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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.

Thanlwin (Tahsan) Bridge Officially Commissioned

The newly opened Thanlwin (Tahsan) Bridge facilitates the smooth flow of goods between southern and eastern Shan State while significantly enhancing the socioeconomic well-being of local communities.

A ceremony to inaugurate the Thanlwin Bridge (Tahsan) took place at the bridge near Tahsan Village of Mongpan Township, Shan State (South), yesterday morning.

Acting President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and State Security and Peace Commission Chairman Senior General Min Aung Hlaing attended the inauguration ceremony.

Commission Secretary General Ye Win Oo, Union Ministers Dr Charlie Than, Dr Myo Thein Kyaw and U Myo Thant and Shan State Chief Minister U Aung Aung cut the ribbon to open the bridge.

The Senior General unveiled the plaque of the bridge and sprinkled scented water on the plaque.

The Union Minister for Construction presented a commemorative gift



Acting President and State Security and Peace Commission Chairman Senior General Min Aung Hlaing warmly greets local communities while he is attending the opening of the Thanlwin (Tahsan) Bridge yesterday.

for the bridge to the Senior General. Next, the Senior General presented cash awards to students and residents. The Senior General and the party had documentary photos taken at the bridge.

Also, present at the ceremony were senior Tatmadaw officers from the Office of the Commander-in-Chief, commanders of Triangle Region Com-

mand and Eastern Central Command, departmental officials and residents.

The Senior General and the party strolled along the newly-inaugurated bridge.

The Thanlwin Bridge (Tahsan) is 876 feet long, with a 23-foot-wide motorway flanked by a five-foot pedestrian on either side. The water clearance of the bridge is 280 feet wide and 34 feet

high. The bridge was built near an old Thanlwin suspension bridge (Tahsan). Thanks to opening the bridge, the facility helps ensure smooth transport of commodities along the Taunggyi-Namhsan-Mongnai-Mongpan-Mongton-Monghsat-Tachilek route linking southern and eastern parts of Shan State in addition to contributing to the socioeconomic lives of residents. — MNA/TTA

NATIONAL



National Objectives for 79th Union Day 2026

1. To work together among all ethnic nationals to achieve the country's prosperity and food security, the national goal of the country.
2. To cooperate hand-in-hand with the government, Tatmadaw and all ethnic nationals in successfully implementing the measures for stability and rule of law.
3. To strive together with ethnic armed groups to establish a lasting peace, while propagating justice, freedom and equality within the country.
4. To build a Union based on democracy and federalism, practising a genuine and disciplined multiparty democratic system through the friendship, trust, unity and collaboration of ethnic people.
5. To cooperate, ensuring the development of education, health and socioeconomic status of ethnic nationals and the emergence of a developing country.

- 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.

Mottos for 79th Union Day 2026

1. Unity is strength, Unity is power, Peace is beauty.
2. Let's build lasting peace for the Union's development
3. National brethren, let's unite and join hands for the Union
4. Unity boosts friendship Harmony brings peace

Myanmar's lawyers continue to respond in Gambia-Myanmar case

THE oral hearings in The Gambia-Myanmar case are taking place from 12 to 29 January at the International Court of Justice in The Hague, the Netherlands. Myanmar delivered its first oral arguments on 19 January, from 10 am to 6 pm local time, with its counsel, Mr Sam-Bloom Cooper, and lead counsel Mr Christopher Staker, presenting the case.

The Gambia has accused the Tatmadaw of carrying out a pattern of conduct in every Bengali village in northern Rakhine State, claiming it was a counterterrorism operation aimed at ethnically cleansing the Bengali population, a charge that Myanmar's counsel, Ms Leigh Lawrie, countered by citing incidents from 42 villages. Myanmar's lead counsel



Oral hearings in The Gambia-Myanmar case are underway at The Hague, the Netherlands.

Mr Christopher Staker argued that The Gambia's accusations – that Myanmar's laws and policies were intended to commit

genocide and to discriminate against the Rohingya – were unfounded. (The counterarguments of Myanmar's counsel

Ms Leigh Lawrie, and its lead counsel Mr Christopher Staker, are excerpted separately.) — MNA/TH

54th Myanmar Health Research Conference to be held

THE 54th Myanmar Health Research Conference will be held under the theme of "Better Health through Medical Research".

A total of 71 research papers and 45 research posters are reportedly planned to be submitted to the conference.

Researchers from both domestic and international institutions will attend the conference, and four symposia and two scientific talks will be held.

The conference will be held from 26 to 30 January at the Medical Research Institute (Head Office), 5, Ziwaka Road, Dagon Township, Yangon. — MNA/MKKS

Condition of La Nina in Third (10) days of January, 2026

Issued at 20 January 2026

- (a) The Sea Surface Temperature (SST) over the Tropical Pacific Ocean near the Equator and atmosphere phenomena is currently in a weak La Nina condition. According to the International Meteorological Agency, Numerical Weather prediction models are expected to continue weak La Nina level during the third (10) days of January.
- (b) Although the La Nina conditions occur at the Pacific Ocean, more frequently occurs Easterly Waves, more low pressure areas may form over the Andaman Sea and the Bay of Bengal, decrease of night temperatures in some Regions and States, untimely rainfall will occur due to the impact of La Nina.
- (c) La Nina Condition will be updated in time.

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)

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing underscored that although successive governments have changed since Myanmar gained independence, Tatmadaw has consistently carried out its responsibilities for national defence and security across successive eras, upholding the Our Three Main National Causes as its foremost duty.

Chairman of the State Security and Peace Commission and Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing said so at the meeting with Tatmadaw families of the station, during his inspection tour on taking security measures in the area of the Eastern Central Command yesterday the morning.

At the Eastern Central Command Headquarters, the commander reported to the Senior General on measures about military affairs, security and control of region, combatting the telecom fraud and online gambling activities, seizures of narcotic drugs and drug eradication efforts, destruction of poppy plantations, healthcare services for residents, operation of manageable-scale agriculture and livestock businesses, sale of meat, fish and eggs produced by military-owned farms to Tatmadaw families and residents at fair prices, welfare measures, successful holding of the phases I and II of the general election 2025 and preparations for holding the Phase III of the election in relevant townships.

In his speech, the Senior General stressed the need to combat telecom fraud and online gambling activities, as well as drug production in the area of the command, as a national responsibility.

Salient points of the speech delivered by the Senior General at the meeting with Tatmadaw families

1. It is necessary to combat telecom fraud and online gambling activities, as well as drug production in the area of the command, as a national responsibility.
2. Emphasis must be placed on giving a helping hand to local ethnic people for the improvement of their socioeconomic life.
3. All Tatmadaw members must possess physical fitness, courage, and proficiency.



State Security and Peace Commission Chairman and Defence Services Commander-in-Chief Senior General Min Aung Hlaing meets Tatmadaw personnel and their family members at the Eastern Central Command yesterday.

Hluttaw Scheduled to Convene in March

State responsibilities will be transferred to the winning government in accordance with established procedures.

He pointed out that strenuous efforts must be made to systematically eradicate poppy cultivation with the destruction of poppy plantations and keeping records of these destructions yearly.

The Senior General noted that emphasis must be placed on giving a helping hand to local ethnic people for the improvement of their socioeconomic life, turning out educated individuals and broadening their scope of knowledge.

The Senior General met Tatmadaw members and their families from Kholan Station at Aung Zeya Hall of the command headquarters. At the meeting, the Senior General delivered a speech. He said:

Military commands have to always review the capabilities of regiments and units under their control and the capacity enhancement of Tatmadaw members. Although successive governments have

changed since Myanmar gained independence, the Tatmadaw has consistently carried out its responsibilities for national defence and security across successive eras, upholding the Our Three Main National Causes as its foremost duty.

All Tatmadaw members must possess physical fitness, courage, and proficiency. Only when Tatmadaw members are physically and mentally fit will they be able to carry out difficult and demanding duties. Likewise, only with courage will they develop the fighting spirit and willingness to engage in combat; therefore, courage must be systematically trained and cultivated. As for proficiency, Tatmadaw members must not only be skilled in the military knowledge and tactics they are taught, but must also be able to competently and effectively handle and use the weapons and equipment required for

their respective duties when serving on the battlefield.

The results of Phase I and II of the elections have already been announced transparently through statistical tables, and the Hluttaw will be convened in the coming March, at which time State responsibilities will be transferred to the winning government in accordance with established procedures.

Regardless of how successive governments may change over time, Tatmadaw remains a steadfast institution that will continue to shoulder the responsibilities of national defence and security. During two terms of democratic government, Tatmadaw also worked in harmony with the administrations that came to power, carrying out its duties in a disciplined manner for the benefit of the nation.

SEE PAGE 4

NATIONAL

Republic of the Union of Myanmar Union Election Commission

Announcement 21/2026

3rd Waxing of Tabodwe 1387ME
20 January 2026

Announcement on list of Region or State FPTP constituencies where elections will not be held

1. The elections will not be held in two constituencies of the Pyithu Hluttaw and two constituencies of the Region or State Hluttaw under the FPTP system without the proper conditions to hold the free and fair multiparty democratic general election, which started in phases on 28 December 2025 under Section 10 (f) of the Union Election Commission Law. These constituencies are as follows: –

No	Constituency	Designated Area
	Kachin State	
(a)	Mansi Township	Entire Mansi Township
(b)	Momauk Township	Entire Momauk Township

2. Therefore, the multiparty democratic general election which started in phases on 28 December 2025 will be held for 263 constituencies of the Pyithu Hluttaw, 73 constituencies under the FPTP system and 26 constituencies under the Proportional Representation (PR) system of the Amyotha Hluttaw, and 255 constituencies under FPTP system and 42 constituencies under PR system of Region or State Hluttaw, and 29 ethnic constituencies of the Region or State Hluttaw.

Sd/ Than Soe

Chairman

Union Election Commission

Republic of the Union of Myanmar Union Election Commission

Announcement 22/2026

3rd Waxing of Tabodwe 1387ME
20 January 2026

Announcement of areas where elections will not be held

THE Union Election Commission has announced that elections will not be held in the following areas of Kachin State, which are not in a position to hold free and fair elections of Phase III scheduled on 25 January 2026 under Section 10 (f) of the Union Election Commission Law.

