

The Global **NEW LIGHT** of MYANMAR

Four Objectives of the National Defence and Security Council

1. To steadfastly strive for emergence of political forces and the people’s representatives who can implement a genuine, disciplined multi-party democratic system while constantly emphasizing on the national interests of the State.
2. To persistently strive for promoting the socio-economic life of the people through the development of agro-based industries in improving the agricultural sector, the vital foundation of the economic growth of the State.
3. To put emphasis on enhancing the national education and health sectors for sustainable development of the State.
4. To implement multi-party democratic system, with the participation of the people, to ensure the success of multi-party democratic general election process and successfully moving towards with the multi-party democratic system aspired by the entire people.

Civil servants must be free from party politics

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing urged civil servants to serve their duties with a clear understanding of the distinction between political matters and state affairs.

Acting President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and Chairman of the State Security and Peace Commission Senior General Min Aung Hlaing delivered a speech at a meeting with departmental officials, town elders, and businesspersons of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME) from Pyay District at Thiri Khittaya Yadana City Hall in Pyay yesterday morning and discussed regional development measures.

Speaking at the meeting, the Senior General emphasized that civil servants must be free from party politics and carry out their duties with a clear understanding of the distinction between political matters and state affairs.

He said everyone should work together to contribute to successful conducting the multiparty democratic general election. Efforts are being made to allow all

Efforts are being made to help all eligible voters cast their votes and to prevent any irregularities of voting.



Acting President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and State Security and Peace Commission Chairman Senior General Min Aung Hlaing views the products manufactured by MSME businesses and agricultural machinery at the Thiri Khittaya Yadana City Hall in Pyay yesterday.

Salient points in the speech delivered by the Senior General at the meeting with Pyay residents

1. If people trust the multiparty democratic system promoted by the State, then all those on the voter list should exercise their right to vote.
2. Not only the responsible organizations but also the entire public must participate collectively in anti-drug initiatives.
3. Everyone must work together to uphold disciplines for the unity and discipline of the entire nation.
4. MSME businesses should be developed using locally produced agricultural products to manufacture high-quality, value-added goods.

eligible voters to cast their votes and to prevent any irregularities of voting.

He added that if people trust the multiparty democratic system promoted by the State, then all those on the voter list should exercise their right to vote.

The Senior General unveiled that the State is actively conducting drug eradication operations. However, for these efforts to be successful, not only the responsible organizations but also the entire public must participate collectively in anti-drug initiatives.

He continued that everyone must work together to uphold unity and discipline for the entire nation. Only then

can a well-ordered, clean, and beautiful region, capital, and nation be established and maintained.

He highlighted that the tourism sector includes accommodation, transport, services, and the sale of souvenirs. Among domestic travel, religious pilgrimages are the most common. He added that residents can attract more tourists by developing their regions, maintaining cleanliness and beauty, and providing good services.

The Senior General underscored that visitors to the region should be able to enjoy and explore its notable sites and natural beauty with peace of mind and

well-being. Therefore, every individual and household should maintain a clean and orderly environment. Likewise, officials in charge of departments should ensure the proper maintenance of roads, bridges, and buildings under their responsibility, thereby contributing to the region’s cleanliness and beauty.

He noted that the development of the tourism industry will lead to increased domestic travel spending, generate non-trade income, boost the sale of products, and expand service-related activities. In turn, this will contribute to the socio-economic development of both the region and the nation.

NATIONAL



2025 MULTIPARTY DEMOCRACY GENERAL ELECTION

- Domestic election observers who wish to monitor the multiparty democratic general election, which will begin in phases on 28 December 2025, may apply for election observation permits at the Union Election Commission (UEC), as well as the relevant Region/State, District, and Township Election Subcommissions from today until 5 December 2025.
- The Union Election Commission announced on 16 September 2025 that domestic election observers must follow the Code of Conduct for Observers, issued under Notification 68/2025, and adhere to the procedures set out for their observation activities under Notification 69/2025. These notifications are available for viewing and can be downloaded from the Union Election Commission's official website <https://www.uec.gov.mm>.
- The Union Election Commission has also announced that international election observers will be allowed to monitor the multiparty democratic general election. Invitations will be extended directly to representatives of relevant countries and international organizations. In addition, through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, invitations will be sent to representatives of foreign embassies, consulates, and permanent missions that maintain diplomatic relations with the Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

Union Election Commission



- Let us encourage production for prosperity of the Nation.
- Let us ensure education sector for the development of the Nation.
- Let us protect our environment for the prosperity of the Nation.

Four National Objectives for 78th Independence Day 2025

- To safeguard the non-disintegration of the Union, non-disintegration of national solidarity and perpetuation of sovereignty by all citizens, as they are the most essential and suitable national objectives and national duties
- To strive forward for national unity and Union peace to implement sustainable and balanced development
- To establish a genuine, disciplined democratic system completely by exercising the freedom and justice in accordance with the laws and regulations
- To advance other economic sectors and promote MSMEs based on regional products

MPT promotes active lifestyle with walking and Zumba activities at Kandawgyi Park

MPT organized a group walking programme and a Zumba fitness activity involving employees and their family members at Kandawgyi Park in Yangon yesterday morning, as part of its December initiative to promote employees' physical fitness and an active lifestyle.

In the modern technological era, increased reliance on electronic devices has reduced levels of physical activity, adversely affecting people's health and life expectancy. Walking helps address physical inactivity that can impact both community and family life. It strengthens the cardiovascular system, improves bone strength and effectively reduces stress. Zumba training, meanwhile, provides an intensive full-body workout that enhances balance, flexibility and overall physical fitness. Walking also improves blood circulation, helps prevent obesity and supports heart health. For these reasons, MPT employees regularly take part in walking,



MPT employees and their family members take part in the 'TeamFit: Unite and Move' initiative organized by MPT yesterday. **PHOTO: KO LWIN**

Zumba and other health-related activities.

Mr Hiroyuki Okai, from the Operations Department of MPTJO, said: "We are working to boost employee motivation and support physical fitness. To help employees restore their energy and remain active, we continue to implement programmes such as walking, Zumba, yoga and futsal competitions under the 'TeamFit: Unite and Move' initiative. We would like to express our sincere appreciation to

employees nationwide for their enthusiastic participation".

MPT launched the 'TeamFit: Unite and Move' programme in 2023, which includes December walking activities, Zumba fitness sessions, yoga health activities and futsal tournaments. The programme aims to encourage employees to engage in regular physical activity, foster strong morale, and further enhance both physical and mental well-being, thereby supporting overall employee fitness. — Oktha/KZL

Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 7 pm, Sunday 21 December 2025)

BAY IN FERENCE: Weather is generally fair over the North Andaman Sea, partly cloudy to cloudy over the South Bay and a few cloud over the South Andaman Sea and elsewhere over the Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL NOON OF 22 December 2025: Weather will be generally fair in Rakhine and northern Shan states and partly cloudy in the remaining regions and states.

STATE OF THE SEA: Sea will be slight to moderate in the Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about 3-5 feet off and along the Myanmar Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Likelihood of slight decrease of night temperatures in Kayah and Shan states.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 22 December 2025: Partly cloudy.

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 22 December 2025: Partly cloudy.

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 22 December 2025: Partly cloudy. — DMH

NATIONAL

Call for Unity, Steadfastness
Amid Attempts To Divide

All citizens must stand orderly and united through thick and thin. We must never lose sight of our main goal and persevere it without deviation regardless of any attempt by the detractors to divide, incite and provoke us.

(Excerpt from the speech delivered by General Aung San at 7:40 pm on 1 January 1947)



Chairman of the State Security and Peace Commission Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing yesterday morning met Tatmadaw members and families at Mya Ayeya Hall in Pyay Station under the Southern Command.

At the meeting, the Senior General delivered a speech, saying that it must always remain “fit for fight” in order for the Tatmadaw to serve its national defence duties.

He stressed that every Tatmadaw member must maintain good health and physical strength. Therefore, daily physical fitness activities must be regularly practised.

He spotted that the Tatmadaw is the most steadfast institution ensuring the State’s continued existence and must carry out national defence responsibilities hand in hand with the people. Therefore, Tatmadaw members should live and act in unity with the people.

He noted that courage is essential in combat. Tatmadaw members must apply the military skills they have been



Chairman of the State Security and Peace Commission Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing delivers the speech at the meeting with officers, other ranks, and family members of the Pyay Station in Pyay yesterday.

Tatmadaw members should live and
act in unity with the people

Tatmadaw is the most steadfast institution ensuring the State’s continued existence and must carry out national defence responsibilities hand in hand with the people.

Salient points in the speech delivered by the Senior General at the meeting with Tatmadaw members and families

1. Just as the Tatmadaw provides support for soldiers’ welfare, each individual must also manage their own income and expenses in a balanced and responsible manner.
2. Tatmadaw members must apply the military skills they have been trained in and use them effectively on the battlefield with bravery in order to fight successfully.
3. It must always remain “fit for fight” for the Tatmadaw to serve its national defence duties.

trained in and use them effectively on the battlefield with bravery in order to fight successfully.

