

The Global **NEW LIGHT** of MYANMAR

Article

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Laypin plum market stays strong despite season's end



Dynamic scenes from the Mekong-Ganga Food Festival at the Secretariat Yangon on Theinbyu Road yesterday.

Mekong-Ganga Food Festival held in Yangon

The Mekong-Ganga Cooperation (MGC) was formed by India and five ASEAN countries: Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam. One of the key activities of the MGC is promoting tourism through cultural exchanges.

Union Minister for Hotels and Tourism U Kyaw Soe Win delivered a speech at the Mekong-Ganga Food Festival, organized by the Embassy of India in Yangon in collaboration with the Indian Women's Association in Yangon and the Myanmar Women Entrepreneurs Network, at the

Secretariat Yangon, located on Theinbyu Road, Yangon, yesterday.

The event was organized to enhance the bilateral friendship between Myanmar and India through cultural interaction and the exchange of experiences.

The event was attended by Yangon Region Chief Minister U Soe Thein, Mayor

U Bo Htay, officials from the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism and related departments, Indian Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Abhay Thakur, ambassadors and diplomats from foreign embassies, the chairpersons of the Indian Women's Association in Yangon and the Myanmar Women Entrepreneurs Network, and guests. **SEE PAGE 4**



Italian Embassy hosts inaugural Cultural Heritage & Art Fair in Myanmar

THE first-ever cultural heritage and art fair in Myanmar, organized by the Italian Embassy, was held from on 23 February 9 am to 9 pm at the Italian Embassy on Inya Myaing Road, Bahan

This photo showcases an invite for the cultural heritage and art fair in Myanmar organized by the Italian Embassy.

Township.

The embassy collaborated with two local organizations — Doh Eain and Our Heritage Homes — to organize the event.

The Doh Eain organization participated in the exhibition as a panellist in a conversation titled 'Sense of Place' and also included a programme called 'Downtown in Memories,' which everyone in attendance could participate in

throughout the event.

The 'Sense of Place' conversation discussed how shared spaces in society impact and connect with both the environment and its residents. The 'Downtown in Memories' programme will explore historical and heritage sites in Yangon, such as the Lokanat Building, book stalls along the roads, the Yatha Tea Shop, and the Post Office. — ASH/TH

NATIONAL

Education as a Catalyst: Building Myanmar's Future through Qualified Educators

COUNTRIES with the highest levels of education among their citizens are also the most developed.

A well-educated population signifies both competence and quantity.

Myanmar must cultivate a large number of qualified educators to drive progress.

(Excerpt from the speech given by Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at the opening of the Myanmar National Education Conference 2024 on 25 June 2024)

Objectives of 80th Anniversary of Armed Forces Day 2025

- To actively participate in serving three main functions of Tatmadaw national defence duty, training duty and public benefit duty upholding Our Three Main National Causes;
- To steadfastly carry out measures for State development and genuine, eternal peace by ending the armed conflicts under the Constitution (2008) and NCA;
- To protect the State and its citizens from dangers and provide sector-wise assistance for the safety and socioeconomic development of the people;
- To provide necessary assistance to hold a free and fair multiparty democratic general election by Tatmadaw for the emergence of a Union based on democratic and federal systems after carrying out measures per the stipulations of the State of Emergency.

Myanmar Gazette

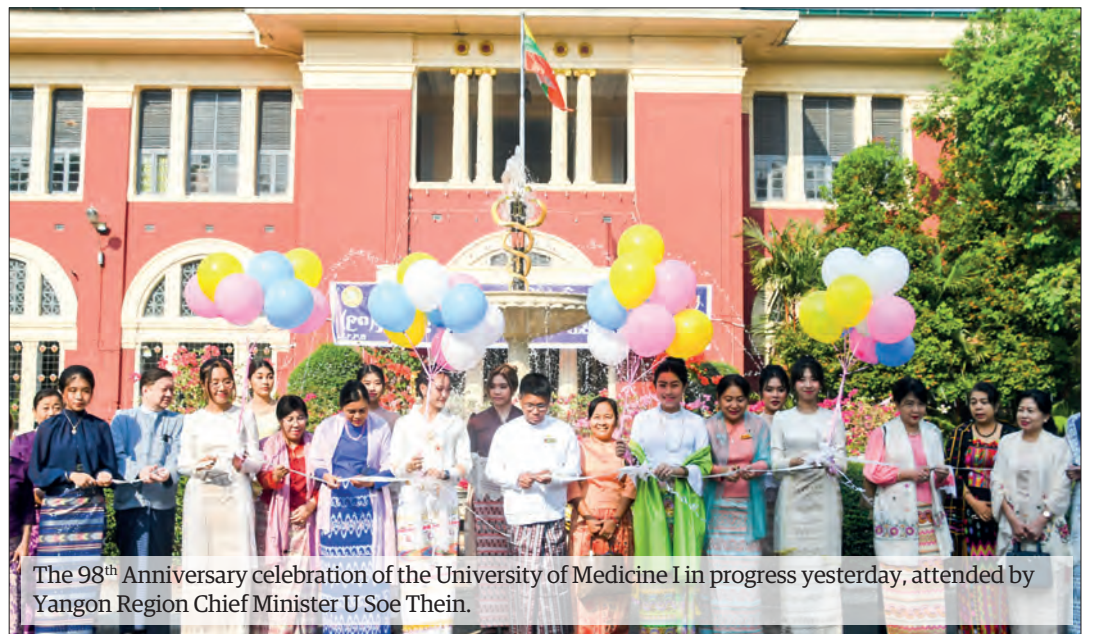
Appointment of Head of Service Organization

THE State Administration Council has appointed U Zaw Zaw, Deputy Director-General of the Department of Aviation under the Ministry of Transport and Communications, as Director-General of the same department on probation from the date he assumes charge of his duties.

Top websites and web portals to access Military Service Rules

- Ministry of Defence
<https://www.mod.gov.mm>
- Ministry of Legal Affairs
<https://www.mlis.gov.mm>
- Ministry of Information
<https://www.moi.gov.mm>
- Myawady Webportal
<https://myawady.net.mm>
- Myanmar National Portal
<https://myanmar.gov.mm>

UM 1's 98th Anniversary Event held



The 98th Anniversary celebration of the University of Medicine I in progress yesterday, attended by Yangon Region Chief Minister U Soe Thein.

THE 98th Anniversary Celebration of the University of Medicine 1 (UM 1) Yangon, took place yesterday within the university compound in Lanmadaw Township, Yangon. Yangon Region Chief Minister U Soe Thein attended the event to show support.

To commence the celebration, Rector Dr Kyaw Shwe, along with the Pro-Rector and responsible officials cut the ribbon to inaugurate the ceremony. The University students performed the song "Mingalaba" as part of the entertainment segment.

Rector Dr Kyaw Shwe then delivered the opening speech, explaining the significance of the celebration. In commemoration of the university's anniversary, competitions in poetry, articles, paintings and posters related to the university's history and landmarks were held, with winning students receiving awards from the responsible officials. Students presented musical performances, traditional dances and songs.

Afterwards, Yangon Region Chief Minister U Soe Thein awarded K2.5 million to

the performing students. He also toured the university campus to view poster exhibitions, wall displays and the festival market stalls.

Founded in 1927, the University of Medicine 1 Yangon has now reached its 98th year in 2025. With support from the State Government, the Ministry of Health and the Department of Human Resources for Health, the university continues to provide medical education, producing numerous medical professionals dedicated to public healthcare services. — Aung Myint (IPRD)/KZL

Untimely Rainfall Warning No 4

Issued at 7 pm MST on 23 February 2025

ACCORDING to the observations at 5:30 pm MST today, due to the convergence of warm air from the Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal and cold air from the China high pressure system, the western disturbances and eastern disturbances, rain or thundershowers are likely to be scattered to fairly widespread in Nay Pyi Taw, Yangon, Bago, Ayeyawady, Taninthayi Regions and Kachin, Kayah, Kayin,

Mon, Shan States and isolated in Mandalay, Magway, Upper Sagaing Regions and Chin, Rakhine States during 24 February 2025 to 27 February 2025.

Advisory

People should be aware of untimely rainfall accompanied with thunder, lightning and hails. — DMH

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.

(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)

Myanmar, Russia conclude 5th Intergovernmental Trade & Economic Meeting

THE Fifth Myanmar-Russia Intergovernmental Trade and Economic Cooperation Commission meeting was held yesterday at the Myanmar International Convention Centre II in Nay Pyi Taw to enhance trade and economic cooperation between the two countries.

Union Minister for Investment and Foreign Economic Relations Dr Kan Zaw and Minister of Economic Development of the Russian Federation Mr Maxim Reshetnikov cochaired the meeting.

The meeting was divided into four segments: a closed-door meeting, a plenary session, a memorandum signing ceremony and an economic forum.

Present at the closed-door meeting were State Administration Council (SAC) Member, Deputy Prime Minister and Union Minister for Transport and Communications General Mya Tun Oo, SAC Member General Nyo Saw, Deputy Prime Minister and Union Minister for Planning and Finance U Win Shein, as well as Union ministers and deputy ministers from relevant ministries of Myanmar and the deputy minister of Economic Development of the Russian Federation along with Russian delegates.



