

The Global **NEW LIGHT** of MYANMAR

Four Objectives of the National Defence and Security Council

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

Bago-Mawlamyine railway upgrades to boost express train speeds to 75 km per hour



Upgrading works underway along the Bago-Mawlamyine section to enable higher-speed train services.

According to Myanma Railways, the entire Bago-Mawlamyine section of the Yangon-Mawlamyine railway is being upgraded to enable express trains to run at speeds of up to 75 kilometres

per hour.

Previously, trains on the 176-mile Yangon-Mawlamyine route operated at a maximum speed of 48 kilometres per hour. Following earlier upgrades to the

Bago-Mawlamyine section, the maximum speed has been increased to 64 kilometres per hour, reducing travel time.

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OPINION

Sustain zero waste of food in society

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Local products see strong sales during Shwesettaw Pagoda festival

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Highway bus lines instructed not to raise ticket prices during Thingyan



Barcode, QR code system continues to be implemented at fuel stations across states and regions

THE barcode and QR code system is being implemented at fuel stations along the Yangon-Mandalay Expressway and in cities in other regions and states, according to the Ministry of Energy.

For this purpose, the ministry is conducting training staff to facilitate

the continued implementation of the barcode and QR code system, which is also being extended to vehicles that have difficulty using barcode and QR code scanning, as well as to small commercial vehicles and other commercial sectors.

SEE PAGE 3

This photo features cars waiting to be refuelled at a fuel station.

NATIONAL

Well-rounded human resources must be produced for production sector

- * For production activities to be carried out successfully, it is essential to have well-rounded human resources equipped with both knowledge and skills.
- * Therefore, we are placing special emphasis on promoting and strengthening the education sector.

(An excerpt from the speech delivered by Acting President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and Chairman of the State Security and Peace Commission Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at the meeting with state, district and township-level departmental officials and town elders in Mon State on 16 November 2025 to talk about regional development undertakings)

- 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.

Weather

Monthly Weather Forecast for April 2026

Issued on 28 March 2026

Bay of Bengal Condition

A low-pressure area may form over the Andaman Sea and the Bay of Bengal. Weather will be partly cloudy over the Andaman Sea and elsewhere over the Bay of Bengal.

Rain condition and Rainy day

Rain or thundershowers will be above normal in upper Sagaing Region and Kachin and Chin states, below normal in Yangon, Ayeyawady and Taninthayi regions and Kayin and Mon states and about normal in Nay Pyi Taw, Mandalay, Bago, Magway and lower Sagaing regions and Kayah, Rakhine and Shan states.

Rainy days are expected about 9 to 12 days in upper Sagaing and Taninthayi regions and Kachin State, five to eight days in Nay Pyi Taw, Yangon, Mandalay, east Bago, lower Sagaing and Ayeyawady regions and Kayin, Chin, Mon and Shan states and about one day to four days in west Bago and Magway regions and Kayah and Rakhine states.

Day Temperature

Day temperature will be 1.5°C above normal of April average Temperatures in Nay Pyi Taw, Yangon, Mandalay, Bago, Magway, lower Sagaing and Ayeyawady regions and Kayin and Mon states and about normal of April average Temperatures in upper Sagaing and Taninthayi regions and Kachin, Kayah, Chin, Rakhine and Shan states. — DMH

Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 7 pm Sunday 29 March 2026)

BAY INFERENCE: Weather is generally fair over the Eastcentral Bay of Bengal, a few clouds over the North Andaman Sea, North Bay and Westcentral Bay of Bengal and partly cloudy to cloudy over the South Andaman Sea and South Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL NOON OF 30 March 2026: Rain or thundershowers will be fairly widespread in upper Sagaing Region and Kachin State, scattered in Chin and northern Shan states and isolated in Mandalay, Magway, lower Sagaing and Taninthayi regions

and Southern Shan State. Degree of certainty is 80 per cent. Weather will be generally fair weather in Yangon, Bago and Ayeyawady regions and partly cloudy in the remaining regions and states.

THE CONDITION OF CUMULONIMBUS CLOUD: The cumulonimbus clouds are developing in Mandalay, Magway, lower Sagaing and Taninthayi regions and Chin and southern Shan states. The area along the cumulonimbus clouds movement, the weather phenomena such as strong winds accompanied with rain, thunder, lightning and hail may occur and therefore it is recommended to be aware in advance of these phenomena.