Regarding welfare and well-being, he said that just as the Tatmadaw provides support for soldiers’ welfare, each individual must also manage their own income and expenses in a balanced and responsible manner.

The Senior General underlined that knowledge makes a good person, and skills make a capable person, emphasizing that formal education is nec-

essary to develop knowledge. Efforts must be made to enhance knowledge, skills, and educational attainment, as education elevates an individual’s life. Therefore, they should regularly study books and literature that provide knowledge and stimulate thinking.

The Senior General emphasized that a multiparty democratic general election will be held in the near future. In voting, it is important to choose and support candidates who can respect and uphold their responsibilities, genuinely

serve the interests of their region and the nation, participate effectively in legislative work, and work together with the Tatmadaw to promote the country’s welfare.

He pledged that after the election, the government that emerges will be entrusted with the nation’s responsibilities. Therefore, everyone should collectively work to ensure the successful conduct of a free and fair multiparty democratic general election.

SEE PAGE 4

NATIONAL

Residents Urged to Prioritize Public Safety Amid Armed Terrorist Threats

ARMED terrorists have been launching attacks by using residential homes and administrative buildings in towns and villages as cover, where they have forcibly settled. They aim to shield themselves from Tatmadaw counterattacks while also persuading temporarily displaced persons to return to their native areas and recruiting new members. That enables terrorists to use civilians as human shields. Tatmadaw is committed to safeguarding the sovereignty of the State and will respond to these threats based on intelligence and prevailing conditions. Therefore, residents in areas where terrorists have taken control must prioritize their safety and protect themselves from being exploited by these groups.

(An excerpt from guidance given by Chairman of the State Administration Council, Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing to Shan State cabinet members and state-level departmental officials on 3 September 2024)

Civil servants must be free from party politics

FROM PAGE 1

He said that if agricultural targets are fully met, an additional income of approximately US\$8 billion could be generated. Furthermore, the development of domestic manufacturing based on agricultural and livestock products will strengthen the national economy and reduce the reliance on imported goods.

The Senior General underlined that domestic oil sufficiency within Pyay District is around 50 per cent. So, efforts should be made to further improve the production of oil crops.

He urged that it is necessary to strive to further increase the production of agricultural and livestock products within the district and the Bago Region. Likewise, in manufacturing MSME products, measures should be taken to ensure high-quality materials and to

carry out advanced packaging systems.

The Senior General said that MSME businesses should be developed using locally produced agricultural products to manufacture high-quality, value-added goods.

He called for cultivation of cotton in the Bago Region, urging efforts should be made to produce high-quality yarn and textiles.

At the meeting, the Pyay District Administrator reported on accomplishment over the guidance of the Head of State, beautifying Pyay, efforts to develop MSME businesses, progress of agriculture and livestock activities, sales of MSME products, improvement of education sector in the district, preparations to hold the multi-party democratic general election and requirements of local transport facilities.

Bago Region Chief Minister

U Myo Swe Win also presented reports on achieving target production of crops in Pyay District, efforts to meet the target production of sesame, test cultivation of Pawsan paddy strain, edible oil, meat, egg and milk security, fish farming process and requirements of appointment for educational staff.

Town elders also requested the Senior General to upgrade rail transport, disburse more loans for development of MSME businesses, eradicate narcotic drugs in Pyay, adopt the policies for edible oil production, and upgrade toilets for development of domestic tourism services.

Union Ministers Lt-Gen Tun Tun Naung, U Tin Oo Lwin, U Min Naung and U Ko Ko Lwin discussed efforts to uphold law enforcement measures for peace and stability across the nation, declining the criminal cases yearly from 2021, nationwide efforts for drug

eradication and needs of public participation, arrangements for the coming general election, participation of people in security measures, development of Sri Ksetra ancient cultural region, efforts for development of tourism sector, arrangements to dredge the moats, upgrading of oil mills, disbursement of loans under the prescribed disciplines, production of oil and natural gas in Pyay region and Pyay Taungtan oil field,

The Senior General viewed round te products manufactured by MSME businesses and agricultural machinery displayed at the hall and gave necessary guidance.

Also, present at the meeting were Secretary of the Commission General Ye Win Oo, senior Tatmadaw officers from the Office of the Commander-in-Chief, and the commander of Southern Command.

The Senior General, his

wife and party visited the Bawbawgyi Pagoda, the historic one built by King Duttabaung, in southwest of ancient Sri Ksetra city. Officials of the Department of Archaeology and National Museum reported on preservation of the pagoda in an original state.

The Senior General gave guidance that ancient heritage sites, pagodas, stupas, and buildings are invaluable legacies, and therefore must be systematically preserved and maintained for the long term. The growth of small trees on the main structure of the pagoda could harm its long-term stability, so they must be regularly removed.

The Senior General and his wife offered flowers, water and oil light to the pagoda and paid homage, leaving instructions on maintenance of the pagoda for its long-term existence. — MNA/TTA

Tatmadaw members should live and act in unity ...

FROM PAGE 3

Also, present at the meeting were Daw Kyu Kyu Hla, the wife of the Senior General; Secretary of the Commission General Ye Win Oo and his wife, Commander-in-Chief (Navy) Admiral Htein Win and his wife, Commander-in-Chief (Air) General Tun Aung, senior Tatmadaw officers from the Office of the Command-

er-in-Chief and their wives, and the commander of Southern Command.

The Senior General presented foodstuffs for officers, other ranks and families of the station through the station commander while the wife of the Senior General gave financial aid for the station's maternal and child welfare association to the wife of the station commander.

At the local Tatmadaw hospital, the Senior General comforted officers, other ranks and People's Military Servants receiving medical treatments for injuries sustained in serving the State defence and security duties and asked about incidents of their injuries and healing the injuries individually and attended to their needs. He also asked about the requirements of

the hospital and fulfilled the needs.

The wife of the Senior General also comforted families of Tatmadaw members receiving medical treatments at the female medical ward and presented foodstuffs.

The Senior General and party viewed round the Pyay Station in a motorcade. — MNA/TTA

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NATIONAL

General Aung San Declares Firm Stand Against Election Disruption

“Our Government shall not permit any disruption of the forthcoming election. The electoral process shall remain free and fair, and no interference shall be exercised upon those who participate in it. Yet, let it be firmly declared that any attempt to disturb or sabotage the election shall be met with the full weight of authority”.

(An excerpt from the radio address regarding the election, delivered by General Aung San on 13 March 1947)



Artistes perform for residents of Nawngkhio and Tatmadaw members in PyinOoLwin

UNION Minister for Information U Maung Maung Ohn, Chairman of the Working Committee on Information and Development of a Resilient and Strong Social Community, along with film and music artistes, performed yesterday for the people of Nawngkhio Township, Shan State (North), as well as for Tatmadaw members and their families in the PyinOoLwin Station.

In the morning, they left Kyaukme and went to the cloud sea at Nawngkhio, 16 miles from Nawngkhio. Seven resorts have been prepared at the Nawngkhio scenic area for domestic and international tourists to stay, relax, and enjoy clean, fresh food, and tourists are now starting to arrive.

Then, the meeting on information and the development of a resilient and strong social community was held at a gymnasium in Nawngkhio, where the video clip “Moving Forward to the Goal” premiered.

In his speech, Union Minister U Maung Maung Ohn ex-



This photo shows the venue packed with local spectators at an entertainment programme in Nawngkhio yesterday, attended by Union Minister U Maung Maung Ohn.

pressed special gratitude to the Tatmadaw members who sacrificed their lives to regain control of the townships in Shan State (North), thanked the public for working with departmental staff to restore towns and villages to normalcy, and urged everyone to continue collaborating and to vote for those who can bring a better future to Nawngkhio Township in the upcoming

multiparty democratic general election.

The Union minister then presented food items donated by the Ministry of Information to frontline Tatmadaw members, as well as 45 Buddha images, 30 sets of MRTV DTH satellites receivers with accessories, and 20 MRTV DVB-T2 set-top boxes to Nawngkhio Station and government departments. Officials

from Nawngkhio then presented honorariums to the artistes who will perform.

The entertainment programme continued with performances by film actors Su Pan Htwa, Pwint, Saung Yoon San, Sithu Win, Than Tha Moe Theint, Sithwe, Htet Inzali, Poe Phyu Phyu, and Nway Oo Thakin, as well as MRTV vocalists Tra Ru Aung, Saw Daniel, Saw

Raster, One Kay Zin, Phu Akri Saung, Myat Su Chel, Ingyin Naing Oo, May Thu Myo, La Wun May, and Khatta, while the audience happily sang and danced along.

In the evening, they arrived in PyinOoLwin Township and performed at Anawrahta Hall of the Defence Services Academy for Tatmadaw members and their families from the DSA, the Defence Services Technological Academy, and the PyinOoLwin Station. First, they presented the video clips “Overcoming the Severe Earthquake and Rebuilding a Better Future” and “Moving Forward to the Goal”.