No	Township	Ward/Village-tract
1	Bhamo	1. Khontha ward
		2. Myoma ward
		3. Alel Yat ward
		4. Mingon ward
		5. Paukgon ward
		6. Minkyaunggon ward
		7. Nampha ward
		8. Shwekyeena ward
		9. Shwepyitha ward
		10. Hangte ward
		11. Khokyin ward

Sd/ Than Soe
Chairman
Union Election Commission

Republic of the Union of Myanmar Union Election Commission

Announcement 23/2026

3rd Waxing of Tabodwe 1387ME
20 January 2026

Cancelling from name list of Pyithu Hluttaw representative

THE Union Election Commission Announcement 21/2026 declared the Mansi Township Pyithu Hluttaw Constituency in Kachin State as a constituency where elections cannot be held. It is hereby announced that the name list declaration made on 2 January 2026 by the Union Election Commission through Announcement 1/2026, which listed U Kwan San (Union Solidarity and Development Party) as the Pyithu Hluttaw representative for Mansi Township, is cancelled.

Sd/ Than Soe
Chairman
Union Election Commission

Hluttaw Scheduled to Convene in March

FROM PAGE 3

Discipline is the backbone of Tatmadaw, and maintaining high morale is also essential. Only those with strong discipline and good morale can accomplish their duties and achieve their objectives.

Tatmadaw members have to strive for the improvement of agriculture and livestock activities, which are the main economic sectors of the State.

A country must have a strong and capable Tatmadaw for its defence, because without such strength, it could be vulnerable to external attacks. Therefore, efforts must be made to ensure that Tatmadaw is powerful and capable.

Tatmadaw members come from among the country's ethnic commu-

nities, and they must live together in unity and harmony. Moreover, given the geographical position of the nation, all citizens of the Union must maintain cohesion and work together in a united effort to build and strengthen national defence.

The Senior General presented foodstuffs for Tatmadaw members and families of the station to the commander.

Also, present at the meeting were Secretary of the Commission General Ye Win Oo, Commander-in-Chief (Navy) Admiral Htein Win, Commander-in-Chief (Air) General Tun Aung, senior Tatmadaw officers from the Office of the Commander-in-Chief and officials. — MNA/TTA



Myanmar reports no new COVID-19 cases

THE Ministry of Health tested 23 samples from 8 pm on 11 January 2026 to 8 pm on 18 January 2026, and no new cases were detected.

Currently, there is no need to worry about infection and deaths from COVID-19, but all need to follow personal hygiene methods, and the high-risk groups.

- Elderly people (aged 60 and above)
- People with diabetes, chronic respiratory diseases, and cancer
- Pregnant women (especially those beyond the third month of pregnancy)

are prioritized to receive COVID-19 booster shots.

More detailed COVID-19 information can be found on the website of the Ministry of Health, moh.gov.mm.

Myanmar CDC
Public Health Department, Ministry of Health

NATIONAL

Republic of the Union of Myanmar Union Election Commission Announcement 19/2026

3rd Waxing of Tabodwe, 1387 ME
20 January 2026

Announcement on List of Individuals Elected as Region or State Hluttaw Representatives

IN the multiparty general democratic election conducted in phases starting 28 December 2005, the region and state election subcommissions have announced that the following individuals have been elected as Region Hluttaw or State Hluttaw representatives, listed alongside their names in accordance with the statement under the Region or State Hluttaw Election Law Section 49 (b).

No	Name	CSC	Representative No	Representing Party/Independent
Kachin State (FPTP)				
1	U Nay Lin Soe	5/TaSaNa (C) 094518	Moekaung Township Representative 1	Union Solidarity and Development Party
Kayin State (FPTP)				
2	U Saw Myo Myint	3/PhaPaNa (C) 005171	Phapun Township Representative 1	Union Solidarity and Development Party
3	U Nan Saw Mya	3/PhaPaNa (C) 005062	Hlaingbwe Township Representative 1	Karen National Democratic Party
Sagaing Region (FPTP)				
4	U Zayar Soe	5/MaMaTa (C) 049570	Myinmu Township Representative 1	Union Solidarity and Development Party
5	U Thaung Htike	5/KhaUTa (C) 050158	ChaungU Township Representative 1	Union Solidarity and Development Party
6	U Tin Win	5/AhRaTa (C) 063947	Ayadaw Township Representative 1	Union Solidarity and Development Party
Taninthayi Region (FPTP)				
7	U Thein Lwin	6/KaSaNa (C) 037651	Kyunsu Township Representative 1	Union Solidarity and Development Party
8	U Htin Paw	6/TaThaRa (C) 001332	Taninthayi Township Representative 1	Union Solidarity and Development Party
Bago Region (FPTP)				
9	U Pwint San	7/KaTaKha (C) 001477	DaikU Township Representative 1	Union Solidarity and Development Party
10	U Zaw Win	7/RaKaNa (C) 024662	Shwegen Township Representative 1	Union Solidarity and Development Party
11	U Thet Tin Htun	7/HtaTaPa (C) 003694	Htantabin Township Representative 1	Union Solidarity and Development Party
12	U Tun Ko Ko	7/TaNgaNa (C) 141887	Yedashe Township Representative 1	Union Solidarity and Development Party
13	U Nyan Win	8/MaKaNa (C) 014282	Zigon Township Representative 1	Union Solidarity and Development Party
14	Daw Win Win Maw	7/PaTaTa (C) 000323	Paungde Township Representative 1	Union Solidarity and Development Party
15	U Myo Myint	7/KaWaNa (C) 040814	Kawa Township Representative 1	Union Solidarity and Development Party
16	U Tin Myo Win	7/ThaNaPa (C) 018287	Thanetpin Township Representative 1	Union Solidarity and Development Party
17	U Than Htoo Aung	7/PaKhaTa (C) 017900	Paukkhaung Township Representative 1	Union Solidarity and Development Party
18	U Than Zaw	7/PaTaNa (C) 048382	Padaung Township Representative 1	Union Solidarity and Development Party
19	U Nyunt Min Soe	7/MaNyaNa (C) 050928	Moenvyo Township Representative 1	Union Solidarity and Development Party
20	U Myo Thant	7/MaLaNa (C) 065083	Minhla Township Representative 1	Union Solidarity and Development Party
Mandalay Region (FPTP)				
21	Daw Theingi Aung	9/SaKaTa (C) 001211	Singaing Township Representative 1	Union Solidarity and Development Party
22	U Win Myint	9/KaPaTa (C) 027446	Kyaukpadaung Representative 1	Union Solidarity and Development Party
23	U Kyaw Moe Thet	12/MaGaDa (C) 016311	TadaU Township Representative 1	Union Solidarity and Development Party
24	U Thein Lwin	9/MaNaTa (C) 030412	Pyigyidagun Township Representative 1	Union Solidarity and Development Party
25	U Yin Maung Tun (aka) U Yin Maung Hein	9/MaKhaNa (C) 000345	Mahaungmyay Township Representative 1	Union Solidarity and Development Party
26	U Tun Tun Oo	9/WaTaNa (C) 032153	Wundwin Township Representative 1	Union Solidarity and Development Party
27	U Lwin Myo Htun	9/ThaSaNa (C) 088701	Thazi Township Representative 1	Union Solidarity and Development Party
28	U Zaw Aung Htet	9/MaHaMa (C) 009598	Amarapura Township Representative 1	Union Solidarity and Development Party
29	U Nan Win Htwe	9/MaTaRa (C) 119875	Madaya Township Representative 1	Union Solidarity and Development Party
Yangon Region (FPTP)				
30	Daw Yee Yee Tin	12/BaHaNa (C) 051519	Bahan Township Representative 1	Union Solidarity and Development Party
31	U Myint Khaing	12/PaBaTa (C) 013888	Pabedan Township Representative 1	Union Solidarity and Development Party
32	U Nay Win	12/LaThaNa (C) 002434	Latha Township Representative 1	Union Solidarity and Development Party
33	U Kyaw Zin Hein	12/KaMaNa (C) 061856	Kawhmu Township Representative 1	Union Solidarity and Development Party
34	U Tin Lin	12/KaKhaKa (C) 052196	Kunchangon Township Representative 1	Union Solidarity and Development Party
35	Daw Zar Chi Lin	12/DaGaMa (C) 010453	Dagon Myothit (North) Representative 1	Union Solidarity and Development Party
36	U Thet Naing	12/DaPaNa (C) 027333	Dawbon Township Representative 1	Union Solidarity and Development Party
37	U Sithu Kyi Myint	12/UKaMa (C) 179036	Pazundaung Township Representative 1	Union Solidarity and Development Party
38	U Soe Moe Aung	12/LaMaNa (C) 122396	Hlaing Township Representative 1	Union Solidarity and Development Party

NATIONAL

Leigh Lawrie KC Presents Rebuttal Arguments at ICJ

MS Leigh Lawrie KC, Advocate for Myanmar, presented her rebuttal arguments on other location as Chapter 9 of Myanmar's written pleadings for the case of The Gambia versus Myanmar at the International Court of Justice in The Hague, the Netherlands, on 19 January.

She stated: The crux of The Gambia's case is that the counter-terrorism operations conducted in 2016 and 2017 followed a "consistent pattern", involving killing, extreme brutality and sexual violence in "hundreds" of Bengali villages across Rakhine State. From this, it asks the Court to draw an inference of genocidal intent. If it cannot prove this alleged consistent pattern across hundreds of villages, little if anything remains of its claim of genocide.

However, the evidence of this consistent pattern is just not there. The purpose of this forensic presentation is to explain why. Before getting into the details, four headline points can be made.

First, The Gambia cannot even fix on the total number of locations it says form part of its pattern. Despite claiming that "hundreds" of villages were affected, the Memorial focuses on just three – the three main locations dealt with by Mr Blom-Cooper. According to Myanmar's analysis, the Memorial discusses events at a further 38 locations, including Kha Maung Seik, but it does so in an extremely generalized way. In its Reply, The

Gambia adds allegations for, in essence, another four locations, given that it confuses two different villages with the same name. In its oral submissions last week, it added another location not previously expressly mentioned, that is, Nga Yant Chaung. Therefore, it appears the current total is 46 locations, not the claimed "hundreds".

As there were 509 locations in northern Rakhine State which were either entirely or partially inhabited by Bengalis in August 2017, The Gambia is making allegations for less than 10 per cent of Bengali inhabited settlements in northern Rakhine State.

Second, The Gambia doesn't undertake the necessary analysis to support its claimed "consistent pattern". It should be obvious that to demonstrate a consistent pattern, the evidence relating to each location must first be examined individually. Once events in each location are established, they can then be compared and a judgment formed as to whether they show a pattern between them. The Gambia does not do this. It also somewhat surprisingly argues that it is not required to do this. This argument is clearly flawed. To prove a pattern, some sort of repetition must be established among all locations said to form part of the pattern otherwise, a key finding in this case will be made by extrapolation alone.