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

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Isolated rain or thundershowers in upper Sagaing and Taninthayi regions and Kachin and Chin states.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 30 March 2026: Partly cloudy.
FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 30 March 2026: Generally fair weather.
FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 30 March 2026: Partly cloudy. — DMH

EARTHQUAKE

(Issued at 5:10 am MST)

A slight earthquake of magnitude 3.6 Magnitude with its epicentre inside Myanmar (about 30 miles south-southeast of Maukmai), latitude 19.83°N, longitude 97.92°E, depth 10 kilometres, about 73 miles south of Namsang Seismological Observatory was recorded at 4 hour 52 minute 50 second MST on 29 March 2026. — DMH

Gold Market Rate as of 29 March 2026

THE price of one tical (16.329325 grammes) of gold with density of 19.25 grammes per cubic centimetre and above is K7,000,000, as established by the Mineral (Gold) Reference Price Determination Committee.

Public Notice

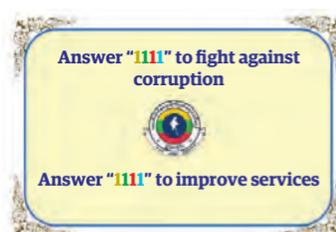
THE Anti-Corruption Commission has established corruption prevention units within ministries to curb corruption effectively.

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



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)



Press Statement

Publication of the 2025 Annual Report of the Union Supreme Court

THE Supreme Court of the Union officially released its 2025 Annual Report today in both Myanmar and English. The report is accessible to the public on the official website: www.unionsupremecourt.gov.mm.

The objectives of the annual report are to ensure transparency and accountability within the judicial process, provide a realistic assessment of court activities and performance, improve the Court's efficiency, and raise public awareness regarding judicial reform.

Court Annual Reports have been issued every year since 2016 to highlight the performance of the Supreme Court of the Union and the Courts at different levels. This 2025 Annual report marks the 10th edition which serves as a comprehensive record, highlighting the continuous progress and achievements of the Supreme Court of the Union throughout the decade-long period from 2016 to 2025.

A specific section of the report features the efforts of the Supreme Court of the Union in 2025. These include: implementing strategic schemes following the major Mandalay Earthquake on 28 March 2025, to ensure that judicial functions remained uninterrupted despite the damage; reducing case backlogs; integrating of technology in judicial management more; and notably, mediating of bank mortgage cases successfully through Mediation Centres across various Region and State High Courts; inaugurating the new building of the Judicial College as an advanced judicial training centre; implementing the Supreme Court of the Union's AML/CFT National Strategic Action Plan 2025; strengthening professional development training programmes for judges; and enhancing cooperation with international judicial partners.

The 2025 Annual Court Report provides an accessible overview for the public to better understand judicial administration and the progress made in improving access to justice.

For feedback or suggestions regarding the report, the Annual Report Team can be reached via email at irrdp.usc@gmail.com.



Bago-Mawlamyine railway upgrades to boost express...



A Yangon-Mawlamyine train.

FROM PAGE 1

At present, further improvements are being carried out across the whole Bago-Mawlamyine section. Once these works are completed, trains will be able to operate at speeds of up to 75 kilometres per hour.

Upgrading works on the 130-mile Bago-Mawlamyine railway section began with filling gravels in the 2014-2015 financial year and were completed in the 2023-2024 financial year. The railway section was facilitated with new rail tracts and concrete sleepers.

In the improvement process of the railway line, there are up to 16 locations along the Bago-Mawlamyine railway line where curves exceed 5 degrees. Due to speed restrictions, additional improvements are being made to reduce travel time, including adding larger volume of gravels. Gravels were packed along the way with the use of Automatic Levelling Lining & Tamping Machine (ALL-TM), in addition to upgrading the rail bridges.

In addition, efforts to further increase operational speeds on this section were completed with filling gravels during the 2025-2026 financial year.

Upon completion of the full upgrade of the Bago-Mawlamyine section, trains will be able to run at a maximum speed of 75 kilometres per hour, further reducing travel time. — ASH/KNN

Barcode, QR code system continues to...

FROM PAGE 1

In addition, fuel stations are selling fuel to vehicles based on their permitted purchase limits and are working to ensure that there is no fuel shortage. The Ministry of Energy has advised the public not to worry, and the people have to purchase fuel only what they need. It also stated that anyone experiencing difficulties in purchasing fuel may file

a complaint.