Then, the Union minister delivered a speech and donated 100 MRTV DTH sets, 100 MRTV DVB-T2 set-top boxes, and books and publications to the PyinOoLwin Station. The MRTV band, together with staff singers and renowned national artistes, performed songs that were enjoyed by cadets, Tatmadaw members from the PyinOoLwin Station, and their families. — MNA/TH

Film actor family donates funds for renovation and charity in Sittway

THE family of Academy Award winner Khant Si Thu donated funds for the comprehensive renovation of the Aungsakkyia Muni Ordination Hall and the Atulamarazein Pylon Chantha Pagoda at Lawkananda Pagoda in Sittway Township, Rakhine State. The donation ceremony was held at Lawkananda Pagoda on 20 December, according to information provided by Acade-

my Award winner Khant Si Thu. In addition, the actor family donated funds to the Sittway Home for the Aged, the Khant Library, the Sittway City bicentennial commemorative event, and the Maha Pyinnya Kyaw Library in Sittway. They also donated rice, clothing and essential supplies for displaced people in Sittway, as well as cash and clothing to the ABC Foundation,

which cares for children who are orphaned and have no surviving relatives.

The actor said, “We donated funds for the comprehensive renovation of the ordination hall and the Atulamarazein Pylon Chantha Pagoda at Lawkananda Pagoda in Sittway, as well as to the Sittway Home for the Aged, and libraries, Basic Education High School No 4 in Sittway,



Some images of the donations made by the family of Academy Award winner Khant Si Thu.

and the Sittway City bicentennial commemoration. We also donated cash and clothing to the ABC Foundation, which looks after orphans, and provided rice,

clothing and essential items for displaced people in Sittway. The total value of the donations amounted to K35 million”. — ASH/KZL

NATIONAL

Myawady sees demolition of 485 more online scam hub buildings

THE government continues to conduct joint operations in the Shwe Kokko and the KK Park areas, where suspects commit telecom fraud and online gambling activities. The combined teams comprising security personnel and administrative bodies are involved in these operations, which include entering the areas, dismantling and removing illegal buildings, and taking further action in accordance with the law.

Yesterday, the authorities demolished three four-storey illegal buildings in Section 3 of KK Park, and a total of 485 buildings out of 635 illegal buildings have so far been demolished in the KK Park area.

The combined team conducted searching operations in Myawady and its vicinity area starting 8 December, and found further 12 illegal buildings used for online gambling and sealed four buildings among them yesterday.



This map shows ongoing demolition measures in the KK Park Section 3.

To prevent future reuse of the materials in online scams and gambling activities in KK Park and Shwe Kokko areas, the seized materials were inciner-

ated systematically.

The government considers the eradication of telecom fraud and online gambling crimes as a national responsibility and, to ensure that such activities can

no longer operate within Myanmar, will continue its efforts in coordination not only with domestic forces but also with the governments of neighbouring countries. — MNA/KZL



Images depict scam related materials and items being razed by fire in Shwe Kokko areas in Myawady Township, Kayin State.



These photos reveal the illegally built two-storey flats destroyed in the KK Park Section 3, Myawady Township, Kayin State.



Illegal goods, vehicles and minerals seized nationwide

UNDER the supervision of the Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee, relevant departments are taking effective action in accordance with the law to prevent and suppress illegal trade across the country.

In Sagaing Region, a combined inspection team under the management of the Illegal Trade Eradication Task Force conducted inspections on 9 December. The team seized foodstuff valued at K2.5 million near Shwe Lay Kyun Dhamma Hall in Seinkon Ward, Sagaing Township, and another foodstuff valued at K4.4 million at the Yadanabon Bridge combined checkpoint. The total estimated value of the seized goods amounted to K6.9 million, and authorities are taking action under the Export and Import Law.

In Taninthayi Region, inspections on 27 November in Bokpyin Township led to the

seizure of 15,750 viss of unrefined tin ore valued at K1,260 million, along with two Hyundai buses used to transport the minerals, valued at K100 million, under the Myanmar Mines Law. Further inspections on 1 December in Myeik and Kawthoung townships resulted in the seizure of one unregistered motor vehicle and one unregistered motorcycle valued at K12.1 million under the Export and Import Law. The total estimated value of these seizures reached K1,372.1 million.

In Bago Region, authorities seized one unregistered motor vehicle valued at K60 million in Thayawady Township on 8 December and are taking legal action under the Export and Import Law.

In Mon State, inspections conducted on 2 and 6 December across Mawlamyine, Bilin, Paung, Kyaikmaraw and Thaton townships resulted in the

seizure of a wide range of undocumented consumer goods, foodstuffs, industrial materials and electrical appliances transported by multiple vehicles. Authorities also seized one unregistered motor vehicle. The total estimated value of the seized items in Mon State amounted to K443.56 million, and action is underway under the Export and Import Law.

Separately, under the management of the Customs Department, inspections on 8 and 9 December led to the seizure of undocumented consumer goods at the Myanma Post in Mayangon Township and at Yangon International Airport cargo terminal. The total estimated value of these seizures was K30.05 million, and cases have been opened in line with customs procedures.

Between 27 November and 9 December 2025, authorities seized a total of 28 cases nation-

wide, with an estimated value of K1,912.61 million.

Further inspections on 9 and 10 December in Sagaing Township resulted in the seizure of undocumented consumer goods, foodstuffs and unregistered vehicles valued at K36.15 million.

In Magway Region, inspections on 9 December in Minbu Township along the Ayeyawady River led to the seizure of illegal crude oil mixed with water, along with a motorized wooden boat, valued at K2.315 million, under the Public Property Protection Act. Authorities also seized one unregistered motorcycle in Ngape Township.

In Mandalay Region, inspections on 8 and 9 December across several townships resulted in the seizure of 14 unregistered motorcycles and four unregistered motor vehicles, with a total estimated value of K36.03 million.

In Kachin State, authorities seized undocumented industrial materials valued at K49.55 million from a warehouse in Myitkyina Township on 9 December, and opened a case under customs procedures.

Further seizures were reported in Bago, Yangon, Magway, Mandalay Region and Mon State, including illegal timber, river sand and gravel extraction vessels, undocumented electrical appliances, industrial goods, foodstuffs and unregistered vehicles. Notably, authorities seized 10 unregistered vessels involved in illegal river stone extraction in Magway Region, with an estimated value of K2,410 million, under the Conservation of Water Resources and Rivers Law.

Between 3 and 11 December 2025, a further 43 cases were seized nationwide, with a combined estimated value of K4,033.27 million. — MNA/KZL

NCA signing aims to end armed conflicts, build durable peace, and establish ethnic rights democracy

❖ “The purpose of signing the NCA is to cease nationwide armed conflicts, paving the way for durable and stable peace, as well as ensuring the rights of ethnic groups and advancing democracy.”

(An excerpt from the speech delivered by Acting President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, Chairman of the State Security and Peace Commission, Chairman of the National Solidarity and Peacemaking Central Committee, Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services, Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at the ceremony to mark the 10th Anniversary of the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement-NCA on 15 October 2025)

Shwe Padauk Fish Market distributes about 300,000 viss of freshwater fish daily

AN average of 300,000 viss of freshwater fish is processed daily at Shwe Padauk Fish Market in Hline Township, Yangon, which mainly distributes aquatic products to townships in Yangon, regions, and states, according to the Shwe Padauk Fish Market Development Committee.

To supply freshwater products to approximately seven million people in the Yangon Region and to people in other regions, Shwe Padauk Fish Market in Hline Township and the Kyimyindine Baho Sanpya Fish Market distribute aquatic products daily. This winter, Shwe Padauk Fish Market is handling about 300,000 viss of freshwater products and 150,000 viss of saltwater products per day.

“In recent months, the inflow of freshwater products had been low, but since early November, imports have stabilized. This month, inflows have reached nearly 250,000 to 300,000 viss per day. As it is the season, fish farms are supplying more fish, and a steady inflow is expected to continue until April. After Yangon, freshwa-



A vender sells rohu fish at the Shwe Padauk fish market in Hline, Yangon. PHOTOS: ZWE MARN

ter fish products are distributed to Pathein, Mandalay, Nay Pyi Taw, Sagaing, Monywa, Kalay, Mawlamyine, and Myawady. Compared with the rainy season, prices are dull slightly, but trade has been good. Problems with selling goods under credit systems arise only when supplies are high, especially for companies. If there is a steady demand for Rohu from Bangladesh, which consumes more Rohu than the regular domestic

market, the farmed fish market would improve, and economic activity would become more efficient. The raw materials are already available in the country,” said U Maung Naing, Secretary of the Shwe Padauk Fish Market Development Committee.

Fish from the Ayeyawady, Yangon, and Bago Regions are mainly exported to major markets such as Bangladesh, UAE, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar, in addition to the two major domestic

markets. In Bangladesh, the fish are processed and packaged by buyers before being exported to other countries. According to freshwater and saltwater fish farmers, the ability to export fish products directly from the country of production would provide livestock farmers and entrepreneurs with more business opportunities.