Yesterday's Fifth Myanmar-Russia Intergovernmental Trade and Economic Cooperation Commission meeting in Nay Pyi Taw featured addresses by MIFER Union Minister Dr Kan Zaw (top right) and Russian Economic Development Minister Mr Maxim Reshetnikov (top left).

The plenary session of the Fifth Myanmar-Russia Intergovernmental Trade and Economic Cooperation Commission meeting continued, where the co-chairs and the Russian Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Iskander Azizov delivered opening speeches.

In his opening remarks, Union Minister Dr Kan Zaw highlighted that Myanmar-Rus-

sia trade and investment relations have significantly progressed since the State Administration Council assumed responsibilities. He stated that Myanmar's collaboration with the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) would provide access to European markets, while Russia could further expand into Asian markets. He invited Russian investors to collabo-

rate on transportation sector development, industrial modernization and infrastructure expansion.

He also noted that direct flights between Myanmar and Russia were currently operational, which would further promote tourism. The Union minister then expressed confidence that the agreements and discussions from this meet-

ing would strengthen bilateral relations, enhance trade and investment and contribute to the mutual economic benefits of both countries.

Russian Minister of Economic Development Mr Maxim Reshetnikov remarked that since the fourth commission meeting, there had been noticeable improvements in bilateral cooperation, not only in trade and investment but also in infrastructure projects and banking sector collaboration. He emphasized that Russian markets remained open to Myanmar businesses and that the Russia-Myanmar Economic Forum would continue to foster networking opportunities for entrepreneurs from both nations.

Russian Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Iskander Azizov added that both nations prioritized cooperation in the energy, nuclear technology, agriculture and mining sectors to increase trade volumes between Myanmar and Russia.

The meeting continued with discussions on the progress of bilateral trade, investment, and economic cooperation, along with the signing of agreements to strengthen ties between Myanmar and Russia. — MNA/KZL

Daily newspapers available online

FOR those who would like to read the Myanma Alinn, the Kyemon and the Global New Light of Myanmar, published daily by the Ministry of Information, please visit www.moi.gov.mm/mal, www.moi.gov.mm/km, www.moi.gov.mm/nlm and www.gnlm.com.mm/e-paper.

News and Periodicals Enterprise



NATIONAL

Mekong-Ganga Food Festival held in Yangon

FROM PAGE 1

The Union minister, the Yangon Region chief minister, the Indian ambassador, and the festival attendees first toured the Myanmar and Indian food stalls, as well as souvenir, handicraft, and clothing stalls. They inaugurated the festival by lighting a lamp, followed by performances of Indian and Myanmar songs and dances.

The Indian ambassador and the chairpersons of the Indian Women's Association in Yangon and the Myanmar Women Entrepreneurs Network then delivered opening remarks.

The Union minister stated in his speech that today's event would provide an opportunity to enhance the friendship between the two countries by



Dynamic scenes from the Mekong-Ganga Food Festival at the Secretariat Yangon on Theinbyu Road yesterday.

sharing the rich cultural heritage and positive experiences between Myanmar and India.

The Mekong-Ganga Cooperation (MGC) was formed by India and five ASEAN countries:

Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam. One of the key activities of the MGC is

promoting tourism through cultural exchanges. Today's food festival is an excellent initiative for the development of tourism between Myanmar and India. The ministry is implementing tourism promotion programs, such as the ASEAN Food Festival in Myanmar, through public-private partnerships to promote tourism. He expressed his belief that today's festival would further strengthen bilateral relations and create new opportunities for cultural exchange and tourism development.

The Union minister also presented the performers with unique gifts and took a photo. Afterwards, the Union minister, the Yangon Region chief minister, and the ambassador cut the ribbon to officially open the festival. — MNA/TH

Deputy Information Minister urges collaboration & library growth

DEPUTY Minister of Information U Ye Tint visited the office of the Thaton District Information and Public Relations Department along with U Saw Kyi Naing, Minister of Social Affairs for Mon State and, the Director of the District's Information and Public Relations Department on 21 February. They observed the ongoing work and activities at the department.

U Ye Tint then met district heads and staff from Bilin and Kyaikhto townships and discussed their respective duties and operations.

In the afternoon, he visited the youth library in Thaton District, which had been constructed under the Library Development Programme. During his visit, he encouraged the library committee members, residents and parents to collaborate in providing children with educa-

tion and knowledge, aiming to help them become capable and well-rounded individuals. He also donated books and magazines to the library.

The deputy minister also visited the Paung Township Information and Public Relations Department, where he met staff members and discussed their work.

In the afternoon, he visited the Information and Public Relations office in Chaungzon Township, reviewing the operations and activities there. Afterwards, he visited the Takawsan Village Library, where he met library officials and locals to discuss strategies for ensuring the library's success, maximizing its benefits and engaging youth in social work.

During his meeting, Deputy Minister U Ye Tint emphasized the importance of prioritizing the



Deputy Minister U Ye Tint meets the personnel from the Information and Public Relations Department in Thaton District, Mon State.

interests of the country and the people, actively participating in regional development projects and promoting literacy and educational activities among youths. He also discussed the expansion and sustainability of libraries in

line with national goals.

The deputy minister also focused on the importance of preparing for and ensuring the successful conduct of a free and fair multiparty democratic election as per national stabil-

ity and the ongoing processes. He emphasized the need for staff participation in this effort as a token of appreciation. The deputy minister presented staff members with foodstuffs and commendations. — MNA/KZL



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Due to limitation of space we are only able to publish "Letter to the Editor" that do not exceed 500 words. Should you submit a text longer than 500 words please be aware that your letter will be edited.

Deputy Ministers attend 3rd Future Technologies Forum

AT the invitation of Mr Anton Kobayakov, Advisor to the President of the Russian Federation, a Myanmar delegation led by Deputy Minister for Industry U Yin Maung Nyunt and Deputy Minister for Education U Nay Myo Hlaing attended the 3rd Future Technologies Forum, which was held in Moscow, Russia on 20 and 21 February.

The delegation attended the welcome dinner for forum participants on 20 February. They took part in the plenary session of the forum at the World Trade Centre in Moscow the next day. The session was led by Russian President Vladimir Putin, and attended by senior government officials,



Deputy Ministers U Yin Maung Nyunt and U Nay Myo Hlaing participate in the third Future Technologies Forum in Moscow on 20-21 February.

company representatives, university scholars and researchers from around the world.

The forum focused on exploring future technological

horizons beyond current advancements. It also introduced new materials that will shape Moscow's future development. A panel discussion titled "Ma-

terials of the Future" was held, where three renowned chemists discussed innovative materials expected to transform urban environments shortly.

Following the forum, the deputy ministers and their delegation returned to Yangon on the evening of 21 February. — MNA/KZL

109 foreign illegal entrants detained in Myawady



Immigration and officials processing the illegal entrants.

AUTHORITIES have detained an additional 109 illegal foreign nationals who had entered Myanmar through border routes after passing through neighbouring countries, including Thailand. These individuals were found in Myawady, particularly in the Shwe Kokko and KK Park areas, where they were involved in illegal online gambling, telecom fraud and other criminal activities.

The detained foreign nationals are currently undergoing identity verification and documentation by the relevant authorities to facilitate their swift repatriation to their respective countries. Between 30 January and 23 February 2025, a total of 2,220 illegal for-

eign nationals were detained in Myanmar. Among them, 673 were deported following legal procedures through Thailand to their home countries while 1,547 are now prepared for repatriation and remain under secure detention.

The government is actively combating online fraud, online gambling, and other cybercrimes, which pose significant threats to national security and the public. It is working closely with international organizations and local communities to effectively suppress and eliminate these illegal activities. Officials across states and regions continue to investigate, take action and prevent the resurgence of such crimes. — MNA/KZL

Electric power fire safety precautions emphasized

YANGON Electricity Supply Corporation Chairman U Aung Kyaw Oo along with responsible officials conducted inspections at the North Okkalapa Electricity Manager's Office, the Htaukkyant Township Electricity Manager's Office and the main substation in Hlawga on the morning of 21 February. They emphasized the importance of taking special precautions to prevent fire hazards.

They visited the 33 kV substation at the North Okkalapa Electricity Manager's Office and inspected the power consumption according to feeders, meter readings, cleanliness and maintenance within the

substation area and fire safety measures in place. They also discussed proposals for a new 66 kV substation to ensure stable and sufficient power distribution within the township. They also instructed efforts to reduce power loss and combat illegal electricity usage.

Afterwards, the team visited the Htaukkyant Township Electricity Manager's Office and the 33/6.6 kV town office substation. They inspected the record-keeping of meter readings, power distribution, power loss issues and any remaining unpaid power bills.

The inspection continued with a visit to the 230 kV Hlawga main substation, where they

reviewed the ongoing 230 kV substation Bus Extension Project and the relocation of the 33 kV power cables. The team emphasized the importance of maintaining a safe working environment and minimizing electrical hazards while ensuring the projects are completed on time.

They also visited the 33/6.6 kV Pale substation in Htaukkyant Township. They checked the power distribution, the reduction of power loss according to feeders and the maintenance of the substation's facilities. They also ensured that fire safety measures were in place and properly executed. — Aung Than Oo/KZL



Officials inspect the power substation in Yangon Region.

NATIONAL

Kalasa Gallery features 'The Energy of Feminine' art exhibit



These photos reveal paintings being displayed at the 'The Energy of Feminine' exhibition.