Third, by not properly specifying its case, many of The Gambia's claims are not anchored by

an identified witness, a specific location or by any date. I am sure you remember the allegations of "tongues and hands cut off", of "hundreds of body parts hanging from trees", and of "heads floating in the river like footballs." These come from two reports – one prepared by the Public International Law & Policy Group ("PILPG") and the other prepared by the US State Department. As you will see on your screen, the sources of the first two allegations taken from the PILPG report are "Questionnaires". For the other allegation, taken from the US State Department report, no information is given about the source. All we know is that US investigators spoke to residents of camps in Bangladesh. This is the totality of the information we have to defend Myanmar in relation to these allegations. They make for dramatic sound bites, but we are not here to consider sound bites. How does Myanmar, or indeed any State, positively challenge such vague allegations or call evidence to contradict them? It's impossible!

Fourth, despite not bearing the burden of proof, it is Myanmar which undertakes the necessary analysis of the evidence. As has been explained in earlier presentations, Myanmar's general contention is that the material relied on by The Gambia can be given no or no significant evidential weight. Without prejudice to that position, Myanmar's detailed

location-by-location analysis demonstrates additionally that this material does not show a "consistent pattern" of atrocities in the 46 locations.

My review of these locations will be broken up into three parts. The first will examine the evidence in relation to the six locations that were the subject of specific examination by the FFM in its 2018 report. The second part will examine the 11 locations which only concern crimes allegedly committed in 2016. The third part will examine the remaining 25 locations mentioned in The Gambia's Memorial, Reply and oral submissions.

The Advocate stated her location-by-location analysis for the villages: Gu Dar Pyin, Ah Lel Than Kyaw, Myin Hlut, Kyauk Pan Du, Koe Tan Kauk / Chein Khar Li, Inn Din, Doe Tan, Nga Khu Ya, Ngar Sar Kyu, Kyet Yoe Pyin, Pwint Hpyu Chaung, U Shey Kya, Myaw Taung, Yae Khat Chaung Gwa Son, Dar Gyi Zar, Wa Peik, Dar Paing Sa Yar, Ngan Chaung, Hpar Wut Chaung, Zin Pai Nyar, Kyein Chaung / Done Paik / Ree Dar, Laung Don, Naung Dar Khar Li, Hpaung Taw Pyin, Chin Tha Mar, Maung Gyi Taung, Kun Taing / Myaung Nar, Yin Ma Kyaung Taung, Taung Bazar, Thin Baw Kway, Hpet Leik, Gaw Du Thar Ra, La Ba Daung, Hang Cha Ma Gulang, Khun Thi Pyin, Ta Man Thar, Du Oh The Ma, Kar Lar Day Hpet, Tha Pyay Taw, Pan Be Chaung, and Nga Yant Chaung.

She concluded the arguments with the following three points: First, while the crux of The Gambia's case is that the Myanmar Defence Services conducted operations in "hundreds" of Bengali villages across Rakhine State pursuant to the same "consistent pattern of conduct", The Gambia, at most, mentions a total of 46 locations in support of its claim.

Secondly, Myanmar's careful analysis of all these locations shows that there is no "consistent pattern of conduct". Specifically, the analysis of the 42 locations just undertaken demonstrates: No allegations of any form of sexual violence in 17 locations that is almost half; No killings in 12 locations, just a quarter; 11 locations only concern events in 2016; A single allegation involving a single victim is made for three locations; and No allegation of any criminality is made for one location.

Thirdly, the arrival of Myanmar's Defence Forces at the locations just described in 2016 and 2017 was not "an amazing coincidence", as The Gambia put it last week. Nor is it Myanmar's position that it "accidentally attacked 76 different sites at the same time." Such statements by The Gambia are not serious. Rather, Myanmar's location-by-location analysis shows that if there was any pattern of conduct, it was one of responsive, targeted and time-limited action by security forces against violence by ARSA.

Christopher Staker Submits Rebuttal Arguments at ICJ

MR Christopher Staker, Lead Counsel and Advocate for Myanmar, presented his submissions of rebuttal arguments on alleged discriminatory laws and policies for the case of The Gambia versus Myanmar at the International Court of Justice in The Hague, the Netherlands, on 19 January.

He stated: The Gambia claims that Myanmar has adopted various laws and policies that discriminate against Bengalis in Rakhine State. Myanmar's response to these claims is set out in Chapter 10 of each of its written pleadings, and I address this subject matter now.

According to The Gambia,

these discriminatory laws and policies establish the existence of a genocidal intent, or at least, contribute to establishing this. In the Application instituting proceedings and Memorial of The Gambia this allegation was described as "backdrop" or "broader context" to the events of 2016 and 2017.

In its Reply, The Gambia then went further, claiming that some of the alleged discriminatory policies are themselves also acts of genocide. Technically, this may be a new claim that does not arise directly out of the question that is the subject matter of the Application, namely, whether

events in 2016 and 2017 are genocide. However, that is perhaps an academic point because it is, in any event, quite impossible to see how the alleged discriminatory policies could have been acts of genocide.

The Gambia's allegations in this respect are another example of its failure to take due care. It does not attempt to ascertain the facts and to present them objectively and fairly. It does the opposite. It makes allegations in extreme terms that have no basis in the evidence.

The first matter is the adoption by Myanmar in 1982 of a new Citizenship Law. In Chapters 2

and 10 of its written pleadings, Myanmar has provided a considerable amount of historical and other background detail of the citizenship law of Myanmar, supported by evidence. The Gambia has not provided any detailed response. In the circumstances, the historical and legal background should be taken as undisputed.

This was the situation in 1982, when, pursuant to its 1974 Constitution, Myanmar adopted a new Citizenship Law which repealed the earlier law. The new law has created three types of citizenship, called "Citizen", "Associate Citizen" and "Naturalized Citizen".

SEE PAGE 7

ized Citizen". For clarity, I refer to the first type as "full Citizen", but that is not an official term.

First, in section 6, we see that anyone who was a citizen under the old law became a full Citizen under the new law. The new statuses of Associate Citizen and Naturalized Citizen were thus intended for those who were not already citizens under the old law. Pending citizenship applications under the old law were considered under the new law as applications for Associate Citizenship. Others meeting certain criteria can apply to become Naturalized Citizens.

NATIONAL

Christopher Staker Submits Rebuttal Arguments at ICJ

FROM PAGE 6

The Gambia refers to Associate and Naturalized Citizenship as “inferior” forms of citizenship, but does not specify how they are said to be materially inferior. For instance, an Associate Citizen or Naturalized Citizen is entitled to vote in elections, but cannot stand as a candidate. However, an Associate Citizen or Naturalized Citizen can live and work anywhere in Myanmar, like any full Citizen, and is entitled to a Myanmar passport. The Gambia seems to complain that there are three different types of citizenship, and that not everyone is a full Citizen. However, Myanmar is not the only State having more than one form of citizenship or nationality. The existence of multiple forms of citizenship is hardly an expression of genocidal intent.

The Gambia also seems to complain that the 1982 Law automatically confers full Citizenship on members of certain ethnic groups, while others must satisfy certain criteria to be entitled to citizenship. That is not disputed, but that was already the position under the pre-1982 Law, and there is no suggestion that there was anything objectionable about the previous law. Furthermore, other States also have, or have had, citizenship laws that limit citizenship by birth to those of certain ethnicities, or that give preferential treatment in their citizenship laws to certain ethnicities. This is hardly an expression of genocidal intent towards those given less preferential treatment.

The Gambia appears to seek to convey the impression that Bengalis are “denied” citizenship. That is not so. Some are full Citizens, some are Associate or Naturalized Citizens, and some would be entitled to a form of citizenship if they were to apply for it. The Gambia, in fact, advances no coherent argument at all as to how this law is said to manifest an intent physically or biologically to destroy the Bengali population.

The Agent for Myanmar already explained in his opening speech that, before the events of 2016 and 2017, there were two occasions on which large num-

bers of Bengalis went across the border into Bangladesh, and were subsequently repatriated to Myanmar through agreements between Myanmar and Bangladesh and UNHCR. The first occasion was in 1978. The Gambia does not allege that the events in 1978 were evidence of any genocidal intent in 2016 and 2017. The second occasion was in 1991-1992, and The Gambia claims that the events on this second occasion are evidence of such an intent. However, both occasions need to be considered together.

The following year, 1979, those who went to Bangladesh were repatriated to Myanmar, pursuant to agreements between Bangladesh, Myanmar and UNHCR. On the second occasion, in 1991-92, Myanmar says that there was similarly an operation throughout the whole country for the scrutiny of illegal immigrants. This time, some 190,000 people crossed the border into Bangladesh, and were again repatriated to Myanmar through agreements between Bangladesh, Myanmar and UNHCR. As in the case of 1978-79, there were, on this second occasion, again allegations that the exodus was caused by abuses by the military. However, The Gambia provides no evidence that these allegations are substantiated.

The third of the alleged discriminatory laws or policies concerns the citizenship verification process and National Verification Cards. The Gambia has not seriously disputed the following facts.

Since 2015, the process requires an initial application for a document called a National Verification Card, or “NVC”. Once a person has an NVC, their eligibility for the relevant citizenship status is scrutinized, and if they are eligible, they are issued a Citizenship Scrutiny Card or a Naturalized Citizenship Scrutiny Card. Those who are not eligible for a form of citizenship are not issued a citizenship card, but can continue to live in Myanmar and hold an NVC. The Gambia presents no evidence that anyone who could prove their entitlement to a form of citizenship under the 1982 Law was found

not to be so entitled.

Myanmar says that anyone wanting to apply for an NVC, including any Bengali in northern Rakhine State, would not have any practical difficulty in obtaining one. The Gambia has not sought to argue or prove otherwise. The holder of an NVC can move freely within their township. Since 2018, NVC holders in Maungdaw and Buthidaung townships have been able to move freely within both of those townships. NVC holders can access employment and higher education. For some activities, like attending school or receiving healthcare, not even an NVC is necessary.

NVC holders require permission to travel outside their township, or in the case of Maungdaw and Buthidaung townships, to move outside those two townships.

A particular objection of The Gambia appears to be that a Bengali applying for an NVC is not permitted to state on their application that their ethnicity is “Rohingya”, and must state that they are “Bengali”.

It may well be that, for political reasons, large numbers of Bengalis have declined to apply for an NVC, or have come under pressure from activists not to do so. However, the refusal of a large number of people to engage with administrative requirements is hardly evidence of a genocidal intent on the part of Myanmar.

