

The Global **NEW LIGHT** of MYANMAR



State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and his wife Daw Kyu Kyu Hla pour water over the Bo tree at yesterday's occasion in Nay Pyi Taw.

SAC Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and his wife Daw Kyu Kyu Hla, council members and their wives pour water on banyan trees

Buddha Day falls on the full moon day of Kason and coincides with the sacred days of preordainment, date of birth, date of attaining Enlightenment and attaining Parinibbana of Lord Buddha.

A ceremony to pour water on the Bo tree in the precinct of Maravijaya Buddha Image in Nay Pyi Taw in Nay Pyi Taw Council Area took place at the venue on the full moon of Kason, 1386 Myanmar Era, which is one of the 12 seasonal festivals of Myanmar, attended by Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and his wife Daw Kyu Kyu Hla who poured water on the Bo tree at the ceremony yesterday afternoon.

Also present at the ceremony were

Vice-Chairman of the State Administration Council Deputy Prime Minister Vice-Senior General Soe Win and his wife Daw Than Than Nwe, the Council Secretary and wife, the Joint Secretary and wife, council members and their wives, union-level dignitaries, union ministers and their wives, the commander of Nay Pyi Taw Command, officials and religious association members.

The Senior General and his wife offered flowers, water and oil lights to the Maravijaya Buddha Image.

The Senior General and wife, the

Vice-Senior General and wife, the Secretary and wife, the Joint Secretary and wife, council members and their wives, and union-level dignitaries and their wives sprayed scented water on the Bo tree and poured water on it. Then, they offered water to Buddha images at the Bo tree and went round the plant clockwise.

The Senior General and his wife cordially greeted the people and viewed round the decorated floats on Buddha Day.

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The reading session to commemorate Buddha Day, the full moon day of Kason, in progress yesterday in the Maravijaya Buddha Park in Nay Pyi Taw.

Nay Pyi Taw hosts reading session on Buddha Day

THE State Administration Council (SAC) organized a reading session yesterday afternoon at the Agga Dipati Sasana Beikman in the Maravijaya Buddha Park in Nay Pyi Taw Union Territory to commemorate Buddha Day, the full moon day of Kason.

The event was graced by Presiding Sayadaws Dr Bhaddanta Kumara and Dr Bhaddanta Kesara, Rector Sayadaws of the State Pariyatti Sasana Universities in Yangon and Mandalay. Also present were Rector Sayadaw Dr Bhaddanta Cekinda of the International Theravada Buddhist Missionary University, paper reader Sayadaws, union ministers, the Nay Pyi Taw Council chairman, deputy ministers, departmen-

tal officials and staff. Rector Sayadaw Dr Bhaddanta Kumara of the State Pariyatti Sasana University (Yangon) delivered the Ovada Katha. A reading session was followed: Dr Bhaddanta Kavindhaja, a professor at the Sitagu International Buddhist Academy in Sagaing, read "The Preordainment, Buddha's Extraordinary Deeds, and Maha Bodhi Puja" paper. Dr Bhaddanta Acinna, Professor/Head of Department at the International Theravada Buddhist Missionary University, read "The Dana Parami of Buddha-would-be: Born as King Vessantara". State Pariyatti Sasana University (Mandalay) Rector Sayadaw Dr Bhaddanta Kesara delivered the Ovada Katha.

Subsequently, State Pariyatti Sasana University (Yangon) Professor/Head of Department Sayadaw Dr Bhaddanta Therinda of the State Pariyatti Sasana University (Yangon) and Lecturer Sayadaw Bhaddanta Kesara of the Pitaka English Department of the State Pariyatti Sasana University (Mandalay) read their papers respectively. Union Minister for Religious Affairs and Culture U Tin Oo Lwin presented certificates of honour and cash donations to Sayadaws. Presiding Sayadaw and Rector Sayadaw Dr Bhaddanta Cekinda of the International Theravada Buddhist Missionary University concluded the ceremony. — MNA/TMT

Low-Pressure Area Condition

Issued at (19:00) hours MST on 22-5-2024

ACCORDING to the observations at (17:30) hrs MST today, the Low-Pressure Area over the Southwest Bay of Bengal and adjoining Westcentral Bay of Bengal off north Tamil Nadu-South Andhra Pradesh coasts, India still persists. It is likely to move northeastwards and intensify into a Depression over Central Bay of Bengal around 24-5-2024. Thereafter, it may continue to move northeastwards, further intensify and reach Northeast and adjoining Northwest Bay of Bengal around 25-5-2024 evening.

General caution

Due to the influence of Low-Pressure Area, rain or thundershowers will be fairly widespread to widespread in Nay Pyi Taw, Sagaing, Mandalay, Magway, Bago, Yangon, Ayeyawady and Taninthayi regions and Chin, Rakhine, Kayin and Mon states with likelihood of regionally and isolated heavyfalls in some regions and states along with strong winds from 23-5-2024 to 27-5-2024. Occasional squalls with rough seas will be experienced in Gulf of Mottama, off and along Mon-Taninthayi Coasts. Surface wind speed in squall may reach 40 miles per hour and wave height will be about 9-12 feet. Frequently squalls with rough to very rough seas will be experienced in Deltaic, off and along Rakhine Coasts. Surface wind speed in squall may reach 45-55 mph and wave height will be about 13-16 feet.

Advisory

Due to the influence of low pressure area, people should be aware heavy rain with strong wind, flash flood and landslide in the hilly areas and near small rivers and also domestic flight, trawlers, vessels and ships off and along Myanmar Coasts.



Myanmar's chargé d'affaires attends ASEAN meeting with US Defence Official in Washington

THE Ministry of Foreign Affairs reported that U Thet Win, Myanmar's chargé d'affaires ad interim in Washington, attended a meeting between Ms Lindsey W Ford, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defence for South and Southeast Asia, and the ASEAN Committee in Washington (ACW).

The meeting took place on 5 May and was led by the Malaysian Embassy as part of

the ACW's initiatives. ASEAN senior officers, representatives, and personnel also attended.

Mr Dato' Nazri Aziz, Malaysian Ambassador to the United States, delivered an opening speech. Ms Lindsey W Ford discussed her upcoming working visit to Singapore for the Shangri-La Dialogue and potential developments in the Indo-Pacific region. — ASH/TMT



A group photo of the attendees.

NATIONAL



SAC Chair PM Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and dignitaries view round the decorated floats at yesterday's occasion.

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The Senior General and his wife, the Vice-Senior General and his wife, Chief of the General Staff (Army, Navy and Air) General Maung Maung Aye, Commander-in-Chief (Navy) Vice-Admiral Zwe Win Myint and wife, Commander-in-Chief (Air) General Tun Aung, senior military officers from the Office of the Commander-in-Chief (Army, Navy and Air) and their wives, officers, other ranks and families poured water on Bo trees at Lawka Chantha Sutaungpyae Association's Pa-

SAC Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and his wife Daw Kyu Kyu Hla, council members and their wives pour water on banyan trees

goda in Zeyathiri Township.

On the full moon day of Kason, Dipankara Buddha gave a preordainment to Buddha-to-be Sumida hermit: "He will be Buddha in Bhadda Kappa", Buddha-to-be prince Siddhartha

was born, the Buddha-to-be attained Enlightenment, and the Buddha attained Parinibbana. So, it was recorded as dates of preordainment, birth, attainment of Enlightenment, and attainment of Parinibbana. Hence,

it is a sacred day for Buddhists. Significantly, these holy days fall on the full moon day of Kason. So, Kason's full moon is marked as Buddha Day. The ceremony of water-pouring on the Bo tree is a prominent religious day des-

ignated as a part of Myanmar's heritage. Hence, one day ahead of the ceremony, the banyan trees are sprayed with scented water, and the thrones are prepared magnificently for doing meritorious deeds. — MNA/TTA

Gala Dhamma ceremony marks Buddha Day on full moon of Kason 1386 ME

DAW Kyu Kyu Hla, wife of Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, attended the Dhamma ceremony to mark the Buddha Day which falls on full moon of Kason 1386 ME at Agga Dipati Sasana Beikman in the precinct of Maravijaya Buddha Park in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday evening.