THE group art exhibition 'The Energy of Feminine' is currently being held at Kalasa Art Gallery in Kyauktada Township, Yangon, from 22 February to 2 March.

The exhibition features paintings by Aung Ko, Lin Wunna, Htoo Aung Kyaw, and Mark PryKaza,

an international artist.

"The exhibition at Kalasa Art Gallery brings together the finest works of four talented artists. We warmly invite art enthusiasts to visit and explore these remarkable paintings," said a representative of the Kalasa Art Gallery.

The displayed paintings vary in size, including 24 by 24 inches, 36 by 24 inches, 18 by 24 inches, and 18 by 18 inches. They cover diverse themes and are created using various mediums such as watercolour, oil, and acrylic. — ASH/KNN

Myanmar representative attends equestrian competition in Qatar

MYANMAR participated as an observer in the 36-nation equestrian show jumping competition held in Doha, Qatar, according to the Myanmar Equestrian Federation.

The event took place from 19 to 22 February and featured 189 top equestrian athletes from 36 countries. The total cash award for the competition was US\$1.3 million, with Longines, the renowned Swiss watch brand, serving as the main sponsor.

At the invitation of the Qatar Equestrian Federation, Myanmar Equestrian Federation President U Pyone Maung Maung attended the competition to observe.

The Myanmar Equestrian Federation is currently preparing for the XXXIII Southeast Asian



Image reveals scenes from the 36-nation equestrian show jumping competition held in Qatar.

Games in Thailand, where it will select four equestrian athletes to represent the country. These athletes will undergo training in

Thailand in collaboration with the Thailand Equestrian Federation before the competition. — ASH/KZL

MSME loans available for application

MSME owners in Nay Pyi Taw, the Union Territory, as well as in regions and states, can apply for the necessary loans to expand their businesses, purchase machinery, and procure raw materials. These loans are provided by the Myanma Economic Bank, Myanma Agricultural Development Bank, and 16 private banks.

The annual interest rates are three per cent for loans where at least 30 per cent is used for fixed capital, four per cent for loans used entirely 100 per cent as working capital and five per cent for loans issued under the Credit Guarantee Insurance (CGI) system.

MSME owners who wish to apply for loans are advised to contact the relevant MSME agencies in Nay Pyi Taw, the Union Territory, regions, and states.

MSME Development Fund Management Committee



This image showcases a poster for the film 'Eain Myaung'.

Myanmar's 'Eain Myaung' horror-comedy hits theatres in Mar

THE Myanmar film 'Eain Myaung' (House Lizard) is set to be released in cinemas nationwide in early March, according to director Thar Nyi, who helmed the production.

This film, the debut project of Weflex Production, was written by Mo Ka, while Thar Nyi directed the adaptation for the big screen.

"Eain Myaung is the first film I've collaborated on with Weflex Production. It's a horror-comedy with some unique twists. There's also a hidden mystery woven into the story. I've put my best efforts into making this film the best it can be," said director Thar Nyi.

The film features an ensemble cast, including Academy Award winners Kyaw Kyaw Bo, May Myint Mo, and Tekkatho Gwanpon, along with Tun Pale Yadanar, Amy Zan, Pwint, Joker, K Nyi, Moe Nyo, Ngapyawkyaw, Khin Hlaing, and child actress Akari Zaw.

Upon its theatrical release, Weflex Production will also promote 'Eain Myaung' on digital platforms such as Facebook, TikTok, YouTube, and Telegram Channel. — ASH/KNN

Public Notice

THE Anti-Corruption Commission has established corruption prevention units within ministries to curb corruption effectively.

The ACC used SMS on mobile phones to ask the public who sought services at an office of the department of the relevant ministries via short code No "1111" for feedback, including the public feedback programme (PFP).

According to the PFP, the proper replies of the citizens via short code No "1111" will provide the quality of services of each department and the requirements for corruption prevention to be fixed.

Therefore, the public should reply to the questions of the ACC and corruption prevention units of the ministries via SMS at short code "1111". Such doing is a supportive measure for PFP, and the people are urged to cooperate in the operations.

Anti-Corruption Commission



The rice bran oil and cooking oil factory under construction in Nay Pyi Taw.

Preparation of rice bran oil factories advances in Paungde & Myaungmya

RICE bran oil and cooking oil plants are planned to be built in Paungde and Myaungmya, according to the Myanmar Rice Federation.

Led by MRF, Myanmar's first rice bran oil and cooking oil factory project was initiated in Nay Pyi Taw, Pyinmana Township, last February at the MAPCO rice mill compound.

"The rice bran oil factory

in Nay Pyi Taw is going to finish and just inspection work is left. Other factories are also being planned in Myaungmya and Paungde and also heard that there is a similar plan in Yangon," according to a source close to MRF.

The factory in Nay Pyi Taw under construction has a capacity of 9,000 tonnes of raw oil and 6,300 tonnes of cooking oil, totalling about

15,300 tonnes a year. A total of 10 factories are being planned to be built in Ayeyawady, Yangon and Bago regions including Nay Pyi Taw in the future. The production of these plants will be sold in the domestic market and exported to overseas markets especially Japan, South Korea and European countries if it is surplus. — Htet Oo Maung/ZS

Laypin plum market stays strong despite season's end

THE trade of Laypin plums, whose season is going to end soon, has been still strong.

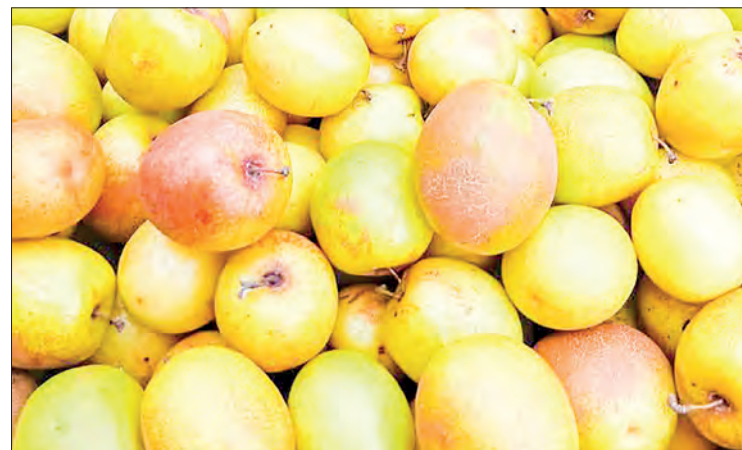
These plums are called Laypin plums as they are produced from Laypin village located along the road to Mann Shwesettaw Pagoda in central Myanmar and the flavour is distinctly sweet. Laypin plums are available only for three months of the year. It is a plum that is gaining popularity in Yangon.

"Laypin plum is sweet and has thick flesh but not seedless. Laypin plum is produced from Pwintbyu and Minbu. The supply already went short in some areas.

Its sale is better than other kinds of plums. Its price is now pretty high in Yangon because the season is about to end. Yangon is the biggest buyer among others nationwide," said a farmer from Pwintbyu Township.

Last December, freshly harvested Laypin plums were traded as the best in Yangon.

Laypin plum is crunchy and the flavour is distinctively sweet from the stage of young fruit and sweeter when it ripens. Despite being sweet, it is hardly to be infected and can be harvested from November to March. — Thit Taw/ZS



This image shows Laypin plums.

Gold Market Rate as of 23 February 2025

THE price of one tical (16.329325 grammes) of gold with density of 19.25 grammes per cubic centimetre and above is K5,500,000, as established by the Mineral (Gold) Reference Price Determination Committee.

Medicinal golden berries sell out fast

SEASONAL medicinal golden berries are selling well in the fruit market, according to the southern Shan State products market.

This is the season when golden-berry appears. It is grown in Pindaya Township exclusively for medicinal purposes and has a different taste from those grown in other areas.

"Goldenberry is good for cholesterol. It cleanses the intestines and lowers blood pressure. People with coronary heart disease can eat it. If you eat it regularly, it is good for defecation. People with high blood pressure and diabetes often eat it. This is the time of golden berry. It already has a market, but what we sell is different from those in Anya.



Images showcase golden berries in the market.

This is the Chinese Taipei variety. It is big and only for eating. It entered the market about two months ago from Pindaya. We supply to Yangon. It is a rare product, so it is selling well," said an official from the Shwe Lubpwint Shop in Kalaw Township.

It will be rare in March, and the number of farmers cultivating medicinal golden berries in Myanmar is still low.

"We have only harvested half of the farm, and it will become rare in March. There are still few people growing it in Anya. The wild fruits are not that big and tasty. Our cultivated fruits are just for eating," he added. — Thit Taw/ZN

OPINION

Uplift leadership role to manage subordinates

TO ensure the success of the organization being led, one must carefully analyze and consider all aspects and take a proactive leadership role. It is necessary to continuously reflect on oneself and strive to become a good leader. Only with comprehensive critical thinking and knowledge can one be an effective leader.