Similarly, the Ministry of Energy is overseeing fuel sales through the Online Monitoring Centre, which monitors fuel distribution across Myanmar in accordance with ministry's regulations, as part of efforts to address fuel shortages experienced in many countries worldwide. — ASH/TH

NATIONAL

Update on the current status of fuel sales under new barcode and QR code system

TO ensure the efficient use of fuel and reduce waste, the new barcode and QR code system has been in place since 27 March 2026.

In addition, starting today, the barcode/QR code system is being implemented along the Bago, PyinOoLwin, Yangon-Mandalay Highway, and the Expressway.

To address any unforeseen issues, including technical problems and fraud under the new system, the Ministry of Energy is monitoring through the Online Monitoring Centre, operating a Call Centre for assistance, and conducting ongoing supervision.

In the four major cities using the QR system, a comparison of sales under the old and new systems shows the following: a total of 189,907 motorcycles and three-wheelers and 138,157 vehicles were refueled on 25 March 2026, but, these numbers had decreased to 149,690 motorcycles and three-wheelers and 105,345



This photo shows petrol station under inspection to ensure the efficient use of fuel and reduce waste, the new barcode and QR code system using for selling fuel oil.

vehicles by 27 March 2026. Similarly, 184,284 motorcycles and three-wheelers and 113,028 vehicles were refueled on 26 March 2026, decreasing to 165,371 motorcycles and three-wheelers and 107,965 vehicles on 28 March 2026.

However, it was observed that some shops took advantage of the fuel price increase by closing without selling, some sold fuel without scanning, and some taxi operators exploited the higher quota to commit fraud, leading to

longer queues at the shops that remained open.

Action is being taken in response to reports of irregularities that harm the public. Yesterday, the licences of three fuel stations have been temporarily suspended, and legal action has

been taken against their managers and employees: “Shwe Poe” in Pubbathiri Township, Nay Pyi Taw Council Area (Licence No 2597); “Golden Lion” on 62nd Street, Pyigyidagun Township, Mandalay Region (Licence No 0730); and “Aung Theikdi” on old Yangon-Mandalay Highway, Pyigyidagun Township, Mandalay Region (Licence No 0480). In addition, following a complaint about illegal storage of fuel, U Myint Maung, a resident of Myananda Lane, 60/B Ward, Dagon Myothit (Seikkan) Township was found storing fuel illegally, and a case has been opened for further legal action.

Fuel is also sold for agricultural equipment through fuel shops approved by the relevant regional or state government.

The ministry urges the public to cooperate by reporting any difficulties or irregularities encountered in purchasing fuel to the Call Centre.

Ministry of Energy

Electrical safety awareness talk held at Aung Pann Myay Private Middle School in Mandalay

AN awareness talk on electrical safety within school premises was held at Aung Pann Myay Private Middle School, located on 32nd Street between 64th and 65th streets in Mandalay, on 28 March.

The session aimed to help students understand the importance of using electricity carefully, preventing fire hazards caused by electrical misuse, and knowing which emergency actions to take if incidents occur. Organizers

explained the topics in a clear and simple way using demonstrations, arranged by the Southeast Asia Oil and Gas Pipeline Company (SEAOP).

“We organized this talk so that students can learn how to use electricity safely. Only then can they protect themselves, their school, and their families. We will share practical electrical safety knowledge relevant to their daily lives and surroundings in an easy-to-understand way with examples. We believe



The electrical safety awareness talk in progress at Aung Pann Myay Private Middle School.

students will gain a real understanding of how to stay safe when using electricity,” said Mr Zhao Huatong, Deputy Managing Director of the company.

Officials from Aung Pann Myay Private Middle School, representatives from the pipeline company, and students attended the event. — ASH/KZL

Global NEW LIGHT of MYANMAR

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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.

NATIONAL

Local products see strong sales during Shwesettaw Pagoda festival



Souvenirs and traditional products are available at Shwesettaw Pagoda Buddha Pujaniya festival in Minbu (Saku) Township. **PHOTOS: ZEYA NAING (SHWE KAN MYAY)**

VENDORS selling local products are enjoying solid sales during the festival season of Shwesettaw Pagoda in Minbu (Saku) Township, Magway Region, ac-

ording to local stallholders from market areas near Shwesettaw Pagoda, Sakkeintae Pagoda and Nagapwet Hill.