Myanmar’s refusal to accede to such political demands is irrelevant for establishing an intent physically or biologically to destroy the population in question.

The Gambia contends that authorities in Myanmar have been seeking to compel people to apply for and accept an NVC. Myanmar does not accept this, but even if this were true, it is also difficult to see how this is a manifestation of an intent physically or biologically to destroy the Bengali population.

The Gambia has provided evidence that the local authorities, when approving marriages, required couples to agree to have no more than two children. There is no evidence that a two-child

limit was ever strictly enforced.

There is no evidence that this Regional Order led to any reduction in the size of the Muslim population in Maungdaw Township or was intended to. I proceed next to the fifth category of alleged discriminatory laws or policies. This is labelled in The Gambia’s Memorial as “segregation, confinement and denial of access to sustenance”. The general allegation is that many Bengali Muslims in northern Rakhine State are required to live in separate areas removed from the general population, and are denied freedom of movement and access to food, healthcare and other necessities.

Those who have one of the three forms of citizenship have freedom of movement throughout Myanmar. Those who do not have such a form of citizenship can obtain a National Verification Card, an NVC. Those with an NVC can travel freely within their township, or in the case of Maungdaw and Buthidaung Townships, can travel freely within those two townships. Those with an NVC can also travel elsewhere in Myanmar after applying for and obtaining travel permission.

They can carry out fishing, trading and agricultural activities for their livelihoods. As I have explained earlier, an NVC is easy for anyone to obtain, and The Gambia does not claim otherwise.

Those who refuse to have an NVC, for political or other reasons, may face some practical difficulties, as I have explained.

In particular, they will have no identification card to produce if asked for one by the police when travelling. However, even then, The Gambia presents no evidence that anyone’s physical or biological existence has been imperilled through lack of an NVC.

The greatest number of Bengalis in northern Rakhine State is living in towns and villages. Hundreds of thousands did not leave for Bangladesh at the time of the events of 2016 and 2017. They largely continue to live in their homes, as they did before.

Those living in IDP camps are not compelled to stay there

and are free to leave, temporarily or permanently. Those living in IDP camps can come and go, interact with the outside world, receive visitors and take up employment.

Myanmar has presented evidence that conditions in IDP camps in Rakhine State are generally acceptable by international standards. Myanmar has also presented evidence of the humanitarian assistance, including food rations and non-food items, medical services and basic education, that have been continuously provided to those still residing in these IDP camps. There is no evidence that the population of the camps is declining due to a lack of such provision. It remains the long-term intention of the government to close the IDP camps and to resettle their inhabitants, and steps are being taken to achieve this. The fact that this has not been achieved to date does not mean that the population living in the IDP camps in the meantime is being physically or biologically destroyed.

The Gambia also claims that those living in Aung Mingalar are “trapped” or “confined” in a “ghetto”. This is emotive rhetoric. Aung Mingalar is simply a ward of Sittway, the capital city of Rakhine State, and has a population of only some 4,000 people. Myanmar says that healthcare services, education, livelihoods, and social and religious activities are freely accessible to them like others in the city.

I have already explained why Myanmar does not use the name “Rohingya” and why it uses the name “Bengali”. The Gambia has not challenged the historical background facts set out in Chapter 2 of Myanmar’s written pleadings. Failure to use a particular name to refer to a population is hardly evidence of an intent physically or biologically to destroy that population. For these reasons, and the further reasons in Myanmar’s written pleadings, The Gambia has not established that any of what it alleges to be discriminatory laws and policies are acts of genocide or evidence of a genocidal intent.

Vow to grasp deserved victories in the 13th ASEAN Para Games

THE 13th ASEAN Para Games will take place in Bangkok and Nakhon Ratchasima, Thailand, as the host from 20 to 26 January 2026. The Myanmar para sports contingent will take part in 11 sports, including swimming, athletics, boccia, bowling, chess, football, goalball, shooting, table tennis, volleyball, and weightlifting, out of 19 sports.

Not only athletes themselves but officials from the Myanmar Para Sports Federation and the entire people expect to secure a large number of medals to bring honour to the State. In its records, the Myanmar team has bagged 14 gold, 12 silver and 17 bronze medals, totalling 43 in the 11th games hosted by Indonesia, standing in the 6th position among the contending teams.

Likewise, Myanmar took the 6th position on the standing table by sweeping 15 gold, 22 silver and 19 bronze medals, totalling 56. As youth are the architects of our future world, the anti-corruption process must be built upon active youth participation. Anti-corruption agencies worldwide are increasingly advocating for the involvement of young people in their initiatives. Youth are the leaders of tomorrow, and they bear a profound duty to shape a world that is fair, just, transparent, and independent. Therefore, the fight against corruption must start now with young people. Corruption is not merely a criminal issue; it is a significant barrier to sustainable development that robs today's younger generation of their rightful opportunities. Thus, today's youth have a vital responsibility to fight against corruption hand-in-hand with the government. This is not optional – it is essential for creating an integrity-based future with zero-tolerance for corruption.

As such, this year's Myanmar sports contingent is responsible for securing a larger number of medals in the competitions of the games by showing off their brilliant skills based on the national spirit and patriotism dedicated to the motherland, Myanmar. As such, a total of 145 athletes, coaches and officials of the Myanmar sports contingent have to vow their achievements in the competitions with earnest efforts.

Currently, athletes from the Myanmar Para Sports Federation are under training with the support of eye specialists, physiotherapists and other technicians who are providing necessary aids for health and physical strength to the athletes on time. Moreover, the ministry and the federation provide treatment to the athletes with modern technologies and advanced medical equipment.

The State is ready to honour the winners of the competition with deserved awards. In fact, encouragement from the people and the government will be a great drive for the athletes of the Myanmar Para Sports Federation in clinching the titles in the 13th ASEAN Para Games. As such, Myanmar athletes have to gear up their efforts in the competitions so as to secure medals as their keenest ambitions.

As a Myanmar saying goes: Health is wealth. Moreover, sports competition aims to uplift the prestige of the State as well as the dignity of the people. If they secure deserved medals in the forthcoming games, it will be the best. If so, all the people will warmly welcome back the victorious Myanmar athletes. It will be a historical milestone for those athletes as well as the records of the Myanmar sports arena. That is why every athlete from the Myanmar para sports contingent needs to strive to firmly grasp the titles in the games.

The Power of Youth: Architects of an Integrity-Based Future

Our Future, Our Responsibility

As youth are the architects of our future world, the anti-corruption process must be built upon active youth participation. Anti-corruption agencies worldwide are increasingly advocating for the involvement of young people in their initiatives. Youth are the leaders of tomorrow, and they bear a profound duty to shape a world that is fair, just, transparent, and independent. Therefore, the fight against corruption must start now with young people. Corruption is not merely a criminal issue; it is a significant barrier to sustainable development that robs today's younger generation of their rightful opportunities. Thus, today's youth have a vital responsibility to fight against corruption hand-in-hand with the government. This is not optional – it is essential for creating an integrity-based future with zero-tolerance for corruption.

According to global data, there are over 1.9 billion young people in the world, accounting for approximately 25 per cent of the global population. Young people often feel that corruption directly hits their prospects, pushing them away from essential services like education, healthcare, social and job opportunities, as well as limiting their effective participation in social life. The future of the world is literally in the hands of the youth. If these hands lack integrity, the world will be plagued by impurities and crime. However, by empowering youth and giving them a platform to speak out, we can build an accountable future. Ignoring youth participation only leads to the erosion of trust in governance. If the bond between youth and the state weakens, corruption will continue to drain our resources and our shared future.

The Heart of Myanmar

According to the 2014 Census data, the youth population in Myanmar (aged 15 to 35) accounts for approximately 34 per cent of the total population. These 34 per cent are not merely spectators in the nation's anti-corruption movement; they are the catalysts for change who accelerate Myanmar's transition towards a more

transparent and accountable society. Recognizing this potential, Myanmar is actively nurturing and training its youth to participate responsibly in social and political affairs. If we take a look at Myanmar's anti-corruption agenda, we can see a clear and strategic focus on empowering the next generation to lead with integrity. This is being actively implemented through various creative platforms such as "Integrity Camps", "Edutainment Programmes", "Youth Talks", and "Panel Discussions". These initiatives are designed to instill ethical values in young minds while making the learning process engaging and impactful.

Furthermore, the responsibility to nurture youth is enshrined in the national legal framework. According to Article 28 (d) of the 2008 Constitution, the Union is committed to implementing a modern education system that promotes 'all-around correct thinking and good moral character,' both of which are foundational to nation-building. Moreover, Article 33 mandates the Union to strive for youth to possess a dynamic patriotic spirit, correct thinking, and the development of the 'Five Noble Strengths' (Bala Nga Dan). Among these, 'Moral Strength' is directly linked to the fight against corruption and upholding the ethical guidelines. Corruption is often the result of a breakdown in ethical behav-

iour; therefore, strengthening the moral fabric of our youth is a constitutional necessity. By prioritizing these values, the Constitution highlights the nation's duty to cultivate citizens who uphold integrity and ethics as the guardians of a clean society.

Youth Participation in Myanmar

For the anti-corruption tasks, the anti-corruption law was enacted in 2013, and the anti-corruption commission was formed in 2014 in line with the international standards. The vision of the Commission is to promote public prosperity through combating widespread corruption in the country, hand in hand with the people. The Commission is fighting corruption for public prosperity, with a strong belief that this is a national cause. The three key pillars of the commission's tasks are prevention, awareness raising and investigation. In combating corruption, Proactive prevention is far superior to reactive punishment. Focusing on youth education today is a proactive strategy to prevent future corruption. Instead of relying solely on taking action after a crime has occurred, fostering integrity from a young age ensures that the seeds of corruption never take root.

In Myanmar, leaving no youth



A painting contest at the forum.

By Linn Latt

behind is a core principle of the anti-corruption agenda. This means that every young person, regardless of their background or location, has a vital role to play in building a culture of integrity. This commitment is solidified by Section 16 (j) of the Anti-Corruption Law (2013), which mandates the Commission to coordinate with relevant departments and organizations to integrate corruption-related awareness lessons into the primary education system. This legal provision serves as the bedrock for a corruption-free future. In accordance with this mandate, the Commission has developed and published comprehensive 'Teacher Guidebooks' for primary and middle schools, as well as 'Integrity Modules' for high school and university levels. These resources have been systematically distributed to relevant ministries and organizations, ensuring that the seeds of ethics and honesty are sown early in the minds of our future leaders.