Also present at the ceremony were SAC Vice-Chairman Deputy Prime Minister Vice-Senior General Soe Win and his wife Daw Than Than Nwe, the secretary and wife, council members and their

wives, union-level dignitaries, union ministers and their wives and officials as well as members of religious associations.

On the occasion, the Vice-Senior General and his wife and congregation took the Eight Precepts from State Ovadacariya Shwegyin Nikaya Chairman 16th Sangharaja of Shwegyin Nikaya Chancellor of Sitagu International Buddhist Academies Abhidhaja Maha Rattha Guru Abhidhaja Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotika Agga Pandita Maha Dhammakathika Bahujana Hitadhara Sitagu Sayadaw Dr Bhaddanta Nyanissara and listened to the



Sitagu Sayadaw gives the Vice-Senior General a certificate of honour.

sermon on Buddha Day of Kason full moon.

SAC Vice-Chairman Deputy Prime Minister Vice-Senior General Soe Win donated

cash for the Dhamma ceremony through Union Minister for Religious Affairs and Culture U Tin Oo Lwin. Sitagu Sayadaw presented a certificate of hon-

our to the Vice-Senior General. They all listened to a sermon delivered by Sitagu Sayadaw and shared merits gains for all donations. — MNA/TTA

NATIONAL



State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and the congregation observe the Eight Precepts from Thanlyin Minkyaung Sayadaw Dr Bhaddanta Candima yesterday in Nay Pyi Taw.

SAC Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, wife Daw Kyu Kyu Hla offer day meals to members of the Sangha who attended the ceremony of marking Buddha Day on Full Moon Day of Kason 2024



man Sayadaw, SAC Vice-Chairman Deputy Prime Minister Vice-Senior General Soe Win and his wife Daw Than Than Nwe to the Secretary Sayadaw, the SAC Secretary and his

wife, the Joint Secretary and his wife, council members and their wives and officials to the Uppatasanti Pagoda Ovada-cariya Sayadaw Lewe Paukmyaing Monastery Presiding Nayaka Abhidhaja Maha Rattha Guru Bhaddanta Janinda, Presiding Nayaka of Tatkon Maha Thihanada Monastery Abhidhaja Maha Rattha Guru Bhaddanta Acinda and members of the Sangha.

The Senior General and his wife offer alms to the SSMNC Chairman Sayadaw.

The Secretary Sayadaw, Presiding Patron of Masoeyein Taikthit Monastery of Mandalay, delivered a sermon, followed by a sharing of merits.

Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and his wife Daw Kyu Kyu Hla offered day meals to members of the Sangha who attended the ceremony of marking the Buddha Day on the Full Moon Day of Kason 2024 at Agga Dipati Sasana Beikman in the precinct of Maravijaya Buddha Park in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

into the emerald alms bowl, fruits, flowers, water, and joss sticks to Maravijaya Naungdawgyi Buddha Image in the Beikman.

The Senior General, wife and congregation took the Eight Precepts from Chairman of the State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee Agga Maha Pandita Agga Maha Saddhama Jotikadhaja Thanlyin Minkyaung Monastery Sayadaw Dr Bhaddanta Candima.

Before the ceremony, the Senior General offered alms

The Senior General and wife offered alms to the Chair-



After the ceremony, the Senior General, his wife and congregation also offered day meals to members of the Sangha led by Chairman Sayadaw Dr Bhaddanta Candima Bhivamsa. — MNA/TTA

The Vice-Senior General and his wife present alms to the SSMNC Secretary Sayadaw.

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NATIONAL

Light offering held at Uppatasanti Pagoda, Maravijaya Buddha Image

STAFF from various ministries and students totalling 1,080 participated in the light offering ceremonies, held inside the compound of the Uppatasanti Pagoda and the Buddha Park of the Maravijaya Buddha Image in Nay Pyi Taw on the Kason Full Moon Day (Buddha Day) of 1386 ME yesterday evening.

Thanks to the vehicles decorated with Buddha images, students and staff paid homage to the Uppatasanti Pagoda with a clockwise procession.

They went to the Maravijaya Buddha Image Park with the decorated floats. The decorated floats parked inside the Buddha Park of the Maravijaya Buddha Image for pilgrims to worship.

Students and staff then paid homage to the Maravijaya Buddha Image with religious flags and candles.

Afterwards, the departmen-

tal staff and students poured the Bo tree near the Maravijaya Buddha image and attended the Kason Full Moon Day Dhamma Event held in the Buddha Park of the Maravijaya Buddha Image and listened to the sermon given by Sitagu Sayadaw Dr Bhaddanta Nyanissara. — MNA/KZL



The Kason Water-Pouring Ceremony of the Maravijaya Buddha Image in progress in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.



The decorated float go round the Maravijaya Buddha Image in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.



Pilgrims participate in the light offering ceremonies at the Maravijaya Buddha Image in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

16th Kason Water-Pouring Event held at Uppatasanti Pagoda

THE 16th Kason Water-Pouring Event was held near banyan trees inside the compound of the Uppatasanti Pagoda in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

The event was joined by union ministers, officials, and their wives. Union ministers and their wives, along with participants, first poured

water on small banyan trees in the Uppatasanti Pagoda compound, and the master of the ceremony recited a mantra named Maha Bodhi Rokha Thisanapusa. They then sprinkled banyan trees with scented water and paid homage to the trees by clockwise procession. — MNA/KZL



The 16th Kason Water-Pouring ceremony of the Uppatasanti Pagoda in progress in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

Bagan's sand paintings captivate locals and shoppers



Sand paintings can be seen in Bagan.

BAGAN'S sand paintings, which used to attract foreign tourists, have gained popularity among local people and there are some purchases, according to the painting trade circle in Bagan.

"With the arrival of foreign tourists, the sand painting market used to be good and sold significantly.

It attracted a lot of foreign tourists. That was before the COVID-19 pandemic. After COVID-19, foreign tourists' entry is still low. Local interest in sand painting has increased. It sells well. Most of the people still don't know how these sand paintings are made. It already has a market. It reaches as far as Yangon. As we are based in Bagan, our products reach every corner of Myanmar, including Dawei and Nay Pyi Taw," said Ko Min Aung, a painting shop owner in Bagan.

In addition, knowledge of the art of sand painting should be widespread throughout Myanmar because this craft, which was formerly known as cloth

painting, has a history dating back to the Bagan era.

"In sand painting, we first put glue on a cloth. After the glue, we put sand particles on it and let it dry in the sun. Then, we draw sketches with a pencil and fill them in with coloured paints. Glue and sand used in the painting are more important. They give a better quality. Only then can the sand painting be rolled or pressed. This sand painting started around 2000. It can only be found in Bagan," he said.

The price of Bagan's sand painting varies with the customized orders depending on the design and the size, according to the sand painting dealers in Bagan. — Thit Taw/ZN

NATIONAL

Alms, offerings donated to 10,272 members of the Sangha in Mandalay on Buddha Day on Kason full moon day

MANDALAY Region government and well-wishers organized a ceremony to donate alms and offerings to 20,272 members of the Sangha invited from four corners of Mandalay on Buddha Day, which falls on the full moon day of Kason, yesterday.

