approximately K2.3 million in Ottara District. The action was taken under the Forest Law.

The Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee reported 23 arrests on 18, 19 and 20 August, resulting in the seizure of illegal goods worth approximately K808 million. — MNA/TMT



Confiscated illegal goods and vehicle.

Counter-argument to false information

DVB spreads fake news about gatherings in Bago



THE malicious media, DVB, intentionally spread false reports, claiming that security forces gathered 20 people each in Thaegon, Oakpho and Natalin townships of Bago Region to serve in the military, raided houses at night to force people to act as porters and instructed them to

This screenshot reveals misinformation.

sign for five-year military services by force.

Subversive media and those who want to destroy the country spread such fake news to lead the youths in the wrong direction. Currently, people military service training has reached four batches successfully, and trainees who completed the courses are serving duties for State defence and security. — MNA/KTZH

Misinformation spreads 10 refugees detained in Shwebo

MALICIOUS media outlets disseminated false information, saying that more than ten refugees were arrested by security forces in Shwebo, Sagaing Region, on 17 August.

Responding to such fake news, a security forces officer clarified that the arrest of over ten refugees was invalid, and upon a tip-off, the security forces patrolled and conducted surprise checks in

the region.

Subversive media outlets intentionally circulate false claims and misinformation to threaten people and mislead the public about security forces carrying out security duties. — MNA/KTZH

This screenshot validates false reports.



Tablets, chemicals impounded in Tachilek, Loilin

A team from the Drug Enforcement Division searched a motorbike driven by Zaw Min Aung near Lwadawkham Village, Tachilek Township, and seized 2,000 tablets at 8 pm on 18 August. On the same day, they also seized another 2,000 tablets from a suspect known as Aik Shen (also known as Sai Shen) near Mongponkha Village-Tract, Tachilek Township, at 3 pm.

Additionally, at 7 pm on 17 August, the team searched a Fuso 12-wheeled truck driven by Sai Mai Khun in Ward 2, Loilin Township, and confiscated 29,500 kilogrammes of ammonium nitrate, a controlled substance. The action was taken against offenders under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law. — MNA/TMT



An arrestee is seen alongside seized drugs and a vehicle.

NATIONAL



The mpox disease prevention and control work coordination meeting is in progress on 19 August 2024 at the Ministry of Health's meeting hall.

MoH confirms no mpox cases in Myanmar amid regional outbreaks

THE Ministry of Health announced that no confirmed cases of mpox were reported in the country, despite the presence of infections in neighbouring and regional countries. This statement followed the testing of 129 laboratory samples from suspected patients between 2022 and the present.

The World Health Organization (WHO) first declared mpox a Public Health Emer-

gency of International Concern (PHEIC) on 23 July 2022. WHO, once again on 14 August 2024, declared mpox as an international public health emergency due to the rapid spread of the disease in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and other African countries. The outbreak was exacerbated by a new strain (Clade Ib) in eastern DRC, which spread across borders and internationally.

The Ministry of Health also announced that while the risk of mpox infection in Myanmar remains low, preventive measures are currently being undertaken. These include monitoring at ports and border crossings and ensuring the availability of necessary drugs and medical supplies in cooperation with relevant ministries and departments. — TWA/MKKS

Rock legends to reunite for 'Hnitchoh Rock' at Inya Lake Garden



This image shows a glimpse of the poster for the 'Hnitchoh Rock' music show.

ACCORDING to singer J Maung Maung, a rock music show titled 'Hnitchoh Rock' (veteran rockstars), featuring four renowned Myanmar rock singers, will be held at Inya Lake Garden in Mayangon Township on 31 August.

"It will be a night where we revisit the past, showcasing the talent of four seasoned rock singers who were once greatly admired by the audience. Ye Thwin, Kaung Sett, Jack Mya Thaug, and I will be performing at the show," said J Maung Maung. The Mercury IX band will accompany the singers. — ASH/TRKM

MCDC to conduct surprise inspection for dyes, hazardous elements in food

MANDALAY City Development Committee (MCDC) will carry out surprise checks on foods that are being sold in the markets to ensure there are no hazardous dyes in the food.

The surprise inspections run by a combined team comprising officials from MCDC's Market and Slaughter-House Department and Food and Drug Administration Department (FDA) will cover the Nanshay market, Nyaungpin market, Mingala temporary market, Takundaing market and other markets in the region.

This move is to check unsafe dyes in food commodities (bamboo shoots, fish paste, dried fish, chilli powder) across over 40 markets in the city. If the foods are identified as containing harmful dyes, they will be seized and



Surprise inspections were seen at municipal markets in Mandalay Region to check food dyes in 2019.

destroyed.

FDA is responsible for regulating domestic food production, supervising food safety for imported foods and food designated for exports and carrying out market surveillance. — TWA/KK

Migrants advised to travel legally to avoid inconvenience

THE workers in local factories who went abroad illegally to work are facing inconvenience, so they are advised to travel only through the legal route, said the people assisting in the labour affairs.

Some workers from industrial zones went to Thailand and China through illegal routes. Some were employed, some were facing difficulties depending on their contacts, and some even returned to Myanmar.

"Some are going through Illegal routes for China. Despite our warning, they are still going through this uncertain route. They also went to China, and those who were there called them back. Among the ten people who left, only two were convenient there. The remaining six are unable to leave, etc. The same is the case with Thailand. We encouraged

them to go through the legal route, but they went illegally. There are some people who are convenient, but some inconvenient people have to come back. I think they got a job depending on their contacts; some are employed, but some aren't," a labour activist said.

It is best for those who have arrived abroad and those who are still in the country to travel through the legal route and to consider their long-term impacts, he said.

"It is the best for both those who go abroad and those who remain in the country to consider their long-term prospects. It should not be the case that they go there just because the salary is low here, and they will be in trouble when they get there," he explained. — MT/ZN

Betel nut slices and halves see brisk sales in Magway market



This photo shows betel nut slices and halves being sold in the market.

SALES of betel nuts in slices and halves are good in the Magway retail market of the Magway Region, according to market sources.

Most betel shops in Magway are buying more corn-kernel-shaped betel slices and halves.

“In our retail market, we sell more sliced and round betel halves. Split betel nuts are not used much here, and they are shaped like corn kernels. They use small ones like that. In retail, they use those types, so sales are good,” said a shop owner of a betel nut wholesale shop in Magway township.

During last month, sales in the retail market of betel nuts in Magway Township were good, and in August, the prices of betel nuts were better than the previous month.

“Last month, sales were good at the Magway retail market. This month, the prices are better these days. Because the prices are good, many betel shops are doing well. We are buying from Ye, Myeik and Dawei. We haven’t ordered the nuts from the Ayeyawady yet,” he said.

