

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.

Acting President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and SSPC Chair Senior General Min Aung Hlaing Speaks with Voters While Touring Polling Sites

ELECTION plays a key role in the democratic system, and voter people must exercise their right to vote – a fundamental citizen's right – to choose and decide the future direction of the country.

Phase III of the Multiparty Democratic General Election 2025 of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar began at 6 am yesterday in the respective townships. Voting people cast their ballots energetically and orderly at their designated polling stations, exercising their free will and choice without any pressure, with pride in their country.

Acting President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and State Security and Peace Commission Chairman Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, accompanied by Commission Secretary General Ye Win Oo and party, visited polling stations in Mandalay Region.

During the visits, the Senior General observed actions of officials checking voter lists in the computer system and the active participation of voters in casting their ballots at the relevant polling stations in Chanmyathazi and Patheingyi townships. The Senior General cordially conversed with other people on their experiences in casting ballots, the use of MEVM and the duty serving of polling staff members.

Voters who came to cast their ballots also felt happy and honoured that the Senior Gen-



Acting President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and State Security and Peace Commission Chairman Senior General Min Aung Hlaing cordially converses with voter people in Patheingyi Township of Mandalay Region yesterday.

eral personally observed and supported the voting process. They warmly and cordially greeted the Senior General and his entourage in return. Moreover, the voters expressed that they came to cast their ballots according to their own will and shared their experiences of voting. They said that voting with the MEVM machine was easier and faster,

and that the voter slips were generated exactly as they cast their votes. They cordially noted that it is impossible to manipulate or steal votes and that the entire voting process was conducted smoothly. The voters expressed the convenience of casting votes in a frank and friendly manner.

During visits to the polling stations, the Senior General re-

sponded to questions raised by local and foreign media. The full text of replies to the media is as follows: -

Q: Since today is the final day of the election, regarding this, what are your expectations for the future of Myanmar?

A: In Myanmar, we have always aimed to follow a multiparty democratic system chosen

by the people. We will continue on this path. It is the path chosen by the people, not one we choose ourselves. We are part of the people, and we also support this. We will proceed according to the multiparty democratic system, and that is the path we will follow in the future.

SEE PAGE 3

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

MoI Union Minister visits MRTV in Yangon to promote government-private media projects

UNION Minister for Information U Maung Maung Ohn inspected the media projects being jointly implemented by Myanma Radio and Television and the private sector in Yangon yesterday morning.

Upon arriving at the MyanSat DTH Broadcasting and Distribution head office, Chief Operation Officer U Thant Sin explained that the head office building had been rented and prepared; that resources had been allocated and operations were underway; that 156 local and international TV channels were being broadcast; that 102 distribution outlets had been opened nationwide; and that more than 10,000 MyanSat set-top boxes (STBs), as well as MRTV DTH set-top boxes (STBs), were being sold. The Union minister coordinated and provided the necessary support.

At the Shwe FM production office, Shwe Thanhwin Media Company Managing Director U Min Min explained the separation of the production office and studio; the initial broadcasts in Bago and Taninthayi Regions and Mon and Kayin States; and the



Union Minister for Information U Maung Maung Ohn visits Shwe FM production office, Shwe Thanhwin Media Company in Yangon yesterday.

subsequent expansion to Nay Pyi Taw, Yangon, Mandalay, Sagaing, Magway, and Ayeyawady regions, as well as Shan State. He added that the broadcasts are transmitted through 17 additional relay stations that a total of 18 hours of programming is aired daily from 5 am to 11 pm, and that live MRTV news is received and broadcast daily at 1 pm.

At the 200-Metre Transmission Workstation, being jointly

operated by Shwe Thanhwin Company, the responsible personnel explained that despite recent natural disasters, the tower and workshop had not been damaged and remained in good condition. They added that the tower would be painted and maintained in the coming years. They also explained that MRTV, Forever, Skynet, and Padamya FM are using the satellite transmitter antenna in accordance with es-

tablished procedures, and that the Skynet DTH control is being used on a rotating basis.

Afterwards, the Union Minister arrived at the Forever Company head office, where Chief Executive Officer Dr Hein Htet Aye and General Manager U Kyaw Kyaw explained that among the various divisions of the broadcasting business, Mandalay FM and Pyinsawadi FM's Teen Radio are currently operating alongside

the head office's management activities. Mandalay FM broadcasts 18 hours a day within a 30-mile radius in Nay Pyi Taw and Toungoo, a 60-mile radius in Yangon, and a 90-mile radius in Mandalay. Pyinsawadi FM's Teen Radio broadcasts 18 hours a day in Yangon, Ayeyawady Region, and Rakhine State.

The Union minister then visited the broadcasting studios and participated in a live broadcast, delivering his greetings to the FM audience.

In addition, the Union minister inspected the building, which houses Studio A and related studios, currently being upgraded with a Ton 250, chiller system in two phases, with the installation of the second Ton 125 facility underway. He instructed that regular inspections and maintenance be carried out for the air handling units (AHUs) and duct lines, as well as for the two 500-kVA generators, with their operational capacity monitored and test runs systematically recorded so that the generators can be promptly activated in the event of an emergency power failure. —MNA/TH

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)

Acting President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and SSPC Chair Senior General Min Aung Hlaing Speaks with Voters While Touring Polling Sites

FROM PAGE 1

Q: Some people are saying that the USDP, which supports Tatmadaw, will win. Because of that, some UN experts say so. There are also comments saying this should not be recognized. What would you like to say regarding this?

A: The people voting are the citizens living inside Myanmar. It's not people from outside who are voting. The people living in Myanmar are the ones casting their votes. They can support whoever they like. Those who come to vote are supporting the candidates they want to support. If the candidates they want to support aren't there, they won't come to vote. There are two reasons for not voting: one is that their preferred candidates aren't available, and the other is due to security concerns — it's difficult for some to come because of safety. Those who do vote come because their preferred candidates are there. Among them are the people supporting parties like the USDP, other PPP, and the White Tiger Party. There are multiple parties. That's why we publish the voter lists. Isn't that showing that people are voting freely? Whether foreign countries recognize it or not, we don't understand. We recognize that the people are voting. That's the way it should be.

Q: Will the Senior General continue to be included in the next incoming government as well?

A: I can't really say anything yet. These things depend on what methods they choose in the Hluttaw once it convenes. That's how it is.

Q: Since it's the last day, what would you like to say about the upcoming new government?

A: They have a responsibility to make the country better. No matter which government comes to power, the goal must be for the country to improve. A government has the duty to promote the interests of the people, to work for national development, to ensure peace



Acting President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and State Security and Peace Commission Chairman Senior General Min Aung Hlaing responds to questions raised by media during his visits to polling stations in Mandalay yesterday.

and stability, and to enable the country to stand on equal footing with the rest of the world. We will do our best to achieve this. The public also needs to be involved. A government cannot lead on its own. The government can set goals and take the lead, but it cannot succeed without public participation. The government must also work to ensure that the people are involved, and the people themselves must take part. Even though we say we want to move toward democracy, it is impossible without the participation of the people. It can only succeed when the people are involved. The people are crucial.

Q: Since today is the final day and there have been many challenges, is there any message you would like to convey to the international community and to the people of Myanmar?

A: The people should work to make the country better and have a broader perspective. That's what I want to say. The

international community also needs to understand the real situation inside Myanmar. When responsible foreign officials visit Myanmar, what they hear outside and the actual situation inside the country are often different. Almost everyone says the same. What I mean is that the country is enduring all the rumours and media reports. In reality, we have many rights, and if those rights can be fully exercised, the country will progress and develop; that's what I'm saying.

Q: Could the government that comes to power in 2025 be like the U Thein Sein government of 2010? Back in 2010, the USDP government came to power, and the people were quite satisfied with it. Can we have similar expectations for the government that will take office in 2025?

A: It will depend on the environment and circumstances in which the winning party is able to cooperate and work

together; won't it? Back when President U Thein Sein took office, they carried out their responsibilities. But on the other hand, there were also opposing forces. If those opposing forces act with the intention of making the country better, that's one thing. However, if they act to create negative consequences instead of improving the country, then it becomes more difficult. No matter which government comes to power, this applies to any government.

Q: The challenges are different. That situation was relatively stable and orderly. But now, maintaining this current situation, which is quite volatile and tense, will be difficult. It is likely to be even more challenging.