Minbu (Saku) Township is

known for its revered pagodas, notable landmarks and many places for visitors to explore. Also, the area is rich in local produce. As a result, pilgrims

and visitors from across the country travel to the festival season, which runs from the 5th waxing day of Tabodwe to the 1st day of the Myanmar New Year,

and purchase local products as souvenirs to take home.

With large crowds of pilgrims visiting during the festival period, vendors are experiencing high demand. Popular items on sale include fried bean snacks, papara, wild vegetables, roots and herbal ingredients, sweet potatoes, thanaka logs, Chin traditional household items, Shwesettaw souvenir T-shirts, and various types of clay pots from Ywathaya Village prepared for the Thingyan period.

A local vendor from the Nagapwet Hill market area in Minbu said that sales have been very strong due to the busy festival season. — Zeya Naing (Shwe Kan Myay)/KZL

Parks adorned with posters, lights, and flowers for 81st Anniversary of Armed Forces Day

IN honour of the 81st Anniversary of Armed Forces Day which fell on 27 March, posters featuring valiant, brave, and patriotic members of Tatmadaw (Army, Navy, and Air) have been placed at the traffic lights at Pinlaung Junction and near the Office of the Commander-in-Chief (Army) in Nay Pyi Taw.

Similarly, along the road from Pinlaung Junction to the parade ground, Tatmadaw slogans have been displayed in both Myanmar and English, while the grand arch at the entrance to the parade ground can also be seen in a magnificent display.

At the entrance to the Tatmadaw parade ground and along both sides of the road, truss beams, light boxes, lighting poles, LED strip lights, rain lights, uplights, programmed LED displays, colourful lights, and banners have been installed



People enjoy their time at the Tatmadaw Park located opposite the Nay Pyi Taw Military Parade Ground yesterday.

on the Tatmadaw columns. In addition, the national flag and the Tatmadaw (Army, Navy, and

Air) flags, lighting effects, trees facing the salute stage at the Military Parade Ground adorned

with handmade lights, and the two stars representing the Tatmadaw flag beneath the statues

of the Three Kings are all decorated with LED strip lights.

Furthermore, in honour of the 81st Armed Forces Day in 2026, Tatmadaw Park located opposite the Nay Pyi Taw Military Parade Ground has been illuminated with decorative lights and the national flag of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar. The 81st Anniversary of Armed Forces Day commemorative emblem, as well as scale models of Tatmadaw vehicles (Army, Navy, and Air), ships, aircraft, and helicopters, are on display. The park is also filled with small fibre statues of Tatmadaw members, decorated with flowers and colourful lights installed on trees.

In addition, various regions and states across the country are also illuminated with colourful lights and festive decorations in honour of the 81st Anniversary of Armed Forces Day. — MNA/KZL

Daily newspapers available online

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News and Periodicals Enterprise



NATIONAL

During the 2026 traditional Myanmar Thingyan festival, the “Mandalay Walking Thingyan,” will be held in a lively atmosphere around the moat in Mandalay, in keeping with tradition.

Forty-five pavilions — including 17 large and 28 small — will be built around the moat during the festival, said U Tin Tun Oo, head of the Revenue Department of the Mandalay City Development Committee. He added that the Mandalay City Maha Thingyan Pavilion is currently under construction and is about 75 per cent complete. The pavilion features unique designs, different from previous years, and is being built in accordance with Myanmar’s traditional culture.

“In addition to these pavilions, we will also celebrate the Mingala Mandalay Walking Thingyan on 73rd Street. We have planned Thanaka pavilions, flower pavilions, and other attractions in a lively arrangement. The purpose of the walking Thingyan is for the public to stroll around the moat, enjoy the water festivities, and participate in the entertainment and charity feast programmes at the pavilions,” he said.

In addition, this year’s Mandalay Thingyan will feature a solar-powered water pump system, allowing people to splash and play with water. No vehicles will be permitted in the moat area, and only pedestrians will be allowed to participate in the festivities.

“The pavilion’s opening ceremony will be held on the evening of the first day (Akya Day) of the



Mandalay to host 2026 Walking Thingyan festival along the moat on a grand scale



These photos feature the traditional Myanmar water festival held in 2024 in Mandalay.