Betel nuts produced in Taninthayi were reportedly exported to Thailand in June. — Thit Taw/ZN

Myanmar rice body assures rice security

IN addition to the effort to control prices, there are both old and new paddy as well as newly-harvested summer paddy, so there is a full guarantee of domestic rice security and no need to worry, according to Myanmar Rice Federation chair U Ye Min Aung.

“We have adequate rice security. In our country, there is old rice stocked from last year and new rice from this year’s summer paddy. It is summer paddy harvest season in the middle part of Nay Pyi Taw Council Area. Both old paddy and rice were produced last year, so there is a full guarantee of domestic rice security. That is why our people don’t need to worry about it. We have also worked on price stability at the same time,” he said. “We have sufficient rice security because we have both old rice and paddy, so it doesn’t need to

worry,” he affirmed.

At the same time, MRF has made sure that there is a regular rice supply in three major markets, including Nay Pyi Taw, Yangon and Mandalay also tried to regulate the price in accordance with the monthly reference rate by the Ministry of Commerce. Meanwhile, rice is sold at affordable prices for the public.

“We have tried our best. But it doesn’t mean we control the rice market 100 per cent. Our country practises a market economy, so farmers and rice millers are eligible to trade independently. However, the reference price has been set now, so all stakeholders are required to follow it. We have also urged them to be broadly aware of it. We can say roughly that rice price has been stable at present,” he said. — MT/ZS

MRF to meet PP woven bag makers to ease operations

MYANMAR Rice Federation (MRF) is scheduled to hold a work coordination meeting with polypropylene (PP) woven bags manufacturers on 21 August at its meeting hall, with a view to facilitating the production and importation of raw materials.

Polypropylene woven bags play a crucial role in packaging rice and broken rice for domestic and export markets. Therefore, they will discuss achieving quality production to meet market demand at the meeting, where the manufacturers can make suggestions and make

their difficulties known.

Thus, representatives of PP woven bag factories have been invited to attend the meeting. Individuals can enquire about details through the contact number of Daw Kay Thi Tun, 09 400067260. — NN/KK



Rice is sold at affordable prices to the public by rice traders and rice millers association under the management of Nay Pyi Taw Council Area.

Over 6,000 applications for fertilizer registration under processing

THE Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation has been screening 6,823 applications to issue fertilizer registration under the approval of the Fertilizer Technology Group.

The Fertilizer Committee holds a quarterly meeting to ensure quality fertilizer for growers. A total of 11,573 registrations have been granted with the approval of the Fertilizer Technology Group after the 41st meeting of the committee.

Additionally, 1,957 registrations were voluntarily cancelled according to individuals’ consent. The department revoked



Fertilizer sacks are neatly organized in the warehouse.

2,793 fertilizer registrations for expiration of validity.

Deputy Minister Dr Tin

Htut for Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation, who also acts as chair of the Fertilizer Commit-

tee, committee members and experts attended the 42nd Fertilizer Committee held on 19 August.

The chair of the committee addressed matters regarding the contribution of agricultural inputs, including fertilizer, towards flood-stricken monsoon paddy fields to remedy the negative impact on crops. The authorities concerned are focusing on technical assistance works to apply fertilizer to the farms systematically.

Moreover, a combination of fertilizer and organic fertilizer will increase soil nutrients, create root development, and

promote the growth of crops. Incorporating rice husks into the paddy field also helps plants prevent the uptake of toxic elements. He also encouraged the farmers to use straw bio-charcoal.

He also elaborated on the distribution of fertilizer in a timely manner for monsoon crops for 2024-2025 agricultural projects being implemented under the State’s Economic Promotion Fund, tactics for improving fertilizer use efficiency and management to ramp up production and suggestions of committee members. — NN/KK

OPINION

Produce quality seeds of crops to bolster the agriculture sector

PRODUCING quality seeds is crucial for bolstering the agriculture sector, as low-quality seeds hinder crop development and yield. In Myanmar, the proverb “low-quality seeds cannot sprout stronger” reflects this reality, emphasizing the importance of good genetic material in agriculture. For successful farming, it’s vital to use seeds that meet regional standards and are suitable for specific cultivable lands.

Climate change, including global warming, has posed significant challenges to agriculture worldwide, affecting crop yields. Myanmar, like many other countries, has experienced climate-related disasters such as floods, droughts, and soil erosion. These events have a direct impact on the livelihoods of farmers and the

overall economy. Therefore, it is essential to develop and use quality crop strains that are resilient to these changing climate conditions. Even with the use of high-quality natural fertilizers and pesticides, if the seeds themselves are of low quality, achieving the desired per-acre yield becomes impossible. This underscores the need for government intervention in the seed sector. Governments must focus on developing this sector to ensure agricultural growth, food security, and the ability to export surplus crops. Such efforts are vital not only for boosting domestic agrarian productivity but also for earning foreign exchange through exports. The production of quality seeds should be a priority, as using low-quality seeds and fertilizers can lead to significant losses for farmers and the agriculture sector. In Myanmar, the domestic market is often flooded with fertilizers of various brands, many of which do not meet the necessary quality standards. Counterfeit and blended products further exacerbate the problem, potentially destroying crops and reducing yields.

Myanmar faces the challenge of securing sufficient quality seeds for its agricultural needs. To address this, it is crucial to focus on domestic seed production rather than relying on imports. This approach would ensure a stable supply of quality seeds, reduce dependence on foreign sources, and promote agricultural self-sufficiency. The government is encouraging both local businesses and foreign investors to invest in seed production, recognizing its importance for the nation’s agricultural future. By fostering a robust seed production industry, Myanmar can enhance its agricultural sector, ensure food security, and strengthen its economy.

Myanmar has sound foundations to produce quality strains of seeds appropriate for different areas of the country and geographical and environmental natures. When authorities contribute to the preservation of seeds and the development of production and export of quality seeds across the nation, it will become a country that produces quality seeds for crops in the future and serves the interests of farmers.

THE monkeypox virus is an orthopoxviral that causes mpox (monkeypox), a disease with symptoms similar to smallpox. While smallpox was eradicated in 1980, mpox continues to occur in countries of central and west Africa. Since May 2022, cases have also been reported from countries without previously documented mpox transmission outside the African region.

Mpox is a zoonosis, a disease that is transmitted from animals to humans, with cases often found close to tropical rainforests where there are animals that carry the virus. Evidence of monkeypox virus infection has been found in animals including squirrels, Gambian pouched rats, dormice, different species of monkeys and others.

After 1970, mpox occurred sporadically in Central and East Africa and West Africa. In 2003 an outbreak in the United States of America was linked to imported wild animals. Since 2005, thousands of suspected cases are reported in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) every year. In 2017, mpox re-emerged in Nigeria and continues to spread between people across the country and in travelers to other destinations.

In May 2022, an outbreak of mpox appeared suddenly and rapidly spread across Europe, the Americas and then all six WHO regions, with 110 countries reporting about 87 thousand cases and 112 deaths. The global outbreak has affected primarily (but not only) gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men and has spread person-to-person through sexual networks.