Shwe Padauk Fish Market receives about 30 types of freshwater products and 15 types of

saltwater products, including farmed fish such as Rohu, Pangasius catfish, Catla, Pomfret, tilapia, and wild-caught fish from rivers and streams such as Stinging catfish, Asian walking catfish, Climbing perch, Common snakehead, Spiny eel, and India gagata. Some freshwater products are supplied to the Kyimyindine Baho Sanpya Fish Market, while various saltwater products arrive at the market port from the Ayeyawady, Yangon, Bago, and Taninthayi regions, as well as Mon State. These two fish markets export fish products to the mountainous regions, as well as central and lower Myanmar, and Rohu to Bangladesh.

Shwe Padauk Fish Market, which supports the daily seafood needs of Yangon and plays a key role in the country’s seafood trade, is open every day from 3 am to 5 pm. It comprises 444 shops, and more than 90 stalls for hawkers at seven complexes across an area of 8.172 acres, and is bustling with seafood buyers, distributors, trucks, and fish-carrying vessels. — Thitsa (MNA)/TH

Free Zoom session to guide on living and working in Germany

FOR those who are interested in working and learning vocational training in Germany, the Living and Working in Germany Advisory Service of the Goethe-Institut Myanmar will host a free Zoom session.

Professionals from medical, engineering, IT and other fields are welcome to ask

questions about the process required for working in Germany as skilled employees. The Zoom meeting has been scheduled from 5:30 pm to 7 pm on 22 December, and advisor Daw Kaung Thet Su Aung will host. Registrations are welcome at amif-yangon@goethe.de.

The programme has re-

ceived a lot of attention, so early registration is required, and a reply will be sent only to eligible persons by mail. — MT/ZS

This image shows an invitation poster for the “Living and Working in Germany” online session.



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Raise the reading habit of the people to uplift their capabilities

READING is one of the best ways for citizens to improve their capabilities in a developing country like Myanmar. The knowledge and perspectives gained from reading enhance people's ability to think and make decisions, helping them improve their capabilities and ensuring that their actions become more effective and beneficial for relevant societies.

Encouraging the habit of reading is a responsibility not only for relevant officials but also for every individual. However, the knowledge and methods learned from reading should not be copied directly into one's life or relevant communities. Such knowledge may be applied when circumstances are appropriate, but it should not be forced or used rigidly in situations where it does not fit.

Through literature, history, the arts, philosophy, and religious writings, readers can explore the breadth of human experience, understanding the struggles, achievements, and wisdom of generations past. Each text opens doors to new ideas, cultures, and ways of thinking, allowing the mind to stretch beyond its immediate environment. As a result, one cultivates empathy, critical thinking, and creativity, enriching both personal development and the ability to contribute meaningfully to society.

As a person's knowledge and thinking skills develop, they become more capable of making decisions and taking actions that positively impact those around them. While scholars may earn recognition for their learning and virtue, the deepest reward of reading is the growth it brings to the individual. Except for reading, perspectives and insights cannot be obtained from personal experience.

Through literature, history, the arts, philosophy, and religious writings, readers can explore the breadth of human experience, understanding the struggles, achievements, and wisdom of generations past. Each text opens doors to new ideas, cultures, and ways of thinking, allowing the mind to stretch beyond its immediate environment. As a result, one cultivates empathy, critical thinking, and creativity, enriching both personal development and the ability to contribute meaningfully to society.

If, over a lifetime, one begins to recognize not only fleeting desires and superficial concerns but also gains insight into knowledge, its limits, and what cannot be known, and realizes that this understanding benefits one's life, then reading can be truly valuable and rewarding.

OUR car was scudding along the Yangon-Bago highway. Tall trees lining the road were swirling behind. I often espied vast stubble fields dotted with shabby huts or clusters of green trees. I looked over the fields as the villages were sheltered by leafy trees. The air was fresh from the cold of the night. As it was just about 8 am, the sun was at the today's palm height, shedding its orange-coloured rays over the world. Soon, we came to Hlegu. It was a prosperous town with tea shops, restaurants, offices, monasteries, meditation centres, schools, the Hlegu Education Degree College, etc. Its economy was bolstered by husbandry, agriculture and good transportation. At the toll-gate, I observed a long queue of trucks fully loaded with various commodities produced from different parts of the country, which were heading for Yangon. As the traffic was heavy, our car had to hug the road. Then we passed through Inntakaw. It was also a busy town with monasteries, the Inntakaw Buddhist College, meditation centres, tea shops, restaurants and factories. When we were out of Inntakaw, we saw the Manle Tawya Monastery ensconced amongst shady big trees and the Shwepyi Resort on the left of the road and some meditation centres and large stretches of forests on the right. We now and then found pagoda-crowned hills standing well back from the road. At about 9:30 am, our car got to the Tenth-mile Hill at the entrance to Bago.

I noticed that many monasteries, pagodas, meditation centres and other Buddhist institutes clustered around the Tenth-mile Hill. These Buddhist buildings, old and new, were tucked away amongst flowering shrub-beries, groves of bamboo plants and shady trees in the wide precincts. My mind was filled with serenity and peace by this quiet neighbourhood, and I was put under the spell of the beautiful landscape shining in the glow of the rising sun.

At the same time, I was reminded of the Buddha's brief stop at this place on the way to Thaton (Sudhamnavati) in the year 111 Maha Era mentioned in the Mon chronicles. The chronicles say that when the Buddha reached there, he saw a female Hamsa (Brahminy duck) with a male Hamsa on her back standing on a small island and that the Buddha prophesied his teachings (Sasana) would flourish at the city which would emerge after his demise at the place where the couple of Hamsas perched. I think Bago was, therefore, the earliest place the Buddha had visited in Myanmar and named 'Hamsavati (City of Brahminy Ducks)' after this traditional narrative.

To my knowledge, apart from Hamsavati, Bago bears two other names: Ussa and Pegu. U Mya, a former Director of the Archaeological Department, assumed that the word 'Ussa' was corrupted from 'Orissa', a region in the north-eastern part of India. During the Colonial Period, Bago was



The Shwemawdaw Pagoda, one of the famous pagodas in Myanmar.

A Visit to Bago

By Maung Maung Aye

called 'Pegu' by the British. Only after 1988, the name 'Pegu' was changed to 'Bago'. Historically, the First Hamsavati was founded by Prince Samala and Prince Vimala in about the 6th century AD and the Second Hamsavati by King Banya U in the 14th century AD. During the Toungoo Period, it was a thriving seaport town, a commercial hub busy with local

and European merchants. During the Colonial Period, it was a district-level town, the seat of a Deputy Commissioner.

A few minutes after passing the Tenth-mile Hill, we came to the entrance to Bago. I saw Bago University hidden among green, leafy trees on a vast estate on the right side of the road. It is known that it was upgraded from

a degree college to a university in 2011 and that its campus covers over 700 acres. A few minutes afterwards, I, on the left, found the archway to the Kyaikpwon Buddha image, one of the oldest Buddha images in Bago. It is said that this four-faced, seated Buddha image goes back to the 7th century AD and was built by King Migadippa and repaired by King

Dhammazedi in the 15th century AD, that it is 90 feet in height and that the images of the Kakusanda Buddha, the Konagamana Buddha, the Kassapa Buddha and the Gotama Buddha are erected back-to-back with their faces towards the four cardinal points.

Our bus proceeded along the road. At 10 am, we arrived at the foot of the Shwemawdaw Pagoda Hill. We ascended the hill by the flight of stairs leading to the pagoda platform. The Shwemawdaw Pagoda, the highest of all the pagodas in Myanmar, was glittering in the sun. We walked clockwise around the pagoda. The pagoda platform was packed with many pilgrims, some paying homage to the pagoda, some offering flowers and lighted candles to Buddha images and some telling rosary beads. At a certain place on the plinth of the pagoda, a model of the broken spire of the pagoda was found. It is said that it was made to commemorate the toppling down of the spire of the Shwemawdaw Pagoda due to a great earthquake, which occurred in 1970. The pagoda platform was surrounded by rest-houses, monastic buildings, spirit-shrines and pavilions. Legend has it that Shwemawdaw Pagoda was built with the enshrinement of the two hair relics of the Buddha brought from Majjhimadesa by the two merchant brothers named 'Mahasavaka' and 'Culasavaka', who were the natives of Zaungtu town.

At 10:30 am, we left the pagoda for the Shwethalyaung Reclining Buddha Image. After a

15-minute drive, we got to the Shwethalyaung Reclining Buddha Image. It was situated in a wide precinct on the Shwethalyaung Pagoda Road in Mazin Ward. It was housed in a large pavilion surmounted by a tiered roof. Behind the pavilion were rows of stalls selling foods, fruits, flowers, local products, Myanmar traditional handicrafts, etc. There were full of pilgrims not only in the pavilion housing the reclining Buddha image but also in the stalls. We bought some flowers and donated them to the reclining Buddha image and paid homage to it. This image measures 180 feet in length and 52 feet in height. It is said that it was built by King Migadippange in the 10th century AD and was renovated by King Tissa, King Banyar U, King Rajadhirat, Queen Shin Saw Bu and King Bayintnaung. As we became hungry, we ate lunch greedily at a stall behind the shrine hall.