(ii) Digital Empowerment - In this digital age, youth are tech-savvy "Catalysts for Change". By leveraging social media and various digital tools, young people can lead powerful advocacy campaigns to raise public awareness. Furthermore, we can harness the power of Artificial Intelligence (AI) to distribute anti-corruption knowledge and resources to the youth in real-time. This digital approach ensures that information is accessible, engaging, and capable of reaching a wider audience across the nation.

Ways to fight against corruption with youth

There are several ways to involve young people in the anti-corruption movement. However, the most effective and key strategies are as follows:

(i) Education and Value-Based Learning - Instilling integrity in young minds since childhood is the most sustainable approach. Integrity education should be integrated into the school curriculum, similar to Civic Education. This nurtures students to become responsible citizens who uphold a zero-tolerance attitude toward corruption throughout their lives. By learning these values early, the next generation will inherently reject unethical practices.

(ii) Active Engagement - Empowering youth by allowing them to participate actively in the fight against corruption is a key factor for success. Through initiatives such as Youth Integrity Clubs, Integrity Camps, and Edutainment Programmes, we provide a



Youth delegates discuss with scholars at the forum.

songs, poems, visuals, and cartoons, the Commission has successfully bridged the gap between complex legal concepts and young minds. The results are significant: between 2022 and 2025, the Commission conducted over 321 educational programmes across various schools nationwide. Furthermore, the Commission is organizing "Youth Talks", specifically designed to "give the floor" to young people. These platforms allow youth to freely express their opinions, share their concepts of integrity, and discuss challenges in fighting corruption. These initiatives do more than just inform; they inspire a new generation to embrace honesty as a core value. This massive outreach proves that when integrity is taught with creativity and inclusivity, it resonates deeply with the youth, paving the way for a cleaner and more ethical society.

Engaging the Future Leader

Fighting corruption is not an easy task. It requires a systemic approach and the adoption of a comprehensive strategy that involves every level of society. At the heart of this strategy lies the youth, who are the architects of an integrity-based society. Recognizing this vital role, the United Nations marked International Anti-Corruption Day on December 9, 2025, with the powerful theme: "Uniting with Youth Against Corruption: Shaping Tomorrow's Integrity". In alignment with this global movement, Myanmar held a commemorative event in Nay Pyi Taw, which included an awarding ceremony for young winners of national competitions in anti-corruption awareness videos, posters, and paintings. These awards are more than just trophies; they symbolize the nation's trust in its youth to lead the way towards a transparent and accountable future.

voices of young people are heard, and their role in nation-building is fully recognized.

Let's Do It Together: A Call to Action

To cultivate a national culture that refuses to tolerate corruption and to prevent misconduct and unethical behaviour, we must start with our youth. The nation is dedicated to nurturing young citizens who uphold integrity and possess the Five Noble Strengths. The fight against corruption is not a sprint, but a marathon – one that requires the relentless energy, unwavering honesty, and deep commitment of the younger generation. As the architects of our future, young people in Myanmar hold the power to dismantle the structures of corruption and replace them with the pillars of transparency and accountability. By integrating integrity into the education system and upholding the constitutional values of moral strength, Myanmar is securing its path towards a prosperous future. Through various Youth Awareness Programmes, we are building a peaceful, just, and strong nation where corruption has no place to stand.

Let's fight against corruption, hand in hand with the youth!

References - <https://www.acem.gov.mm/>

NATIONAL

FROM PAGE 5

No	Name	CSC	Representative No	Representing Party/Independent
39	U Aung Kyaw Moe	12/UKaTa (C) 132235	South Okkalapa Township Representative 1	Union Solidarity and Development Party
40	U Aung Naing Thu	9/MaNaMa (C) 067114	Cocokyun Township Representative 1	Union Solidarity and Development Party
41	Daw Khin Thet Mar	12/KaMaTa (C) 039378	Kyimyindine Township Representative 1	National Unity Party
42	U Thurein Lin	12/BaHaNa (C) 024046	Insein Township Representative 1	Union Solidarity and Development Party
Shan State (FPTP)				
43	U Sai Than Tun (aka) U Thein Than Tun	13/YaSaNa (C) 040683	Ywangan Township Representative 1	Danu Nationality Democracy Party
44	Khun Than Htoo	13/SaSaNa (C) 015623	Sisang Township Representative 1	Pa-O National Organization Party
45	U Khun Tun Phyu	12/BaHaNa (C) 017680	Kalaw Township Representative 1	Union Solidarity and Development Party
46	U Aung Kyaw Nyunt	13/YaSaNa (C) 036474	Yatsauk Township Representative 1	Union Solidarity and Development Party
47	Daw Nan Seng Moon	13/LaYaNa (C) 126632	Tanyang Township Representative 1	Union Solidarity and Development Party
48	U Sai Kham Kaw	13/MaRaTa (C) 005954	Mongyal Township Representative 1	Union Solidarity and Development Party
49	U Win Hlaing	9/PaThaKa (C) 001452	Kunhing Township Representative 1	Shan and Nationalities Democratic Party
50	U Sai Kyaw Moe	1/MaKaNa (C) 008491	Mongpan Township Representative 1	Union Solidarity and Development Party
51	Khun Han Thein Oo	13/TaKaNa (C) 065556	Maukmae Township Representative 1	Union Solidarity and Development Party
52	Daw Nan Hmut Num	13/LaYaNa (C) 003847	Mongkai Township Representative 1	Shan and Nationalities Democratic Party
53	Daw Nan Es Kee Moe	13/LaKhaNa (C) 025714	Lecha Township Representative 1	Shan and Nationalities Democratic Party
Ayeyawady Region (FPTP)				
54	U Thein Tun	14/PaThaRa (C) 009847	Kyaunggon Township Representative 1	Union Solidarity and Development Party
55	Saw Thet Naing Oo	14/PaThaRa (C) 037478	Kangyidaunt Township Representative 1	Union Solidarity and Development Party
56	U Ko Ko Zin	14/ThaPaNa (C) 050860	Thaboung Township Representative 1	Union Solidarity and Development Party
57	U Kyi Ko Ko	14/KaLaNa (C) 008987	Kyaiklat Township Representative 1	Union Solidarity and Development Party
58	U Kyaw Kyaw (aka) U Kyaw Myo Tin	14/PhaPaNa (C) 009828	Pyapon Township Representative 1	Union Solidarity and Development Party
59	U Hla Htay	14/BaKaLa (C) 007853	Bokalay Township Representative 1	Union Solidarity and Development Party
60	U Min Kyin San (aka) U Zar Ni Kyin San	10/KaHtaNa (C) 066311	Pantanaw Township Representative 1	Union Solidarity and Development Party
61	U Saw Mya Thein	14/WaKhaMa (C) 011403	Wakema Township Representative 1	National Unity Party
62	U Khin Maung Win	14/AhMaNa (C) 007853	Eainme Township Representative 1	Union Solidarity and Development Party
Kayah State Hluttaw (Bamar Nationalities Constituency)				
63	Daw Khin Thandar Htun	12/MaGaTa (C) 100236	Bamar Nationalities Constituency	Union Solidarity and Development Party
Magway Region Hluttaw (Chin Nationalities Constituency)				
64	U Tun Khin	8/SaTaRa (C) 002762	Chin Nationalities Constituency	Union Solidarity and Development Party
Mon State Hluttaw (Nationalities Constituency)				
65	U Myo Min Hlaing	10/KhaHsaNa (C) 000614	Bamar Nationalities Constituency	Union Solidarity and Development Party
66	U Aung Kyaw Thein	10/KaMaRa (C) 054851	Kayin Nationalities Constituency	Union Solidarity and Development Party
67	U Chit Thein	10/ThaHtaNa (C) 150539	Pa-O Nationalities Constituency	Pa-O National Development Progress Party

Sd/Than Soe
Chairman
Union Election Commission

Statement of Union Solidarity and Development Party 1/2026

20 January 2026
3rd waxing of Tabodwe, 1387 ME

THE Myanmar delegation, led by Union Minister U Ko Ko Hlaing of the Office of the President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and Union Minister for Legal Affairs and Union Attorney-General Dr Thida Oo, visited the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in The Hague, the Netherlands, from 12 to 29 January 2026 to respond, in accordance with the law, to the allegations made by the Republic of The Gambia. This action demonstrates Myanmar's responsible conduct as a nation and its commitment to respecting and adhering to international legal norms.

The Union Solidarity and Development Party fully welcomes and supports the State's reliance on the principles of justice in addressing disputes effectively and transparently. Such actions not only present the factual realities of the case but also help the international community to understand these facts, thereby providing an essential foundation for building trust.

Accordingly, the Union Solidarity and Development Party officially expresses its support and appreciation for the efforts of the Myanmar delegation in representing the State at the ICJ and in resolving the matter in accordance with the law, and affirms that the Party remains fully aligned with the State's policies and positions.

Central Executive Committee
Union Solidarity and Development Party

Corrigendum

PLEASE read "... between 1 February and 30 June ..." instead of "... between 1 February and 31 August ..." expressed in the story under the headline of "Myanmar maize export to commence on 1 Feb under zero duty" in the 2nd paragraph of the first column on page 10 of this daily, issued on 20 January 2026. Error is regretted. — Ed

NATIONAL

324 offenders face legal action for sabotaging elections

THE seventh meeting of the Central Committee on Security Supervision for the Multiparty Democracy General Election was held yesterday afternoon at Areindama Hall, Myanmar Police Force Headquarters.

At the meeting, Central Committee on Security Supervision Chairman and Union Minister for Home Affairs Lt-Gen Tun Tun Naung said the multiparty democracy general election Phases I and II were successfully held in accordance with the dates set by the Union Election Commission, and the voter turnout was 52.13 per cent in Phase I, while 55.95 per cent in Phase II. Although the insurgents attempted to disrupt the election and prevent citizens from voting through intimidation, threats,



The seventh meeting of the Central Committee on Security Supervision for the Multiparty Democracy General Election underway yesterday, addressed by Union Minister Lt-Gen Tun Tun Naung.

and attacks, the people cast vote freely and actively.

The weaknesses should be learnt from Phases I and II, en-

suring that the voters can cast a vote peacefully and safely in

the coming Phase III, and the affiliated departments under the ministry should carry out more effective security measures.

He then instructed the officials to supervise the parties and candidates to follow the statements issued by the Union Election Commission.

He continued that action was taken against a total of 404 people – 324 males and 80 females – in 331 cases under “Law on the Protection of Multiparty Democratic General Elections from Obstruction, Disruption, and Destruction” for attempting to sabotage election processes until 19 January 2026.