The ceremonies took place at Mingala pavilions on four sides of moats in Mandalay. It was also attended by State Ovadacariya Abbot of Dhammikayama Meiktila Monastery Sayadaw Abhidhaja Maha Ratha Guru Bhaddanta Sujanapiya, members of the State Central Working Committee of the Sangha and venerable Sayadaws, and monks from Buddhism Learn-

ing Centres from four corners of Mandalay.

The ceremony aims to enable people to be free from dangers.

Mandalay Region Chief Minister U Myo Aung and his wife, Commander of Central Command Maj-Gen Kyi Khaing and his wife, regional level officials and their wives donated offerings to members of the Sangha.

Then, the regional chief minister and wife, the commander and his wife, officials and people donated meals, alms and cash for nine prerequisites to 20,272 members of the Sangha from four corners of Mandalay at the same time. — MNA/TTA



Mandalay Region government and well-wishers donate alms and offerings to 20,272 members of the Sangha on Buddha Day, which falls on the full moon day of Kason, yesterday.

Religious places thronged with devotees on Kason Full Moon Day in Mandalay



People from Mandalay Region celebrate Kason water-pouring ceremonies at the religious places in Mandalay Region yesterday.

AS Kason Full Moon Day (Buddha Day) is an auspicious day, devotees did good deeds, including pouring water on banyan trees, donating rice to Buddhist monks and launching free food events across Mandalay City.

Mandalay's people, led by Yaydaw Sayadaw, washed the

face of Madalay Maha Muni Buddha Image at 4 am and then recited Dhamma Cakka, donated golden robes, rice, water and flowers to the pagoda. They also poured water on each Buddha image situated in every corner of the pagoda and the banyan tree on the Tuesday corner of the pagoda and kept

sabbath on Buddha Day.

With the supervision of the Mandalay Region government, people also donated offerings to 2,568 Sanghas along the Palace Wall and 10,272 Sanghas on the four sides of the Mandalay Moat.

Likewise, pilgrims thronged to Shwekyeemyin

Pagoda, Phayani Pagoda, Sutaungpyae Pagoda, Sutaungya Pagoda, Kyauktawgyi Pagoda, Kuthodaw Pagoda, Thakyathiha Pagoda, Jade Pagoda, Aungtawmu Pagoda, Chanthagyi Pagoda and Chanthaya Pagoda as well-wishers donated food to them.

Similarly, people poured

water onto the banyan tree planted by King Mindon at Bogon Ward, Mahaangmyay Township and the banyan tree situated at the base of Mandalay Hill.

In the evening, the Mandalay people also poured water on banyan trees across the city.

— Min Htet Aung/KZL

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News and Periodicals Enterprise



Pagodas in Yangon packed with devotees on Full Moon Day of Kason

KASON Full Moon Day is an auspicious day as it marks the Buddha's birth, Enlightenment, and attainment of Parinibbana. It is therefore regarded as Buddha Day. On this day, religious sites in Yangon, including the Shwedagon Pagoda, were filled with devotees observing the sabbath and pouring water on banyan trees.

The 41st Kason Banyan Tree Water-Pouring Festival took place on the platform of the Shwedagon Pagoda at 5 am yesterday, supervised by the Yangon Region government and the Shwedagon Pagoda Board of Trustees. The programme included offering alms on the pagoda platform. Pagoda trustees, religious groups, and pilgrims recited Buddha Puja, offered alms, flowers, water, fruits, and light, observed Nine Precepts, paid homage the Buddha, Dhamma, and Sangha, shared loving-kindness, and prayed for blessings.

Pagoda trustee members



The photo shows the Shwedagon Pagoda with full of pilgrims yesterday.



People from Yangon Region celebrate Kason water-pouring ceremonies at the Shwedagon Pagoda and Sule Pagoda in Yangon Region yesterday.



Thiri Maha Dhamma Guru, Bhaddanta Narada Bhivamsa (Hla Yadana Sayadaw).

Afterwards, the devotees and pilgrims participated in the water-pouring ceremony for the banyan tree. The Yangon Region chief minister and his wife, along with other officials, also visited the Botahtaung Pagoda, Sule Pagoda, and Thiri Mingala Kaba Aye Pagoda to partake in the water-pouring festival.

Water-pouring ceremonies were also held at the Lawka Chantha Abaya Labamuni Buddha Image, the ancient historic Aparajita Hair Relic Kyaikwyne Pagoda, Shwephonepwint Pagoda, Waradana Swetaw Pagoda (Yangon), Mahavizaya Pagoda, historic Maha Dhammaranthi Eeindawya Pagoda, Kyaikkasan Pagoda, Lamu Pagoda, Ngahtetgyi, Chaukhtetkyee, and Koehtetkyee pagodas in Yangon. Pilgrims and devotees enjoyed Vesak Day at Yangon's many pagodas, stupas, and temples, including the Shwedagon Pagoda. — MNA/TMT

also offered alms food to the venerable monks and Ovadacariya Sayadaw. Yangon Region Chief Minister U Soe Thein and his wife, Commander of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Zaw Hein and his wife, Yangon Region ministers and their wives, pagoda trustees, and religious devotee groups assembled and circled the pagoda platform clockwise to hold the 41st water-pouring festival at the banyan

tree on Kason Full Moon Day at the Shwedagon Pagoda.

The Shwedagon Pagoda's Ovadacariya Sayadaws conducted the Buddha Bisaka Mingala Anekaza for the banyan tree. Afterwards, pilgrims and personnel observed Nine Precepts from Ovadacariya Sayadaw of Naynattha Monastery Agga Maha Pandita Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Agga Maha Gandhavasaka

Pandita Bhaddanta Sucetta.

Alternate chair of the Shwedagon Pagoda Board of Trustees, U Hla Myint, read the Bodhi Yokkha Udaka Puja Mingala paper. Subsequently, the Yangon Region chief minister and his wife, the commander of Yangon Command and his wife, Yangon Region Chief Justice Daw Sandar Thwe, and other officials donated offerings to the Ovadacariya Sayadaws

and listened to the Anumodana Dhamma delivered by the Shwedagon Pagoda Board of Trustee Ovadacariya, State Sangha Central Working Committee, Pali University Nyaungdon Monastery Presiding Nayaka Agga Maha Pandita Agga Maha Gandhavasaka Pandita Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja, Tha.Sa.Ah Dhammacariya Vatanthaka Pali Paragu, Saytiyinganapawara

OPINION

Let Vesak Day bring peace and stability to society

VESAK Day, celebrated on the Kason Full Moon in May, holds immense significance for millions of Buddhists worldwide. It commemorates three pivotal events in the life of the Lord Buddha: His birth in 623 BC, His Enlightenment, and His passing at the age of 80. This sacred day, recognized internationally by the United Nations through resolution 54/115 of 1999, acknowledges Buddhism's profound contribution to global spirituality over the past two and a half millennia.

In Myanmar, the Full Moon of Kason is a deeply revered day, marking the Lord Buddha's Enlightenment. Known as Gotama, the Buddha's teachings revolve around breaking free from the cycle of life filled with suffering and ignorance (Avijja) to attain Enlightenment. This message is universal, transcending religious boundaries, urging all humans to seek liberation from life's inherent miseries.

Therefore, Vesak Day, marked by the Full Moon of Kason, serves as a beacon of peace and prosperity in Myanmar. It exemplifies how ancient traditions can inspire modern practices that enhance both spiritual and environmental well-being, fostering a peaceful and stable society. Through these shared rituals and values, Vesak Day, called Buddha Day, continues to bring peace and stability, encouraging a harmonious coexistence among all people in Myanmar society.

peace and community harmony.

This practice has broader implications for Myanmar society. It not only preserves an essential cultural and religious tradition but also promotes environmental awareness. As people come together to celebrate Vesak Day, the collective action of watering the Bo trees becomes a symbol of unity and peace. This communal effort helps to reduce hostility and grievances among different national race groups, contributing to a stable and harmonious society.