WHO Director-General declares mpox outbreak- a public health emergency of international

concern (PHEIC) on 14 August 2024. In declaring the PHEIC, Dr Tedros said, “The emergence of a new clade of mpox, its rapid spread in eastern DRC, and the reporting of cases in several neighboring countries are very worrying. On top of outbreaks of other mpox clades in DRC and other countries in Africa, it’s clear that a coordinated international response is needed to stop these outbreaks and save lives.”

Person-to-person transmission of mpox can occur through direct contact with infectious skin or other lesions such as in the mouth or on genitals; e.g. talking or breathing, touching or vaginal/anal sex, kissing, oral sex or kissing the skin and respiratory droplets or short-range aerosols from prolonged close contact.

The virus then enters the body through broken skin, mucosal surfaces, or via the respiratory tract. Mpox can spread to other members of the household and to sex partners. People with multiple sexual partners are at higher risk.

Animal to human transmission of mpox occurs from infected animals to humans from bites or scratches, or during activities such as hunting, skinning, trapping, cooking, playing with carcasses, or eating animals. The extent of viral circulation in animal populations is not entirely known and further studies are underway. People can contract mpox from contaminated objects such as clothing or linens, through sharp injuries in health care, or in community setting such as tattoo parlors.

Mpox causes signs and symptoms which usually begin within a week but can start 1–21 days after

Be aware of mpox

By Dr Than Lwin Tun



Mpox (monkeypox)

exposure. Symptoms typically last 2–4 weeks but may last longer in someone with a weakened immune system. Common symptoms of mpox are: rash, fever, sore throat, headache, muscle aches, back pain, low energy and swollen lymph nodes.

For some people, the first symptom of mpox is a rash, while others may have different symptoms first. The rash begins as a flat sore which develops into a blister filled with liquid and may be itchy or painful. As the rash

heals, the lesions dry up, crust over and fall off.

Some people may have one or a few skin lesions and others have hundreds or more. These can appear anywhere on the body such as the: palms of hands and soles of feet, face, mouth and throat, groin and genital areas and anus.

Some people also have painful swelling of their rectum or pain and difficulty when peeing.

People with mpox are infectious and can pass the disease on to others until all sores have

healed and a new layer of skin has formed. Children, pregnant people and people with weak immune systems are at risk for complications from mpox.

Typically for mpox, fever, muscle aches and sore throat appear first. The mpox rash begins on the face and spreads over the body, extending to the palms of the hands and soles of the feet and evolves over 2–4 weeks in stages – macules, papules, vesicles, pustules. Lesions dip in the centre before crusting over. Scabs

then fall off. Lymphadenopathy (swollen lymph nodes) is a classic feature of mpox. Some people can be infected without developing any symptoms.

In the context of the global outbreak of mpox which began in 2022, the illness begins differently in some people. In just over a half of cases, a rash may appear before or at the same time as other symptoms and does not always progress over the body. The first lesion can be in the groin, anus, or in or around the mouth.

People with mpox can become very sick. For example, the skin can become infected with bacteria leading to abscesses or serious skin damage. Other complications include pneumonia, corneal infection with loss of vision; pain or difficulty swallowing, vomiting and diarrhea causing severe dehydration or malnutrition; sepsis (infection of the blood with a widespread inflammatory response in the body), inflammation of the brain (encephalitis), heart (myocarditis), rectum (proctitis), genital organs (balanitis) or urinary passages (urethritis), or death. Persons with immune suppression due to medication or medical conditions are at higher risk of serious illness and death due to mpox. People living with HIV that is not well-controlled or treated more often develop severe disease.

Identifying mpox can be difficult as other infections and conditions can look similar. It is important to distinguish mpox from chickenpox, measles, bacterial skin infections, scabies, herpes, syphilis, other sexually transmissible infections, and medication-associated allergies. Someone with mpox may also have another

sexually transmissible infection such as herpes. Alternatively, a child with suspected mpox may also have chickenpox. For these reasons, testing is key for people to get treatment as early as possible and prevent further spread.

Detection of viral DNA by polymerase chain reaction (PCR) is the preferred laboratory test for mpox. The best diagnostic specimens are taken directly from the rash – skin, fluid or crusts – collected by vigorous swabbing. In the absence of skin lesions, testing can be done on oropharyngeal, anal or rectal swabs. Testing blood is not recommended. Antibody detection methods may not be useful as they do not distinguish between different orthopoxviruses.

The goal of treating mpox is to take care of the rash, manage pain and prevent complications. Early and supportive care is important to help manage symptoms and avoid further problems.

Getting an mpox vaccine can help prevent infection. The vaccine should be given within 4 days of contact with someone who has mpox (or within up to 14 days if there are no symptoms).

It is recommended for people at high risk to get vaccinated to prevent infection with mpox, especially during an outbreak. This includes: health workers at risk of exposure, men who have sex with men, people with multiple sex partners and sex workers and Persons who have mpox should be cared for away from other people.

Most people with mpox will recover within 2–4 weeks. Things to do to help the symptoms and prevent infecting others:

Do – stay home and in your own room if possible, wash hands often with soap and water or hand

ARTICLE



Life in the Ediacaran Period as imagined by researchers. **ILLUSTRATION: IMAGE FOR VISUAL PURPOSE/ WIKIMEDIA COMMONS**

New Fossil Timeline Links Sea Levels, Oxygen

A newly developed timeline of early animal fossils suggests a relationship between sea level fluctuations, variations in marine oxygen, and the appearance of the earliest ancestors of present-day animals. The study sheds light on the processes driving the development of the earliest creatures, from which all major animal species sprang. A team from the University of Edinburgh

studied a compilation of rocks and fossils from the so-called Ediacaran-Cambrian interval - a slice of time 580-510 million years ago. This period witnessed an explosion of biodiversity according to fossil records, the causes of which have baffled scientists since Charles Darwin.

The early animals found from this era were all sea-dwellers, at a time when oxygen levels in the air and ocean were much

lower than today.

While the very first lifeforms before this time were mostly single-cell, and simple multi-celled organisms, creatures in the Ediacaran Period started to become more complex, with multiple cells organised into body plans that allowed them to feed, reproduce, and move across the ocean floor.

This era also marked the emergence of so-called bilateri-

an animals - which display symmetrical body plans, in common with most present-day species including humans.

By compiling data from different sources - including radiometric dating and geochemical information about the layers of rock in which fossils were found - the team mapped all major fossil finds and various environmental datasets onto a single timeline.

The new chronology allowed

the team to study trends in biodiversity for the period in question with more detail than before.

They combined these insights with further chemical clues from the geological record - confirming a link between major changes in global sea levels, intervals when shallow marine environments gained more oxygen, and the appearance and diversification of early animal groups.