A: The situation is not stable and tranquil. That's correct. That's true. We need to have a broad perspective, which is why I said earlier that the country needs a wide-ranging vision. — MNA/TTA

NATIONAL



Chairman of the State Security and Peace Commission and Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing meets Tatmadaw members and families of Mandalay Station at Yan Aung Myin Hall of the Central Command Headquarters yesterday.

Winning government to assume State duties after election

Regardless of political changes within the nation, Tatmadaw remains steadfast in its duty to defend the country's sovereignty and security.

Chairman of the State Security and Peace Commission and Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing met Tatmadaw members and families of Mandalay Station at Yan Aung Myin Hall of the Central Command Headquarters yesterday morning.

In his address, the Senior General noted that in accordance with the principle that people keep their promises and leaders act with integrity, measures were taken

to ensure that the upcoming five-step process is conducted properly, allowing a free and fair election to be held. The Myanmar Electronic Voting Machine (MEVM) was implemented to prevent any occurrences of electoral fraud.

He revealed that the aim is to ensure an election free from fraud, a prestigious election, and one that produces outcomes reflecting the genuine wishes of the voting public.

He noted that more than half of eligi-

ble voters cast their ballots in the current election, which can be considered a successful election.

The Senior General affirmed that after the election, the State's responsibilities will be transferred to the winning government.

He continued that the government was able to conduct the 2025 multiparty democratic general election successfully. Election observation teams from the international community also visited to

observe the election process and provided many positive remarks.

Regardless of any changes among political parties or organizations in the country, Tatmadaw continues to carry out its responsibilities for national defence and security faithfully and without neglect up to the present day.

He guided that Tatmadaw members have to try hard to apply the constantly evolving military skills and strategies in accordance with the times. Therefore, efforts must always continue to build and maintain a capable and strong Tatmadaw.

He urged officers and other ranks to study the constantly evolving sciences and technologies of the times. This will help gain knowledge and expand understanding, and each individual should engage in reading and studying in order to improve their socioeconomic life.

He stressed that, as Tatmadaw has the responsibility to defend the nation against any potential threats, efforts must continue to build and maintain a capable, strong military.

After asking about the needs of Tatmadaw members and families, the Senior General presented foodstuffs for them to the commander, while the wife of the Senior General gave cash awards for the station maternal and child welfare association through the wife of the commander.

After the meeting, the Senior General and his wife cordially greeted Tatmadaw members and families.

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

Urban facelift prioritized as new government looms

Current officials must meticulously maintain efficient work processes to ensure a seamless handover to the incoming government.

Acting President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and State Security and Peace Commission Chairman Senior General Min Aung Hlaing yesterday morning, met Mandalay Region ministers and officials from Mandalay City Development Committee and gave guidance on the development of Mandalay in accordance with the city's characteristics, with beautification.

Speaking on the occasion, the Senior General said that he visited the process of Phase III of the Multiparty Democratic General Election 2025 in Mandalay Region. A large number of voting people cast their votes in the election, most of whom were young people and middle-aged people. During the trip, they saw clean and beautiful landscapes of major roads and streets in Mandalay, and he praised officials of the development committee and city dwellers for their efforts to keep the city neat and tidy systematically.

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Acting President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and State Security and Peace Commission Chairman Senior General Min Aung Hlaing gives guidance to Mandalay Region ministers and officials from Mandalay City Development Committee yesterday.

NATIONAL

Acting President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and SSPC Chairman Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and his wife Daw Kyu Kyu Hla pay homage and support for Mandalay's Maha Wizitayon Sayadaw's needs

Acting President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and State Security and Peace Commission Chairman Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and his wife Daw Kyu Kyu Hla, accompanied by Commission Secretary General Ye Win Oo and his wife, and senior Tatmadaw officers from the Office of the Commander-in-Chief, paid homage to Presiding Patron of the Mandalay's Maha Wizitayon Monastery State Ovadacariya Abhidhaja Maha Rattha Guru Abhidhaja Aggamaha Saddhammajotika Aggamaha Pandita Bhaddanta Vicarinda Bhivamsa, aged 98 and 78 vasa, yesterday afternoon.

The Senior General, his wife and party paid homage, asked after the health condition of the Sayadaw, supplicated propagation of the Sasana and provided necessary measures.

The Senior General and his wife donated alms, medicines and nutritious food in addition to cash for nine prerequisites to the Sayadaw and gave guidance to officials to fulfil the Sayadaw's needs. — MNA/TTA

Acting President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and State Security and Peace Commission Chairman Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and his wife Daw Kyu Kyu Hla donate offerings to Mandalay's Maha Wizitayon Monastery Sayadaw yesterday.



Urban facelift prioritized as new government looms

FROM PAGE 4

He noted that since Phases I, II and III of the election have been successfully conducted, a new government is expected to take office by the end of March. During the interim period before the new government is formed, Mandalay City will continue its urban beautification and development projects without interruption. Efforts for the reconstruction of areas affected by the earthquake will also continue. Priority will be given to urban beautification projects that can be completed within the two-

month interim period.

He highlighted that good work processes should be carefully maintained so that it can be effectively handed over to the incoming government.

The Senior General also stressed the need to improve road facilities and maintenance works. He underscored that it is necessary to check air pollution of the city and efforts must be made to conserve the environment.

He added that in the education sector, it is necessary to provide training courses to

improve the teaching abilities of teachers. Students need to utilize summer holidays effectively by offering courses in etiquette, English, basic computer skills, and other beneficial summer programmes, with proper planning in advance. Tatmadaw also annually conducts training courses for youth in maritime and aviation skills, both at basic and advanced levels.

In the field of education, discussions and efforts are ongoing to convert the education degree colleges into full-fledged teacher training universities. Measures

are also being taken to ensure that teachers receive increased benefits in accordance with degree-level standards and subject-specific requirements.

As the majority of people rely on government-run schools, it is necessary to continue efforts to enhance the capabilities of education staff.

Mandalay Region has to form a committee and implement a systematic plan to further improve the production of key crops such as oil crops and pulses. MSME businesses should focus on producing high-quality

marketable products based on agricultural and livestock outputs, and efforts should be made to increase their production.

Mandalay Region Chief Minister U Myo Aung reported on rubber production in the industrial zone. The Senior General gave necessary guidance.

Also, present at the meeting were Commission Secretary General Ye Win Oo, senior Tatmadaw officers from the Office of the Commander-in-Chief and the commander of Central Command, and regional ministers. — MNA/TTA

NATIONAL

UEC hosts dinner in honour of international election observers in Yangon

AN honorary dinner was hosted for international election observers, who came to observe the Multiparty Democratic General Election (Phase III) which concluded on 25 January 2026, at the Parkroyal Hotel in Yangon yesterday evening.

The dinner was attended by the Chairman of the Union Election Commission U Than Soe, Yangon Region Chief Minister U Soe Thein, UEC members, the Yangon Region Minister for Natural Resources, a delegation from the Republic of Belarus; delegations from the election commissions of Cambodia, Nepal and Indonesia, a delegation from the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, a delegation from Nicaragua; a representative from India, a delegation from the International Conference of Asian Political Parties (ICAPP), officials from the Yangon Region Election Subcommission and officials from the UEC Office.

At the ceremony, the Chairman of the Union Election Commission said that Phase III of the election, which marked an



Union Election Commission Chairman U Than Soe expresses gratitude to delegates from foreign countries in attendance at the honorary dinner in Yangon yesterday.

important milestone in the electoral process, had been successfully held. He explained that the honorary dinner was organized in recognition of the participation and contributions of the international observers.

He expressed special gratitude, on behalf of the Government and the people of Myanmar, for the observers' participation throughout the

entire election process. He said that their observation strengthened not only freedom, fairness and transparency, but also enhanced confidence among the Election Commission, political parties, parliamentary candidates, voters and all stakeholders involved in the election.

He further said that international observers had witnessed first-hand the collective efforts

of political parties, election sub-commissions, polling station members, security personnel, civil society organisations and all those who contributed to the success of the election, particularly voters who cast their ballots with a strong sense of civic duty. He added that observers had seen voters casting their ballots peacefully, joyfully and actively for the future of the

nation.

He expressed confidence that the event would further strengthen cooperation and mutual understanding between Myanmar and the international community. He said that the Election Commission looked forward to receiving the observers' findings and recommendations, which would contribute to building a genuine and disciplined multiparty democratic system. He emphasised that the successful conduct of the elections represented a positive step forward for Myanmar and said he was especially proud that all three phases of the election had been successfully completed. He also expressed gratitude and recognition to each observer in attendance.