Therefore, Vesak Day, marked by the Full Moon of Kason, serves as a beacon of peace and prosperity in Myanmar. It exemplifies how ancient traditions can inspire modern practices that enhance both spiritual and environmental well-being, fostering a peaceful and stable society. Through these shared rituals and values, Vesak Day, called Buddha Day, continues to bring peace and stability, encouraging a harmonious coexistence among all people in Myanmar society.

(CONTINUED FROM YESTERDAY)

Tencent

When we visited multi-conglomerate Tencent in Beijing on the evening of 23 April, we realized its commitment to integrity, proactivity, collaboration and creativity, supporting social sector development with the digitalization of charity, rural revitalization, primary healthcare, carbon neutrality, education innovation, public energy service, basic science research and digital culture. Its services include social networks, music, web portals, e-commerce, mobile games, internet services, payment systems, smartphones, and multiplayer online games. It operates the instant messengers Tencent QQ, WeChat, Tencent Music, Weixin pay, Weixin search, Weixin Channels (videos and live stream platform for everyone to record and create), mini-programmes with easy access to products and services and mini-games.

Kuaishou

During our visits to Kwai that evening, we gained in-depth

knowledge, the Middle East, North Africa and Southeast Asia. One can create short videos with magic effects and easy-to-use editing tools, voice-over, digital humans, music, and filters through the Kwai app. GIF Kuaishou was launched for users to create GIFs, which, in essence, are the earliest form of short videos.

Kuaishou's cumulative donations to charity projects exceed 200 million RMB. They facilitate rural revitalization, entrepreneurship, and employment of people with disabilities, care for older adults and veterans, and promote accessibility. Its innovative recruitment model also helps promote the employment of blue-collar workers, graduates, migrant workers, etc.

Communication University of China

The Myanmar media delegation also paid a visit to the Communication University of China (CUC) on the morning of 25 April. The CUC is one of China's key universities of Project 211, directly administered by the Ministry of Education. There are currently

seven doctoral programmes, 35 doctoral programmes (subordinate disciplines), 18 master programmes, 95 master programmes (subordinated disciplines), eight professional master categories and 84 bachelor programmes. It is a well-known university in the field of information communication, with approximately 18,000 students. The CUC occupies a total of 499,800 square metres of buildings, including a seven-storey library, four four-storey canteens with food delivery service and a number of research centres.

A Myanmar media delega-



Posing for a documentary photo after China-Media talk show at CRI on 26 April 2024.

tion attended the presentation of digital virtual humans with AI technology at the State Key Laboratory of Media Convergence of the CUC. Lu Di, the party secretary and deputy researcher of the New Media Research Institute of the CCU, explained the latest development of 5G technology and AI technology under the theme of China's new media integration development and cutting-edge AI

technology. Daw Cho Thet Tun from Myanmar Golden Phoenix asked about the impacts of AI on humans in the media industry. Lu Di pointed out that it is just different forms of presentation and communication. She affirmingly confirmed that China has also experienced and overcome difficulties and challenges in the new media evolution. She assured that the media industry will play a pivotal role in future with human intelligence support combined with AI and 5G and 6G technology advancement.

The Myanmar media delegation also visited the Media Museum, which the birth and development of wireless radio broadcasting and TV, the first-ever music box that could be found on streets with coin payment for music, private radio emergence, animation video small theatre and establishment and growth of Yanan Xinhua Broadcasting Station can be found.

With a 5G network and advanced technology, they can provide news coverage from remote areas, like an interview in the same room. They can broadcast live multi-angle shows, meetings, and crop harvest festivals live on one screen from 70 different areas across China, among others.

screen. Big data also computes Xi's favourite food, speech, possible location, and personal staff analysis, as the representatives from CCTV.net explained. On the evening of 25 April, the Myanmar delegation visited Olympic Park, having three big facilities: National Stadium (Bird's Nest), Water Cube and National Indoor Stadium and strolled around Wangfujing Street, the most well-known and bustling shopping street with tourists and domestic visitors.

Through this insightful, informative, and engaging new me-

New Media Workshop delivers key messages, good insights

By EM



Presentation of digital virtual humans with AI technology at the State Key Laboratory of Media Convergence of the Communication University of China.

China-Myanmar Media exchange

The Myanmar Media delegation visited the China Radio International on the morning of 26 April and participated in a media talk show.

China Central Television, China Radio International and China National Radio (CNR) were unified to become the China Media Group, Mr Wang Xiao Feng, deputy director, explained. They provide services in 26 languages of countries in Asia and Africa.

Media talk show at China Radio International

During the visit to the Myanmar Department of China Radio International, the members of the Myanmar Media Delegation participated in the New Media talk show at New Media Studio. They exchanged views with media colleagues to discuss the China-Myanmar friendship.

Kywe Kywe Htike, deputy director of the MITV, said that as far as I'm concerned, travel vlogs highlighting the development of China, beautiful landscapes, and culture will attract Myanmar's people. Captain Myo Min Thant from Myawady expressed that he was a big fan of the historical Chinese series. Myanmar people got to know Chinese culture and tradition through binge-watch series and movies. Ei Myat Mon from The Global New Light of Myanmar said that China's Spring Festival attracts people's attention. They watched a video clip showing agricultural technology development in a village in Yunnan Province and farming methods for premium quality agricultural produce. We can see how they boost community-based tourism. Kywe Kywe Htike said that it was a good programme for the Myanmar people as it can give them

community knowledge. Thereafter, they shared their experiences at the New Media Workshop in China.

"Through this media workshop, I came to realize that we need to exert concerted efforts to adapt to new media evolution from traditional media. During our visits to Tencent, Kuaishou, CCTV.net and Communication University of China, we witnessed media development with the support of the AI and 5G network." Ei Myat Mon from The Global New Light of Myanmar shared.

Captain Myo Min Thant was amazed to learn about the latest technology in China, and although we still have a long way to go, we will strive for development for sure.

Kywe Kywe Htike said that "it is her fifth time she came to China. This time, I realized that short videos are becoming more popular and effective to attract the attention of the audience. I got the idea to present the news effectively with a short video. I attended a workshop in China back in 2012, and I now see the big impact of the 5G network on connectivity and innovation. I looked up to China's new media development with technological advancement. I want to attract the attention of younger generations with short video presentations."

We also discussed how cultural exchange will foster understanding and respect among diverse communities and promote peaceful relations between two countries.

China-Myanmar cooperation in various fields was also discussed, with the presence of Shwe Yamin Oo, presenter of the Sky Net, Lwin Min Oo, Editor-in-chief of the Standard Time Daily and Wint Wah Han, presenter of Vidya Myanmar.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

NATIONAL

Salt farms in Mon State halt operations to prevent rain damage

SALT Industries of Mon State reported that salt production farms in the state ceased operations to avoid rain damage. Rain can be forecasted at least 15 days in advance based on weather information, allowing salt farmers to close their farms and secure their equipment in time.

Twenty years ago, salt farmers experienced significant losses due to unexpected rain. Since then, they have been vigilant in following weather forecasts and have practised closing their farms

at least 15 days before expected rainfall. Salt farming is a seasonal business, similar to crop cultivation, and depends on favourable weather conditions, fuel prices, and domestic commodity prices.

Salt farm owners reported that the cost of raw salt production this year is higher than in previous years due to increased labour and fuel costs, as well as general commodity prices. As a result, salt farmers need to earn at least K200 per viss to make a profit or at least cover

their expenses.