The responsibilities of leaders are vast, requiring them to be systematic in their duties and continuously engaged in learning. Leaders must guide their troops and subordinates toward economic and social well-being and ensure they follow the right path. To accomplish this, leaders themselves must constantly read and study to gain the necessary knowledge. Likewise, they should encourage those under their command to expand their knowledge

A good leader plays a crucial role in setting a clear vision, motivating and empowering their team, fostering open communication, making informed decisions, adapting to change, building strong relationships, promoting

collaboration, and leading by example, ultimately driving positive outcomes for the organization and its members. Moreover, leaders need to comprehensively understand the emotional feelings of subordinates and they must be one with those subordinates in harmony. If so, those leaders can do everything successfully due to the reliance and cooperation of subordinates.

Leaders have to make more sacrifices for the interests of all rather than subordinate in all measures. Leaders must be capable of guiding subordinates to the right tracks while preventing possible dangers. They must have the capacity to serve heavier duties than subordinates in all assignments in addition to management measures. Leaders, indeed, must be equipped with industry, perseverance, courage, patience, tolerance, rationality, arts of critical thinking and analysis whenever subordinates face any problems and difficulties to be resolved. Without intentional efforts to persuade reliance of subordinates, leaders need to share ways and means with them to overcome challenges in daily life.

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The traditional rhyme often recited in Myanmar circles concludes in a way that allows it to continuously

through reading and learning. Only with sufficient knowledge and expertise can they effectively carry out their responsibilities. Through knowledge and skills, they can enhance the value of their leadership.

Leadership is not merely a natural talent but a discipline that can be mastered through continuous learning and the practical application of effective strategies. It is a skill that enables a leader to mobilize and guide their subordinates toward successfully achieving assigned goals and responsibilities. Therefore, a leader must consistently acquire knowledge and expertise to make sound decisions, emphasizing the need for individual effort and dedication to continuous learning.

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CONNECTING ON THE UNIVERSAL DANCE OF WORDS

Myanmar idioms, with their beautiful and vivid imagery, enrich everyday conversations.

မုန့်လုံး စက္ကူကပ် / mun lone hcakkuu kaut /



ကြာအေးကို သူ့အမေရိုက်လို့ မှောင်မိုက်မှာပဲ။ ကိုလူပျိုထံရဲ့ ပေါက်က ခြေထောက်ကိုဆွဲ တွဲလဲ။ တွဲလဲရယ်နေပါအုံး မိုးတောင်ကချွန်း မုန့်လုံး။ မုန့်လုံးကိုစက္ကူကပ်ပါလို့ ကြာကလပ်နဲ့ဆွမ်းတော်တင်။ ပလွင်ပေါက်မျောက်ကလေး ဆင်းတဲ့လို့ပြေး။ ကြာအေး။ မုန့်လုံးသည် ကောက်ညှင်းဖြင့် ပြုလုပ်သော မြန်မာ့သွားရည်စာတစ်မျိုး ဖြစ်သည်။ ကောက်ညှင်းသက်သက်ဖြင့်လည်းကောင်း၊ ထန်းလက် သို့မဟုတ် ကြာသကာခဲကို ဌာပနာသွင်း၍လည်းကောင်း ပြုလုပ် စားသုံးကြသည်။

“မုန့်လုံး စက္ကူကပ်” ဟူသော စကားရပ်သည် အဆုံးမရှိ အထပ်ထပ် ဖြစ်နေသော အခြေအနေကို သရုပ်ဖော်ရာတွင် ဥပမာတစ်ခုအဖြစ် သုံးနှုန်းခြင်း ဖြစ်သည်။

“မုန့်လုံး စက္ကူကပ်” ဟူသော စကားရပ်သည် “ကြာအေး” ကဗျာနှင့် ဆက်စပ်လျက်ရှိသည်။ “ကြာအေး” ကဗျာကို၁၉၆၀ ပြည့်နှစ်တွင် မြန်မာနိုင်ငံ သူ့တောသန့်အသင်းက ထုတ်ဝေသော စာစောင်၌ J. A. Stewart ၏ “Some Songs and a Riddle” ဆောင်းပါးတွင် ဖော်ပြခဲ့သည်။ အဆုံးမရှိသဖြင့် “Endless Songs” ဟူ၍ အမည်ပေးထားပြီး၊ သူ့တောသီအိုရီက “ပတ်လည်သီချင်း”ဟုလည်း ခေါ်တွင်ကြသည်။

“ကြာအေး” ကဗျာတွင် “မုန့်လုံး စက္ကူကပ်”၊ “ကြာအေး သူ့အမေရိုက်” စသည့် စာသားများ ပါဝင်ပြီး၊ ယင်းတို့သည် အဆုံးမရှိ အတောမသတ်ဖြစ်နေသည့် အခြေအနေကို ဖော်ပြရာတွင် အသုံးများသော စကားရပ်များ ဖြစ်သည်။

“ကြာအေး” ကဗျာကို အနောက်တိုင်းပညာရှင် ဆရာကြီး J. A. Stewart က အင်္ဂလိပ်ဘာသာသို့ ဘာသာပြန်ဆိုခဲ့ပြီး၊ ဘဝသံသရာ၏ ဝဲကွယ်အတွင်း၌ အဆုံးမရှိ ဆက်တိုက် လည်ပတ်နေရသည့် သဘောကို သရုပ်ဖော်ထားသော သံဝေဂစရာ ကဗျာတစ်ပုဒ် ဖြစ်သည်။ ထိုသို့ အဆုံးမရှိဘဲ ထပ်ခါထပ်ခါ လည်ပတ်နေခြင်းသည် ဘဝ၏ သံသရာ သဘောကို ညွှန်းဆိုပြီး၊ ဝဲကွယ်မှ လွတ်မြောက်ရန် ကြိုးပမ်းသော်လည်း မဆုံးနိုင်ဘဲ အထပ်ထပ် လည်နေခြင်းသည် ထွက်ပေါက်မဲ့ နှံ့အိုင်၌ ရှိနေကန်နေရသကဲ့သို့ ခံစားရစေသည်။

ကြာအေး (အသုံးကွဲများ - ကြဇ၊ ဂျာအေး) သည် အမည်မသိ ရှေးစာဆိုတော်တစ်ဦးက ရေးဖွဲ့ခဲ့သော မြန်မာသီချင်း ကဗျာတစ်ပုဒ် ဖြစ်သည်။ အချို့က ကြောင်ပမ်းဆရာတော် ရေးဖွဲ့သည်ဟုလည်း ဆိုကြသည်။ ကြာအေး သီချင်း ကဗျာသည် ပတ်လည်သီချင်း (သို့) အဆုံးမရှိသော အမျိုးအစား ဖြစ်သည်။

To repeat something endlessly
The traditional rhyme often recited in Myanmar circles concludes in a way that allows it to continuously

loop back to the beginning.

This phenomenon can be likened to the act of continuously repeating a statement or topic in a conversation without making any progress, similar to “going in circles.”

It symbolizes the habit some people have of reiterating points rather than advancing the dialogue towards a conclusion or resolution.

This Myanmar idiom suggests that sometimes discussions can become stagnant, reflecting a tendency to revisit the same issues repeatedly, without addressing new ideas or solutions.

The imagery of glueing a piece of paper onto a cake represents how intricate and complex conversations can become when they go back to the same point over and over again, creating a cycle that feels unending.

Going in circles

Definition: To keep discussing or doing something without making any progress or reaching a conclusion.
Example Sentence: “We’ve been going in circles for an hour about the same issue. We need to find a solution.”

Beating a dead horse

Definition: To continue talking about or attempting to solve a problem that has already been resolved or is beyond solving.
Example Sentence: “Stop beating a dead horse! We’ve already decided on the new policy, there’s no need to discuss it again.”

Banging your head against a brick wall

Definition: To attempt something with no success or result, as if fighting against something impossible to change.
Example Sentence: “Trying to convince her to change her mind is like banging your head against a brick wall.”

Running around in circles

Definition: To be very busy but without making any actual progress.
Example Sentence: “I feel like I’m running around in circles trying to organize this event, but nothing is getting done.”

Spinning your wheels

Definition: To exert effort but achieve no meaningful result, similar to a vehicle spinning its wheels without moving forward.
Example Sentence: “We’ve been spinning our wheels with this project for months. Maybe it’s time to try a different approach.”

Stuck in a loop

Definition: To be trapped in a cycle where nothing changes or progresses.
Example Sentence: “We’re stuck in a loop with this debate. We keep repeating the same points without finding a resolution.”

Treading water

Definition: To make no progress or achieve nothing, often in a situation where action is expected or needed.
Example Sentence: “Since the project’s budget was frozen, we’ve been treading water with no forward momentum.”

မုန့်လုံး/ mone say /



လူတစ်ဦး၏ အပြုအမူသည် “မုန့်လုံး” နှင့် သဏ္ဍာန်တူနိုင်သည်။ အကယ်၍ လူတစ်ဦး၏ အပြုအမူများသည် အခြားသူများအား ဒေါသ၊ စိတ်ပျက်ခြင်း သို့မဟုတ် မုန့်လုံးတီးမှုတို့ကို ဖြစ်ပေါ်စေပါက ယင်းအပြုအမူများကို “မုန့်လုံး” ဟု တင်စား၍ ခေါ်ဆိုနိုင်ပါသည်။ ဆိုလိုသည်မှာ ယင်းအပြုအမူများကြောင့် သူ့အား လူအများက မုန့်လုံးတီးသွားနိုင်သည်ဟု ဆိုလိုခြင်းဖြစ်သည်။

“မုန့်လုံး” လို့ တင်စားခေါ်ဆိုတဲ့ အပြုအမူတွေကို ရှောင်ရှားသင့်တယ်။

သူတစ်ပါးကို အပြစ်တင် ဝေဖန်နေခြင်းဟာ တစ်မျိုးပြောရင် မုန့်လုံးဆေးနဲ့တူပါတယ်။

To create conditions that lead to animosity
This Myanmar idiom is a metaphor for behaviour that breeds dislike or resentment in others.