This dynamic set the stage for several significant bursts in biological diversity, known as the Avalon, White Sea, and Cambrian

assemblages, each marking the arrival of new animal groups and the decline of others.

By reconstructing environmental conditions in deepest time, the study unlocks new insights into the ancient forces and pressures that shaped the earliest life on our planet.

The team also identified gaps in the fossil record, suggesting that current knowledge about early animals is biased by the clusters of sites worldwide where fossils have been found and studied.

SOURCE: ANI

TECH/ENVIRON WORLD

China achieves new progress in building High Energy Photon Source



This photo taken on 23 July 2024 shows the tunnel of the High Energy Photon Source (HEPS) storage ring in Beijing, capital of China. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

A major progress has been made in the construction of the High Energy Photon Source (HEPS), the first high-energy synchrotron radiation light source in China, with the electron beams with currents reaching 12 mA stored in the HEPS storage ring.

The Institute of High Energy Physics (IHEP) under the

Chinese Academy of Sciences, the main HEPS developer, announced the new achievement in Beijing's suburban Huairou District on Monday.

As one of the country's key scientific and technological infrastructure projects, HEPS is expected to become one of the brightest fourth-generation synchrotron radiation facilities

worldwide and will serve as a research platform for material science, chemical engineering, biomedicine and other fields.

The construction of the HEPS project began on 29 June 2019. The facility is composed of several parts, including accelerators, beamlines, end stations and support facilities. — Xinhua

Huawei launches cybersecurity training for Zimbabwean officials

CHINA'S tech giant Huawei on Monday launched the first cybersecurity training programme for Zimbabwean government officials to capacitate them against cyber threats in Harare, the capital of Zimbabwe.

A total of 100 officials from government ministries and agencies participated in the four-day training programme organized by Huawei in collaboration with the Ministry of Information and Communication Technology, Postal and Courier Services.

Topics covered under the training programme include global cybersecurity trends, international security standards, enterprise private protection governance, and enterprise



Beaullar Chirume, permanent secretary in the Ministry of Information and Communication Technology, Postal and Courier Services, delivers a speech during a training programme organized by Huawei in Harare, Zimbabwe, on 19 August 2024. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

data security governance practice. In a speech read on his behalf, Huawei Zimbabwe Managing Director Yang Shengwan said Huawei will

continue investing in the country's digital future and working hand-in-hand with the government to address cybersecurity challenges. — Xinhua

Study shows how sunflowers maximize collective sunlight capture

RESEARCHERS from Israel and the United States have discovered that sunflower plants "dance" during growth to avoid shading each other and maximize sunlight capture, according to a statement issued by Tel Aviv University (TAU) on Monday.

Previous studies have shown that when sunflowers are densely planted and shade each other, they grow in a zig-zag pattern, moving forward and backward, to avoid mutual shading and optimize sunlight exposure, thereby enhancing collective photosynthesis.

In the new study, researchers from TAU and the University of Colorado, Boulder, explored how sunflowers "know" to grow in a way that maximizes sunlight

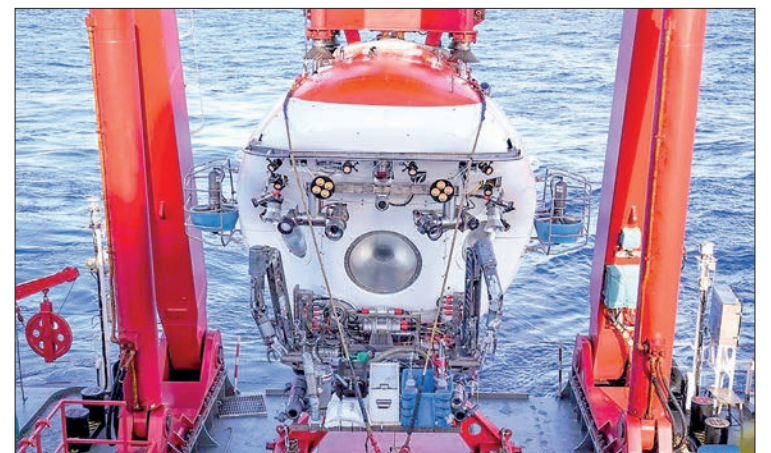
capture for the entire group.

They grew sunflowers in a high-density environment, photographing their growth every few minutes and compiling the images into a time-lapse video.

Through quantifications and computer simulations, the team demonstrated that these random movements help the plants collectively reduce shadowing.

They observed that the range of sunflower "steps" varied widely, from minimal displacement to movements of up to two centimetres in various directions every few minutes.

The researchers concluded that sunflowers use both small, slow steps and large, quick ones to find the optimal arrangement for the group. — Xinhua



China's manned deep-sea submersible Jiaolong is about to conduct its 300th dive in the Western Pacific Ocean, 18 August 2024. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

China's manned deep-sea submersible completes 300th dive

JIAOLONG, China's manned deep-sea submersible, on Sunday completed its 300th dive since its maiden mission in August 2009.

Jiaolong, with a crew of one scientist and two submariners, conducted the dive in the Western Pacific Ocean. It was the first of 18 planned dives in an ongoing scientific expedition.

The submersible is being carried by China's Deep Sea No 1 research vessel, which has Chinese and foreign scientists aboard and embarked from Qing-

dao in east China's Shandong Province on 10 August.

During its 45-day expedition to the Western Pacific Ocean, Jiaolong is scheduled to collect deep-sea organisms, seawater and sediment, aiming to deepen our understanding of the unique ecosystems and environments of seamounts.

Since 2009, Jiaolong has explored waters in the Pacific Ocean, Indian Ocean and Atlantic Ocean, enabling a total of 900 trips down into the deep sea. — Xinhua

With tourists away, Mount Fuji barrier taken down in Japan



Workers begin setting up a large black screen to block the view of Mt Fuji at a popular photo spot in the Yamanashi Prefecture town of Fujikawaguchiko on 21 May 2024. **PHOTO: KYODO**

A barrier erected in Japan to block a popular view of Mount Fuji has been taken down — for now — after succeeding in discouraging unruly tourists, a town official said Tuesday.

Fujikawaguchiko put up the large screen in May after residents complained about streams of mostly foreign visitors causing problems while trying to snap photos of Japan's famous volcano.

The town lowered the screen on 15 August ahead of

a typhoon and has decided not to put it back up.

"We wanted to see what would happen," the town official told AFP.

"There are still some people who come to the place. But we no longer find many people suddenly rushing out into the traffic to cross the road," he said.

Pictures taken from the narrow pavement in front of a dentist's office were popular online, with the snow-capped

mountain rising photogenically into the sky from behind a convenience store.

The town's struggle with unruly tourists made international headlines as record numbers of tourists headed to Japan over the summer, creating some opposition among locals.