Attendees coordinated the discussion, and the Union minister concluded the meeting. — MNA/KTZH

Myanmar, Russia pledge to deepen cooperation in agri sector



Union Minister U Min Naung holds talks with the Russian trade delegation yesterday.

UNION Minister for Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation U Min Naung, met yesterday afternoon with a delegation led by Mr Konstantin Kanarev, Trade Representative of the Russian Federation, and Mr Mark Zalutskii, Founder and CEO of Osnova Company, in Nay Pyi Taw.

The founder and CEO of Osnova Company explained the progress and results of a research programme jointly carried out with the Department of Agricultural

Research (Yezin) on Yantol foliar spray products, which help overcome crop losses caused by grain shattering before maturity and during harvesting in crops such as soybean, sesame, and rice, and the plans for future research programmes to be implemented.

The Union minister discussed measures to enhance cooperation in research and technological development, arrangements to support the importation of Yantol foliar

spray products into Myanmar, the production, distribution, and sale of these products domestically in accordance with existing laws and procedures, the establishment of a foliar spray factory to produce locally and opportunities for export to be effective support for agricultural sector of Myanmar.

Also present at the meeting were the permanent secretary and directors-general from the departments. — MNA/KTZH

Myanmar, India to discuss trade promotion at 9th Joint Trade Committee Meeting

UNION Minister for Commerce U Chit Swe met Indian Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Abhay Thakur and a delegation led by Additional Secretary Shri Nitin Kumar Yadav of the Department of Commerce under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry of India, who are in Nay Pyi Taw to attend the ninth Myanmar-India Joint Trade Committee Meeting, at the Union Minister’s reception hall in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday evening.

Both sides discussed ways to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes for Myanmar and India through the Joint Trade Committee, the implementation

of processes to promote bilateral trade, the extension of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on bilateral trade, the promotion of Myanmar’s agricultural exports, including pulses, to India, cooperation to facilitate the use of the two countries’ currencies in bilateral trade, and measures to enhance mutual exchanges between business communities of both countries.

The meeting was attended by the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Commerce, the Director-General of the Department of Trade, and other relevant officials. — MNA/MKKS



Union Minister U Chit Swe receives the Indian trade delegation yesterday.

NATIONAL

Union Info Minister honours MRTV freshers

TODAY, the media sector is of great importance. In addition to its three main duties — to inform, to entertain and to educate — the state-owned media should provide accurate information using various media approaches to encourage the people to participate enthusiastically in efforts for development and peace processes while also fostering their happiness, said Union Minister U Maung Maung Ohn.

He said so yesterday to the fresher staff who attended the capacity-building training and fresher welcome event at the MRTV in Tatkon, Nay Pyi Taw.

He also added that AI technology should be applied to change the data achieved from

the internet into information, and to wisdom, applying the knowledge and also based on critical thinking and ethical use.

MRTV staff members from diverse ethnic backgrounds are serving together in unity and solidarity, sharing common aspirations and carrying out for the interests of the country. They should continue to strive to become capable and reliable staff members whom the State can rely on.

The Union minister drew lots of 45 Buddha statues for MRTV families and K1.5million for the trainees.

He then posed for a documentary photo together with attendees and trainees.



The group documentary photo session of newcomers to MRTV, attended by Union Minister U Maung Maung Ohn.

A total of 144 staff members joined the capacity-building training.

After the event, the Union minister and party inspected the upgrading of the Surround Mixing and Mastering Studio.

The studio is being arranged to allow individual sound recording rooms for each musical instrument, ensemble recording

with full bands, and the creation and use of multiple surround sound systems with clear and high-quality audio.

They also observed the repair works being carried out by the Shwe Taung construction company inside the main building of MRTV, which was hit by the Mandalay earthquake.

They inspected the test use

of machines to broadcast Hluttaw meetings live, and the installation of the fourth phase (250 tonnes) out of the fourth phase (1,000 tonnes, chiller system) at the main building.

The Union minister and party had lunch together with officers and freshers of MRTV at the Office Canteen. — MNA/ KTZH

Myanmar hosts 10th ASEAN Seaport Interdiction Task Force meeting

THE 10th ASEAN Seaport Interdiction Task Force Meeting, hosted by Myanmar, was held online yesterday at the meeting hall of the former office of the commander of the Drug Enforcement Division under the Myanmar Police Force (Bukwe) in Nay Pyi Taw.

At the meeting, the head of the International Relations Department of the Drug Enforcement Division under the Myanmar Police Force highlighted the rapidly changing situation regarding drugs and synthetic drugs, the increasing use of encrypted communication systems and digital plat-



The 10th ASEAN Seaport Interdiction Task Force Meeting underway online yesterday.

forms by drug gangs as shown by recent arrests, the need to upgrade prevention and enforcement processes to keep

pace with modern systems, the importance of controlling precursor chemicals at key ports due to their transport through

seaports, and the vulnerability of seaports — given their vital role in regional trade and international connectivity — to becoming prime targets for cross-border gangs, underscoring the need for greater cooperation among member states to ensure seaport security.

He also said that Myanmar will further enhance joint operations with ASEAN member countries, pay special attention to seaport security and trade, urge member countries to build stronger mutual trust through faster and smoother seaport operations and timely, consistent information exchange, accel-

erate seaport checkpoints, and continue efforts toward achieving the common goal of a drug-free ASEAN region.

The meeting was attended by a delegation led by Police Lt-Col Aung Kyaw Oo of Myanmar Maritime Police Division under the Myanmar Police Force, as well as representatives from ASEAN member countries and the ASEAN Secretariat. ASEAN member countries presented their national drug situations, discussed the work of the ASEAN Sea Port Interdiction Task Force, and made recommendations for future cooperation. — MNA/TH

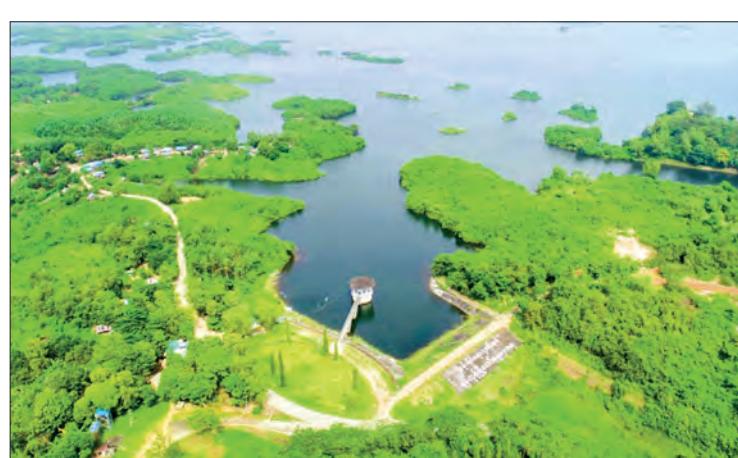
YR receives irrigation water for over 37,000 acres of summer paddy

ACCORDING to the Irrigation and Water Utilization Management Department (Water Resources), more than 250,000 acres of summer paddy are being planned for cultivation in Yangon Region for both domestic consumption and export, and over 80,000 acres had already been planted by the second week of January. To ensure the successful growth of summer paddy fields, irrigation water has been supplied to 37,353 acres from the Ngamoeyeik

Dam and electric pumping stations.

During the current summer paddy season, irrigation water has been delivered to 22,133 acres through the Ngamoeyeik canals, 7,386 acres via the dam's sluice gates, and 7,834 acres through electric pumping stations using dam water, bringing the total to 37,353 acres.

"To increase water storage in the reservoirs, we installed shutters at spillways and reinforced them with sandbags



An aerial drone view of the dam supplying irrigation water to surrounding areas. **PHOTO: KANU**

towards the end of the rainy season. Water release for summer paddy cultivation began on 15 December. As the cultivated area has expanded compared with last year's summer paddy season, we plan to release a greater volume of water this year. We are pleased that sufficient reservoir water can be supplied to support the agricultural sector across the region," said U Tun Lwin, Staff Officer (Civil) of the Ngamoeyeik Dam.

SEE PAGE 14

Tatmadaw restores Thabeikkyin-Mogok route; Travel resumes

THE Tatmadaw troops were able to fully regain control of the Thabeikkyin-Mogok communication route, which had been temporarily controlled by so-called PDF insurgent groups, on 19 January. As a result, from today onwards, locals and travellers can freely and safely move along the Mandalay-Thabeikkyin-Mogok route, and regional trade and transportation activities can now be conducted smoothly and normally.

The NUG-affiliated insurgent groups had recruited young people from Mandalay, Sagaing, and Meiktila plains and DCS personnel who had betrayed their duties, providing them with insurgent training to produce fighters under the PDF name since 25 June 2024. They collected unlawful forces, encouraged support, and collaborated with some ethnic armed organizations to capture Mandalay. Operating under the "Shan-Mann military campaign," they carried out insurgent activities along the Mogok-Thabeikkyin-Madaya-Mandalay route and targeted towns, villages, government and private factories, and security posts, simultaneously coordinating with military operations in Kachin

State and northern Shan State, seeking to reach Mandalay.

Due to the overwhelming strength of these insurgents, security forces had to implement counter-terrorism operations (CTOs) across the region. Troops coordinated ground and air intelligence, acting courageously to prevent insurgents from taking full control of towns, villages, factories, and workplaces. As a result, the Thabeikkyin area, under temporary insurgent control, was fully secured on 23 July 2025; the Alpha cement factory and surrounding areas on 28 August; the Setawgyi dam and surrounding areas on 25 November; the Sin Kuu area on 19 December; and the Ayeyawady bridge (Yadana Theinga) on 22 December. These operations successfully dismantled the insurgents' military ambitions.

During the time insurgents held these areas, they carried out attacks by constructing bunkers around religious buildings, schools, administrative offices, hospitals, and residential homes, planting landmines on public routes, sabotaging government-owned factories and private workplaces, misusing industrial

products for personal gain, and using residents as human shields to attack security forces. These actions caused severe disruptions to local economic, social, health, and educational activities.

By gradually regaining control of the insurgent-held areas, the Tatmadaw earned the trust and support of residents, while insurgent groups lost public backing. Some PDF members, realizing the futility of their actions and unable to accept internal leadership disputes, began cooperating with nearby Tatmadaw units, entering the legal fold together with weapons.