In Myanmar, it is understood that just as certain medicines are formulated to target specific illnesses, human actions can provoke strong negative feelings.

Behaviours that create tension, misunderstandings, or hostility among individuals can be compared to concocting a harmful potion that induces hatred rather than healing.

This idiom serves as a cautionary reminder that our actions carry consequences; thus, the way we interact with others can either foster goodwill or incite animosity.

By choosing our words and behaviours carefully, we can promote harmony instead of preparing a “compound for incurring hatred.” The metaphor emphasizes the importance of self-awareness and emotional intelligence in interpersonal relationships.

Stir the pot

Definition: To cause trouble or create conflict in a situation, often by saying or doing something that provokes others.
Example Sentence: “John loves to stir the pot at work by bringing up controversial topics during meetings.”

Add fuel to the fire

Definition: To make a bad situation worse by saying or doing something that provokes more anger or conflict.
Example Sentence: “Her comments only added fuel to the fire, making the argument even more heated.”

By AUGUSTIN

Throw a wrench in the works

Definition: To disrupt or cause problems in an otherwise smooth situation, often leading to negative consequences.
Example Sentence: “His decision to bring up old issues really threw a wrench in the works during our team meeting.”

Pour salt into the wound

Definition: To make a bad situation even worse, especially by reminding someone of their mistakes or failures.
Example Sentence: “By mocking her mistake in front of everyone, he just poured salt in the wound.”

Cause a rift

Definition: To create a division or separation between people, often leading to hostility or animosity.
Example Sentence: “The argument about money caused a rift between the two friends that they couldn’t repair.”

Burn bridges

Definition: To destroy a relationship or opportunity beyond repair, often by acting in a hostile or unforgiving manner.
Example Sentence: “By quitting without notice, he really burned bridges with the company.”

မျက်နှာပြောင်/ myetnar pyaung /



To act shamelessly despite wrongdoing
“မျက်နှာပြောင်တယ်” ဆိုသည်မှာ မိမိ၏ အမှားကို သိလျက်နှင့် ရက်ရွံခြင်း၊ ကြောက်ရွံခြင်း၊ အားနာခြင်း၊ မရှိဘဲ ဆက်လက် ပြုမူခြင်းကို ဆိုလိုပါသည်။ အမှန်စင်စစ် အရက်အကြောက်ဟူသည့် လူတိုင်း၌ ရှိသင့်သော အရာတစ်ခု ဖြစ်ပါသည်။ သို့သော် “မျက်နှာပြောင်” သူတို့သည် မိမိတို့၏ အမှားကို ဖုံးကွယ်ရန် သို့မဟုတ် အပြစ်မှ လွတ်မြောက်ရန် အတွက် ရက်ရွံမှုကို လုံးဝ မပြဘဲ ရဲဝံ့စွာ ပြုမူတတ်ကြပါသည်။

ဥပမာအားဖြင့် တစ်စုံတစ်ဦးသည် လိမ်လည်ပြောဆိုပြီးနောက် မိမိ၏ အမှားကို ဝန်မခံဘဲ ဆက်လက် မျက်နှာပြောင်နေပါက ယင်းကို “မျက်နှာပြောင်တယ်” ဟု ခေါ်ဆိုနိုင်ပါသည်။ အလားတူစွာ တစ်စုံတစ်ဦးအား နှစ်နာစေပြီးနောက် ဘာမျှ မဖြစ်ခဲ့သကဲ့သို့ ပြုမူနေပါကလည်း “မျက်နှာပြောင်တယ်”ဟု ဆိုနိုင်ပါသည်။
This Myanmar idiom refers to individuals who

display a sense of bravado or lack of shame after committing dishonourable acts.

While most people would feel guilt and shame, leading them to avoid showing their faces to friends or peers, some manage to confront their peers without remorse.

It illustrates a striking lack of conscience that allows these individuals to engage with others as if nothing happened.

This behaviour might stem from a variety of reasons, including denial of the wrongdoing, a belief in their invulnerability, or a disregard for social ethics.

The phrase captures the idea of boldness in the face of disgrace, shedding light on moral ambiguities in human behaviour and the complexities of guilt and accountability.

It serves as a poignant reminder of the varying ways people navigate personal integrity in the face of shameful actions.

Face the music

Definition: To confront the consequences of one’s actions, typically after doing something wrong, but doing so without showing remorse.
Example Sentence: “After lying to the boss, he had to face the music when everyone found out the truth.”

Hold your head high

Definition: To act with confidence or dignity even after doing something shameful, often suggesting a lack of remorse.
Example Sentence: “Despite the scandal, she held her head high and continued attending social events without hesitation.”

Walk with a swagger

Definition: To behave in a way that shows confidence or arrogance, even when one’s actions might deserve shame or regret.
Example Sentence: “Even after the cheating scandal, he still walked with a swagger, as if nothing had happened.”

Brush it off

Definition: To dismiss something easily or act as though it doesn’t matter, despite the gravity of the situation.
Example Sentence: “She made a huge mistake at work, but she just brushed it off and acted like it was no big deal.”

Have a thick skin

Definition: To be unaffected by criticism or shame, often in situations where others would feel guilt or embarrassment.
Example Sentence: “Even after his dishonesty was exposed, he showed he had a thick skin by continuing to speak in public without any shame.”

Act like nothing happened

Definition: To continue behaving normally or confidently despite having done something wrong or shameful.
Example Sentence: “After the argument, she acted like nothing happened, as if her words hadn’t caused any harm.”

TECH/ENVIRON: WORLD

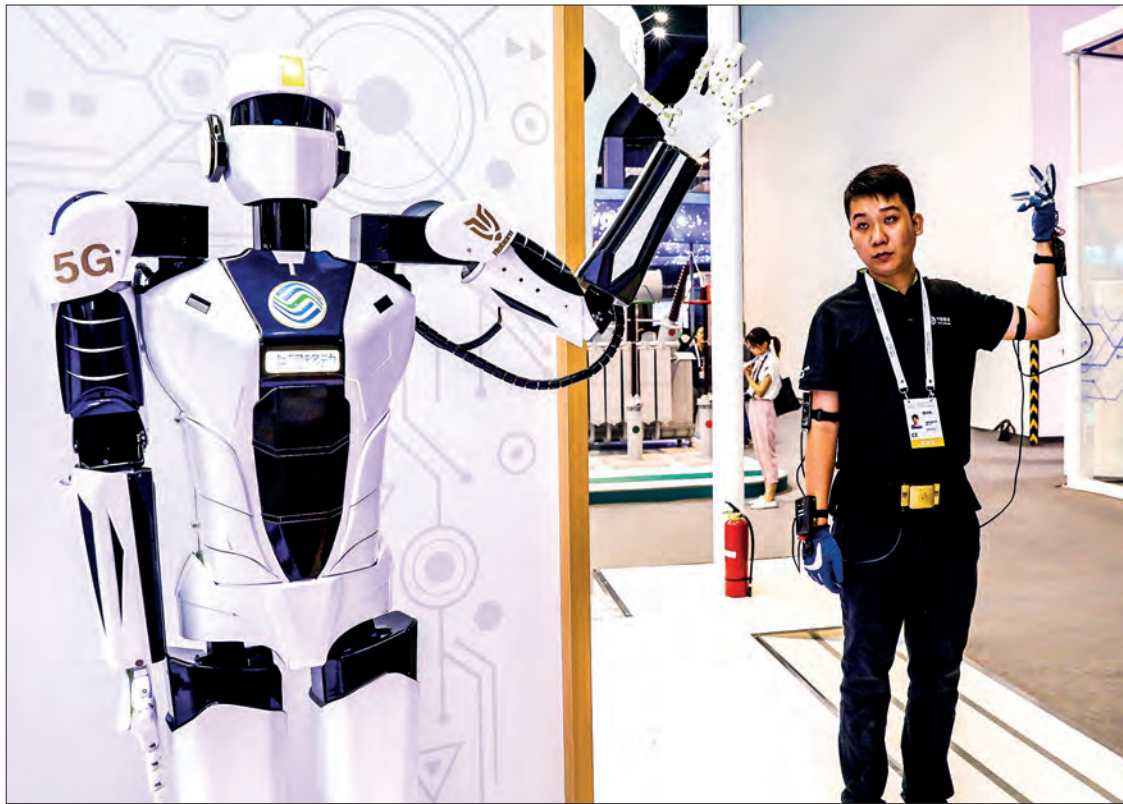
China targets AI misuse in 2025 cyberspace cleanup initiative

The proposed measures include enhancing oversight of AI-generated content, requiring clear labelling of synthetic materials, and imposing penalties for using AI to spread misinformation or manipulate public opinion through paid online commenters.

CHINA'S cyberspace regulator on Friday unveiled plans that position work to combat artificial intelligence (AI) misuse as a central focus of a 2025 nationwide campaign to address online misconduct.