Salt is currently harvested and stored in warehouses in good condition. In Myanmar, salt production primarily occurs in the Ayeyawady Region, Rakhine State, and Mon State. Ayeyawady Region accounts for 66 per cent of the country's total salt production, while Rakhine State and Mon State share the remaining 34 per cent. Myanmar ranks 51st among the 93 countries in the world that produce salt. — TWA/TMT



Salt farmers in Mon State are harvesting salt.

YUFL to offer PhD courses in Chinese, Korean languages



Yangon University of Foreign Languages.

YANGON University of Foreign Languages will offer one-year full-time PhD courses in Chinese and Korean languages for the 2024-2025 academic year.

Prospective students must meet the specified requirements, sit for three-hour entrance exams (covering the respective subjects and English) on 27 and 28 May, and attend a personal interview on 31 May if they pass the written exams.

Application forms must be submitted to the Student Affairs Department of YUFL no later than 24 May. — TWA/MKKS



Open tender announcement for procurement of 700 phone devices for Myanmar Post

ACCORDING to the Ministry of Transport and Communications, 700 phone devices will be purchased in Myanmar

currency for Myanmar Post through an open tender system.

Tender forms are available at Myanmar Post's head office in Nay Pyi Taw from 16 to 30 May, and the tender will be opened on 14 June. For further details, individuals can contact Myanmar Post's head office during office hours. — TWA/TKO

Myanmar Post under the Ministry of Transport and Communications (The former building of the Myanmar Post Office in Central Yangon)

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Myanmar attends Cheque Sharing Ceremony of ALFS in Tokyo

ACCORDING to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Daw Lè Lè, the wife of the Myanmar Ambassador to Japan, attended the Cheque Sharing Ceremony of the Tokyo-based Asia-Pacific Ladies Friendship Society (ALFS) on 15 May, where she received a profit-sharing cheques for the Myanmar Embassy from ALFS President Madame Haruko Komura.

The ceremony was held at the Embassy of Singapore in

Tokyo to distribute the proceeds from the sale to the member embassies, where 19 embassies attended to receive profit-sharing cheques.

The 2024 ALFS Charity Bazaar of the Asia-Pacific Ladies Friendship Society (ALFS), comprising 26 embassies of Asia-Pacific countries based in Tokyo, was held on 26 March at the Meiji Kinenkan in Tokyo, with participation from 19 embassies, including the Myanmar



Attendees of the Cheque Sharing Ceremony are seen.

Embassy, as well as business companies and associations from Japan.

The Myanmar Embassy in Tokyo transfers the proportional profits received from the ALFS Charity Bazaar each year to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to support donations to social security organizations and Monastic Education Schools in Myanmar, thereby strengthening their educational development activities. — ASH/TH

Promotion Conference on 21st CAEXPO invites enthusiastic traders

ENTHUSIASTIC traders are cordially invited to participate in the Promotion Conference on the 21st CAEXPO, according to the Myanmar Trade Promotion Organization.

The Promotion Conference on 21st CAEXPO will be held at U Bein 1 of Wyndham Grand Yangon Hotel on 3 June.

The China-ASEAN Expo (CAEXPO) is an annual event convened in Nanning, China's Guangxi province, in order to boost economic cooperation between China and ASEAN. Myanmar Trade Promotion Organization joins hands with China-ASEAN Secretariat in exhibition development.

The 21st CAEXPO is scheduled to take place from 24 to 28 September. The delegation of the China-ASEAN Secretariat will come to Myanmar and share information regarding setting exhibition and event objectives.

Those interested companies can enquire about the 21st CAEXPO with the Myanmar Trade Promotion Organization through email event.td.myantrade@gmail.com and contact numbers 01 385323 and 067 408622. — NN/EM

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.

1,550+ food companies, factories apply for GACC in 2.5 years



Foodstuffs produced by Myanmar food companies and factories are seen in a supermarket in Yangon.

A total of 1,550 Myanmar food processing companies and factories submitted over 3,000 applications to the General Administration of Customs of the People's Republic of China (GACC) over the past two and half years, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

According to GACC Decree 248 and 249, GACC registration is mandatory for food exporters starting from 1 January 2022.

Those individuals executing edible oil, oilseeds, stuffed pastry products, edible bird's nest and related products, edible grains, grains milling industrial products and malt, fresh and dehydrated vegetables, dried beans, plant species, nuts and seeds, dried fruits, unroasted coffee and cocoa bean, special dietary food excluding milk-based formula, functional foods, bee products, aquatic products including farm products, animal products and animal feed

and livestock animal businesses need to apply for GACC license in order to place their goods in China's market.

The relevant authorities for the registration with GACC are the Agriculture Department, the Livestock Breeding and Veterinary Department, the Fisheries Department and the Food and Drug Administration.

Between 1 December 2021 and 5 May 2024, 3,092 applications by 1,550 factories have been forwarded to the GACC through the Agriculture Department (2,935 applications), the Fisheries Department (134), the Livestock Breeding and Veterinary Department (14) and the Food and Drug Administration Department (nine).

Exporters can directly access China International Trade Single Window through <https://cifer.singlewindow.cn> by creating accounts for those food groups that are not listed in the 18

groups mentioned above.

As of 3 May 2024, a total of 1,029 applications have been successful in registering with the GACC with the approval of the competent authority.

Regarding the registration of the importing companies, the Department of Animal and Plant Quarantine under the GACC will check quarantine access for the imported grains (raw coffee beans, cocoa beans, vegetables, spices, edible grains, pulses, oil crops and herbal animal products and plant for their origins).

Companies cannot directly proceed with registration, and they need to carry out this step through competent authorities and departments concerned by sending an email to dapq@customs.gov.cn or submitting a letter to the Chinese Embassy in Myanmar or the Myanmar Embassy in China. — NN/EM



A factory located in the Kyauktan industrial complex in Mawlamyine, Mon State.

20 domestic enterprises, 11 foreign projects greenlit in Mon State in April

THE Mon State Investment Committee (MSIC) gave the green light to 20 domestic enterprises and 11 foreign enterprises to invest in the region in April, creating 4,487 jobs for locals, according to the MSIC's meeting held on 20 May.

The foreign enterprises will invest US\$15.456 million in the region, while domestic investments made by Myanmar citizens amounted to K70.388 billion. Additionally, the existing enterprises were found to expand capital in April.

The committee is exerting continuous efforts to create job opportunities for the locals by endorsing domestic and foreign enterprises in accordance with the existing laws and rules.

As Mon State is strategically located, the committee is prioritizing spurring the investments, supporting existing businesses, attracting new investors, increasing job opportunities in the region and enhancing the socioeconomy of the local community. — ASH/EM

NATIONAL

ME assists in repatriating citizen from Saudi Arabia

THE Myanmar government, concerned for its citizens facing difficulties abroad, always ensures their safe and prompt return home through the Myanmar embassy in the respective country and the embassy of that country.

In consultation with the authorities in Riyadh, the Myanmar Embassy successfully facilitated the return of a Myanmar girl facing difficulties in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, to her home country. Ma Aye Aye Pai, a Myanmar national, departed Riyadh at 12:50 pm local time on 21 May and arrived in Yangon at 9:50 pm via Muscat and Bangkok.

Ma Aye Aye Pai wished to return to Myanmar due to work fatigue and poor relations with her employer in Riyadh. Her employer brought her to the Myanmar Embassy, where she received assistance with accommodation and meals. To expedite her return from Saudi Arabia, the relevant departments coordinated with officials to obtain an exit pass, enabling her smooth arrival in Yangon on 22 May.