The Fujikawaguchiko official said the town can put up the screen again if tourists return and cause more problems. — AFP

King Charles III to visit Southport three weeks after knife attack

KING Charles III will on Tuesday visit Southport in north-west England, Buckingham Palace announced, three weeks after a knife attack which killed three young girls sparked nationwide riots.

"His Majesty The King will travel to Southport to express his continued support for those affected by the 29th July attack and the riot which followed in the town, and to thank frontline emergency staff for their ongoing work serving local people," the palace said in a statement.

The monarch will meet

members of the Southport community outside the town hall early in the afternoon, before then meeting regional leaders, representatives from the emergency services and others.

They will include local groups and faith leaders impacted by the violent disorder which hit Southport the day after the 29 July mass stabbing.

Ahead of those public engagements, Charles will meet privately with some of those impacted by the knife attack, which claimed the lives of three

young girls and injured 10 others, including eight children.

The meeting will include some of the surviving children who were present at the community centre targeted, as well as their families.

The children were attending a Taylor Swift-themed dance class when an assailant entered the building and began attacking them.

Axel Rudakubana, who was aged 17 at the time, has been charged with murder and attempted murder over the stabbing spree. — AFP

China to issue commemorative coins featuring world's tallest wooden pagoda

CHINA'S central bank will issue a set of commemorative coins on 27 August featuring the world's tallest wooden pagoda.

The set of three coins, all legal tender in China, consists of two gold coins and one silver coin, according to the People's Bank of China.

All three coins have the image of Sakyamuni Pagoda of Fogong Temple in Yingxian County, north China's Shanxi Province, on the obverse side.

The pagoda, well known as the Wooden Pagoda of Yingxian County, was built in 1056 with tenon-and-mortise work. The 67.31-metre-high building is the

tallest and oldest wooden multi-story structure in the world, according to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

The 100-gramme round gold coin, with a denomination of 1,500 yuan (about US\$210), has a maximum circulation of 600 pieces. The reverse side features swift birds, auspicious clouds and distant mountains.

The 5-gramme round gold coin has a denomination of 80 yuan and a maximum circulation of 10,000 pieces. Its reverse side features the image of the Sakyamuni statue on the first story of the pagoda. — Xinhua

Nintendo museum to open in Japan on 2 October



People visit a Nintendo store in Shibuya district of Tokyo on 2 May 2024. **PHOTO: AFP**

JAPAN'S Nintendo said Tuesday it will open its much-awaited first museum on 2 October featuring vintage video games and an interactive shoot-em-up with "Super Mario" characters.

The museum in Kyoto's Uji city is located inside a renovated old factory built in 1969, where the gaming giant began life making Western-style and Japanese playing cards and later repaired consoles.

The company on Tuesday also released a video of Shigeru Miyamoto, the renowned crea-

tor of "Super Mario Bros" and other famous games, giving a sneak preview of what's inside.

"The Nintendo Museum is a place where visitors can learn about Nintendo's commitment to manufacturing that places importance on play and originality," Miyamoto said in the clip.

Along with the shooting game and some of the firm's first consoles, exhibits include a giant controller that two people operate and another featuring ancient Japanese poems. — AFP

ECONOMY WORLD

Yangtze River Delta in East China reports record-high foreign trade in Jan-July



This aerial panoramic drone photo taken on 11 July 2023 shows new energy vehicles for export at a terminal of Taicang Port, east China's Jiangsu Province. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

THE total foreign trade value of the Yangtze River Delta region reached 9.1 trillion yuan (about US\$1.28 trillion) in the first seven months of 2024, hitting a record high, Shanghai Customs said Tuesday.

This figure translates into a 5.8 per cent year-on-year foreign trade value increase in the region, while accounting for 36.7 per cent of China's total foreign trade value in the first seven months of the year, according to Shanghai Customs.

The value of automobile exports reached 180.63 billion

yuan, up 2.7 per cent year on year, and accounting for 39 per cent of the country's total automobile export value in the same period.

The value of ship exports amounted to 111.41 billion yuan, an increase of 79 per cent year on year, accounting for 64.1 per cent of China's total ship export value in the same period.

The export value of high-tech products reached 1.2 trillion yuan in this period, up 4.4 per cent year on year, while contributing 34.8 per cent of the country's total export value of

high-tech products in the first seven months of 2024.

The Yangtze River Delta region's foreign trade value stemming from trade with Belt and Road participating countries reached 4.06 trillion yuan, up 7.7 per cent year on year. The value of its trade with other members of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership totalled 2.77 trillion yuan, a 4.9 per cent year-on-year increase. Meanwhile, the value of its trade with other BRICS countries amounted to 1.21 trillion yuan, up 8.3 per cent year on year. — Xinhua

German exports, imports decline in H1

THE value of German exports fell by 1.6 per cent year-on-year in the first six months of the year (H1), while imports dropped by 6.2 per cent, highlighting the underwhelming performance of foreign trade in Europe's largest economy, official data showed on Monday.

In the first three months of the year, Germany exported goods totalling 801.7 billion euros (US\$889.9 billion). Industrial goods -- Germany's largest export sector -- saw reduced overseas demand, with exports of vehicles and vehicle

parts, machines, and chemical products all decreasing compared to the same period in

2023, according to the Federal Statistical Office (Destatis). — Xinhua



An aerial view shows new cars of various brands parked for export on the parking of a car terminal at the harbour of Duisburg, western Germany, on 7 August 2024. **PHOTO: AFP**

Brazilian market upgrades 2024 economic growth forecast to 2.23%

BRAZIL'S financial market upgraded its economic growth forecast for 2024 from 2.20 per cent to 2.23 per cent, but downgraded expected growth for 2025 from 1.92 per cent to 1.89 per cent, the Central Bank of Brazil said Monday.

According to the bank's weekly Focus survey of leading financial institutions in the South American country, at the start of the year, economists were projecting a 1.52 per cent growth in the gross domestic product (GDP).

Regarding inflation, the projection rose from 4.20 per cent to 4.22 per cent for the year and declined from 3.97 per cent to 3.91 per cent for the next, in both cases falling within the official target rate of three per cent with a margin of tolerance of 1.5 percentage points either up or down.

Market analysts expect the benchmark interest rate to remain at the current level of 10.50 per cent until the end of the year and to register 10 per cent by the end of next year. — Xinhua

NEWS IN BRIEF

Croatian tourism revenues to hit record 15.2 bln euros this year

CROATIA'S tourism revenues will increase four per cent to reach a new record of 15.2 billion euros (US\$16.82 billion) this year, the local daily Jutarnji List said in a report on Monday.

The predicted 600 million euro boost to the country's tourism economy is the latest official projection of the Croatian National Bank (CNB). Meanwhile, in 2025 and 2026, the growth rate of Croatia's tourism revenues is expected to accelerate to 4.5 per cent, and will reach 15.9 billion euros and 16.6 billion euros respectively, the report said. — Xinhua

Kenya's tourism revenue hits US\$1.1 bln in H1 amid rise in visitor arrivals

KENYA generated 142.5 billion shillings (around US\$1.11 billion) in tourism revenue during the first half (H1) of this year, assisted by a significant rise in visitor numbers, according to the Kenya Tourism Board (KTB) Monday.