The proposed AI-related measures will enhance oversight of AI-generated content, enforce the clear labeling of synthetic materials, and impose penalties on the use of AI to spread misinformation or the manipulation of public opinion through the "internet water army", which refers to groups of internet users paid to post online comments, according to the Cyberspace Administration of China (CAC).

The CAC is set to launch its 2025 "Qinglang" operation, an annual initiative launched in recent years to create a cleaner, safer



online environment.

Other key goals for the 2025 operation include curbing misinformation propagated by social media influencers, combatting malicious marketing on short-video platforms, addressing unverified rumors that damage businesses, and protecting minors online, particularly during the summer break. The 2025 initiative will build on the success of prior years' campaigns, which have led to the removal of problematic platforms and accounts while effectively deterring violations, the administration noted. — Xinhua

A staff member demonstrates 5G-based remote control of a robot during the 2019 World Artificial Intelligence Conference in Shanghai, 29 August 2019. **PHOTO: XINHUA/FILE**

WHO chief warns 'history will not forgive' failure to seal pandemic deal



Countries are nearing the conclusion of a significant agreement focused on pandemic prevention, preparedness, and response. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

THE head of the UN's health agency warned Friday that history would not forgive countries if they fail to strike a pandemic treaty at the last hurdle — with progress slow and time running out.

World Health Organization leader Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said countries had reached the cusp of concluding a landmark agreement on pandemic prevention, preparedness and response, as

they wrapped up a week of talks.

But with only five more days of formal negotiations left, scheduled for 7-11 April, countries agreed to hold informal meetings in March in a bid to break the deadlock.

"You have made progress — maybe not as much as you would have hoped but still there is progress," Tedros said as the penultimate round of talks closed at the WHO head-

quarters in Geneva.

"We are at a crucial point as you move to finalise the pandemic agreement" in time for the WHO's annual decision-making assembly in May.

"You are so close. Closer than you think. You are on the cusp of making history."

He urged countries not to sink the agreement on a word, a comma or a percentage in the text, imploring them not to make the perfect the enemy of the good.

"History will not forgive us if we fail to deliver," he warned.

The 13th round of talks kicked off under a cloud, with the United States — besides quitting the WHO under President Donald Trump — formally telling the UN health agency they would play no further part in the treaty talks.

But European diplomatic sources said optimism for a deal remained high despite Washington walking away. — AFP

Kazakhstan plans to take rare fish species in Aral, Caspian Sea for scientific purposes

KAZAKHSTAN plans to seize limited number of rare and endangered fish species, as well as other aquatic animals from the Aral and Caspian Seas, for scientific research and reproduction efforts, the Ministry of Agriculture's press service announced in a statement on Thursday.

The species subject to capture include the Caspian seal, Aral Sea shovelnose sturgeon,

Aral barbel, nelma, and Caspian trout. The statement emphasized that only a restricted number of these animals will be caught under the supervision of the relevant authorities.

These species were once commercially fished but are now on the brink of extinction. Recent reports indicated mass die-offs among the Caspian seal population. — Xinhua

LA mayor sacks fire chief over handling of deadly blazes

LOS Angeles city fire chief Kristen Crowley has been sacked by the city's mayor, Karen Bass, over apparent leadership failures during deadly blazes that swept through the city.

Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass sacked the city's fire chief on Friday, blaming her for leadership failures in the handling of deadly blazes that tore through the California metropolis in January.

The axing of Kristin Crowley comes six weeks after America's second most populous city was ravaged by fires that left at least 29 people dead and vast areas in ruins.

It also comes as angry residents continue to look for someone to blame for the fires. — AFP

Trump biopic director apologizes after actor's groping accusation

THE director of a controversial movie about US President Donald Trump's younger years apologized Saturday after admitting to an "over-familiar" gesture towards an actor who later complained of being groped.

Ali Abbasi, a Danish-Iranian filmmaker, said on X that he was "truly sorry" for his behaviour at a party that followed the Golden Globes awards ceremony in Los Angeles in January.

Abbasi's biopic "The Apprentice", released weeks before last year's US election, caused a stir with its unflattering representation of Trump, portraying him suffering erectile dysfunction and undergoing surgery for

hair loss.

"I fully understand that my action made someone uncomfortable, regardless of my intent, and for that I am truly sorry," Abbasi wrote on social media of the groping incident.

He said that he "made an over-familiar gesture -- a slap on the rear" to a male acquaintance with whom he considered he had a friendly relationship, but said it was "intended as playful and not in any sexual way whatsoever".

The director refuted an account in The Hollywood Reporter that his talent agency, Creative Artists Agency (CAA), had dropped him due to the allegation against him. — AFP



Ali Abbasi's film 'The Apprentice' gave an unflattering account of US President Donald Trump's younger years. PHOTO: AFP/FILE



Sean Baker, long a leading figure of the US independent movie circuit, who is now shooting to mainstream success, has won multiple prizes for 'Anora'. PHOTO: AFP

Oscars favourite Baker says indie film 'struggling' as 'Anora' tops Spirit Awards

The Spirit Awards celebrate films made for under \$30 million, and Baker's "Anora", produced for just \$6 million, won both Best Feature and Best Director.

SEAN Baker, whose low-budget movie "Anora" is the frontrunner for next weekend's Oscars, delivered an impassioned plea to "keep indie film alive" as he won top prize at the Spirit Awards Saturday.

The annual Film Independent Spirit Awards ceremony, held in a giant tent at Los Angeles' Santa Monica beach, only celebrates movies made for less than \$30 million.

Baker, long a leading figure of the US independent movie

circuit, who is now shooting to mainstream success, won best feature and best director for "Anora", which was shot for just \$6 million.

"Indie film is struggling right now more than ever," said Baker.

"I personally do not have children, but I know for a fact that if I did, I would not be able to make the movies that I make," warned one of the United States' most respected directors.

His latest film "Anora" portrays Ani, a stripper and escort, whose whirlwind marriage to the son of a Russian oligarch rapidly unravels in disastrous circumstances.

Mikey Madison, who plays Ani, won best lead performer honours at the Spirit Awards.

Having launched at the Cannes film festival last May, where it won the Palme d'Or, "Anora" became an arthouse hit, grossing \$40 million worldwide. — AFP

Shakira cancels Colombia concert over venue safety concerns

SHAKIRA has cancelled a concert in Colombia, among dozens of dates on her world tour, due to a damaged stage roof that posed safety concerns, event organizers said on Friday.

The Colombian singer-songwriter is on her first world tour in seven years, with nearly 50 performances scheduled in Latin America through June, followed by more concerts in the United States and Canada.

"During the process of setting up the show scheduled for 24 February, the stage roof installed by a local production company suffered damage that put the artist's safety at risk," event organizer Paramo Presenta wrote on social media on Friday.

The company added that it hoped to reschedule the concert, which was due to take place at the Atanasio Girardot Stadium in Medellin.



The 48-year-old four-time Grammy winner had already been forced to scrap a tour date in Peru after she received treatment in hospital last week for an abdominal condition. Titled "Las mujeres ya no lloran" (Women Don't Cry Anymore), the tour kicked off in Rio de Janeiro this month just a few days after she received a Grammy for best Latin pop album. She returned to her hometown of Barranquilla, where she was welcomed on Thursday by tens of thousands of fans at the Metropolitan stadium. — AFP

Colombian singer Shakira performs during the worldwide launch of her 'Las Mujeres ya no Lloran' tour at Metropolitan Stadium in Barranquilla, Colombia on 20 February 2025. PHOTO: STRINGER / AFP

ECON: WORLD

Argentina's Milei praises Trump plan for reciprocal tariffs

Milei announced his intention for Argentina to be the first country to join the proposed reciprocity agreement in trade that the Trump administration is advocating for, with the tariffs set to take effect on 2 April.



Argentine President Javier Milei addressed the annual Conservative Political Action Conference near Washington. **PHOTO: AFP**

ARGENTINE President Javier Milei met Donald Trump on the sidelines of a gathering of US conservatives Saturday, where he praised his American counterpart's reciprocal tariffs plans that have shocked trading partners.

Addressing the yearly Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC) near Washington, the ultra-libertarian president often echoed Trump's positions as he attacked what he called "a political class with a God complex".

Trump, whom Milei sees as an ideological ally, has vowed to impose reciprocal tariffs beginning 2 April — applying the same fee levels to imports that other countries place on US products.

Milei said he wanted to make Argentina "the first country in the world to join this reciproc-

ity agreement that the Trump administration is asking for in trade matters." Trump has also threatened to impose 25 per cent tariffs on steel and aluminium imports. Argentina is one of the Latin American countries that would be most affected.

'Second independence'

During their meeting, Milei and Trump discussed the Argentine leader's "groundbreaking economic reforms" and developing closer ties between the nations, the White House said.

It added that Trump invited Milei to visit Washington "in the coming months". Milei needs US support in negotiations with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), whose managing director Kristalina Georgieva he met earlier this week. — AFP

NEWS IN BRIEF

Trump says wants Musk to be 'more aggressive' in federal cuts

US President Donald Trump said Saturday he would like his billionaire advisor Elon Musk to get "more aggressive" in implementing his reform agenda cutting back the federal government.

"Elon is doing a great job, but I would like to see him get more aggressive," Trump wrote on his Truth Social platform. "Remember, we have a country to save."