At about noon, we departed from the Shwethalyaung Reclining Buddha Image. We called in on the Kalyani Ordination Hall located in vast precincts sheltered by large perennial trees on the same road. Some feet to the east of the ordination hall was found a shed which housed the Kalyani Stone Inscriptions, which were very important in the history of Buddhism of Myanmar. We found ten stone slabs on which the religious contributions of King Dhammazedi were engraved in Pali and Mon. It is learnt that when King Dhammazedi succeeded to the throne

of Hamsavati in 1472, he was aware that Buddhism was declining in Lower Myanmar; that he, therefore, dispatched some Mon monks to Sri Lanka and had them reordained on the Kalyani river there, that when they arrived back in Myanmar, King Dhammazedi endeavoured to purify and promote the declining teachings of the Buddha with the assistance of the monks who had been reordained in Sri Lanka. Then, King Dhammazedi had all his religious activities recorded on ten stone slabs in 1476, which were later known as the Kalyani Stone Inscriptions. To my relief, these valuable epigraphic documents were kept in good custody by the Department of Archaeology and National Museum. But I think responsible personnel should try to bring more public attention to this priceless cultural heritage.

Although we wanted to visit some more historical buildings and sites like the Kambojasadi Palace built by King Bayintnaung in 1553, the Hamsa Hill Pagoda, which was built to mark the perching of Hamsas (Brahminy ducks), the Mahazedi, a merit of King Bayintnaung, etc., we felt so tired due to the intense heat of the mid-day summery sun. So, we gave up our cherished desire of ransacking this ancient town for more ancient sites and buildings connected with legends and history and left Bago at 2 pm. But, to me, it was a worthwhile trip, for I got some knowledge on the history and Buddhism of Bago and was relaxed by the enchanting beauty on the way.

Choosing Ourselves One Less Spoon at a Time

By Laura Htet (UDE)

THESE days, when we scroll through social media or listen to conversations around us, one topic keeps coming back again and again: sugar. Some people talk about quitting it completely, some say they just want to reduce it, and others feel confused about whether it really makes a difference. What most of

us agree on, though, is one simple idea: anything taken too much can be harmful. Sugar is not the enemy, but too much sugar quietly becomes a problem before we even realize it.

Many of us grow up with sugar being part of comfort and celebration. Sweet tea in the morning, instant coffee during busy work

hours, a cold soft drink on a hot day, or a small dessert to end the evening. These habits feel normal, even harmless. But over time, sugar stops being just a treat and starts becoming part of our daily routine. When that happens, our body begins to react in ways that are easy to ignore at first.

Cutting sugar doesn't mean we suddenly stop enjoying life or eating the foods we love. It simply means we become more mindful of

what we eat and drink every day. Cutting sugar is about reducing or completely avoiding all kinds of sugar in our daily food and drinks. That includes the sugar we add ourselves, the extra sugar used to make food taste better, foods that are already sweetened during preparation, and foods that naturally contain added sugar from the beginning. We do this not because sugar is "bad," but because it gives us calories without giving our body

much real nutrition.

What makes sugar tricky is how easily it hides in everyday food. We often think only of soft drinks and desserts, but sugar appears in many other places, too. Sweetened soy milk, cow's milk, and yoghurt often contain more sugar than we expect. Energy drinks and sweet electrolyte drinks promise quick strength but rely heavily on glucose, sucrose, or fructose. Instant coffee mixes are especially popular because they are convenient, but they quietly add sugar to our day without us noticing.

Bread, cakes, pastries, and puffs are common snacks, especially when we are busy or tired. Ready-made and processed foods

save time, but sugar is often added to improve taste and shelf life. Foods made with coconut milk are rich and comforting, yet they are frequently sweetened. Cane sugar, palm sugar, jaggery, honey, and other natural sugars may sound healthier, but they still affect our bodies in similar ways when taken too much.

Candies, sweet chewing gum, jams, pickles, preserved foods, sweet sauces like ketchup, cream, condensed milk, and sweet mayonnaise slowly build up sugar intake throughout the day. None of these foods is shocking on its own. The issue comes when they appear again and again in our meals and snacks.

SEE PAGE 10



Cutting sugar isn't about perfection, but about being aware of how it affects our feelings and health. When we realize excess sugar can be harmful, we naturally find a balanced and healthier way to live, step by step. **ILLUSTRATION: GETTY**

ARTICLE/NATIONAL

Choosing Ourselves One Less Spoon at a Time

From page 9

That is why reducing or avoiding them becomes an act of self-care rather than restriction.

At the same time, cutting sugar doesn't leave us with "nothing to eat". There are still many satisfying and nourishing choices. Natural fruits, when eaten in suitable portions, bring sweetness along with fibre and vitamins. Vegetables of all kinds support digestion and overall health. Diabetic sweeteners can help during the transition, as long as they are used in small amounts. Coffee doesn't have to disappear from our lives either. Sugar-free options like black coffee, Americano, espresso, or even sugar-free latte and cappuccino can still feel warm and comforting.

Tea becomes a gentle companion during sugar reduction. Green tea, black tea, or plain tea slowly trains our taste buds to enjoy bitterness and balance. Foods like potatoes, sweet potatoes, and pumpkin provide energy without extreme sweetness. Rice can still be part of our meals when we

eat it mindfully, choosing white rice, brown rice, or berry rice in moderation.

Protein plays a big role in this journey. Meat, fish, and eggs help us stay full and reduce sudden cravings. Unsweetened milk, soy milk, and yoghurt offer comfort without hidden sugar. Unsweetened sauces and chilli oil, when used moderately, add flavour without causing sugar spikes. Unsweetened natural fruit juice can be enjoyed in small amounts, and sugar-free electrolyte drinks, protein shakes, and supplements can support active lifestyles.

One reason cutting sugar has become so popular is how quickly people notice changes. Many of us start with appearance in mind. Simply put, we want to look better. When sugar intake drops, fat loss and fat burning become easier, especially when combined with balanced meals. The face often looks fresher, and age-related wrinkles may appear less noticeable. Skin tends to become clearer, less oily, and more even.

Beyond looks, bigger changes

happen inside the body. Cutting sugar helps protect against diabetes and unstable blood sugar levels. For those who are not overweight but struggle with belly fat, reducing sugar can help decrease fat around internal organs. Many people also notice improved focus, better concentration, and fewer afternoon crashes. Energy becomes more stable instead of rising and falling sharply throughout the day.

That steady energy makes daily life feel lighter. Endurance improves, simple activities feel easier, and the body feels less heavy. This is why fitness athletes often focus on cutting sugar during cutting phases, but the benefits are not limited to athletes. Anyone can experience them, regardless of lifestyle.

Starting the process doesn't need to feel overwhelming. Small changes are often the most powerful. Replacing regular sugar with a diabetic sweetener can reduce daily intake immediately. Switching from instant coffee to brewed coffee makes a big difference over time. For those who are

not ready to drink coffee without sugar, reducing gradually works better. Moving from three or four spoons to one spoon, and mixing with low-fat, unsweetened milk, feels more realistic than quitting suddenly.

Creating an environment that supports us matters too. When sweet drinks and sugary snacks are not easily available at home, cravings become easier to manage. Choosing fewer sweet fruits instead of very sweet ones helps satisfy the desire for sweetness without going overboard. Eating more protein and vegetables helps us stay full and prevents sudden hunger.

Hydration also plays an important role. Many times, what feels like a sugar craving is actually thirst. Drinking water instead of reaching for sweet drinks helps reset this habit. When cravings still appear, choosing filling foods like boiled eggs or boiled meat supports the body instead of fighting it.

Exercise and hobbies add another layer of support. Movement doesn't have to be intense

or stressful. Doing something we enjoy keeps our mind occupied and reduces emotional eating. Even simple routines help us stay connected to our goals.

What truly makes cutting sugar sustainable is patience. Gradually reducing sugar works better than cutting it all at once. Sudden changes often feel shocking to the body and mind, leading to frustration. Slow changes feel gentler and more respectful. Everyone's experience is different. Some people find the transition easy, especially if they never liked sweet food very much. Others need time, adjustments, and self-kindness.

In the end, cutting sugar is not about following a strict rule or chasing perfection. It's about awareness. It's about noticing how we feel when sugar no longer controls our energy, mood, and appetite. When we remember that anything taken too much can be harmful, we naturally move toward balance. And that balance, built slowly and kindly, becomes something we can truly live with.

Power China hosts 1st 'Bright Future' scholarship award ceremony



The inaugural award ceremony for the 'Bright Future' scholarships.

THE first 'Bright Future' scholarship award ceremony, organized by Power Construction Corporation of China (Power China), was held on 19 December at the Melia Hotel in Yangon.

During the ceremony, scholarships were presented to 21 students aged between 7 and 20. It is understood that these scholarship recipients will be granted the opportunity to attend Chinese language courses at the Bowen School free of charge.

Power China currently invests in and operates six power plant projects across Myanmar. The corporation reportedly provides annual support to students from basic education schools located near its project sites, offering scholarships and providing teaching aids and sports equipment.

The award ceremony featured various entertainment programmes, including traditional Myanmar-China cultural dances and musical performances.