This represents an increase from \$1.06 billion in the same period last year, the KTB reported.

The KTB said that Kenya welcomed 1.03 million international visitors, marking a 21.3 per cent increase from 847,810 visitors during the same period in 2023. Domestic tourism also saw growth, with 2.25 million bed nights recorded, about a 10 per cent increase from 2.06 million bed nights in the previous year. — Xinhua

New Zealand's exports to China up 8.5%

NEW Zealand's total annual goods exports to China were up 107 million NZ dollars (US\$65.45 million), or 8.5 per cent, in July 2024, compared with July 2023, the country's statistics department Stats NZ said on Tuesday.

The largest rises of exports to China were fruit, up 76 million NZ dollars (\$46.49 million), Stats NZ said, adding exports of preparations of milk, cereals, flour, and starch were up 53 million NZ dollars (\$32.42 million), and logs, wood, and wood articles, were up 52 million NZ dollars (\$31.81 million). — Xinhua

NEWS IN
BRIEF

New air-cargo
route links China's
Xinjiang, Britain

A new air-freight route officially opened between Urumqi, capital city of north-west China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, and Bournemouth in Britain, on Monday.

According to Urumqi Diwopu International Airport, the cargo service will run four round trips a week, with a single journey taking 10 hours.

The airport has opened eight international freight transport routes destined for eight countries, including Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Georgia, Hungary and Britain. — Xinhua

S Korean banks' loan delinquency ratio falls in June

SOUTH Korean banks' loan delinquency ratio fell in three months due to more bad loan settlement than new delinquent loan, financial watchdog data showed Tuesday.

Bank loan, overdue at least one month, stood at 0.42 per cent of the total at the end of June, down 0.09 percentage points from a month earlier, according to the Financial Supervisory Service (FSS). The bad loan ratio turned downward after rising for the past two months as banks settled more bad loan ahead of the end of the second quarter.

New delinquent loan came to 2.3 trillion won (US\$1.7 billion) in the cited month, lower than the settlement of non-performing loans worth 4.4 trillion won (\$3.3 billion). The delinquency ratio has roughly been on the rise after hitting a bottom at 0.20 per cent in June 2022 on the back of the higher policy rate. — Xinhua

Markets waver ahead of earnings, Powell speech

EUROPEAN and Asian stock markets fluctuated on Tuesday as investors trod carefully ahead of a key speech by US Federal Reserve chief Jerome Powell that could provide more hints of an interest rate cut.

With recent data indicating the US economy remains in good shape as inflation slows and the labour market softens, there is widespread expectation the bank will finally start unwinding its long-running programme of tight monetary policy next month.

A slew of earnings from US stores Target, Lowe's and TJX are also on tap this week, providing more insight into the confidence of consumers after reassuring retail sales figures last week.

But the main focus is Powell's remarks on



A man walks past a brokerage display showing the early numbers (L) on the Tokyo Stock Exchange as well as the Japanese yen versus US dollar (R), along a street in Tokyo on 14 August 2024. PHOTO: AFP

Friday to the annual symposium of global central bankers at Jackson Hole, Wyoming, where he could give signals about the Fed's plans for borrowing costs.

Bets have surged

that officials will cut rates by 25 basis points next month -- with some even flagging 50 points -- followed by two more before the end of the year.

Powell raised hopes for a move at the bank's

most recent meeting when he said it could come "as soon as" September, having previously said the policy board did not need to wait for inflation to fall to its two-per-cent target before re-

ducing rates. "All eyes and ears are tuned in, eagerly waiting to see if he'll give a wink of confirmation to the current market pricing," said independent analyst Stephen Innes.

"The market is positioning his remarks to be more consequential than usual, hoping for a dovish signal that sets the stage for the (policy board) to cut in September," he said in his Dark Side Of The Boom newsletter.

However, he added: "But don't expect Powell to spill the entire rate-cut enchilada just yet. With one more non-farm payrolls report to navigate, the decision between a 25 or 50 basis point cut in September is still up in the air, poised to be the opening act in a multi-rate-cut storyline." — AFP

GM cuts over 1,000 workers from software business: WSJ

GENERAL Motors (GM) is cutting more than a 1,000 employees globally in its software and services division, a partial reversal of a hiring binge in recent years, The Wall Street Journal on Monday quoted a person familiar with the matter as saying.

The cuts include roughly 600 people who

are based around the company's Detroit-area headquarters, while a total number of layoffs couldn't be learned, according to the report.

GM has hired thousands of salaried workers in software and other tech realms in recent years. Traditional automakers are aiming to develop smarter vehi-

cles that can be updated much like smartphones, it said.

"The reduction comes about two months after GM appointed a pair of former Apple executives to lead its division focused on the digital aspects of its business, such as connected vehicles, infotainment and advanced driver-assistance systems," it noted.

In June, GM promoted two former Apple executives, Baris Cetinok and Dave Richardson, to run its software and services business. Both men were hired last year under Mike Abbott, another former Apple executive who stepped down as GM's software chief in March, citing health reasons. — Xinhua



In an aerial view, brand new GMC trucks are displayed on the sales lot at Hanlees Hilltop GMC on 2 July 2024 in Richmond, California. PHOTO: JUSTIN SULLIVAN/GETTY IMAGES/AFP

မိတ်ဆွေ-ပြဿနာ အမွေများနှင့် ငွေဆုံးရှုံးမှု မဖြစ်ရအောင် တိုက်အိမ်၊ ကား၊ ခြံမဝယ်မီ အမွေခွဲဝေခြင်းနှင့် မှုခင်းများ မလုပ်မီ (ဖြစ်နေလျှင်) ဘာဘဲလုပ်လုပ် ကြိုတင်ဆွေးနွေး အကူအညီရယူပါ။ ပြည်လမ်း၊ အင်ယားကန်အနီး၊ ၉ ပေ အုပ်တံတိုင်နှင့် ကြိုးဖုန်းပါ ခြံရောင်းမည်။ (သို့) ၎င်းခြံကို 2RC လုံးချင်းဖြင့် အလဲအထပ်လုပ်လိုပါ၍ ပိုင်ရှင်သာဆက်သွယ်ပါ။ စေတနာ ဥပဒေ အကြံပေးလုပ်ငန်း၊ 09-79 22 47 521/ 09-4 222 888 46

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
M.V ISEACO WISDOM VOY.NO. (127N)
Consignees of cargo carried on M.V ISEACO WISDOM VOY.NO. (127N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 21-8-2024 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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ROLLING UPDATES

WORLD

China-Africa economic, trade cooperation reaches new heights: official

CHINA-AFRICA economic and trade cooperation has continued to scale new heights since the 2021 Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC), delivering tangible benefits to the people of both China and Africa, Assistant Minister of Commerce Tang Wenhong said Tuesday.