Trump has put the tech entrepreneur in charge of the Department of Government Efficiency, tasking him with slashing public spending and tackling waste and alleged corruption.

Musk — the world's richest person and Trump's biggest donor — has led the effort to fire swaths of the federal workforce.

In the latest cuts announced Friday, the US Defence Department will cut its civilian workforce by at least five per cent starting next week.

Trump's administration has already begun firing many other federal workers who are on probationary status. — AFP

Asia Economic Dialogue 2025 focuses on resilience and global economic challenges



Delegates address key global economic challenges and exploring strategies for resilience. **PHOTO: ANI**

THE 9th edition of the Asia Economic Dialogue took place from 20 to 22 February 2025 at the Pune International Centre in Maharashtra, India.

AED is the Ministry's annual flagship "Track 1.5 Dialogue" on geo-economics, co-hosted in collaboration with the Pune In-

ternational Centre.

"The 9th edition of the Asia Economic Dialogue, jointly organized by MEAIndia & PuneIntCentre, commenced today in Pune," Randhir Jaiswal, a spokesperson with the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said in a post on X. According to the MEA,

the theme of the current edition of the Dialogue is "Economic Resilience and Resurgence in an Era of Fragmentation".

"The Dialogue will explore key contemporary topics in geoeconomics, including Artificial Intelligence (AI) and automation, economic imperatives of Cyber Security, facets of Blue Economy in Indian Ocean Region & beyond, the challenges and prospects for the International Monetary System, unlocking the potential of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), and impact of Climate Change on global economy. The Dialogue also aims to address the complexities of economic fragmentation and identify actionable pathways for resilience and resurgence," the MEA said in a statement. — ANI



A drone photo taken on 22 February 2025 shows a section of the Danubian Corridor in Serbia. **PHOTO: WANG WEI/XINHUA**

Serbian president hails opening of new Danubian Corridor sections

SERBIAN President Aleksandar Vucic celebrated the official opening of two sections of the Chinese-built Danubian Corridor near Pozarevac on Saturday, describing the expressway "a lifeline" that will boost the local economy. A ceremony, which marks the important progress of the 67.94-kilometre corridor built along the Danubian River, was held

on the newly constructed section 1 and attended by Vucic, other Serbian government officials, representatives from the Chinese embassy, and contractor Shandong Hi-Speed. Vucic emphasized that the new sections, which connect Eastern Serbia to Corridor 10 highway, are set to attract investments and boost tourism in the region. — Xinhua

Asia's largest flower market sees blooming business in 2024

THE Dounan Flower Market, Asia's largest fresh-cut flower trading market, in the southwest Chinese city of Kunming saw flower transaction volume up 5 percent to 14.18 billion stems last year.

With a transaction value of 11.57 billion yuan (about 1.61 billion U.S. dollars) in 2024, the market has led the country in both flower transaction volume and value for 25 consecutive years.

The Dounan Flower Market, located in the Chenggong District of Kunming, Yunnan Province, is also the world's second-largest fresh-cut flower trading hub. This bustling market is a key supplier, with flowers from Dounan reaching every provincial-level region on the Chinese mainland and more than 50 countries and regions worldwide, including Japan and Thailand.

Flower cultivation in Dounan dates back to 1983. In the 1990s, local residents began commercial cultivation and trading. In 1999, China's first professional flower trading market was established in Dounan.

Since then, the market has expanded its flower industry chain, solidifying its position as a major flower trading hub. Now, seven out of 10 fresh-cut flowers in China come from Dounan.

Dounan's blooming flower industry highlights China's prominence in the global flower market.

With about 1.5 million hectares dedicated to flower cultivation and more than 5 million people involved in the industry, China has become the world's largest flower producer and an important flower trader and consumer. — Xinhua

New air route links China's ancient city with Malaysia

A new air route connecting Xi'an, the capital of northwest China's Shaanxi Province, with Kuala Lumpur of Malaysia officially opened on Sunday.

At about 8:40 am, an Airbus A320 aircraft departed from the Xi'an Xianyang International Airport. China Eastern Airlines operates the daily round trip flight. During its outbound journey, it stops in Kunming, southwest China's Yunnan Province, at 11:15 am before arriving in Kuala Lumpur at 4:50 pm local time.

The return flight leaves Kuala Lumpur at 5:50 pm local time, stops in Kunming four hours later, and lands in Xi'an at 1:35 am the next day.

Founded over 3,100 years ago, Xi'an is home to the famous Terracotta Warriors and numerous other historic sites. It was the capital of 13 dynasties in China. The new air route offers more convenient choices for tourists to Kuala Lumpur, Shaanxi, and picturesque Yunnan and serves as a bridge for economic and



People walk at the departure hall of Terminal 5 of Xianyang International Airport in Xi'an, capital of northwest China's Shaanxi Province, 20 February 2025. PHOTO: SHAO RUI/XINHUA

cultural exchanges.

This is also the first international air route opened after Terminal 5 of the

Xi'an Xianyang International Airport went into operation last Thursday. — Xinhua

ANA to serve US-brewed Dassai on international flights



Photo taken in Tokyo on 18 February 2025 shows bottles of US-brewed Japanese sake Dassai Blue, which will be served on some international flights of All Nippon Airways Co. PHOTO: KYODO

ALL Nippon Airways Co will offer the US-brewed version of the popular Japanese sake "Dassai" to passengers on some international flights, the Japanese airline has said.

Dassai Blue, produced in New York by Asahi Shuzo Co will be available to passengers on business class between March and May as well as first class between June and August.

It will be the first time that Dassai Blue is available to passengers on commercial flights, according to the brewer based in Iwakuni in western Japan, though the locally produced ver-

sion has been offered on ANA flights in the past.

"We made the selection from a comprehensive perspective based on its quality and established reputation," an ANA official said.

Dassai Blue is the product of a brewery in Hyde Park that began operation in 2023. The premium sake graded as Junmai Daiginjo is made with rice polished down to at least 50 percent of its original size and no additional alcohol or additives are used in the brewing process, according to the brewery. — Kyodo

Hong Kong firm makes £7 bln bid for Thames Water: report

A Hong Kong company has submitted an initial £7-billion (\$8.8 billion) bid for a majority stake in Thames Water, a heavily indebted UK water supplier, the Financial Times said Friday.

CK Infrastructure, part of the CK Hutchison group, put forward the non-binding offer earlier this month,

but expects the utility's bondholders to take significant writedowns, according to two people close to the issue.

The news came after a UK court on Tuesday approved a £3 billion emergency loan for Thames Water, offering it a lifeline as it buckles under a mountain of debt.

The loan provides a short-term solution to keeping the company — faced with debts of £16 billion — afloat while it finds the necessary funding to stave off a costly public bailout.

Thames Water did not comment on the FT report when asked by AFP. — AFP

ROLLING UPDATES

WORLD



Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr (L) and US Ambassador to the Philippines MaryKay Carlson lay flowers at a memorial event at a US military cemetery in Manila on 22 February 2025, as the Philippines marked the 80th anniversary of Battle of Manila. **PHOTO: KYODO**

Philippines marks 80th anniversary of Battle of Manila

Over 1,000 US servicemen lost their lives in the battle, which lasted from 3 February to 3 March 1945.

COMMEMORATIVE events were held Saturday in the Philippine capital for the Battle of Manila, a turning point in World War II 80 years ago that left around 100,000 civilians dead, with President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. leading a memorial service for the casualties of the campaign against Japan's occupation.

Marcos said during the event at a US military cemetery in the capital that over 1,000 US servicemen were killed in the battle in which US and Filipino forces fought against the Japanese, saying "Many of those

who fought for Manila's freedom were eventually interred in these hallowed grounds".

"Filipinos paid the highest price for democracy to be preserved and for democracy to flourish," he said about the battle that lasted from 3 February to 3 March 1945.

Earlier Saturday, another event to remember the battle was held in the historic area of Intramuros in Manila, one of the battle sites. A few survivors of the war attended along with US Ambassador to the Philippines MaryKay Carlson.

"It need not have happened, but it did," said Lourdes Montinola, 97, who lost her parents and two siblings during the battle.

"And it's sad that they made people suffer as much as they did," she said of the savage attacks committed by Japanese soldiers against civilians.

Albert Montilla, 89, whose relatives perished during the intense fighting, said, "We all have to forgive and forget. And I think, the Japanese government should at least apologize." — Kyodo

NEWS IN BRIEF

Germany kicks off federal election

GERMAN voters went to polls Sunday to decide the composition of the next Bundestag, the country's lower house of parliament.

The election was scheduled for September this year, but a snap election was triggered by the collapse of the current ruling coalition of the Social Democratic Party (SPD), the Greens, and the Free Democratic Party last year.

The latest polls show that the sister parties of the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) and Christian Social Union (CSU) are taking the lead.

According to Friday's survey conducted by the Forsa Institute, support for CDU and CSU stood at 29 per cent, compared with 21 per cent for the far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD) and 15 per cent for Chancellor Olaf Scholz's SPD. — Xinhua

Sri Lanka to introduce digital TV to free up spectrum for 5G

THE Sri Lankan government will introduce digital TV to free up spectrum space for the launch of 5G, local media on Sunday quoted Deputy Minister of Digital Economy Eranga Weeraratne as saying.