“My hometown is Myingyan. I worked for four months in Riyadh. I asked the Myanmar embassy to help me return home because I struggled with the food, language, traditions,



Ma Aye Aye Pai.

and social dynamics in Riyadh. I want to share my experience with all women who are thinking of working abroad. I want them to carefully consider the conditions and culture of the destination country before travelling, and they should not be swayed solely by promises of high wages. The Myanmar Embassy provided me with good accommodation and meals, and I am very grateful for the warm and helpful support from the ambassador and the staff. I also thank the government and officials of the Myanmar Embassy who assisted in my return home,” said Ma Aye Aye Pai. — Nyein Thu/TKO

Major seizures and arrests reported nationwide



Confiscated illegal timbers in Bago Region (L) and pairs of sandals and a vehicle in Mandalay Region (R).

SUPERVISED by the Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee, actions are being taken nationwide against illicit trading in accordance with the law.

During inspections on 20 May, the combined teams supervised by the Magway Region Illegal Trade Eradication Special Task Force seized illegal timbers weighing 16.293 tonnes, valued at K1.849 million in Minbu and Thayet districts. This enforcement was carried out under the Forest Law.

On 20 and 21 May, on-duty teams under the Bago Region Illegal Trade Eradication Special Task Force confiscated a Higer bus (estimated value of K40 million) travelling to Yangon from Mawlamyine. The bus was carrying nine types of goods valued at K8.04 million, including 600 bags

of non-dairy cream from Thailand without official documents. They also seized illegal teak weighing 6.114 tonnes, illegal hardwood weighing 0.215 tonnes, and other illegal timbers weighing 5.486 tonnes, valued at K5.234 million, in Bago, Toungoo, and Thayawady districts. The action was taken under Customs procedures and the Forest Law.

On 21 May, the combined team captured a Volvo tractor head with a trailer (approximately worth K86 million) travelling to Mandalay from Myitkyina, carrying 52,414 Erke T-shirts, 16,290 pairs of trousers, and 588 pairs of sandals from China, worth over K2,084.64 million, without official documents at the Shwegyin checkpoint.

On 21 May, the combined

team under the management of the Customs Department seized five types of goods worth K39.648 million, including 21,600 LED bulbs that differed from the items listed on the Import Declaration (ID), from a container at the Thilawa Port Terminal container checkpoint. The action was taken under Customs procedures.

Furthermore, on 21 May, illegal timbers weighing 73.109 tonnes and valued at K7.961 million were confiscated in Thandwe district, Rakhine State. The action was taken under the Forest Law.

The Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee reported that 17 arrests were made on 20 and 21 May, with the confiscated goods valued at an estimated K2,273 million. — MNA/MKKS

Counter-argument to false information

Fake news accuses security forces of beating, arresting six Myeik locals

SUBVERSIVE media are posting false accusations on social networking sites, claiming that six residents, including a woman, were beaten and arrested by security forces on 20 May after a convoy was attacked with a mine near Latha Village in Myeik Township and Yanfo Village in Tanintharyi Township.

According to a local security official, the truth is that while the security forces were conducting operations near Latha Village in Myeik Township, PDF terrorists ambushed them from a distance, prompting the security forces to fire back and causing the terrorists to retreat and run away, with no residents being detained.

The reports indicate that malicious media are fabricating news stories to create fear among local people by ambushing, shooting and misrepresenting the actions of the security forces. — MNA/TH



The screenshot validate false claims.

Singapore's SingHealth collaborates with India's Sharda Care

IN a historic move, SingHealth, renowned as one of Singapore's leading healthcare groups, has entered into a strategic collaboration with Sharda Care - The Health City, a pioneering healthcare institution in India. This collaboration, formalized through the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), marked the beginning of a new age of innovation and excellence in healthcare delivery.

The MoU was formally signed in the presence of P.K Gupta, Chancellor, Sharda University & Chairman, Sharda Hospital and Sharda Care - The Healthcity, Y.K Gupta, Pro-Chancellor, Sharda University, Prof Tan Hiang Khoo, Director of SingHealth Duke-NUS Global Health Institute, Prof V Anantharaman, Emeritus Consultant, Dept of Emergency Medicine and Vijaya Rao, Director International Collaboration Office. Expressing his enthusiasm for the partnership, Rishab Gupta, Vice-President of Sharda Hospital, remarked, "This collaborative endeavour with SingHealth fills us with immense excitement." — ANI

New factory of Coca-Cola bottler breaks ground in China's Guangdong

Spanning an area of 128,000 square metres, the state-of-the-art facility will feature 11 new beverage production lines, multi-tier warehouses, and ancillary facilities.



The new facility will be a green, intelligent, environmentally friendly and diversified world-class plant.

PHOTO: VIA X

THE construction of a new factory of Swire Coca-Cola Ltd, a bottler of Coca-Cola, with an investment of 1.25 billion yuan (about 175.89 million US dol-

lars), started Tuesday in south China's economic powerhouse province of Guangdong.

Covering an area of some 128,000 square metres, the com-

pany's new factory will boast 11 new beverage production lines, multi-tier warehouses and supporting facilities, with an expected increase in annual

production capacity of approximately 66 per cent compared to the current level of the company's Guangdong branch.

According to the company, the new facility will be a green, intelligent, environmentally friendly and diversified world-class plant.

"The Chinese mainland has become a crucial driver of our company's continuous growth. We constantly draw inspiration from this market, fueling our innovation," said Karen So, managing director of Swire Coca-Cola.

She added that the company will continue to increase its investment in China, expecting the investment in the market to exceed 12 billion yuan from 2023 to 2032. "Expanding our operations in such a vibrant and fast-growing market is really exciting," she said.

As Coca-Cola's fifth largest bottler in the world by sales volume, Swire Coca-Cola operates five bottling plants in Guangdong with a total of 14 modern production lines, serving more than 90 million consumers. — Xinhua

NEWS IN BRIEF

"Massive" fire at Danish pharma giant Novo Nordisk: fire service

A massive fire broke out in a building belonging to Danish pharmaceuticals manufacturer Novo Nordisk on Wednesday.

The Copenhagen fire service, which sent around 100 firefighters to the building near the Novo Nordisk headquarters just outside the Danish capital, described the fire as "massive", local media reported.

The blaze started in a garbage truck before spreading to a building, BT newspaper reported.

Initially, there were no reports of casualties but the fire risked spreading to other buildings and motorists on a nearby highway were cautioned to slow down due to the smoke, BT reported.

It was the second time in less than a week that a blaze struck the pharmaceuticals giant.

On Thursday, 16 May, there was a fire in one of Novo Nordisk's buildings in Kalundborg where more than half of the world's insulin is produced. — Xinhua

Record 19.1 million intl passengers used Haneda airport in FY 2023

INTERNATIONAL flight passengers at Tokyo's Haneda airport totaled a record high of 19.1 million in fiscal 2023, government data showed Wednesday, with an increase in inbound tourist traffic following the relaxation of COVID-19 border measures contributing to the growth.

The figure marked a 2.8-fold increase from the previous fiscal year, topping the previous record of 18.2 million set in fiscal 2018, according to the transport ministry's East Japan Civil Aviation Bureau. Meanwhile, domestic flights at the airport rose around 16 per cent in fiscal 2023 to 61.8 million, the bureau said.

Located about 15 kilometres from central Tokyo, Haneda airport resumed hosting inter-

national flights in 2010 and has rapidly expanded services in the ensuing years.

It is now Japan's second busiest international airport after Narita International Airport,

located near Tokyo in neighboring Chiba Prefecture. Narita saw around 26 million international passengers in fiscal 2023, more than double the previous year. — Kyodo



Photo taken on 27 April 2024, shows an international departures lobby at Tokyo's Haneda airport. **PHOTO: KYODO**

ROLLING UPDATES: WORLD

Xi extends congratulations to Vietnam's new president

CHINESE President Xi Jinping on Wednesday congratulated To Lam on his assuming office as president of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam.