Afterwards, the UEC Chairman joined attendees for dinner. Before and during the dinner, guests enjoyed performances of traditional Myanmar songs and dances presented by the cultural dance troupe of the Department of Fine Arts. —MNA/KZL

Transboundary haze pollution prevention, hotspot control coordinated in Shan State (East)

UNION Minister for Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation U Khin Maung Yi met with departmental officials, local leaders, social organizations, cultural groups, local authorities, and residents in Kengtung and Mongphyat townships in Shan State (East) on 24 January to discuss measures to reduce transboundary haze pollution and fire hotspot incidents.

During the meeting at Kengtung Town Hall, the Union Minister highlighted that during the current dry season, forest fires and other burning incidents contribute to fire hotspots and damage the environment. Smoke contains PM 2.5 particles, which are invisible to the naked eye but harmful to human health. The ministry has been taking

measures to address these concerns. He emphasized that smoke can travel across borders, so Myanmar collaborates with ASEAN member countries and neighbouring states to control fire hotspots and transboundary haze pollution.

He noted that Myanmar, Thailand, and Laos have jointly formulated the Clear Sky Strategy (2024-2030) to mitigate transboundary haze pollution and have been implementing the plan. Similarly, the Myanmar-Thai Transboundary Haze Pollution Prevention Committee was established to prevent smoke pollution, and relevant activities are ongoing.

Data from the ministry shows that the total number of fire hotspots in Myanmar de-

creased from 51,091 in 2024 to 45,025 in 2025, a reduction of 6,066 hotspots (12 per cent). The goal for 2026 is to further reduce fire hotspots by 20 per cent, with eastern Shan State achieving a 30 per cent reduction in 2025. The Union minister called for continued efforts in 2026.

Locals were urged to adopt sustainable practices such as contour or hill-slope farming instead of slash and burn cultivation, intercropping with fruit and forest trees, using highland farming techniques, and disposing of waste systematically rather than burning, while utilizing organic matter to restore soil fertility. Relevant departments and local administrators are encouraged to provide technical guidance and education to



Union Minister U Khin Maung Yi speaks at the meeting on the measures to reduce transboundary haze pollution and fire hotspot incidents in Kengtung in Shan State (East) on 24 January 2026.

support these practices.

The Union minister stressed that protecting natural resources, sustaining a green environment, improving local climate, reducing fire hotspots, and controlling transboundary haze pollution require the joint cooperation of departments, organizations, and local communities.

Also, the Director-General of the Environmental Conservation Department and the Director-General of the Forest Department held discussions

under the themes "Transboundary Haze Pollution Prevention" and "Forest Conservation and Sustainable Rural and Urban Development" respectively. The Union minister concluded the meeting with a summary of key points.

In the afternoon, the Union minister visited the Township Forest Department in Mongphyat Township and inspected over 113,000 saplings planted in the township's Myoma nursery. —MNA/KZL

NATIONAL

MoI Union Minister inspects progress of Wazira Cinema upgrade and Sarso Beikman construction

UNION Minister for Information U Maung Maung Ohn inspected the upgrading of Wazira Cinema on Bogyoke Aung San Road in Kyauktada Township, Yangon, into an international-standard theatre, as well as the construction of a three-storey RC Sarso Beikman building at No 18-A, Bo Min Khaung Street, Uyin Ward, Mingala Taungnyunt Township.

While inspecting the upgrading works of Wazira Cinema, Myanmar Architectural Council Chairman U Win Zaw and officials from Shwe Taung Company explained the progress of the work in each section.

The Union minister stated that, in accordance with the guidance of the Head of State, Wazira Cinema, a building over 100 years old, is being upgraded to an international-standard theatre without altering its original design, with work carried out based on the assessment reports of the Myanmar Architectural Council and the Myanmar Engineering Council, noting that



Union Minister for Information U Maung Maung Ohn inspects progress in upgrading Wazira Cinema in Yangon yesterday.

the renovation so far had not reached the previously planned level and that additional upgrading, retrofitting, and improvements would result in higher costs than originally planned, and emphasizing that the thea-

tre, intended for public use, must be safe, secure, and meet the standards of an internationally recognized theatre.

They then inspected the proposed parking area on the land owned by Myanma Railways in

front of Wazira Cinema.

Next, upon arriving at the construction site of the three-storey RC Sarso Beikman building, the Director-General of the Printing and Publishing Department and the Project Director of

Myanmar Land & Development Ltd, reported on responsible for construction, and 88 per cent complete of the Beikman building.

The Union minister instructed them to complete the Sarso Beikman building on time with special attention to quality and strength, to have the quality control team conduct special inspections, to ensure the building can showcase literature, music, and drama in a coordinated manner based on expert advice from relevant sectors, to collect museum exhibits promptly, to plant trees and flowery plants systematically to beautify the premises and exterior, to use only quality construction materials, and to coordinate so that the Sarso Beikman, as a national-level building and a monument to India-Myanmar friendship, is maintained in proper order.

Then, he inspected the construction of the three-storey RC Sarso Beikman building. — MNA/TH

International election observers, diplomats monitor election process in Phase III of general election



International election observation teams and diplomats observe election process at polling station in Thakayta and Lanmadaw Townships of Yangon Region yesterday.

INTERNATIONAL election observation missions, along with diplomats and officials from foreign embassies based in the country, visited polling stations in Yangon yesterday where Phase III of the multiparty democratic general election was held. They met with polling station officers, responsible officials, and voters, and conducted discussions, observations, and

monitoring related to the election process.

As a show of support from the international community for Myanmar's efforts to ensure that the general election is conducted freely, fairly, transparently, and with dignity, international election observers, along with diplomats and officials from international embassies based in the country, took part in observing

and monitoring the successful conduct of the general election.

Together with Union Election Commission member U Myo Hlaing, the delegation led by Ms Volha N Chamadanova from the Republic of Belarus, Election Commission member Mr Yich Samethy and party of Cambodia, Election Commission member Dr Janaki Kumari Tuladhar and party of Nepal, Election Com-

mission member Ms Yusti Erlina and party of Indonesia, Mr Mario Jose Armengol Campos and party of Nicaragua, Mr Nguyen Xuan Loc and party of Vietnam, Ms Rami Niranjan Desai from India, Dr Chheng Kimlong and party of International Conference of Asian Political Parties (ICAPP) and representatives from local-based embassies visited polling stations in Dagon,

Lanmadaw, Thakayta, Dagon Myothit (Seikkan), Tamway and Yankin townships and monitored the process of selecting the candidates by voters with the use of MEVM, and managements for the free and fair election under the election standards and good practices. They asked polling station officers, officials, and voters about what they wanted to know. — MNA/TTA

OPINION

ARTICLE

Create an environment with clean energy

ENERGY is essential for all, but it must not be harmful. All countries worldwide are seeking chances to generate electricity from different types of energy above and underground, as well as above and underwater, and utilize electricity for the development of society.

They extract five types of renewable energy include solar energy, wind energy, hydropower, geothermal energy and biofuels. Renewable energy is any energy source that is replenished faster than it's used. Renewable energy is derived from unlimited natural resources, such as sunlight, wind, geothermal heat and the movement of water. Renewable energy stands in contrast to

commonly used fossil fuels, which include coal, oil and natural gas. In fact, renewable energy is the most appropriate for society.

Although this situation has been gradually improving, the world is not on track to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 7 (SDG7), which aims to ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all by 2030. In this regard, notable progress is being made on the transition to clean energy: installed renewables capacity per capita has continued to grow each year, reaching a new high of 341 watts per capita in developing countries, up from 155 watts in 2015.

Every country needs to end their reliance on fossil fuels and invest in alternative sources of energy that are clean, accessible, affordable, sustainable, and reliable. Renewable energy sources, which are available in abundance all around us, provided by the sun, wind, water, waste, and heat from the Earth, are replenished by nature and emit little to no greenhouse gases or pollutants into the air.

For populations without clean energy access, the lack of reliable power hinders education, healthcare, and economic opportunities, and many of these developing regions still rely heavily on polluting fossil fuels for their daily life, perpetuating poverty. An estimated 1.5 billion people in rural areas still use unsafe, unhealthy and inefficient cooking systems, such as burning wood or dung. As such, it is necessary to emphasize creation of the proper environment for those people to have access to clean energy in their daily routine, in addition to the operation of industries to be able to consume the renewable energy.

On 26 January 2026, all countries worldwide need to celebrate the International Day of Clean Energy with the theme "Clean Energy for People and Planet". This day emphasizes the critical role of renewable energy, sustainable technologies, and energy efficiency in creating a cleaner, greener future for all.