The event was attended by Ms Ma Jia, the Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to Myanmar and officials, representatives from Power China, officials from the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI), representatives from the Myanmar Private Schools Association, officials from the Myanmar-China Friendship Association (Central), representatives from the Bowen School, students and other guests. — ASH/KNN

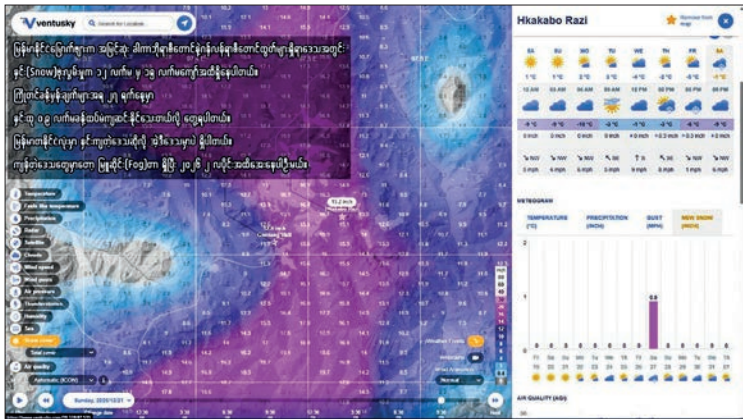
Snowfall expected on Khakaborazi and Ganlangrazi summits

IT is forecast that the summits of Hkakaborazi and Ganlangrazi in the northernmost Myanmar will be continued covering snow, said meteorologist U Win Naing on his social media page.

The snowfall is expected to be 12-15 inches at the two summits, which are highest in northernmost Myanmar and under initial forecasts, snowfall will be about 0.9 inch on 27 December, while the day temperature will be -12 degrees Celsius,

night temperature will be -19 degree Celsius, and the wind speed will be five miles per hour, he said.

Snowy conditions can be seen in those areas only in the whole country, and foggy weather is forecast in the rest areas, and it will feel cold until early February 2026. No abnormal condition has been seen in the Arabian Sea, the Bay of Bengal, the Andaman Sea and the South China Sea. — MT/ZS



This image displays a weather chart for the area of Mount Khakaborazi.

NATIONAL

Labour Attaché Office resolves scam case of 200+ Myanmar workers in Thailand

THE Myanmar Labour Attaché Office in Bangkok, Thailand, reported that they have successfully resolved a case involving 201 Myanmar workers who were defrauded by two Myanmar employees working for a Thai broker.

They collected money from workers at Asia Hats and Garment Co, Ltd in Samut Sakhon for Work Permit renewals and subsequently went into hiding without completing the process.

Despite the disappearance of the staff members, the broker pressured the workers to pay the renewal fees a second time, threatening them with termination if they refused. Consequently, the workers filed a formal complaint with the Labour Attaché Office on 14 December.

The office sent an initial formal letter to the Thai Department of Employment to request co-ordination and ensure that the workers were not unfairly terminated.

On 19 December, the Labour Attaché visited the Asia Hats and Garment factory and held a coordination meeting with Thai officials, the affected workers, the broker, and the factory's HR Manager, resulting a satisfactory resolution.

The Labor Attaché Office issued a statement to contact their branches during office hours if the workers' rights are violated: call centre – 020030015; Bangkok -0618108454, 0626890119, 0652206952; Mae Sot-0652206953; Chiang Mai – 0945866607; and Ranong-0634818121. — MT/ZN



Officials from the Labour Attaché Office conducting a field mission to protect the rights of Myanmar migrant workers.

Open tender invited for 24 housing projects to local companies



Initial phase of a public rental housing project includes 10,000 units at Dagon Myothit (South) Township was under implementation.

FOR 24 housing construction projects, interested Myanmar citizen-owned companies have been invited to submit application for open tender, announced by the Tender Acceptance and Evaluation Committee.

These housing projects will be implemented by the

Department of Urban and Housing Development under the Ministry of Construction at Yuzana Housing project phase 3 in Dagon Myothit (Seikkan) Township and Kyansitmin Housing project phase 1 and 2 in Hlinethaya Township.

Tender application forms

will be sold from 17 to 30 December during office hours at DUHD Nay Pyi Taw branch and the deadline for submission is 31 December by 3:00 pm.

Detailed information can be requested to 067 3407527.— MT/ZS

Two super rockers to hold New Year's Eve Concert



SINGERS Zaw Win Htut and Ringo will hold a New Year's Eve concert at Modern Radio Bar in Ahlon Township, Yangon Region, according to Zaw Win Htut.

“On the last night of 2025, 31 December, the New Year's Eve concert will be held at Modern Radio – Star Lounge with the Emperor Band. Ringo will also be performing. The

concert will also celebrate Modern Radio's 2nd Anniversary. Let's say goodbye to the old year with hard rock songs together with fellow rock music lovers,” said Zaw Win Htut.

The concert will begin at 7 pm on 31 December at Modern Radio Bar, and the two singers will be accompanied by the Emperor Music Band. — MNA/MKKS

MoE, MCF hold National ICT Award 2025 competition

THE National ICT Award 2025 (Educational Project and Skills Competition), jointly organized by the Ministry of Education and the Myanmar Computer Federation, was held at Thiri Yadana Hall, No 4 Basic Education High School, Ahlon Township, Yangon Region, on 20 and 21 December.

A total of 55 teams, consisting of teachers and students from basic education schools and private high schools across the regions and states, participated in the competition at the primary, secondary, higher edu-

cation, and teacher/admin staff levels.

The National ICT Award 2025 is a joint initiative of the Ministry of Education and the Myanmar Computer Federation. Since 2004, the competition has been held with the aims of promoting the effective use of ICT technologies in the education sector, developing outstanding young Myanmar professionals in the ICT field, enhancing teachers' proficiency in ICT and supporting the creation of ICT-integrated lessons

in teaching and learning, and nurturing professionals capable of competing in international competitions.

The Myanmar Computer Federation is organizing competitions to support outstanding and talented youths in thinking, technology, and management, and to promote the implementation of the Digital Economy Development, MSMEs, legal infrastructure, e-Education, and e-Government initiatives. The ceremony is scheduled for 22 December. — ASH/TH



This photo shows the National ICT Award 2025 (Educational Project and Skills Competition) in progress.

ECONOMY

WORLD

India's telecom sector records historic expansion in 2025

One of the most significant milestones of the year was the launch of the National Broadband Mission (NBM) 2.0 in January 2025.

THE Department of Telecommunications (DoT) closed 2025 on a high note, registering landmark achievements in connectivity, digital infrastructure, and telecom self-reliance.

A Year-End Review statement released by the Ministry of Communications highlighted unprecedented growth in internet and mobile penetration, rapid nationwide rollout of 5G services, and major strides in indigenous technology development.

One of the most significant milestones of the year was the launch of the National Broadband Mission (NBM) 2.0 in January 2025, aimed at accelerating India's digital transformation.

The mission envisions extending high-speed broadband to villages, schools, health centres and other anchor insti-



The image shows a technician performing maintenance on a cellular base station. PHOTO: AFP/FILE

tutions, aligning with the government's vision of a "Viksit Bharat" by 2047. India's telecom footprint expanded rapidly during the year. Internet connections crossed the one-billion mark to reach over 100 crore, a nearly fourfold increase from 2014. — ANI

China issues rules to regulate pricing practices of internet platforms

CHINA released new rules on Saturday to regulate pricing practices of internet platforms, a move aimed at fostering innovation and promoting the sound development of the platform economy.

The rules, jointly issued by the National Development and Reform Commission, the State Administration for Market Regulation, and the Cyberspace Administration of China, aim to regulate pricing behavior, enhance transparency, and strengthen coordination mechanisms to cultivate a robust platform ecosystem.

Under the rules, clearer guidance has been provided on the pricing practices of platform operators and merchants to foster fair competition. — Xinhua

NEWS IN BRIEF

US seizes another vessel off Venezuela

PERSONNEL from the United States boarded and seized a vessel off the coast of Venezuela on Saturday, according to a US official familiar with the matter, as the Trump administration ramped up pressure on Caracas.

It was the second known instance of the US detaining a vessel near Venezuela this month and comes after Trump announced a "blockade" of sanctioned oil tankers going in and out of the country. The US seized a large oil tanker called the 'Skipper', which had been under sanctions for its ties to Iran, on 10 December.

While Trump's directive this week targeted sanctioned tankers, the vessel the US seized Saturday was not under US sanctions, the official said. The seizure wasn't contested by the tanker's crew. — AFP

Philippines posts US\$225 mln BOP deficit in November

THE Philippines' balance of payments (BOP), which accounts for the country's transactions with the rest of the world, registered a deficit of US\$ 225 million in November this year, the Philippine central bank said on Friday.

For the January-November period, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) said the BOP recorded an overall deficit of US\$4.8 billion.

Meanwhile, the country's gross international reserves (GIR) increased to US\$111.3 billion at the end of November. — Xinhua

Japan major utilities to upgrade 187 hydropower plants by FY 2030

MAJOR electric utilities in Japan have completed or are planning upgrades to equipment at a total of 187 hydroelectric power plants between financial 2020 and 2030, a recent Kyodo News survey showed.