Tang made the remarks at a press conference detailing the progress and achievements that have been made under the nine cooperation programmes China announced during the FOCAC's 8th Ministerial Conference held three years ago in Senegal. These nine programmes span categories such as medical and health, poverty reduction and agricultural development, trade and investment promotion, digital innovation, green development and capacity building,



An exhibitor (R) briefs products to a visitor during the China-Africa Economic and Trade Expo (CAETE) in Africa (Kenya) 2024 in Nairobi, Kenya, 9 May 2024. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

among others.

According to Tang, driven by programmes aimed at trade and investment promotion as well as poverty reduction and agricultural development,

China-Africa investment and trade cooperation has developed steadily. "China has remained Africa's largest trading partner for 15 consecutive years."

The official said a raft

of cooperative projects, such as the Lekki port in Nigeria and the Nairobi expressway in Kenya, have materialized over the past three years. — Xinhua

SpaceX a week away from first private spacewalk

FOUR members of a SpaceX mission that will carry out the first ever private spacewalk arrived in Florida on Monday ahead of their takeoff next week.



(FILES) This handout photo courtesy of Polaris Programme taken on 11 February 2022 and obtained on 14 February 2022 shows the SpaceX Polaris Dawn crew (from L) Jared Isaacman, Mission Commander, Anna Menon, Mission Specialist and Medical Officer, Sarah Gillis, Mission Specialist, and Scott Poteet, Mission pilot, posing for a photo. **PHOTO: JOHN KRAUS / POLARIS PROGRAM / AFP**

The five-day expedition, named Polaris Dawn, will be led by US billionaire Jared Isaacman, who already chartered the first all-civilian orbital spaceflight in 2021, called Inspiration4. "It's been two and a half years since we announced the Polaris programme. It's been a really exciting journey of development and training," Isaacman told a press conference Monday.

He did not reveal how much he has spent on the programme, which includes a total of three missions and which he jointly funds with SpaceX.

For the trip, the company has developed its first generation of space suits, which are white and futuristic. "This will be epic," SpaceX CEO Elon Musk wrote on X, which he also owns.

The launch of the Falcon 9 rocket is scheduled to take place before dawn next Monday from the Kennedy Space Centre in Florida.

Two SpaceX employees will be on the trip: The first, Sarah Gillis, is in charge of astronaut training and trained Isaacman for Inspiration4.

The second, Anna Menon, worked for NASA before joining SpaceX. — AFP

NEWS IN BRIEF

Mpox kills over 570 in DR Congo: health minister

THE ongoing mpox outbreak has been declared a "continental emergency", according to Roger Kamba, health minister of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), speaking on Monday.

Kamba reported that since the beginning of this year, the DRC has so far documented 16,700 confirmed or suspected cases of mpox, including more than 570 deaths, an increase from the 15,664 suspected cases and 548 deaths reported last week.

In December 2022, the DRC declared a national outbreak of mpox, prompting the establishment of an incident management system since February 2023 based on the increasing number of reported cases.

The disease, affecting 17 African countries and several others outside the continent, is notably impacting younger populations, particularly children under 15, said Kamba, describing this as a "novelty" in the context of the outbreak.

"But I remind you that the vaccine is only part of the response; the first line of defence is adherence to preventive measures," said the minister, specifying that the country would receive a batch of mpox vaccines next week.

The health minister also noted that the government's interventions have helped prevent a larger-scale spread within the country.

The World Health Organization (WHO) declared last Wednesday that mpox, formerly known as monkeypox, a public health emergency of international concern, raising alarms about its potential for increased global transmission, following an initial announcement on 23 July 2022. — Xinhua

Netherlands on alert for new mpox variant

THE Dutch public health authority, RIVM, said on Monday that healthcare providers are on high alert for potential infections from a new variant of the mpox virus.

"If a case is detected, the Municipal Health Service will conduct source and contact tracing and provide guidance to prevent further transmission," the RIVM said. "Vaccination is available for close contacts. The Netherlands has sufficient vaccines in stock."

RIVM virologist Chantal Reusken told local media that it is probably only a matter of time before a new variant of mpox appears in the Netherlands. But the risk is low and the disease is manageable due to the country's robust healthcare system, said Reusken.

Mpox, caused by an orthopoxvirus, was prevalent in West and Central Africa. However, in the spring of 2022, cases began emerging in Europe without direct links to those regions. Following a peak in summer 2022, the number of cases sharply declined by autumn. There were a total of 1,316 confirmed cases to date in the Netherlands.

In 2024, a more deadly variant, Clade 1b, emerged in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and neighbouring countries. On 14 August 2024, the World Health Organization declared mpox a public health emergency of international concern, activating its highest level of global alert for mpox for the second time in two years. — Xinhua

SPORTS

Professional boxing qualifiers held in Myanmar

MYANMAR Lethwei Federation, Japan Boxing Commission and MBC Company jointly organized the very first professional boxing qualifiers for WBC and WBO at the Myanmar Boxing Federation Training Ground in Thingangyun, Yangon, yesterday.

The men's events involved four rounds, in which boxers Shein Htet Ko Ko and Tun Tun Win fought at 63.50 kilogrammes, Lin Htut Paing and Zaw Moe Myint at 55.34 kilos, Naing Lat and Hlwan Moe Aung at 61.23 kilos, Htet Wai Lin and Saw Wailan Htet at 72.57 kilos, Naw Phone and Phyo Ko Ko at 50.80 kilos, Nay Htet Aung and Saw Khite Ye Lin at 57.15 kilos, Win Hlaing Tun and Kyaw Myo Htwe at 63.50 kilos and Nay Lin Aung and Zaw Sai Naw at 79.38 kilos.

The women's rounds were

fought four rounds, and Naw Oh-mar Soe and Ei Ei Htwe competed at 61.23 kilos.

The Myanmar Boxing Commission presented World Boxer Council medals to the winners.

Myanmar Lethwei Federation Chairman 1 U Kyaw Kyaw Soe, Chairman 2 U Ko Ko Aung, executive committee members, officials of Myanmar Boxing Commission and enthusiasts attended the event.

The qualification tournament will be held in September. — Arkar Lin/KTZH



One of the qualifiers in action in Yangon yesterday.

Atletico twice fight back in Villarreal draw

DIEGO Simeone's Atletico Madrid shared an entertaining 2-2 draw with Villarreal as they began their La Liga campaign on Monday.

The Rojiblancos revamped their squad over the summer after struggling to a fourth-place finish but had to settle for a point at Villarreal's Estadio de la Ceramica, twice coming from behind.

Alvaro Morata, Stefan Savic, Memphis Depay and others have departed while Atletico brought in Julian Alvarez, Alexander Sorloth and Robin Le Normand, who all made their debuts.