Xi pointed out that China and Vietnam are friendly socialist neighbours linked by mountains and rivers.

Xi also noted that during his state visit to Vietnam last year, he and Nguyen Phu Trong, general secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam Central Committee, jointly announced the building of a China-Vietnam community with a shared future that carries strategic significance, opening a new chapter in the relations between the two Parties and

Xi emphasized the close ties between China and Vietnam, highlighting their friendship as neighbouring socialist nations.



To Lam attends a swearing-in ceremony in Hanoi, Vietnam, 22 May 2024. To Lam, a member of the Politburo of the Communist Party of Vietnam, was elected as Vietnam's new president on Wednesday, local media reported. **PHOTO: VNA/HANDOUT VIA XINHUA**

two countries.

The Chinese leader said he is glad to see that various departments and localities of the two countries are stepping up efforts to build the China-Vietnam community with a shared future, and have made positive progress.

The Chinese president said he highly regards the development of China-Vietnam relations, and is ready to work with comrade president to maintain strategic communication, guide a substantial development in the building of the China-Vietnam community with a shared future, and deliver more benefits to the two peoples. — Xinhua

Huge crowds attend Iranian President Raisi's funeral procession in Tehran

IRANIAN President Ebrahim Raisi and members of his delegation, including Foreign Minister Hossein Amirabdollahian, died in a helicopter crash in northwestern Iran on 19 May.

Sputnik is live from Tehran as crowds gather for the funeral of President Ebrahim Raisi.

Iran's Supreme Leader

Ayatollah Ali Khamenei is expected to offer prayers for the late president following his death in a helicopter crash.

On 20 May, Iranian Vice-President Mohsen Mansouri confirmed media reports that Raisi and his delegation, including Foreign Minister Hossein Amirabdollahian, died in a helicopter crash in north-

western Iran.

Under the Iranian constitution, an early presidential election must be held within 50 days after the incumbent president is pronounced dead or incapacitated. Meanwhile, Raisi's powers have been transferred to the first vice president, Mohammad Mokher. — SPUTNIK



People attend a farewell ceremony held for Iran's late President Ebrahim Raisi, late Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian and others in Tehran, 21 May 2024. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

SUMMARIES: WORLD

Passengers from turbulence-hit plane reach Singapore on relief flight

MOST of the passengers onboard a Singapore Airlines flight that was hit by severe turbulence resulting in a passenger's death arrived in Singapore on Wednesday from Bangkok, where the plane had made an emergency landing the previous day.

A relief plane operated by the airline flew 131 passengers and 12 crew members to Singapore's Changi Airport in the morning, the airline said in a statement. Dozens of people had also been injured when turbulence hit flight SQ321 en route to the city-state from London.

Another 79 passengers and six crew members remained in Bangkok for medical care or to look after travel companions who were injured, the airline said.

The Boeing 777-300ER had a total of 211 passengers and 18 crew members when the incident occurred, it said.

Officials at Bangkok's Suvarnabhumi Airport earlier identified the fatality as a 73-year-old British man who suffered a heart attack. Seven other people sustained severe injuries. — Kyodo

Spain's FM announces definitive withdrawal of ambassador to Argentina

SPANISH Foreign Minister Jose Manuel Albares has announced the definitive withdrawal of the country's ambassador to Argentina, local media reported on Tuesday. The move comes in the wake of provocative comments made by Argentinian President Javier Milei about the Spanish President, Pedro Sanchez, and his wife.

The comments were made during a rally by the far-right Vox party in the Spanish capital Madrid on Sunday, and no apology has been made since.

In a press conference on Tuesday, Albares said that "the Government remains vigilant, the situation has not changed and therefore I announce that we are withdrawing our ambassador (Maria Jesus Alonso) in Buenos Aires." Alonso, who had been called for consultations on Sunday, "will definitely stay in Madrid and Argentina will continue without an ambassador", the minister said. — Xinhua

SPORTS

Myanmar, Japan sign MoU for youth and women's football development

THE Myanmar Football Federation (MFF) signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on the morning of 22 May in Nai, Japan to cooperate with the Japan Football Association (JFA), for the development of the youth and women's football plus the betterment of academy schools and youth team competitions.

The Myanmar Football Federation President U Zaw Zaw and Japan Football Association President Tsuneyasu Miyamoto signed the MoU.

The agreement provides that both

sides will maintain the cooperation in technical development between the two football federations, the improvement of the refereeing sector, women's football development, and youth development activities for an initial period of three years.

With the support of the Ayeyawady Foundation, the Myanmar youth U-12 team will go to compete in the U12 International Invitational Youth Tournament, where Barcelona, Juventus and Japan J League youth clubs will participate. — Ko Nyi Lay/KZL



Myanmar Football Federation President U Zaw Zaw and Japan Football Association President Tsuneyasu Miyamoto are seen holding the MoU for Myanmar's football development. **PHOTO: MFF**

Para athletics: German "blade jumper" Rehm snags 7th world title



The "blade jumper", who previously clinched gold at the Tokyo 2021 Paralympics and holds the current world record, successfully defended his title by winning the gold medal in the men's long jump T64 final in the western Japanese city.

Germany's Markus Rehm soars en route to winning the men's long jump T64 gold medal at the World Para Athletics Championships at Kobe Universiade Memorial Stadium on 22 May 2024. **PHOTO: KYODO**

GERMAN long jump champion Markus Rehm comfortably secured his seventh consecutive world title Wednesday at the World Para Athletics Championships in Kobe.

The "blade jumper" who took gold at the Tokyo 2021 Paralympics and current world record holder successfully defended his title, edging Americans Derek Loccident and Trenten Merrill, respectively, to win the gold medal in the men's long jump T64 final in the western Japan city by 61 centimeters.

He achieved a season-best 8.30 metres at Kobe Universiade Memorial Stadium, coming slightly short of the record 8.72 he landed in Germany just over a year ago.

"I'm sure we will come even closer...towards Paris, and hope we see even bigger jumps there," he said, while entertaining the idea of leaping beyond 9 meters in the French capital.

The 35-year-old acknowledged that among his opponents, Loccident especially was a "huge talent", adding he could feel the competition was getting

"closer and closer" as the world's top athletes set their sights on August's Paris Paralympics.

He also emphasized that better competition was beneficial for the sport in general, saying he shared tips and techniques with his peers to improve the quality of para long jump and show fans it could be on par with its Olympic counterpart.

"The further we jump, the better is the advertisement for our sport," he said. "If you want to see real good jumps... you don't have to only go to the Olympics". — Kyodo

Ronaldo set to spearhead attack as Portugal announce squad for Euro 2024

ICONIC forward Cristiano Ronaldo has been named in Portugal's 26-player squad for the upcoming Euro 2024 in Germany.

The marquee event will kick off on 15 June and the 39-year-old will look to secure his second Euro title with Portugal.



At 39 years old, Ronaldo aims to add to his illustrious career by clinching his second Euro title with Portugal, with the marquee event set to kick off on 15 June. **PHOTO: ANI**

Along with England and France, Portugal will be one of the favourites to lift the title on the back of their strong pool of players. In the last edition, Portugal crashed out of the Round of 16 following their defeat to Belgium. They will be aiming for a better performance in the upcoming edition of the tournament.

In goalkeepers, Portugal have a strong set of players to pick from. Diego Costa has been one of the shot-stoppers in front of the goal, but Rui Patricio also holds enough potential to do the job for Portugal.

In the list of defenders, Ruben Dias, Joao Cancelo, Pepe and Diogo Dalot form a formidable defensive pair. Coming to midfielders, Bruno Fernandes, Joao Palhinha and Ruben Neves boast a strong pair in the middle of the field for Portugal.