India's Global and Cultural Heritage

By Ambassador Bhaswati Mukherjee

INDIA'S cultural and civilizational heritage is her gift to the world. An understanding of what our culture and civilization would take us on a historical journey into our past.

Any serious discussion must begin with EH Carr In 'What is History' Carr concludes:

"History is a continuous process of interaction between the historian and his facts, an unending dialogue between the present and past, a dynamic, dialectical process, which cannot be limited by mere empiricism or love of facts alone".

Another aspect is the inter-linkage between culture and imperialism in the 19th century. Dr Edward W Said noted in his seminal work 'Culture and Imperialism':

"Partly because of empire, all cultures are involved in one another; none is single and pure, all are hybrid, heterogeneous, differentiated and un-monolithic".

This is an excellent definition of our own culture.

Efforts were made to belittle or downgrade our heritage after the arrival of the Dutch, Portuguese, French and British to India.

This was the age of colonialism and imperialism. Dr Said noted the notion of inferior races helped fuel the imperial acquisition of territory during this period. The culture of imperialism entailed venerating the colonialist's culture to the exclusion of other cultures, a notion completely antithetical to the Indian approach.

One of the most authoritative works of AL Basham, 'The Wonder that was India', rejects the earlier Western interpretation that Indian civilisation is un-political, spiritual and unchanging, i.e. Indian civilisation itself is static and non-dynamic. Basham demonstrates that India has a dynamic civilization and cultural heritage. India's oral traditions also made

an important contribution.

The civilisation that developed in the Valleys of the two great river systems, the Indus and the Ganges, although in a sharply demarcated geographical region due to the Himalayas, was never an isolated civilisation. Settlers and traders came to India from the land and sea routes from the East and West. As a great maritime power, India also travelled East and West.

This resulted in the development of a complex pattern of multi-dimensional culture, demonstrated in art and cultural traditions from Ancient to Modern India, whether the dancing Buddhas of the Gandharva school of art, which was strongly influenced by the Greeks, to the great temples of North and South India.

The Aryan period saw the development of Vedic literature as well as the Puranas. The earliest literary source was the Rig Veda

and the two epics, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata.

Ancient Indian architecture and sculpture were dynamic, not static. Due to cross-fertilization of culture, India's ancient culture did not perish with the coming of the Muslim invaders.

It is important to recognize that India's culture and civilization are a gift to her Diaspora. India is a multi-cultural state. With the contribution and partnership with its huge Diaspora, Indian culture has emerged as a force to connect, to build relations and to heal the ruptures created by history and politics.

Ancient Indian culture was severely impacted by invasions from Muslim invaders from the 10th century onwards. These invasions destroyed many elements of our ancient culture. They resulted in barbaric acts such as attacks on temples, including multiple attacks and the destruction of the famous Somnath temple.

Later, the Indo-Islamic Mughal architecture and miniature paintings evolved as an example of India's syncretic culture. The most fascinating aspect of medieval history is the development of the Indo-Islamic style in art and architecture, through the adaptation of Indian resources, ex-

pertise, designs and motifs. What developed in Mughal times was an eclectic pattern of culture, of which the Taj Mahal remains the finest example.

It is important to recognize that India's culture and civilization are a gift to her Diaspora. India is a multi-cultural state. With the contribution and partnership with its huge Diaspora, Indian culture has emerged as a force to connect, to build relations and to heal the ruptures created by history and politics.

It is internationally recognised that one of India's significant global contributions has been its ancient cultural and civilizational partnerships. 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' from the Maha Upanishads was among the first precursors of global citizenship as it is understood today.

'Udara charitana tu, Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam'. It means that it is only for the

generous-hearted that the world is one family. It forms the basis of UNESCO's ongoing dialogue between cultures, religions and civilizations.

India's vibrant cultural and civilizational heritage, through her Diaspora, has spread worldwide. It serves as a powerful reminder that India's values of tolerance, inclusiveness and cross-fertilization of cultures, which are an intrinsic part of our civilization, are more relevant than ever before in the emerging, chaotic global disorder.

Cultural diplomacy now plays an important role in the dissemination of these values. Indian arts, culture and spiritualism have attracted people from all around the world for centuries.

Indian spirituality has had a global presence for centuries. One

of its important manifestations in today's world is the large number of Yoga centres spread across the world. At the personal initiative of PM Modi, soon after his first election in 2014, the UN General Assembly recognized 21st June as International Day of Yoga. Culture and cultural diplomacy have emerged as the force to connect, to build bilateral relations and to heal the ruptures created by history and politics.

Most challenging is how do we preserve that culture? It is a living culture and can only survive if nurtured and strengthened by successive generations, including our Diaspora. Indeed, unless we present our civilisation and cultural heritage in a manner which is both comprehensible and attractive to young India, this heritage

cannot survive.

Our composite culture is our gift to the world. It reflects the evolution of our own history, the manner in which India seamlessly absorbed other cultures but never lost her own.

I had recently visited Vishwa Bharati University, Shantiniketan and read Gurudev's inspirational message at the entrance, which still resonates today.

Gurudev said:

"India represents the wealth of the mind, which is for all."

We acknowledge India's obligation to offer to others the hospitality of her best culture.

And India's right to accept from others their best."

We have done so and will continue to do so for generations to come. That is why we are Bharat, that is India.

(Views expressed in the article solely belong to the author.)

BRICS 2026- Implications for a Multipolar World

By Ambassador Anil Trigunayat

RECENTLY the French Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs Jean Noel Barrot, while meeting the Indian External Affairs Minister Dr S Jaishankar, made an interesting observation that France was heading the G7 (in which India has been a permanent invitee for over a decade) and India was the chair of BRICS in 2026 and both strategic partners had great possibility of cooperation for enhancing multilateralism. Both countries believe and subscribe to it. President Macron further underscored that India is going to be the President of BRICS. I want to work with India to build bridges.

BRICS countries must not become anti-G7, and G7 must not become anti-BRICS. This is a recognition of the growing heft of the BRICS and emerging multipolarity and the need for collaborative rather than conflictual approaches. There is indeed a real convergence possibility in an idealistic scenario as the G7 dominates in global finance, technology and high-value-added services and controls major global institutions and currencies, while BRICS could be the new pivot for economic growth with commodities, consumption and huge markets with manufacturing and manpower and are key partners in global value supply chains. India and the EU strategic partnership will be further strengthened with the signing of the Trade Agreement and the visit of the EU leadership as the Chief Guest on this Republic Day 2026, a distinct honour and affirmation of the special partnership.

This statement is significant since unilateralism has become the major currency in international discourse, with the most recent

example being the regime change in Venezuela and President Trump walking out of 66 international agreements or organizations. The transatlantic alliance is also going through unprecedented stress. Hence, the desire for cross-regional connections between and among the mini and plurilateral is not surprising. In any case, India, being the founding member of the BRICS and QUAD, supposedly on two opposing ends of the spectrum, believes that BRICS is not anti-West but a non-Western alternative representing cross-continental aspirations of major economies and countries from the Global South, with China and Russia as the P-5 members. India can easily become a credible bridge and bridge builder between the divergent groupings across the East-West and North-South divide, given its inclusive and universalistic approaches enshrined in the foreign policy ambit of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' – the World is one family.

Since the US Investment Banker Jim O'Neil expounded about the promising and emerging economies as the BRIC Group with Brazil, Russia, India and China, it has grown to ten members with several middle powers including South Africa, Ethiopia, Egypt, Iran, Indonesia and the UAE. Saudi Arabia remains interested and continues to participate in the meetings, while Argentina, under its new pro-US political dispensation, decided to opt out of it. At the Kazan Summit, it was also decided to have associate members as partner countries since over two dozen nations have expressed a deep desire to join the BRICS, which has acquired a new heft in a disrupted world order.

BRICS represents nearly half of the world population, with India as the most populous country with exceptional human resources; also, nearly 40 per cent of the global GDP compares rather well with G7 - China and India leading the economic pack, with India being

the fastest growing major economy in the world, recently surpassing Japan to become the 4th largest. It comprises a group with the biggest producers and consumers of energy, as well as enviable heft in critical minerals and technologies. The group believes in mutual respect and mutual interests. Even with politically and economically divergent systems and approaches, it enjoys a high diplomatic weight and sheer scale.