Thingyan festival, and the closing ceremony will take place on the evening of the last day (Atet Day). The opening will feature a grand event with 500 schoolgirls and 400 belles, totalling 900 participants. In addition, the Myanmar choral dance troupes will parade through the city with the Myoma band to pay homage to the public. There will also be singing performances by popular artistes and shows by a traditional Myanmar orchestra. Choral dance competitions will be held as well, with handsome prizes awarded to the winners,” he said.

This year, as a special feature, pavilions representing eight ethnic groups—Kachin, Kayah, Kayin, Chin, Bamar, Mon, Rakhine, and Shan—will be set up. Traditional dances and ethnic foods will be offered, allowing people to enjoy foods while experiencing the Thingyan festival.

Since last year’s Mandalay earthquake prevented the celebration of Thingyan, this year’s festival has been planned on a grand scale, in keeping with traditional culture. — Min Htet Aung (Mandalay sub-printing house)/TH

Pyay Thingyan festival to feature walking events, dance contests



A glimpse of Pyay Walking Thingyan Festival in the previous year. PHOTO: KO HSAT

THE 1387 Traditional Myanmar Cultural Maha Thingyan Festival will be held in Pyay, Bago Region, featuring a lively programme of walking Thingyan, at the central pavilion, and traditional dance competitions, according to the organizing committee.

To ensure a vibrant celebration, construction of the central pavilion is underway near the General Aung San statue at the junction of Lanmadaw Road and Bogyoke Road in downtown

Pyay, under the supervision of responsible officials. Dance troupes from major wards such as Nawin, Sinsu, Kyaunggyi Ohtan, Khittaya, and Ywabae, along with departmental teams, are currently rehearsing their traditional choral dances in preparation for the competition.

The walking Thingyan will take place along the route from the central pavilion to the old night market street, adding to the festive atmosphere.

During the Maha Thingyan festival days, the central pavilion will host daily morning and evening entertainment programmes, including music performances, choral dance competitions by ward and departmental teams, and satuditha feasts. Revellers will be able to participate joyfully in water festivities at both the central pavilion and the walking Thingyan areas throughout the celebration. — Ko Hsat (IPRD)/KZL

NATIONAL

FPB, MCEF ink MoU for mutual cooperation

THE First Private Bank (FPB) and Myanmar Construction Entrepreneurs Federation (MCEF) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on 26 March at the MCEF meeting hall in Thuwunna, Yangon, to promote ties and enhance cooperation in mutually agreed areas.

FPB Independent Director

U Thet Swe and MCEF President U Shein Win delivered remarks at the signing ceremony. The MoU was signed by Chief Executive Officer U Thura and Deputy Chief Executive Officer U Myo Min Cho on behalf of FPB and President U Shein Win and General Secretary U Ko Ko Lay on behalf of MCEF. — ASH/KK



This photo captures officials of First Private Bank and Myanmar Construction Entrepreneurs Federation seen at the signing the Memorandum of Understanding.

Pun Hlaing Hospitals secure Healthcare Asia Hospital Group of the Year 2026 award



This photo features the YOMA-OUE Pun Hlaing Hospital officials receiving the Healthcare Asia Hospital Group of the Year-Myanmar Award 2026.

YOMA-OUE Pun Hlaing Hospitals received the Healthcare Asia Hospital Group of the Year-Myanmar Award 2026 for its exceptional success in expanding access to healthcare services across Myanmar, its leadership in clinical governance, and its commitment to international quality standards.

The Healthcare Asia Award, presented by Healthcare Asia Magazine, aims to honour outstanding hospitals

across Asia. These awards recognize hospitals that go beyond conventional boundaries to deliver excellent patient care and make a lasting impact on their local communities.

Over the past 20 years, Yoma-OUE Pun Hlaing Hospitals have grown from a single hospital into a network of 17 healthcare facilities, including three hospitals, three Pun Hlaing Special Clinics, four Pun Hlaing Family Clinics,

and seven laboratory sample collection centres. These facilities are located in Yangon, Mandalay, Taunggyi, Aungban, and Pyapon, and are supported by the HEAL by Pun Hlaing application.

From basic medical care and diagnostics to more complex procedures such as organ transplants and cardiac surgeries, the hospitals and clinics offer a comprehensive range of services. The different levels of healthcare within the group are integrated rather than segmented.