While on the attacking front, Ronaldo, Diogo Jota, Rafael Leao and Joao Felix pose a lot of threat in front of the goal for the Roberto Martinez side. — ANI



WORLD

WOMEN'S CRUCIAL ROLE IN TEA INDUSTRY

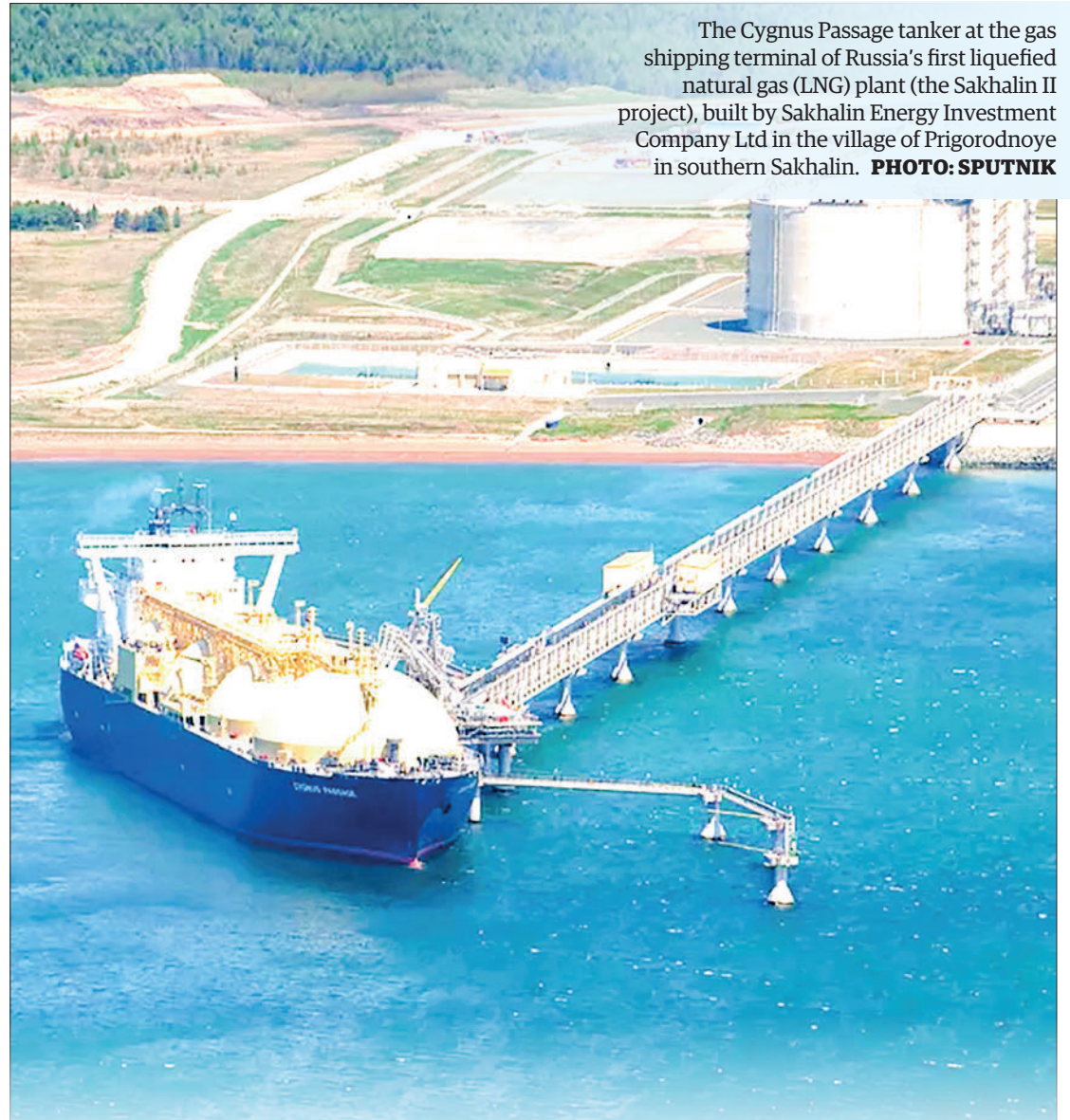
Intl Tea Day marked in Europe with tea art displays, tea tastings

THE 2024 International Tea Day was marked in Rome and Belgrade on Tuesday with tea art performances, diverse tea tastings and immersive learning programmes about tea culture.

The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) hosted an event at its headquarters in Italy's capital Rome, focusing on the crucial role women played in the tea industry and approaches to help them overcome the challenges they face.

"Women play a crucial role in the tea industry, substantially contributing to its sustainability, productivity and community development," FAO Director-General Qu Dongyu said in his opening speech, adding that their contributions underpin the industry's economic viability, social fabric and sustainable development.

Tea cultivation not only contributes to the agricultural economy but promotes sustainable farming practices and environmental conservation as well, Qu noted. — Xinhua



The Cygnus Passage tanker at the gas shipping terminal of Russia's first liquefied natural gas (LNG) plant (the Sakhalin II project), built by Sakhalin Energy Investment Company Ltd in the village of Prigorodnoye in southern Sakhalin. PHOTO: SPUTNIK

Intl tourism reaches 97% of pre-COVID levels in first quarter of 2024

INTERNATIONAL tourist arrivals surged to 97 per cent of pre-pandemic levels in the first quarter of 2024, with projections indicating that numbers are expected to exceed those of 2019 over the rest of the year; the UN Tourism reported on Tuesday.

The Madrid-based organization's report shows that 285 million tourists made international trips between January and March, marking an increase of around 20 per cent compared to the same period in 2023. UN Tourism anticipates a "full recovery of international tourism" or the rest of the year,

"with arrivals growing two per cent above 2019 levels."

International arrivals in the Asia and Pacific region saw a significant rise, from 65 per cent of 2019 levels in the first quarter of 2023 to 82 per cent in the first three months of this year.

There was also a strong growth in the Middle East where international tourism was 36 per cent higher than pre-pandemic levels while Europe received 120 million international tourists, also representing one per cent rise from that of 2019. — Xinhua



Tourists take a selfie at Phi Phi Islands national park in Krabi, Thailand, 16 February 2023. PHOTO: WANG TENG

Moscow confident in plenty of demand for Russian LNG, even if EU halts imports

Studennikov noted the EU's previous restrictions on Russian pipeline gas imports and highlighted the EU's growing dependence on US LNG amidst its energy crisis.

IF the European Union bans the import of Russian liquefied natural gas (LNG) in one of its sanctions packages, Russia will not be left without buyers in other parts of the world, as the demand for energy resources is only growing, Director of First European Department of the Russian Foreign Ministry Artyom Studennikov said.

"We will not remain without customers. The interesting thing about the LNG market, as it is known, is its global nature, liquefied gas can 'travel' around the world. The demand for it is steadily growing, and wide horizons are opening up here. But any attempts by the West to interfere with our trade with the countries of the world majority are obviously doomed to fail," Studennikov told Sputnik.

The European Union had previously imposed restrictions on the import of pipeline gas from Russia, the diplomat recalled.

"The European Union has plunged into an energy crisis, energy prices have been breaking records for many months. Over the past two years, the EU countries have tried to stabilize their energy market. But at what cost? They became heavily dependent on US LNG, becoming its largest importer," Studennikov said.

The "green" policy of the European Union is unlikely to be successful if Brussels decides to ban the import of Russian uranium products, Studennikov said. "Without our uranium products, the 'green' growth so favoured by the EU is unlikely to have a chance of success. Of course, there is also the problem of ensuring the safety of those reactors that were developed specifically for Russian fuel," Studennikov said.

Brussels acted in a similar way when it wanted to harm Russia by banning the supply of pipeline gas, the diplomat added. — SPUTNIK