Tatmadaw forces have systematically combined intelligence reports from locals and PDF defectors to clear territories along the Mandalay-Madaya-Singu-Thabeikkyin corridor. The route was progressively secured: on 31 December, the Mandalay-Madaya-Singu-Thabeikkyin route; on 14 January, a local battalion and Seingon village along the Thabeikkyin-Mogok route; and on 15 January, the Kin village and the enemy's military camp areas were brought under full control.

Remaining stretches of the



This image and inset show Tatmadaw columns and troops retaking the Thabeikkyin-Mogok route.

Thabeikkyin-Mogok route were cleared and secured by Tatmadaw columns: from Kin village, troops advanced on 19 January to the target area near Malepauk village and on 20 January to Malepauk village itself; from On-dan village, troops secured Aung Bardan on 17 January, Seinein on 18 January, and Shwenyaungpin on 19 January. On 20 January, all Tatmadaw units coordinated at Malepauk village, fully regaining control of the Thabeikkyin-Mogok communication route and reopening it for public use.

Tatmadaw troops continued efforts to maintain peace and security across the Mandalay-Singu-Madaya-Thabeikkyin-Mogok region, allowing civilians to travel safely and freely. Armed clashes occurred with insurgent groups during operations, and some Tatmadaw members sacrificed their lives for the nation, while others sustained injuries.

With the communication routes fully restored, vehicular traffic can now operate normally, and the movement of goods and trade within the region can proceed efficiently. Residents can resume educational, healthcare, and socioeconomic activities, strengthening their livelihoods.

Local people, grateful and supportive of the Tatmadaw, welcomed the returning troops along the routes with flowers, drums, and traditional celebratory displays, creating a scene of unity between the Tatmadaw and civilians. Tatmadaw forces will continue restoration efforts, repairing roads, administrative buildings, homes, and schools damaged by insurgent actions. They will cooperate with relevant authorities to ensure smooth trade, safe travel, and strengthened security and governance throughout the region. — MNA/KZL

Myanmar repatriates 24 foreigners linked to telecom fraud

A total of 24 foreign nationals who were involved in telecom fraud and other criminal activities have been repatriated from Myanmar to their respective countries via the Myanmar-Thailand Friendship Bridge II.

The group includes 22 Vietnamese and two Singaporean nationals who had illegally entered Myanmar through border routes, conducting online gambling, online scams, and other criminal acts in Kayin State and the Myawaddy-Shwe Kokko areas. The repatriation process was carried out in accordance with the law and international cooperation, prioritizing humanitarian considerations and fostering friendly relations between countries.



The immigration process in progress for the deportation of undocumented foreign entrants.

To ensure that the repatriation process was orderly, smooth, and accurate, U Kaung San Lin, Chairman of the Myawaddy District Administration and Management Committee, together with relevant officials, coordinated

with departmental authorities to verify and cross-check all records and information. Following this verification, the formal repatriation ceremony was conducted, attended by officials from the Deputy Director of the District

Immigration and Population office, Ms Hoang Diem Hanh, Counsellor at the Vietnamese Embassy in Thailand, Mr Kenneth Lui, First Secretary at the Singapore Embassy in Thailand, and other responsible officials, as well as representatives from Thailand's Tak Province Immigration Department. Myanmar authorities systematically handed over documentation and records of the foreign nationals to their respective countries.

Between 30 January 2025 and 20 January 2026, a total of 14,151 foreign nationals who had entered Myawaddy Township illegally were detained, screened, and processed. Among them, 12,176 were repatriated to their respective countries via Thai-

land in compliance with legal procedures. The remaining 1,975 individuals are ready for repatriation, and authorities continue to provide secure custody and care.

The Myanmar government continues to actively identify, apprehend, and take strong action against foreigners involved in online scam centres and other criminal networks. Myanmar collaborates closely with neighbouring countries, regional partners, and international organizations to ensure effective law enforcement. Authorities are coordinating prompt and safe repatriation to their respective countries while ensuring their welfare and protection for foreign nationals affected by misfortune or victims of human trafficking. — MNA/KZL

NATIONAL

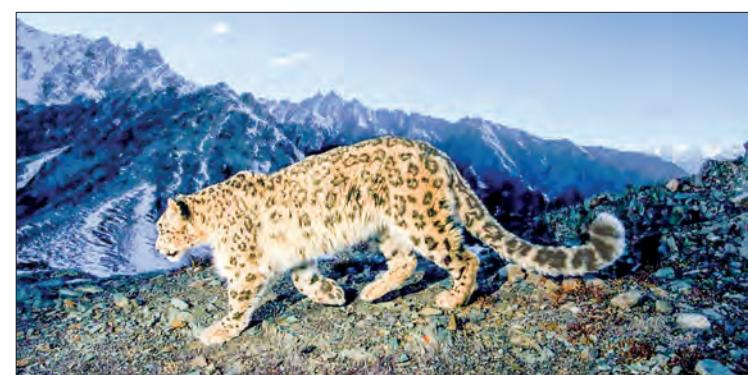
Myanmar Snow Leopard Study Finds 60% of Habitat in China

Due to human energy consumption and deforestation, environmental degradation has increasingly threatened the Earth's long-term sustainability. The impacts on air, soil, water, forests, and wildlife are causing natural disasters and altering ecosystems year by year. In particular, deforestation and melting glaciers highlight global warming. Forests and glaciers interact with human survival, maintaining ecological balance, and wildlife within these ecosystems, including species in forests and glacial mountain ranges, are essential components of nature.

Among these species, the snow leopard (*Panthera uncia*), widely recognized as the "king of snowy mountains," is a wild cat species belonging to the large cat family, classified under the *Panthera uncia* subspecies. International conservation organizations have given it protected status. The International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) lists the snow leopard as a vulnerable species, noting that it faces risks of extinction globally, with ongoing

conservation efforts.

Snow leopards can leap approximately 15 metres and measure 1.4 metres in body length, with tails ranging from 90–100 centimetres. Their fur is a mix of grey and white with black spots. They are mostly nocturnal and solitary. Their tails contain thick fur to help maintain balance and resist cold, and their large paws allow movement on snow. Female

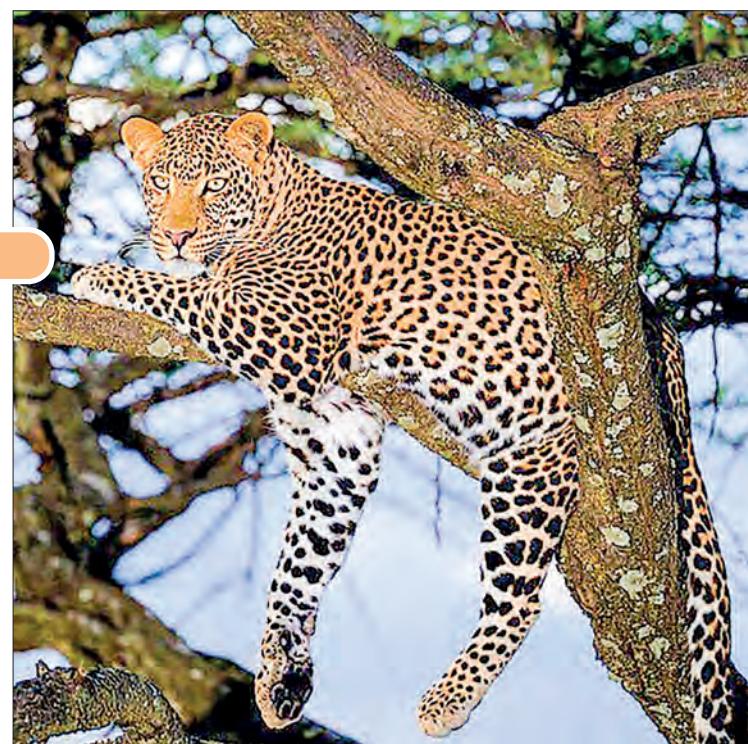


snow leopards have a gestation period of about 100 days, usually giving birth to 2–3 cubs. They are primarily found in Central Asia, including China, India, Mongolia, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Bhutan, Kazakhstan, Nepal, and Russia, and face decreasing numbers due to poaching for fur.

By NyaungU Phee

Globally, snow leopard populations in glacial mountains are estimated to range between 2,700 and 3,300 individuals, while some surveys suggest 3,000–5,000 individuals exist worldwide. Monitoring remains challenging due to wide-ranging habitats and elusive behaviour.

In Myanmar, snow leopard populations were studied in the



Snow Leopard Group, 19 January 2026, Yangon.

eras were installed at 11,648 feet and 11,705 feet across glaciers in the Khakaborazi area to record and monitor the species.

Snow leopards in Myanmar are part of the critical northern glacier ecosystem, and China's Sanjiangyuan region, bordering Myanmar, is one of the densest habitats, containing roughly 60 per cent of the world's snow leopard population. Conservation research has recorded snow leopard movements and estimated population sizes using infrared camera surveys and over 10,000 movement records, making it

one of the largest studies globally.

The Khakaborazi National Park, located along Myanmar's northern glacier ranges, remains an essential habitat for the rare snow leopard. The species plays a key role in the glacial ecosystem. Myanmar, in collaboration with China, continues to conduct research and conservation efforts. Monitoring and protecting snow leopards in this border region demonstrates the country's capacity to safeguard endangered wildlife in Southeast Asia and supports global conservation initiatives. — KZL

YR receives irrigation water for over 37,000 acres of summer paddy

FROM PAGE 12

For the summer paddy fields, which farmers rely on heavily, reservoir water is being released from December until the first week of May through the main Ngamoeyeik canals and their branches, including the main left and right canals and their distributaries. To prevent water loss during irrigation, the Irrigation and Water Utilization Management Department (Water Resources) is working in cooperation with Water User Groups.

To ensure that farmers' summer paddy fields across the Yangon Region receive sufficient irrigation water, reservoir water is being released from the Ngamoeyeik Dam in Hlegu Township, Lagwinbyin Dam, Kalihtaw Dam, and the Tabula Dam in Taikkyi Township. Irrigation water continues to be supplied to 37,353 acres of summer paddy fields through the Ngamoeyeik Dam and electric pumping projects to ensure the successful production of summer paddy. — Nyein Thu (MNA)/MKKS

Yangon to host 79th Mon National Day & flag-hoisting ceremony on 2 Feb



Mon National Day celebrations in progress in the previous year.

THE 79th Mon National Day ceremony and flag-hoisting ceremony will be held on 2 February at the National Theatre, located in Dagon Township, Yangon Region, according to Nai Htaw Oo, a member of the Central Executive Committee of the Mon Literature and Culture Association (Yangon Region).