India, as the Chair in 2026, will be hosting the BRICS Summit and a large number of sectoral meetings ranging from commerce, connectivity, currency and counter-terrorism and culture to technology and fintech, education, R&D, traditional medicine and youth and sports exchanges. A key quest for BRICS and India is the urgency and imperative for global institutional reforms, especially that of the UN and UNSC, which is threatening to become irrelevant, having been consigned to the post-World War II mindset of victor and the vanquished of the P-5 veto powers. Moreover, for President Trump, driven by his MAGA constituency, the weaponization of financial instruments should be a one-way street and their prerogative and de-dollarization the big redline. Already, the five original BRICS countries are in the cross hairs of the USA, including Russia, China, India, Brazil and South Africa, compressing them in his high and unreasonable game of tariffs.

BRICS is trying to provide a viable alternative bereft of dominance and dictation, especially in the context of South-South cooperation, despite members ranging from the largest democracy to totalitarian states. But its internal diversity reinforces multipolarity and options. It challenges Western dominance by providing a more beneficial cooperative and consensual landscape, along with certain institutions like the New Development Bank. There is an effort to create a new BRICS currency, on which countries like India are still not convinced, even though this trend has been initiated due to unilateral and abrasive sanctions and the weaponization of financial instruments, forcing the rest of the world to secure themselves through transactions in national currencies. This trend could become a major force multiplier for multipolarity in times to come.

Instead of a single global security architecture, multipolarity

promotes regionalized security systems: The original five of BRICS have varying roles in the regional security dynamic - Russia shapes Eurasian security dynamics; China dominates East Asian strategic calculations; India asserts influence in the Indian Ocean, South Asia and the Global South in general; Brazil and South Africa act as regional stabilizers. This decentralization reduces global uniformity but increases regional power competition, sometimes heightening local instability. This also has an internal challenge as competing powers within an organization, including the BRICS, may slow down the integration process and block hegemonic projects.

Interestingly, India is also slated to host the QUAD Summit in 2026 with the US, Japan, and Australia despite some uncertainty. This provides a unique opportunity for India to iron out certain misperceptions while bridging the gaps seeped in zero-sum games through a better understanding and cooperation between the perceived rival groups and camps. Global challenges require global solidarity.

BRICS is not aiming to replace the existing world order but is hoping to reshape the multipolar collaborative matrix. This is a process in motion, but a potent force which will continue to strengthen as long as the powerful countries resort to hypocrisy and undermine the very institutions they themselves had created through unilateral and unifocal approaches. India is a voice of reason and believes in bridging the divides through dialogue and diplomacy, and reforms of the existing institutions and not necessarily their replacement.

2026 will witness the continuation of this policy even during India's BRICS presidency, while working for multipolarity and multilateralism, which are under serious threat. PM Narendra Modi has so aptly redefined the BRICS to mean Building Resilience and Innovation for Cooperation and Sustainability. He further added that 'condemning terrorism should be our principle, not just a convenience'.

Anil Trigunayat is a former Indian Ambassador to Jordan, Libya, and Malta and currently a distinguished fellow with prestigious Think Tanks like Vivekananda International Foundation and United Services Institute of India.)

(Views expressed in the article solely belong to the author.)

NATIONAL

Multiparty Democratic General Election Phase III conducted in 61 townships

THE Phase III of the Multiparty Democratic General Election of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar was held at relevant polling stations in 61 townships of regions and states, starting from 6 am yesterday.

The Phases I and II of the election took place on 28 December 2025 and 11 January 2026 respectively with public participation under the leadership of the government. The Phase III of the election was held in Bhamo, Phakant and Shwegu townships of Kachin State, Kawkareik and Kya-in-Seikkyi townships in Kayin State, Kani and Salinayi townships in Sagaing Region.

Moreover, the election was held in Launglon, Thayetchaung and Palaw townships in Taninthayi Region, Kyaukkyi, Kyaukdaga, Pyu, Ottwin, Thegon, Waw, Gyobingauk and Okpo townships in Bago Region, and Myittha, Chanmyathazi, Mahlaing, Taungha, Myingyan, Ngazun, Thabeikkyin and Patheingyi townships in Mandalay Region.

Likewise, voters cast ballots in the election in Dagon, Lanmadaw, Seikkyi/Khanaungto, Dala, Dagon Myothit (Seikkan),



Local residents are queuing to cast their ballots in a peaceful manner at the polling station in Tamway Township, Yangon Region, yesterday.

Dagon Myothit (East), Mingala Taungnyunt, Thakayta, North Okkalapa, Tamway, Yankin, Kyauktan, Kayan, Thongwa, Sangyoung, Hlinethaya (West) and Hlinethaya (East) townships in Yangon Region, Metmung, Pinlaung, Nyaungshwe, Pekhon, Mongnai, Kehsi, Mongshu, Hsipaw and Kyaukme townships in Shan State, and Yekyi, Ngaputaw,

Dedaye, Nyaungdon, Danubyu, Ingapu, Mawlamyinekyun, Zalun, and Laymyethna townships in Ayayawady Region.

Voter people cast their ballots with the use of Myanmar Electronic Voting Machine-MEVN at relevant polling stations.

Eligible voters cast ballots at designated polling stations in re-

gions and states while Tatmadaw members and families systematically voted at the relevant polling stations in the military command areas of regions and states.

To ensure that voters can cast their ballots freely, peacefully, and conveniently, necessary vehicles, medical teams for healthcare services, and security arrangements were prepared in

advance at each polling station. Chief ministers and officials from the respective regions and states toured the polling stations to oversee the process and coordinated as needed to address any requirements.

At the conclusion of voting, polling station officers and staff retrieved the results from the voting machines (control units) in the presence of representatives of political parties and election observers, and systematically counted the results, along with the advance ballots, in an orderly manner.

In connection with the holding of the general election, voters who came to cast their ballots at the various polling stations expressed the voices and heartfelt sentiments.

During yesterday's general election, domestic and international media, as well as diplomats, chargés d'affaires at interim, and officials from foreign embassies based in the country, and international election observers visited polling stations to observe voters freely casting their ballots and to gather information. — MNA/KZL



Yangon and Bago regions and Shan State Chief Ministers observe voter people at the polling stations.

Mandalay voters cast ballots peacefully and freely in election phase III

THE phase III of the 2025 Multiparty Democratic General Election was held simultaneously across Myanmar on Friday in 61 designated townships from 6 am to 4 pm.

In Mandalay Region, voters cast their ballots peacefully and freely at their respective polling stations in accordance with prescribed rules and procedures.

Polling stations in relevant townships and wards of Mandalay Region opened systematically from 6 am. Voters enthusiastically participated in the election process, while polling station staff and responsible officials provided the necessary assistance to ensure a smooth and orderly voting process.

The phase III of the election

took place in Thabeikkyin, Pathemyi, Chanmyathazi, Myittha, Myingyan, Taungha, Mahlaing and Ngazun in Mandalay Region.

More than 600,000 eligible voters cast ballots at 556 polling stations that were opened systematically across the eight townships. A total of nine political parties and three independent candidates contested in the

election for Hluttaw seats.

At Polling Station No 1 in Chanmyathazi Township, polling station officer U Naing Oo said that preparations had been carried out in advance in coordination with relevant teams. The polling station had 1,671 eligible voters and 15 staff members, with four voting machines installed. Facilities, including

shelters, chairs, drinking water and food, were also arranged to ensure voter convenience.

An 80-year-old voter, U Kan Sein, said he arrived at the polling station early in the morning and found voting with electronic machines to be easier and more efficient than previous manual voting methods.

SEE PAGE 11

NATIONAL



North Okkalapa Township.



Ngaputaw Township.



Kengtawng Township.



Kehsi Township.



Kayan Township.



Nyungshwe Township.



Phakant Township.



Thegon Township.

FROM PAGE 10

To prevent electoral malpractices and ensure accuracy and speed in the voting process, Myanmar Electronic Voting Machines (MEVMs) were used. Voters cast their ballots by pressing buttons beside the names and symbols of their preferred political parties or candidates. Voter Ma Thanda Lwin, who voted for the third time, said the electronic voting system was more systematic, faster and more accurate. She added that separate voting was carried out for Amyotha Hluttaw, Pyithu Hluttaw and Region Hluttaw seats.

Similarly, Ma Mi Mi Soe said voting with

electronic machines was more convenient, particularly for elderly voters, and allowed voters to express their choices freely.

A 25-year-old voter, Ma Phyoe Phyoe, said she voted for candidates who could ensure security for young people and prioritise education. An 18-year-old first-time voter, Maung Shun Lin Htet, said he felt proud and excited to fulfil his civic duty. In Mandalay Region, candidates contested seats for the Pyithu Hluttaw, Amyotha Hluttaw, Region Hluttaw and Ethnic Affairs representatives during the phase III of the 2025 general election. — Maung Aye Chan/KZL



Voter Ma Thanda Lwin shows her inked finger after casting a vote at a polling station in Mandalay on 25 January 2026.