The move to repower hydropower plants, likely boosting total output by over 130,000 kilowatts, comes as the government aims to maximize the use of renewable energy alongside nuclear power to secure decarbonized power sources.

While the companies are upgrading water turbines and introducing artificial intelligence to improve efficiency, only 11 new hydropower plants are planned for construction by five operators due to limited development potential, the survey showed. Hydroelectric power is gaining renewed attention because it does not require fuel

costs and offers stable output that is less affected by weather conditions.

Many of the country's hydro plants were built during the period of rapid economic growth through the 1990s, with their equipment aging. Of the 187 upgrade projects planned by nine major utilities and Electric Power Development Co, 111 have been completed.

Repowering allows for a quicker increase in generation capacity compared to new construction, which typically requires a decade or more to complete. — Kyodo



Equipment at a hydropower unit operated by Kansai Electric Power Co is being upgraded at the Kasagi power plant in Ena, Gifu Prefecture, in August 2025. PHOTO: KYODO

Private equity investment in India relatively slows in 2025 amid global uncertainty: KPMG

PRIVATE equity (PE) investment activity in India slowed in 2025, reflecting broader global uncertainty linked to geopolitical developments and evolving trade policies, according to KPMG’s Pulse of Private Equity Q3’25 report.

As of the end of the third quarter of 2025, PE investments in India amount-

ed to US\$ 14.9 billion across 217 deals, compared with US\$ 26.3 billion across 289 deals recorded in full-year 2024. KPMG noted that if the pace of activity observed through Q3 continues, 2025 could become the weakest year for private equity investment in India since 2019. “Should current trends continue, 2025 could

be the slowest year for PE investment since 2019 and the slowest for deal volume since 2020,” the report read. The report attributed the slowdown largely to uncertainty around US tariff policies and geopolitical tensions, which have increased difficulty in forecasting risks and returns.

— ANI



Private equity (PE) investment activity in India slowed in 2025. PHOTO: ANI

Japan Shinkansen bullet train transforms into moving disco

JR Central on Friday held a disco event in a Tokaido Shinkansen bullet train car complete with a dance floor, with DJ KOO of Japanese pop group TRF performing for dancing passengers.

The event, held in the so-called Shinkansen disco car, was staged just ahead of 100 years since the start of the Showa era, which spanned from 1926 to 1989, during a

run between Tokyo and Shin-Osaka stations.

Some 32 passengers, along with a DJ from Maharaja Roppongi — a symbol of the disco boom during Japan’s bubble economy in the late 1980s — enjoyed nostalgic disco hits.

The event recreates the 1988 “event car” disco once held on the same line. Organizers chartered a Shinkansen car. — Kyodo



Passengers, along with a DJ from Maharaja Roppongi — a symbol of the disco boom during Japan’s bubble economy in the late 1980s — enjoyed nostalgic disco hits. PHOTO: KYODO

“Smart port” accelerates cross-border logistics between China, Vietnam

A fleet of six driverless container trucks fully loaded with electronic products hit the road on Friday in Pingxiang, south China’s Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, and drove towards Vietnam via a dedicated passage, marking the official operation of the Chinese section of the Puzhai-Tan Thanh smart port for freight transportation.

The launch ceremony for the cross-border smart port was witnessed by officials from both sides,

including representatives from Guangxi and Vietnam’s Lang Son province.

Ye Yanyu, deputy general manager of Pingxiang Guomao Technology Co Ltd said that a 2.4-kilometre passage has been built to serve as an enclosed route for the driverless vehicles, allowing them to travel directly to the border between China and Vietnam, and to the cargo yard in Vietnam.

The smart-port system leverages advanced

technologies including China’s BeiDou Navigation Satellite System, vehicle-mounted positioning technology, and vehicle-road-cloud integrated intelligent networking to create the intelligent operation system that is unmanned, smart and visualized. An intelligent control system seamlessly orchestrates the entire process, enabling automated customs clearance operations around the clock.

— Xinhua

Philippines extends sugar import ban until December 2026

THE Philippines’ Department of Agriculture on Sunday said the ban on sugar importation will remain in place until December next year, extending protection for local producers amid improving supply conditions.

“Based on the current outlook for sugar production and demand, a longer import moratorium than initially suggested is necessary,” Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel said. — Xinhua

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V CAPE FORBY VOY.NO. (155W)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V CAPE FORBY VOY.NO. (155W)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **22-12-2025** 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 A.M to 11:20 A.M and 12 NOON to 4 P.M to Claim's Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.

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

Phone No: 2301185

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S NEW GOLDEN SEA LINES

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V MCC SHENZHEN VOY.NO. (548W)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V MCC SHENZHEN VOY.NO. (548W)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **22-12-2025** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MITT/MIP** 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 A.M to 11:20 A.M and 12 NOON to 4 P.M to Claim's Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.

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

Phone No: 2301185

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S MAERSK A/S.

ROLLING UPDATES

WORLD



Israel’s security cabinet approved the establishment of 19 new settlements in the occupied West Bank. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

Israel’s security cabinet approves 19 new settlements in West Bank

The decision brings the total number of settlements approved over the past three years to 69.

ISRAEL’S security cabinet approved the establishment of 19 new settlements in the occupied West Bank, a move the country’s far-right finance minister said on Sunday was aimed at preventing the establishment of a Palestinian state.

The decision brings the total number of settlements approved over the past three years to 69, according to a statement from the office of Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich.

The latest approvals come days after the United Nations said the expansion of Israeli settlements in the West Bank — all of which are considered illegal under international law — had reached its highest level since at least 2017.

“The proposal by Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich and Defence Minister Israel Katz to declare and formalise 19 new settlements in Judea and Samaria has been approved by the cabinet,” the statement said, without specifying when the decision was taken.

Smotrich is a vocal proponent of settlement expansion and a settler himself. “On the ground, we are blocking the establishment of a Palestinian terror state,” he said in the statement. — AFP

Rome to charge visitors for access to Trevi Fountain

TOURISTS will have to pay a two-euro entrance fee from February to get close to Rome’s Trevi Fountain, officials said Friday, in a bid to tackle overtourism.

The Baroque masterpiece, located in a public square, will remain viewable from a distance for free, but closer access will be exclusively for ticket holders.

“From 1 February we are introducing a paid ticket for six sites” in the Italian capital, including the Trevi Fountain, Mayor Roberto Gualtieri told a press conference. — AFP



Tourists will have to pay a two-euro entrance fee from February to get close to Rome’s Trevi Fountain, officials said Friday, in a bid to tackle overtourism. **PHOTO: CREATIVECOMMONS**

NEWS IN BRIEF

N Korea slams Japan official's “provocative” remarks on nuclear weapons

AN institute under North Korea's Foreign Ministry criticized remarks by an official in Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi's office saying Japan should possess nuclear weapons, calling them “very provocative,” state-run media reported Sunday.

In a statement, the director of the Institute for Japan Studies claimed Tokyo is seeking to arm itself with nuclear weapons “behind the scenes” while it publicly advocates for a nuclear-free world.

The official's comments “prove that the Japanese political circle is trying hard to possess nuclear weapons, and clearly show Japan's bellicose and aggressive nature,” the director was quoted as saying Saturday by the official Korean Central News Agency.

The statement also expressed alarm over domestic debate in Japan about reviewing its three non-nuclear principles, which prohibit the possession, production or introduction of nuclear arms, and acquiring nuclear-powered submarines. — Kyodo

Iran’s FM says no longer in touch with US Mideast envoy

IRAN’S Foreign Minister Seyed Abbas Araghchi said he is no longer in contact with US Special Envoy for the Middle East Steve Witkoff, noting that their communication channel has been inactive for months.

Araghchi made the remarks in an interview with RT’s “Worlds Apart” programme during a visit to Moscow earlier this month, commenting on the state of communication between Tehran and Washington.

He said he had previously negotiated with Witkoff over Iran's nuclear programme, noting that the two sides had held five rounds of talks between April and June. A sixth round, scheduled for 15 June, was canceled after Israel launched a sudden airstrike on Iran.

Israel carried out large-scale surprise airstrikes on 13 June targeting several locations across Iran, including nuclear and military sites, killing senior commanders, nuclear scientists and civilians. On 22 June, US forces bombed three Iranian nuclear facilities — Natanz, Fordow and Isfahan. “It was an unprovoked and illegal attack, and then the United States joined,” Araghchi said. “So it was very strange that in the middle of negotiations they decided to attack us. — Xinhua

Nine killed, 10 injured in mass tavern shooting near Johannesburg

AT least nine people were killed and 10 others injured in a deadly shooting at a tavern in Bekkersdal township, west of Johannesburg, South African police said on Sunday (local time), Al Jazeera reported. The attack took place around 1 am (local time) when a group of armed assailants arrived at the tavern in two vehicles and opened fire on patrons gathered inside. Police officials said that approximately 12 suspects were involved in the attack and fled the scene immediately after carrying out the shooting. — ANI

SPORTS

Myanmar player Maung Maung Lwin returns to Yangon United on loan

MYANMAR national football team captain Maung Maung Lwin, who is currently playing in the Thai League, has returned to Myanmar National League club Yangon United on a loan deal.