The Mon National Day ceremony and the flag-hoisting ceremony are organized with the objectives of

preserving and promoting the traditional cultural heritage of the Mon people, reviving and strengthening the national spirit, and encouraging interest in the promotion and development of Mon literature and culture.

"The ceremony will be held on 2 February. The flag-hoisting ceremony will take place at 8 am, and at 10 am. prizes and certificates of honour will be presented to winners

of the Mon literature and traditional Mon singing, dancing and music competitions organized by the Mon Literature and Culture Association. We are also encouraging people to attend the 79th Mon National Day ceremony in traditional Mon attire," said Nai Htaw Oo.

Mon National Day ceremonies are commonly held in areas where large numbers of Mon people reside, including Mon State, Kayin State, Yangon Region, Bago Region and Tanintharyi Region, and Mon communities living abroad also commemorate Mon National Day.

Mon National Day is observed in commemoration of the first waning day of Tabodwe in Sasana Era 1116 (AD 573), the date on which the Mon brothers Prince Thamala and Prince Wimala founded the royal capital of Hanthawady, and the day has since been designated and celebrated as Mon National Day. — ASH/MKKS

SPORTS

China's Wu and Wang shine, defending champs advance at Australian Open

CHINESE players Wu Yibing and Wang Xinyu reached the second round of the Australian Open after stirring victories, while Jannik Sinner and Madison Keys made successful starts to their title defences on Tuesday.

Having rolled through the qualifying draw, Wu showcased his confident form by outlasting Italy's Luca Nardi to reach the second round of the Australian Open for the first time in his career.

Wu was rewarded for his aggressive play and he hit 45 winners to prevail 7-5, 4-6, 6-4, 6-2 in just under three hours.

The 26-year-old will next play Eliot Spizzirri, who upset 28th seed Joao Fonseca.

In the night session, Sinner started his quest for a third straight Australian Open title by comfortably winning the opening two sets before France's Hugo Gaston retired injured.

An ailing Gaston, world No 93, had to pull the pin just

68 minutes into the first round match after struggling to move around the centre court of Rod Laver Arena.

Sinner, a four-time grand slam champion, hit 19 winners and led 6-2, 6-1 in his first match in over two months.

"Not the way you want to win the match but he's a very talented player," Sinner said. "I'm very happy to come here, it's a special place".

Americans Ben Shelton and Taylor Fritz also advanced.

In the women's draw, Wang underlined her status as China's highest-ranked player at this year's Australian Open after a 6-3, 6-3 victory over qualifier Anhelina Kalinina.

The world No 46 fired down 10 aces in her dominant 6-3, 6-3 first round victory in one hour and 33 minutes.

Wang will play former French Open champion Jelena Ostapenko in the second round. — Xinhua



4 Myanmar fighters gear up for ONE Friday Fights 139 in Bangkok

ONE Friday Fights 139 will feature four Myanmar fighters ready to make an impact on 23 January. Veteran Soe Lin Oo returns in the main event against Thai fighter Worapon, aiming to end his three-fight losing streak.

Soe Lin Oo has fought six times in ONE, winning three and losing three, while Worapon has competed in elev-

en matches, winning six and losing five. Kyaw Swar Win, already familiar to Myanmar fans, will make his ONE debut against Japanese fighter Muga, who previously fought Myanmar fighters Eh Mwi and Super Yay Chan, losing to Eh Mwi but defeating Super Yaychan.

Nay Yine, a Myanmar fighter making his ONE de-

but, will face Thai fighter Khunsuk, who brings experience from 12 previous ONE fights. Meanwhile, Salai Htan Khee Shein will compete in his second ONE match, seeking to bounce back after losing his debut. He will take on Thai fighter YodUdon, who has fought four times in ONE, winning two and losing two. — Shine Htet Zaw/KZL

Manchester City signs Guehi amid defensive crisis

MANCHESTER City has confirmed the signing of Crystal Palace captain Marc Guehi in a reported 20 million-pound (US\$26.8 million) deal to strengthen its defence after recent injury setbacks. The club announced Monday the signing of Guehi on a five-and-a-half-year deal, through to the summer of 2031.

Manchester City first opened talks with the 25-year-old earlier this month following injuries to defenders Josko Gvardiol and Ruben Dias.

Those absences were evident in Saturday's 2-0 defeat away to Manchester United, when Pep Guardiola's side fielded a back four featuring three players aged 21 or under - Rico Lewis, Abdukodir Khusanov and Max Alleyne - alongside 30-year-old Nathan Ake. Alleyne was replaced at halftime by another 20-year-old, Nico O'Reilly.

Guehi said he is "really happy and incredibly proud" to become a Manchester City player. — Xinhua



Jannik Sinner hits a return during the men's singles 1st round match between Hugo Gaston of France and Jannik Sinner of Italy at the Australian Open tennis tournament in Melbourne, Australia, 20 January 2026. PHOTO: XINHUA

Salah returns to Liverpool training after AFCON

MOHAMED Salah made his much-anticipated return to Liverpool training on Tuesday following the Africa Cup of Nations as the club prepare for their Champions League match against Marseille.

The Egypt forward was put through his paces during a gentle workout with the rest of the squad at the club's training centre.

Salah's return has been a major talking point after he took aim at Liverpool in an explosive interview early last month.

He accused the club of

throwing him "under the bus" after he was benched for three games in a row and said he had no relationship with manager Arne Slot.

But he appeared as a substitute in a 2-0 Premier League win against Brighton on 13 December, providing a assist, and Slot subsequently said the club had moved on from the furore.

Last week Slot said he was "happy" Salah would be returning, refusing to divulge the content of his conversations with the 33-year-old.

The Liverpool boss said he



Liverpool's Egyptian striker (11) Mohamed Salah smiles as he attends a team training session at their training ground in Kirkby, Liverpool, north-west England on 20 January 2026, on the eve of their UEFA Champions League, league phase football match against Olympique Marseille in Marseille. PHOTO: AFP

was unsure whether the forward would face Marseille in France on Wednesday.

Liverpool are currently ninth in the league phase of the Champions League.

The top eight qualify automatically for the last 16 while teams placed from ninth to 24th face a play-off round.

Salah scored 29 league goals to win the Premier League Golden Boot last season as Liverpool romped to a 20th English league title, but has managed just four goals during the current campaign. — AFP

China's Wu and Wang
shine, defending
champs advance at
Australian Open



PAGE 15

Sovereignty, integrity of Greenland, Denmark's territory "non-negotiable": Ursula von der Leyen



European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen speaks at the World Economic Forum annual meeting in Davos, Switzerland, 20 January 2026. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

EUROPEAN Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said Tuesday that the European Union stands in full solidarity with Greenland and the Kingdom of Denmark, stressing that their sovereignty and territorial integrity are non-negotiable.

In a special address at the World Economic Forum annual meeting in Davos, von der Leyen said the EU is preparing an Arctic security support package built on five pillars, including stepped-up investment in Greenland's economy and infrastructure and increased defence spending on European icebreaker capability.

"First principle: full solidarity with Greenland and the Kingdom of Denmark. The sovereignty and integrity of their territory is non-negotiable," she said.

Von der Leyen said the EU also plans to channel a major European investment push into Greenland to support the local economy and infrastructure, while using

the bloc's defence spending increase to bolster European icebreaker capability and other equipment seen as vital to Arctic security.

She said Europe must adjust to a "new security architecture and realities" and is preparing its own security strategy, including an upgraded Arctic strategy, to be published later this year.

"And at the heart of this will be the fundamental principle: It is for sovereign people to decide their own future," she said.

Von der Leyen also warned that proposed additional tariffs by US President Donald Trump linked to Greenland would be "a mistake especially between long-standing allies." She noted that the EU and the United States agreed to a trade deal last July. "In politics as in business — a deal is a deal," she said, adding that "when friends shake hands, it must mean something". — Xinhua

Russian special envoy
Dmitriev plans to meet
with US delegation
representatives in
Davos - Kremlin

KIRILL Dmitriev, head of the Russian Direct Investment Fund (RDIF) and special presidential envoy for economic cooperation with foreign countries, plans to meet with some representatives of the US delegation in Davos, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said on Tuesday.

Dmitriev arrived in Davos, where the World Economic Forum is taking place. Several Western media outlets, citing sources familiar with the matter, reported that he might hold meetings with members of the US delegation during this visit.

Dmitriev is passing on information on a peaceful settlement in Ukraine to the US side, Peskov stated. He did not confirm that the RDIF CEO has a meeting scheduled with US President Donald Trump. Russia supports the restoration of trade and economic relations with the United States, Peskov said. Moscow is unaware of the ongoing discussions between Ukrainians and Europeans, Dmitry Peskov said. — SPUTNIK

Hamas says "fully ready" for power handover procedures



Displaced Palestinians carry jerricans amid tent shelters set up along the shore in Gaza City as strong winter winds sweep the Palestinian enclave on 13 January 2026. **PHOTO: AFP**

HAMAS said Monday that it is "fully ready" to transfer administrative powers to a newly-formed Palestinian technocratic committee tasked with governing Gaza in the post-war phase.

The group pledged to ensure "a smooth and orderly transition" that protects public sector rights and guarantees the continuity of essential services for civilians, the Hamas-run Gaza government media office said in a statement.

The statement framed the adminis-

trative transition as part of the second phase of the Gaza peace deal, while strongly linking it to the overarching demand for a complete end to Israeli "aggression" in Gaza.

It emphasized the "inherent right" of Palestinians to reconstruction conducted in a manner that "preserves Palestinian national rights and sovereignty", and reiterated the goal of an independent Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital.

The 15-member Palestinian technocratic committee to temporarily administer the post-war Gaza officially launched its work on Friday through a meeting in Cairo, prioritizing Gaza's "humanitarian file". The committee arrived in the Egyptian capital on Thursday, delayed by a day due to Israeli obstruction, an Egyptian source told Xinhua.

Meanwhile, violence continues in the enclave on Monday. Gaza Civil Defence spokesperson Mahmoud Basal told Xinhua that three Palestinians were killed by Israeli fire in separate incidents in Khan Younis and Rafah areas.

Basal said Israeli forces regularly target shelters and civilian areas, calling the actions "a clear and blatant violation of all humanitarian and international laws".

Local sources also reported Israeli airstrikes east of Khan Younis and artillery shelling in eastern Gaza, alongside the demolition of residential homes.

The Israeli side has yet to comment on the latest incidents.

Since the ceasefire between Hamas and Israel took effect in October 2025, at least 465 Palestinians have been killed, raising the total death toll since October 2023 to 71,550, Gaza-based health authorities said Monday. — Xinhua