INTERVIEW

Voters Push for New Leadership to Secure Youth's Future



Ma Khin Mar Lwin (Dagon Township)



Maung Paing Soe (Dagon Township)



Ma Yoon Kabya Soe (Dagon Township)



Ma Aye Madi Soe (Lanmadaw Township)



Maung Wai Phyo Oo (Lanmadaw Township)



Ma Wut Shwe Yi (Yankin Township)



Ma May Thae Nu Khaing (Tamway Township)



Ma May Yadana (Tamway Township)



Ma Nang Wutyi (Tamway Township)



U Soe Win (Tamway Township)



Daw Nwe Ni Myo Hlaing (Polling Station Head)



U Dawut (Tamway Township)

AS Phase III of the multiparty democratic general election 2025 was held in 17 townships of Yangon Region yesterday, eligible voters keenly cast ballots at their respective polling stations from the opening time.

The news team mentioned the aspirations of voters from Dagon, Lanmadaw, Yankin and Tamway townships in Yangon Region and officials' endeavours to hold a free and fair election.

Ma Khin Mar Lwin (Dagon Township)

As a citizen, I want to the polling station together with all my family members to cast a vote because I want to fulfil my civic duty. I cast my vote for the party I prefer. When a new government emerges, what I want to say is I hope it will take action to reduce commodity prices for the people.

Maung Paing Soe (Dagon Township)

It was an exciting experience for me. It is my first experience of casting a vote in my life. As a young person, I came to vote because voting is a citizen's right, and because I hope there will be more job opportunities and better living conditions. As a young person, I want to live freely and peacefully. Above all, I want to ensure a good life for my family. We want better jobs and higher wages for young people, and we want a better future for our generation.

Ma Yoon Kabya Soe (Dagon Township)

It is my first-time experience for me to cast a vote. So, I felt excited. I hope there will be more opportunities for employment and improvements in education for us. I came to vote because I hope for a leader who I believe will be better for everyone.

Ma Aye Madi Soe (Lanmadaw Township)

This is my first-time voting. At first, I was worried that I might not know how to do it, but it turned out to be straightforward, and everything went smoothly. As a citizen, you should think about your coun-

try – what will happen in the future – and if you live in this country, you should care about it. I want Myanmar to be peaceful and functioning normally. That's why I studied the candidates and voted for the representative I believe will perform best. Going forward, I hope Myanmar will be peaceful and develop further.

Maung Wai Phyo Oo (Lanmadaw Township)

To exercise my right as a citizen to express my will, I chose the representative whom I believe aligns with my wishes. I want the country to become better than it is now and to see progress in all aspects.

Ma Wut Shwe Yi (Yankin Township)

As this is my first time casting a vote, I feel excited. I am also happy to have the opportunity to vote and not lose my citizen rights. Voting by machine was not difficult at all. I am a university student, and I want to contribute to my country to the best of my ability. I want to see our country become better than now. I also hope for a new government that can develop the education sector to be on par with other Asian countries and, by enhancing young people's capabilities, help build a better and more progressive future for the youth.

Ma May Thae Nu Khaing (Tamway Township)

This is my first-ever vote. Voting by machine was convenient. I cast my vote for the party I believe will be beneficial for the country. As I am a student, I would like to prioritize the education sector. History shows that countries built on education are the ones advancing rapidly today. When education standards are high, technology follows, and economic success comes naturally; this is clear when we look at neighbouring countries. A stable education system is essential. In the education sector, there must be equal access and equal teaching quality for both mountainous and lowland areas. Since the

future of the country depends on young people, the future of our youth can only shine brightly with the light of education. I would like to say that the integration of youth and education is a true driving force for national development.

Ma May Yadana (Tamway Township)

I work at an eye hospital. As a young citizen, this is my first time voting. I cast my vote with full confidence for the party that I believe can raise wages, reduce commodity prices, and improve employment opportunities. I also voted for the party that I think can make living conditions and transportation more convenient for workers. I want the country to be peaceful and stable. I enthusiastically voted for the candidate who I hope will be able to plan and implement measures to improve the lives of workers, and I believe this will give us young workers peace of mind about our future.

Ma Nang Wutyi (Tamway Township)

I cast my vote, which is important for the country. I believe the elected candidate will be able to make the country better and improve the economy. If a new government emerges, I strongly hope that commodity prices will be stable and aligned with wages, that job opportunities will help improve everyone's economic situation, and that women as a whole will have security and rights. I also have high expectations that the government will be one the public can rely on in areas such as transport, education, and healthcare.

U Soe Win (Tamway Township)

I voted for the party's candidate who will work for the good of the country without considering personal gain. As citizens, we hope for a developed, peaceful, and prosperous society. This moment is extremely important, and there is much work to be done. To make the country peaceful and prosperous, everyone needs to work together hand in hand. The fu-

Interviewers: Nyein Thu & Kyaw Gyi; Photos: Kanu & Kyaw Gyi

ture of the country depends not only on the hands of the people but also on the capabilities of the new government that will emerge.

Daw Nwe Ni Myo Hlaing (Polling Station Head), Polling Station 1, BEHS No 2 in Ward 14 of Yankin Township

At Polling Station 1 in Ward 14, Yankin Township, there were 2,296 voters, including 74 for the Kayin ethnic representative and 94 for the Rakhine ethnic representative. As early voters, 70 people had already cast their ballots. Arrangements were made so that the public could vote smoothly, including organizing the voter lists for easy checking, and the machines were repeatedly tested. At 5 am on the day the polling station opened, when the candidates arrived, it was demonstrated that the machine buttons were functioning properly and that the machines were set to zero. At 6 am, voters began arriving to cast their ballots. Although the polling station closed at 4 pm, all voters present inside the station were allowed to vote in an orderly manner.

U Dawut (Tamway Township)

I hope a good new government will emerge for the country. Improvements are needed in the health, education, and transport sectors. Most importantly, citizens' rights should be equal and fair. Currently, the main challenge is the economy, so measures are needed to facilitate booming trade. I also believe that a positive change will occur. For the country to develop, everyone should avoid activities of personal cult and partisanship. We should welcome reformers who will genuinely work to make the country better. So, we wholeheartedly welcome a new government that prioritizes the interests of the country and the people.

NATIONAL/INTERVIEW

Statement supports Myanmar delegation at ICJ

National Unity Party Central Committee Headquarters Statement

23 January 2026

THE National Unity Party strongly condemns the fabricated allegations made by The Gambia against the Republic of the Union of Myanmar at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in The Hague, the Netherlands, which undermine the State's sovereignty and the interests of the entire nation and mislead international public opinion.

Led by Union Minister for the Ministry 2 of the President's Office U Ko Ko Hlaing and Union Minister for Legal Affairs and Union Attorney-General Daw Thida Oo, the Myanmar delegation (Agent of Myanmar) is lawfully responding to The Gambia's allegations at the ICJ with solid evidence based on historical facts and political perspectives.

The National Unity Party honours and fully supports the Myanmar delegation's steadfast efforts at the ICJ to uphold the dignity and honour of the State and the people of Myanmar in accordance with the law and credible evidence.

With full confidence in the rule of law, the National Unity Party hereby declares that it stands together with the people in supporting the Myanmar delegation (Agent of Myanmar) in its lawful proceedings before the International Court of Justice.

Central Executive Committee
National Unity Party

Yangon Region sees enthusiastic voter turnout as Phase III of general election continues

THE 2025 Multiparty Democratic General Election Phase III was successfully held yesterday in 61 townships across the country.

The Phase III of the general election was held at 1,300 polling stations across 17 townships in Yangon Region, with voters casting their ballots peacefully.

Local and foreign media outlets are freely reporting on the third phase of the multiparty democratic general election in Yangon Region, while diplomats from foreign embassies in Yangon and local and international election observation teams are monitoring voters as they cast their ballots freely.

Phase I of the 2025 multiparty democratic general election was held on 28 December 2025 with 1,313 polling stations across 12 townships in Yangon Region, followed by Phase II on 11 January 2026, with 1,171 polling stations opened in 16 townships in the region.