He said that analog television currently occupies spectrum space equivalent to 26 channels, and transitioning to digital TV will significantly reduce this usage, freeing up bandwidth for 5G and other mobile communication needs. The country's Telecommunication Regulatory Commission is undertaking a project to construct 276 towers to enhance mobile broadband connectivity and support the rollout of 5G. These efforts are crucial to advancing the government's plan to expand Sri Lanka's digital economy to US\$ 15 billion, Weeraratne said. The deputy minister added that the government has proposed the establishment of the Digital Economy Authority to oversee digitalization efforts across all ministries under a single authority. — Xinhua



Ivorian soldiers rise an Ivorian flag during an official handover ceremony at the military camp in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire, on 20 February 2025. **PHOTO: YVAN SONH/XINHUA**

France hands over military base to Cote d'Ivoire

FRANCE officially transferred control of its only military base in Cote d'Ivoire, the camp of the 43rd Marine Infantry Battalion (BIMA), to the West African nation's authorities on Thursday.

During an official ceremony at the military camp's parade ground, Cote d'Ivoire's Defence Minister Tene Birahima Ouattara and his French

counterpart, Sebastien Lecornu, signed the official handover document.

The ceremony also featured the symbolic raising of the Ivorian flag in place of the French flag, marking the official installation of the Ivorian army at the base, which was renamed Camp Thomas d'Aquin Ouattara in honour of the country's

first army chief of staff.

"This act marks a new step in the friendship and strategic cooperation between our two nations," stated Ouattara. "The geopolitical changes and current security challenges on the continent should guide our joint willingness to promote shared security for sustainable regional stability." — Xinhua

SPORTS

Nepal Invitational Tournament: Myanmar tops group to reach final



Myanmar's May Htet Lu (white) competes for possession during the last group match against Team Nepal. **PHOTO: MFF**

THE final group-stage matches of the Nepal Four Nations Women's Football Invitational Tournament were held on 23 February, with Myanmar securing first place in the group

and advancing to the final. In the last group match, Myanmar and host Nepal drew 2-2, while Lebanon defeated Kyrgyzstan 2-0. Both Myanmar and Nepal had al-

ready secured their spots in the final before this match, making the result inconsequential. The draw was determined by early goals from both sides, leading to a balanced outcome.

Myanmar fielded a different lineup but still included key players. The match began with both teams attacking aggressively. Myanmar took an early lead with goals from Myat Noe Khin in six minutes and May Htet Lu in 16 minutes. However, Nepal equalized with goals from Ranamagar in 11 minutes and Bhandari in 41 minutes. Neither team scored in the second half, ending the match in a draw.

At the end of the group stage, Myanmar and Nepal both finished with seven points. However, Myanmar secured the top spot based on goal difference, while Nepal finished second. Lebanon earned three points while Kyrgyzstan lost all three matches without earning a point.

The final between Myanmar and Nepal will take place on 26 February. — Ko Nyi Lay/KZL

Kabayel stops Zhang in six rounds to claim WBC interim heavyweight title

GERMANY'S Agit Kabayel captured the WBC interim heavyweight title with a sixth-round TKO victory over China's Zhang Zhilei on Friday night, as part of the Riyadh Season boxing event themed "The Last Crescendo".

Zhang, 41, started cautiously in the opening round, testing his opponent with measured movements, while Kabayel, 32, set an aggressive tone, pressing forward with relentless combinations. The German fighter employed a high-paced strategy, frequently targeting Zhang's body to disrupt his

rhythm.

By the second round, the effects of Kabayel's body shots were evident, with Zhang showing signs of discomfort as redness and swelling developed on his midsection. The Chinese boxer also sustained a facial cut, and by the third round, his breathing became noticeably laboured.

Zhang found a moment of success in the fifth round when he landed a powerful left hook that sent Kabayel to the canvas. However, the German quickly recovered, and Zhang was unable to capitalize on the knockdown. — Xinhua



Agit Kabayel (L) of Germany fights with Zhang Zhilei of China during their WBC heavyweight interim title match in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, 22 February 2025. **PHOTO: WANG HAIZHOU/XINHUA**

Arsenal post £17.7M loss despite record revenues

ARSENAL lost £17.7 million in the 2023/24 season despite a return to the Champions League helping to post a club record £616.6 million (\$775 million) revenue.

The Gunners missed out narrowly to finish second to Manchester City in the Premier League and reached the quarter-finals in their first Champions League campaign since 2016/17 before bowing out to Bayern Munich.

A return to Europe's elite club competition contributed towards a £71 million rise in broadcasting revenue and £29 million more matchday income.

Commercial income also grew significantly to £218.3 million thanks to a renewal of the club's agreement with stadium and shirt sponsor Emirates and selling naming rights to the training ground to Sobha Realty.

However, wages skyrocketed to £327.8 million from £234.8 million. The figures were an improvement on the £52.1 million loss posted in the previous 12 months.

"The club continues to be compliant with all applicable financial sustainability regulations put in place by UEFA and the Premier League," Arsenal said in a statement.

"Consecutive qualifications for the UEFA Champions League for 2024/25 for both men's and women's teams represent a positive continuation of the club's progress and we look forward to an exciting end to the 2024/25 season." — AFP



Arsenal posted a £17.7 M loss in 2023/2024 despite club record revenues of over £600 million. **PHOTO: ANDREJ IVANOV/AFP**



Xi congratulates Brunei's Sultan on independence anniversary

In his message, Xi emphasized the long-standing friendship between China and Brunei, highlighting the deepened political mutual trust and successful practical cooperation that has developed since the establishment of diplomatic relations over 30 years ago.

CHINESE President Xi Jinping extended congratulations on Sunday to Sultan of Brunei Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah on the country's 41th anniversary of independence.

In his congratulatory message, Xi pointed out that China and Brunei enjoy a time-honoured friendship, and the two countries have deepened political mutual trust and achieved fruitful results in practical cooperation since the establishment of diplomatic ties more than 30 years ago, setting an example for equality and win-win cooperation between countries of different sizes. Xi said that during Hassanal's successful state visit to China not long ago, the two countries reached an important consensus on the building of a China-Brunei community with a shared future, opening a new chapter in China-Brunei cooperation. Xi said he highly values the devel-



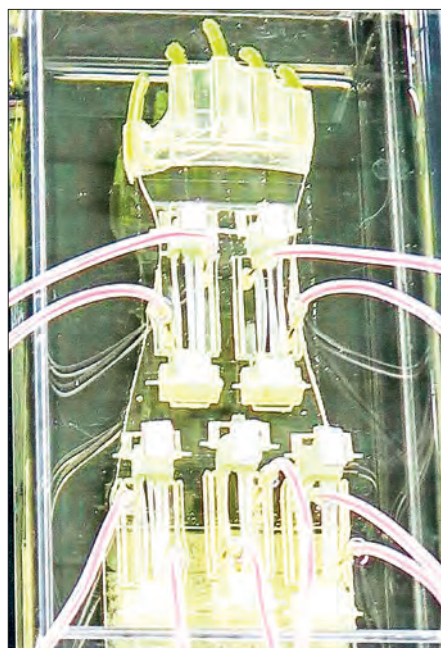
In this file photo dated 6 February 2025, Chinese President Xi Jinping meets Sultan of Brunei Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah in Beijing. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

opment of China-Brunei relations and stands ready to work with Hassanal to make greater and more substantive efforts

in the building of a China-Brunei community with a shared future, and bring more benefits to the two countries and two peo-

ples, so as to make greater contributions to regional peace, stability, development and prosperity. — Xinhua

Japan team develops world's largest "biohybrid" robot hand



A team of researchers in Japan says it has developed a robot hand that moves using cultivated human muscle tissues and is the largest of its kind yet developed, with the hope of applying the technology to prosthetic hands.

The biohybrid hand has five fingers that move individually using multiple joints and can perform complex finger movements, such as grasping and moving the tip of a small object, said the researchers at the University of Tokyo and Waseda University. It measures 18 centimeters in length, including a fore-

Photo taken on 12 February 2025 in Tokyo shows "biohybrid hand" developed by a team of researchers at the University of Tokyo and Waseda University. **PHOTO: KYODO**

arm section.

Like muscle tissues in human bodies, the contracting force of the robot's tissues decreased and showed signs of fatigue after 10 minutes of action but recovered after an hour of rest, the team said. Previous biohybrid devices could only make a single-joint movement and were limited to about a centimetre in size as thick muscle tissues for moving larger limbs suffered tissue loss due to nutrients not reaching the centre.

The team addressed the problem by bundling together multiple thin strings of muscle tissues into a sushi roll formation to act as one larger muscle. As such design ensures nutrients reach each string, these tissues had enough strength to allow the robotic hand to move. — Kyodo

FLORA AND FAUNA EFFECTS

Indonesia glaciers may vanish by 2026 due to global warming: expert

INDONESIA'S only glaciers could disappear by next year due to global warming, an expert has said, in a phenomenon that may affect the island's flora and fauna including indigenous species.

The glaciers – on the 4,862-metre-high peak Puncak Jaya located in the Jayawijaya Mountains in the Indonesian part of the island that the country shares with Papua New Guinea – are called "eternal snow" by locals. They are the last remaining ones in tropical western Pacific, said Donald Sukma Permana from Indonesia's Meteorological, Climatological and Geophysical Agency. — Kyodo