The latter two started on Spain's east coast and Norwegian striker Sorloth netted what proved to be the goal to earn his team a point.

"I think we played a good game, we had some individual areas where we have to improve, but as a group we were committed," said Simeone.

Villarreal took the lead through Arnaut Danjuma in the 18th minute with the forward starting his team's La Liga opener after spells on loan at Tottenham



Atletico Madrid's French forward (7) Antoine Griezmann and teammates acknowledge supporters at the end of the Spanish league football match between Villarreal CF and Club Atletico de Madrid at La Ceramica stadium in Vila-real on 19 August 2024. PHOTO: AFP

and Everton.

The Dutch winger beat Axel Witsel for pace to run on to a pass and then worked some space to squeeze a low shot across goal and into the far corner.

Atletico reacted instantly, scoring little over a minute later when Antoine Griezmann played in Marcos Llorente who rifled into the roof of the net. — AFP

Germany captain Gundogan retires from international football

ILKAY Gundogan, who captained Germany at Euro 2024 on home soil, announced his international retirement on social media on Monday.

The veteran midfielder decided to step down from international duty at the age of 33.

"After a few weeks of reflection, I have decided that it is time to end my national team career," said Gundogan, who scored

19 goals in 82 appearances for his country. "I am proud to have made 82 international appearances for my country, a number I never dreamed of when I made my senior debut in 2011. My highlight was undoubtedly the great honour of captaining the team at our home European Championships last summer".

Gundogan's retirement follows the international retirements of Thomas Muller

and Toni Kroos, who stepped down after Germany's 2-1 quarter-final defeat to Spain at Euro 2024.

The Barcelona midfielder mentioned feeling a certain "tiredness" and noted that "the games at club and national level are not getting any less. I will remain a fan of the national team, and I sincerely hope that we can continue our upward trend together." — Xinhua

Bayern's Stanisic to miss 'several weeks' with knee injury

BAYERN Munich defender Jospip Stanisic is set to miss "several weeks" with a knee injury picked up in training, the club announced Tuesday.

Stanisic "tore the lateral ligament in his right knee" at training on Monday and will undergo an operation, Bayern said in a statement. The 24-year-old returned to Bayern this summer after a season-long loan at Bayer Leverkusen, where he won the Bundesliga and German Cup double.

Bayern sporting director Max Eberl said on the club's in-house TV channel on Tuesday Stanisic, who has 20 caps for Croatia, "will be missing for the next few weeks, unfortunately".

Bayern, who finished trophyless last season for the first time in 11 years, are already light in defence.

New centre-back signing Hiroki Ito will miss the first few weeks of the season with a foot injury, while fellow central defender Matthijs de Ligt was sold to Manchester United earlier in August.

Bayern open the 2024-25 season on Sunday away at Wolfsburg. — AFP



Iran says response to Hamas chief's assassination, Gaza truce separate issues

IRAN'S Foreign Ministry Spokesman Nasser Kanaani said on Monday that his country's right to respond to the assassination of Hamas Politburo Chief Ismail Haniyeh and the pursuit of a ceasefire in Gaza were two separate issues.

He made the remarks at a weekly press conference in Tehran while responding to a question about whether Iran's willingness and determination to achieve a ceasefire in Gaza would affect or delay its response to Haniyeh's assassination on 31 July.

Kanaani accused Israel of violating Iran's territorial integrity and national security by assassinating Haniyeh, who was a high-ranking political guest of Iran, and stressed that reaching a ceasefire in Gaza was an international demand and not related to Iran's "legitimate, legal and recognized right to respond to the aggressor and punish Israel for Haniyeh's martyrdom".

Regarding Gaza truce talks, Kanaani noted that the ball was in the court of US and Israel as Hamas had already presented its viewpoints.

Kanaani described Iran as the "most important regional and international supporter" for ending the conflict and reaching a truce in Gaza, noting that the country was still making efforts towards those goals and would support relevant measures. — Xinhua



Displaced Palestinians watch from a makeshift camp as shells fired from Israeli tanks hit an area near the Hamad residential complex in Khan Yunis in the southern Gaza Strip on 18 August 2024 amid the ongoing conflict between Israel and the Hamas militant group. **PHOTO: AFP**

Israel wants to build wall between Egypt, Gaza to hinder Hamas tunnels-digging – Reports

ISRAEL insists on building a wall near the Philadelphia Corridor on the border between the Gaza Strip and Egypt to prevent Palestinian movement Hamas from building tunnels, The Wall Street Journal reported, citing Arab mediators in the negotiations between Israel and Hamas.

Israel also wants access to data from cameras and sensors monitoring the area, the newspaper said.

A senior Egyptian official told the publication that Cairo was in favour of a complete withdrawal of Israeli forces

from the corridor and the Rafah border crossing between Egypt and the Gaza Strip. An Israeli technical team has completed meetings with its counterparts in Cairo to discuss the corridor and Rafah, but without much progress, according to Arab mediators.

Last Sunday, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office said he was continuing to work to advance a Gaza deal that would maximize the number of hostages released and insist that the Israeli army remain in the corridor on the border between Gaza and Egypt.

Israel closed the Rafah Crossing in December, it has not been opened since.

Gaza ceasefire talks were held in Doha last week involving Qatar, Egypt, the United States and Israel. Hamas leadership refused to participate in the talks due to a lack of specifics on the terms of the truce. A joint statement by the United States, Qatar and Egypt, released by the office of Egyptian President Abdel Fattah Sisi, said the mediators had presented Israel and Hamas with a ceasefire proposal that narrowed the differences between the parties. — SPUTNIK



Russian servicemen of the artillery brigade division of the Centre group of forces fire a BM-27 9K57 Uragan (Hurricane) multiple launch rocket system towards positions of the Ukrainian Armed Forces in the Avdiivka sector of the front line amid Russia's military operation in Ukraine, Russia. **PHOTO: SPUTNIK**

Russian forces liberate New York in Donetsk region – MoD

RUSSIAN troops have liberated New York in the Donetsk People's Republic, the Russian Defence Ministry said on Tuesday.

"As a result of an offensive by units of Battlegroup Tsentr, a large group of enemy troops was destroyed and one of the largest settlements of the Toretsk agglomeration and strategical-

ly important logistics hub, New York, in the Donetsk People's Republic was liberated," the ministry said in a statement.

Russia's Battlegroup Yug has repelled two counterattacks and eliminated more than 680 Ukrainian servicepeople over the past 24 hours, the Russian Defence Ministry said.

In battles with Battlegroup Tsentr group of forces, Kyiv has lost over 585 troops, the statement read. At the same time, Battlegroup Zapad has eliminated over 450 Ukrainian troops, the ministry said, adding that Kyiv has lost up to 110 servicepeople in battles with Battlegroup Vostok. — SPUTNIK