In the 2025 multiparty democratic general election, 4,938,823 voters were eligible to vote across 45 townships in Yangon Region, 3,784 polling stations were opened, and 20 political parties and 46 independent candidates — a total of 982 Hluttaw candidates — competed in the election. — MNA/TH

Sittway District Administrator and Say Tha Mar Gyi Villager unveil independent, peaceful lifestyle of residents in Aungmingala Ward of Sittway and support of government for health and education sectors

A statement of U Aung Naing Oo, Sittway District Administrator of General Administration Department on independent livelihoods of residents from Aungmingala Ward in Sittway of Rakhine State and another statement of Daw Tin Ni Shwe (a) Nang Rang Saw Ra, residing in Say Tha Mar Gyi Village of Sittway on arrangements of the government for accommodation, health and education sectors were described as follows: -

U Aung Naing Oo (Director)
District Administrator, Sittway District General Administration Department

Now, we arrive in Aungmingala Ward. We see the school in Aungmingala Ward. There are one government's school and two schools teaching Arabic language. Students from the ward are learning education at the government's school under full strength of teachers. In our ward, after the 2012 conflict, during 2013-2014, there was security provided outside for the safety of the residents, and gates were set up. After 2014, the gates were removed, and people have been able to move around freely. There are no obstacles or restrictions anymore. Similarly, we also have a busy market nearby, which the local residents of the ward call the 'Democracy Market.' At present, this ward is a place where Rakhine indigenous people, other ethnic

groups, and Bengali people in Sittway can move about freely without restriction.

This school has a vacant plot, and arrangements are being made to expand it. The school we visited is Aungmingala Ward Basic Education Middle School, where students from the ward are studying. Moreover, plans are underway to build a new school building on the vacant plot to allow further expansion. The area we visited also includes a market in Aungmingala Ward, Sittway, called the 'Democracy Market.' In this market, Bengali people from the ward buy and sell goods, and Rakhine indigenous people and other ethnic groups also trade there. Currently, people are able to move and carry out their activities freely and peacefully in this area.

Daw Tin Ni Shwe (a) Nang Rang Saw Ra

Say Tha Mar Gyi Village, Sittway

I have been living here for a long time, about thirty years. I am married and have four children. Regarding medical treatment, we can receive healthcare from the government. The government health department comes once a month to give vaccinations, especially for children. For patients like us, they also come once a week or once every fifteen days to provide medical treatment. We are here to live freely.



U Aung Naing Oo (Director)



Daw Tin Ni Shwe (a) Nang Rang Saw Ra

In terms of our security, we have an administrative system, including the ward administrator, the household heads, and group leaders. They provide protection for us, and if we need help, we can go and inform them and they will assist us together. We receive good support and opportunities from them. The government also provides us with the best possible support. I work odd-job. I work as a casual labourer. But it is fine. My husband is also a casual labourer.

There are no restrictions at all. We live completely freely, without any disturbance. The government allows us to live freely and peacefully. Everything is fine and satisfactory. Regarding healthcare, as I mentioned, the health department comes once a month to give vaccinations. They give vaccines to pregnant women as well. For chil-

dren, when they reach two months of age, they are given vaccinations. In real emergency situations, the government provides medical treatment, and we can go there and receive treatment freely.

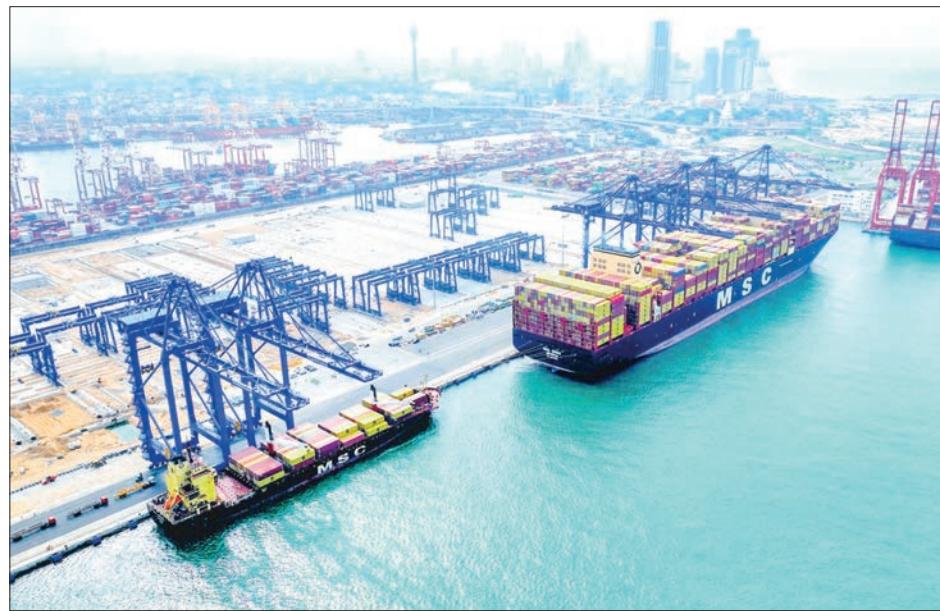
Regarding education, in our Say Tha Mar Gyi Village we have a post-primary school. Children can study there up to Grade 7. For Grades 8, 9, and 10, the government arranges schools for them in Thetkaepin. They can go to those schools and attend freely. As for the identity card, in 2017 there was a program under which the government's Immigration Department came and processed applications. Some people received their cards, and some did not. I am still in the process of applying, and I hope that we will receive it. I am not eligible to vote yet, but I went to observe. — News Team

Colombo East Container Terminal commissions third berth

THE Colombo East Container Terminal (CECT), managed by the Sri Lanka Ports Authority (SLPA), commissioned its third berth on Friday.

SLPA Chairman Siri-mevan Sarathchandra Ranasinghe said the CECT handled over 500,000 twenty-foot equivalent units (TEUs) in 2025, despite operating with incomplete infrastructure for part of the year.

With the third berth now operational, throughput is expected to rise significantly.



SLPA Managing Director Ganaka Hemachandra said the remaining jetty works are scheduled for completion by mid-February, after which the terminal will operate at full scale. The facility is aiming to process 1.5 million TEUs in 2026.

SLPA Managing Director Ganaka Hemachandra said the remaining jetty works are scheduled for completion by mid-February, after which the terminal will operate at full scale.

PHOTO: REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE/ SRI LANKA PORT AUTHORITY

rector Ganaka Hemachandra said the remaining jetty works are scheduled for completion by mid-February, after which the terminal will operate at full scale. The facility is aiming to process 1.5 million TEUs in 2026.

Hemachandra also noted that the collective progress of the SLPA and other terminal operators at the Port of Colombo is contributing to foreign exchange earnings, employment, and trade connectivity. — Xinhua

India's commercial vehicle sector entering next upcycle: Nomura

INDIA'S commercial vehicle industry is entering

the early stages of a cyclical recovery, driven by

improving fundamentals and supportive structural

factors, according to a recent research report by Nomura.

The global brokerage firm said the commercial vehicle sector appears poised for an upcycle after several years of muted growth, with volumes expected to pick up over the next two to three years.

The India Medium and Heavy Commercial Vehicles (M&HCV) industry appears to be entering the next upcycle, and Nomura estimates volumes to grow 8-10 per cent year-on-year in 2025-26-2026-27 after a period of modest growth.

— ANI



The commercial vehicle sector appears poised for an upcycle after several years of muted growth, with volumes expected to pick up over the next two to three years. **PHOTO: ANI**

Cambodia's agricultural products exports up 7.3% in 2025

CAMBODIA made a gross revenue of US\$6.46 billion from its exports of agricultural products in 2025, up 7.3 per cent from \$6.02 billion in the year before, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries said in a report on Sunday.

Potential agricultural products for exports included rice, rubber, cassava, mangoes, bananas, peppercorn, cashew nuts, longans, and durians, among others.

The report said China is a key market for Cambodian products, especially for milled rice.

Cambodian Ministry of Commerce's Secretary of State and Spokesperson Penn Sovicheat said the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) agreement and the Cambodia-China Free Trade Agreement (CCFTA) have given a boost to Cambodia's agricultural exports. — Xinhua

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V SINAR BINTAN VOY.NO. (917N)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V SINAR BINTAN VOY.NO. (917N)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **26-1-2026** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **AWPT** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S SAMUDERA SHIPPING LINE

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V PELICAN VOY.NO. (0082N)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V PELICAN VOY.NO. (0082N)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **26-1-2026** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **AWPT** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

(ONE) OCEAN NETWORK EXPRESS LINE

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V XO LUCKY VOY.NO. (X2602E)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V XO LUCKY VOY.NO. (X2602E)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **26-1-2026** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MIP** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S TI2 LOGISTICS PTE LTD

SPORTS

Myanmar sixth with 20 golds at ASEAN Para Games

MYANMAR athletes delivered a strong performance at the XIII ASEAN Para Games, winning gold in sitting volleyball and silver in football, as the national contingent secured a total of 59 medals: 20 gold, 19 silver and 20 bronze — to place sixth in the overall standings.