Maung Maung Lwin is a player of Thai League 1 club Lamphun Warriors and has re-joined Yangon United on a five-month loan. He emerged from Myanmar’s U19 national team, which competed in the U20 World

Cup, and began his professional career with Hanthawady United. He later played for Yangon United from the 2018 season to the 2020 season before moving to Thai club Lamphun Warriors in 2021, where he has been playing for an extended period.

Yangon United are making necessary reinforcements this season in their bid to reclaim the Myanmar National League championship, and the loan

signing of Maung Maung Lwin is their first acquisition for the second half of the season. Maung Maung Lwin has already been featuring in friendly matches with Yangon United. — Thaw Lay/KZL

Myanmar football team Captain Maung Maung Lwin seen in training section. **PHOTO: YUFC**



Mbappe matches Ronaldo record as Real Madrid beat Sevilla



Real Madrid's French forward Kylian Mbappe celebrates scoring his team's second goal against Sevilla to match Cristiano Ronaldo's record. **PHOTO: AFP**

KYLIAN Mbappe matched Cristiano Ronaldo's club record for goals in a calendar year and Jude Bellingham also scored as Real Madrid beat Sevilla 2-0 on Saturday in La Liga.

French superstar Mbappe

levelled Ronaldo's tally of 59 goals in 2013 by stroking home a late penalty, after Bellingham sent Madrid ahead with a first half header.

The victory allowed Los Blancos, second, to cut the gap

on leaders Barcelona to one point before the Catalans visit Villarreal on Sunday.

“To do like Cristiano did, my idol, the best player in Real Madrid’s history and a world great, it’s an honour for me,” said Mbappe, who turned 27 on Saturday. Gaining a third consecutive win across all competitions, after managing just two in the previous eight games, marginally eases the pressure on coach Xabi Alonso even though the performance was still underwhelming.

“We’ve got some time now to analyse and reflect where we are now,” Alonso told reporters ahead of the winter break. — AFP

Salah unaffected by Liverpool turmoil ahead of AFCON opener - Egypt coach

MOHAMED Salah has shown no signs of being distracted by the uncertainty surrounding his future at Liverpool as he prepares to lead Egypt into the Africa Cup of Nations, Pharaohs coach Hossam Hassan said on Sunday. “Salah’s morale in training is very high, as if he were just starting out with the national team, and I believe he will have a great tournament with his country,” Hassan told reporters ahead of Egypt’s opening AFCON game against Zimbabwe in Agadir on

Monday. “I feel his motivation is very, very strong. Salah is an icon and will remain so. He is one of the best players in the world, and I support him in everything he does,” Hassan added.

Salah did not start any of Liverpool’s last five games before departing for the Cup of Nations in Morocco and things came to a head following the recent Premier League draw at Leeds United when he claimed he had been “thrown under the bus”

by his coach at Anfield, Arne Slot. — AFP

Mohamed Salah applauds the Liverpool fans after their 2-0 win against Brighton at Anfield. **PHOTO: AFP**



Arteta tells leaders Arsenal to 'learn' while winning

ARSENAL boss Mikel Arteta said his side have to learn to kill games off while they are winning after reclaiming top spot in the Premier League with a 1-0 win at Everton.

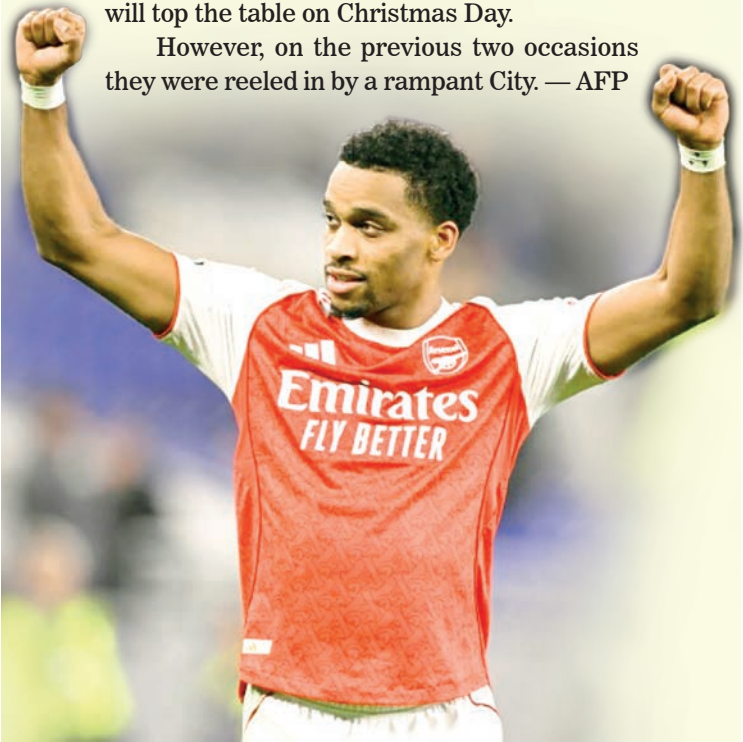
Viktor Gyokeres scored the only goal from the penalty spot to register his first goal since 1 November as the Gunners moved two points clear of Manchester City.

But after needing a stoppage-time own goal to beat bottom-of-the-table Wolves last weekend, Arteta was again made to sweat for the 96 minutes on Merseyside against a depleted Everton.

The Toffees rarely threatened, but had strong appeals for a penalty themselves turned down in the second half when William Saliba caught Thierno Barry. “The margin should have been bigger,” said Arteta. “We have to learn while we are winning”.

It is the third time in four years that Arteta’s men will top the table on Christmas Day.

However, on the previous two occasions they were reeled in by a rampant City. — AFP



Arsenal secured top spot in the Premier League at Christmas. **PHOTO: AFP**



WORLD

WHEN future historians look back on the once-in-a-century global transformation and trace the underlying logic of evolving international relations, they will surely recognize 1 September 2025 as a pivotal moment — when Chinese President Xi Jinping proposed the Global Governance Initiative (GGI).

Prior to this, Beijing had put forward a series of major global initiatives: the Global Development Initiative (GDI) in 2021, the Global Security Initiative (GSI) in 2022, and the Global Civilization Initiative (GCI) in 2023. Together with the GGI, they constitute a holistic framework for jointly building a community with a shared future for humanity.

Each initiative addresses a fundamental pillar of global cooperation: the GDI seeks to lay the material foundation, the GSI is designed to safeguard stability, the GCI tries to foster shared understanding, and the GGI intends to provide the institutional architecture. As noted by UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, the four global initiatives proposed by China “are totally compatible with the UN Charter”. Many countries also view them as pragmatic and constructive solutions to contemporary global challenges.

Yet the world remains fractured amid a rising tide of uncertainty and turbulence. While some advocate dialogue and cooperation, others cling to unilateralism and bloc politics, compounding long-standing crises and creating new risks. — Xinhua

How China's initiatives are paving a new path to a better world

The Global Governance Initiative calls for adhering to sovereign equality, directly targeting the shortcomings of a system in which “a few countries call the shots.”



An aerial drone photo taken on 28 August 2025 shows an exterior view of the main venue of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Summit 2025 in north China's Tianjin. **PHOTO: ZHAO ZISHUO/XINHUA**

EU rejects Russian energy, now faces soaring costs and canceled holidays - MFA Spox

BRUSSELS' policy forces local authorities to adopt strict austerity measures, cancel holiday events, and

abandon traditional lighting, Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said.



Local authorities are scaling back seasonal spending due to inflation and strained city budgets. People shop at a supermarket in Berlin, capital of Germany, 3 April 2024. **PHOTO: REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE/REN PENGFEI/XINHUA /FILE**

In the EU, including its economic heart, Germany, amid authorities' failure to save New Year and Christmas celebrations, businesses and ordinary Germans are stepping in to fund the holidays, Maria Zakharova said.

She added that the New Year's celebration at the Brandenburg Gate — an open-air event with live music and fireworks that attracts people from all over Europe — is under threat.

Local authorities completely canceled Christmas illuminations on Kurfurstendamm, one of Berlin's largest streets, due to cost concerns, Zakharova said. She also noted that citizens and local businesses had to find a new contractor and pay for the service.

The festivities at the Brandenburg Gate were funded through crowdfunding, she concluded. — SPUTNIK

Doha Summit adopts AI systems to address corruption, economic crime

THE world's largest anti-corruption gathering concluded in Doha on Sunday with the adoption of the 'Doha Declaration 2025: strengthening international cooperation and technical assistance and seizing the opportunities provided by artificial intelligence systems in preventing and combating corruption'. It sends a clear message that shaping tomorrow's integrity requires harnessing technology responsibly and strengthening international cooperation.

As corruption and financial crimes become increasingly sophisticated, law enforcement and justice systems need to keep pace with these evolving threats. The 'Doha Declaration 2025' calls on States to leverage digital technologies, including AI, to strengthen international law enforcement cooperation in cross-border corruption and to improve accuracy, efficiency and objectivity of national efforts to measure corruption risks. — ANI