The XIII ASEAN Para Games, hosted by Thailand from 20 to 26 January 2026, are being held at various stadiums and gyms in Bangkok and Nakhon Ratchasima (Korat). On the day's competitions, Myanmar athletes competed in athletics, swimming, seven-a-side football, sitting volleyball, goalball (visually impaired), chess (visually impaired), shooting and table tennis.

In swimming events that began at 9 am, Nyi Nyi Lin Htet won gold in the men's 100-metre freestyle (S4), Min Htoo claimed silver in the men's 50-metre breaststroke (SB7), and Aung Myint Myat secured bronze in the men's 100-metre freestyle (S6). In athletics, Htet Htet Aye captured gold in the women's shot put (F55), while Sein Phawt won gold and Nang Win Win



Myanmar and Indonesian teams competing in sitting volleyball final in XIII ASEAN Para Games 2026.

Than took silver in the women's shot put (F63/F64).

Myanmar earned additional bronze medals through the national goalball team, the men's team event (B2) in visually impaired chess by Maw Shay, Lin Htet Naung and Min Thant Soe, and the men's team event (B1) by Kaung San, Myo San Aung and

Thant Zin Oo.

In the sitting volleyball final, Myanmar defeated Indonesia in straight sets to secure the gold medal. In the seven-a-side football final, Myanmar fell 1-0 to host Thailand and settled for silver.

Following the competitions, awards ceremonies were held,

with medals presented by President of the Myanmar Paralympic Sports Federation Maj-Gen Hla Moe and officials from the ASEAN Para Sports Federation (APSF). The State has designated prize money of US\$300 for each gold medal, US\$200 for silver and US\$100 for bronze, which were presented by Maj-Gen Hla

Moe on behalf of the State.

Maj-Gen Hla Moe and his delegation also attended and encouraged Myanmar athletes at various venues, including athletics, swimming, shooting and the sitting volleyball final at the 80th Birthday Anniversary Stadium; table tennis at Centre Point Hotel Terminal 21 (Korat); goalball at Vongchavalitkul University; and visually impaired chess and the seven-a-side football final at Nakhon Ratchasima Rajabhat University.

On 25 January, Myanmar athletes competed across eight sports and added four gold, three silver and four bronze medals to the tally.

Overall, Myanmar finished the XIII ASEAN Para Games with 20 gold, 19 silver and 20 bronze medals, totalling 59 medals, and ranked sixth among participating nations. The gold medal haul marked an increase of five compared with the XII ASEAN Para Games held in Cambodia in 2023, reflecting Myanmar's continued progress and contribution to enhancing national pride through sport. — MNA/KZL

Mbappe double at Villarreal takes Real Madrid top of La Liga



Real Madrid's French forward Kylian Mbappe celebrates scoring his team's first goal at Villarreal on Saturday. **PHOTO: AFP**

KYLIAN Mbappe netted twice to earn Real Madrid a 2-0 win at Villarreal on Saturday and take his side to the top of La Liga.

Alvaro Arbeloa's team moved two points clear of arch-rivals Barcelona, who host bottom-of-the-table Real Oviedo on Sunday.

La Liga's top scorer Mbappe reached 21 goals for the season in the competition to help Madrid see off a spirited Villarreal side, who are now fourth.

Arbeloa's side have won three consecutive matches across all competitions and victory at Villarreal could be a vital step in the revival of their season.

After the shock Copa del Rey defeat at second-tier Albacete in Arbeloa's first match at the helm just 10 days ago after replacing Xabi Alonso, his Madrid have started to take shape.

The coach has made clear how important his star players are and none has been more crucial this season than French superstar Mbappe, who has netted 34 times across all competitions. — AFP

Arsenal rocked by Man Utd, Villa rekindle Premier League title bid

MANCHESTER United inflicted Arsenal's first home defeat of the season in a 3-2 thriller to blow the Premier League title race open on Sunday as Aston Villa beat Newcastle to close within four points of the Gunners.

Villa's impressive 2-0 victory at Newcastle took Unai Emery's men level on points with Manchester City, whose own title chances were boosted by events at the Emirates Stadium.

A week on from dominating City in the Manchester derby, Michael Carrick's dream start as United boss continued thanks to Matheus Cunha's stunning later winner.

"A really painful one," said Arsenal boss Mikel Arteta. "But now it is time to be very close to those players that have given us

so much joy and support them because we all want to win."

A Lisandro Martinez own goal put Arsenal in front but the Red Devils quickly levelled when Bryan Mbeumo pounced on an error by Martin Zubimendi.

Patrick Dorgu's brilliant strike put the visitors in front early in the second half.

Not for the first time this season, despite their lofty league position, Arsenal were blunt as an attacking force from open play.

But they could rely on their prowess from set-pieces to equalize when Mikel Merino forced in a corner on 84 minutes.

Just moments later Cunha took aim from outside the box and delivered a telling blow to the Gunners' hopes of a first league title in 22 years. — AFP

Colombo East Container Terminal
commissions third berth

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South Korean ex-PM Lee dies during Vietnam trip

LEE HAE-CHAN, a former South Korean prime minister who was serving as a senior vice president of the Peaceful Unification Advisory Council (PUAC), died on Sunday while receiving medical treatment in Vietnam, Yonhap News Agency reported.

Lee collapsed on 23 January during a business trip to Ho Chi Minh City, where he was attending a meeting of the council's Asia-Pacific regional committee, and was rushed to a local hospital, according to Yonhap.

He was diagnosed with an acute myocardial infarction and underwent a stent procedure by local medical staff, but failed to recover and passed away at 2:48 pm local time.

A seven-term lawmaker and a veteran figure of South Korea's democratic movement, Lee served as prime minister under former President Roh Moo-hyun from 2004 to 2006.

— Xinhua



Industrial robots are operating on an intelligent production line in a smart manufacturing enterprise in Yangzhou, East China's Jiangsu Province.
PHOTO: REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE/VCG/GLOBAL TIMES

China-ASEAN experts discuss frontier AI development, governance

Hou emphasized that China's extensive expertise in automation research, technology, and industrial application positions the country to significantly drive global scientific and technological progress.

EXPERTS from China and across the ASEAN grouping gathered for the 2026 China-ASEAN AI Capacity-Building Training Programme and High-Level Seminar on AI Frontier Technologies and Governance to discuss cooperation and capacity building.

The gathering of over 100 representatives here on Friday worked to find common ground and exchange views on frontier artificial intelligence (AI) technologies and security challenges, against the backdrop of rapid

technological change and rising governance concerns.

In his remarks, Hou Zengguang, vice president of the Chinese Association of Automation and professor at the Institute of Automation of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, said that the deep integration of AI with automation and digital technologies is reshaping the global development landscape and profoundly influencing production and daily life. Hou noted that China has accumulated rich experience in research, technology development and industrial application

in the field of automation, which can contribute to global scientific and technological advancement.

Meanwhile, Shahbaz Khan, director and representative to UNESCO Regional Office for East Asia, said AI is reshaping industries, societies and global cooperation patterns. While bringing unprecedented opportunities, it also poses profound challenges, he said, adding that promoting inclusive cooperation and building a fair and equitable AI governance system has become a shared task for all stakeholders. — Xinhua

Canadian PM calls for "buy Canadian" in response to Trump's new tariff threat

CANADIAN Prime Minister Mark Carney on Saturday called for "buy Canadian" and "build Canadian" in response to a new tariff threat from US President Donald Trump.

Carney published a pre-taped video on his personal social media account about buying and building Canadian

to combat economic threats from other countries.

"With our economy under threat from abroad, Canadians have made a choice: to focus on what we can control," Carney said at the beginning of the video.

Though Carney did not mention the United States di-

rectly, the prime minister said: "We can't control what other nations do. We can be our own best customer. We'll buy Canadian. We'll build Canadian."

Trump on Saturday threatened to slap a 100 per cent tariff on Canadian goods coming into the United States. — Xinhua



Mark Carney delivered his speech at the World Economic Forum in Davos on 20 January, one day before US President Donald Trump's scheduled address. PHOTO: AFP