Founded in 2005, Pun Hlaing Hospital became the first hospital in Myanmar to receive JCI accreditation in 2017, with subsequent accreditations in 2020 and 2023. The collaboration between First Myanmar Investment (FMI) and OUE Lippo Healthcare Limited of Singapore aims to build the largest hospital network in Myanmar and deliver medical services nationwide through hospitals, clinics, and the HEAL by Pun Hlaing application. — ASH/MKKS

11th Education Fair kicks off in Yangon with scholarships to study in India

THE 11th Indian Education Fair commenced at the India Centre in Yangon on 26 March, with keynote addresses by Indian Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Abhay Thakur, event organizers and various officials.

The fair features ten prestigious private universities from India that hold National Assessment and Accreditation Council-NAAC accreditation and National Institutional Ranking Framework-NIRF rankings. It has already attracted over 400 participants, including educational enthusiasts and students from both state and private schools who have recently completed their matriculation or Grade 12 examinations.

The event provides Myanmar students with access

to scholarship opportunities at more than 20 of India's top universities and colleges, while offering a gateway to a massive academic network comprising over 1,000 universities and 4,200 colleges. Furthermore, the fair highlights the benefits of India's world-class education system, which is noted for being highly affordable in terms of both tuition fees and living expenses.

In addition to the special scholarships available, the organizers announced that the exhibition will extend beyond Yangon. The fair is scheduled to be held in Mandalay at the Mingalar Mandalay Hotel on 30 March, ensuring that students in Upper Myanmar also have the chance to explore these international academic pathways. — ASH/KZL



The opening ceremony of the 11th Indian Education Fair in progress at India Centre in Yangon.

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OPINION

Sustain zero waste of food in society

FOR this year's International Day of Zero Waste, the focus is on food – what we eat, what we waste, and how we can move towards a more circular future. The world wastes food on a staggering scale. Every year, we throw away about one billion tonnes of edible food, nearly one-fifth of all food available to consumers. This impacts both people and the environment.

A press release of the United Nations stated that around 60 per cent of food waste happens at the household level. The rest comes mostly from food service and retail, the result of inefficient

food systems – including production, distribution and consumption. Tackling this issue requires redesigning these systems, transitioning towards a more sustainable, circular approach grounded in efficiency, resilience and sustainability. A zero-waste future is possible when everybody works together – do their part by consuming thoughtfully, recovering surplus food, and working to build circular food systems. As such, they all have to consume food efficiently without various forms of waste.

In Myanmar society, some people waste food. In reality, for any food item to come into existence, farmers and livestock workers must first labour hard in agriculture and livestock production. The raw materials obtained are then turned into food products through production processes that require significant labour, capital investment, financial resources, and managerial and intellectual effort. Only after all these stages and resources are invested does a food product come into being. Therefore, everyone should value and consume food efficiently.

Just because one has the money to buy food does not mean one should consume it carelessly or wastefully after purchasing it. Such selfish and thoughtless behaviour amounts to nothing more than food wastage. The food that may be lost due to one's actions could instead be used beneficially by other consumers if it were not wasted, thereby bringing benefits not only to oneself but also to one's community and the nation. Only when all produced food is consumed efficiently can unnecessary financial losses in the food production sector be reduced, which in turn will become an important support for the national economy.

Therefore, in Myanmar society, families should teach their future generations to eat in an orderly manner and to consume food efficiently and responsibly, so that they may grow into responsible citizens through such guidance. Those who have excess food should share it with those in need with kindness and compassion, with zero waste. Only in this way can a peaceful and prosperous society be built.

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Sustainable Development through Culture and Creativity Industries

Introduction

In today's global economic landscape, cultural and creative industries (CCIs) have emerged as a significant driver of sustainable development. These industries harness cultural resources, human creativity, and intellectual capital to generate economic, social, and cultural value. Consequently, many countries are increasingly prioritizing CCIs within their national development strategies.

Myanmar, with its long and distinguished history, is endowed with a rich cultural heritage and diverse traditional crafts. This cultural wealth provides a strong foundation and considerable potential for the development and expansion of cultural and creative industries in the country.

Definition of Cultural and Creative Industries

According to UNESCO, cultural and creative industries (CCIs) are sectors that rely on creativity, culture, knowledge, and intellectual property to produce goods and services that generate cultural, economic, and social value.

More broadly, CCIs can be understood as industries that utilize cultural resources and creative capacities to create employment opportunities, stimulate economic growth, and safeguard cultural heritage.

These industries encompass a wide range of sectors, including:

- Performing arts (dance, theatre, and traditional performances)
- Visual arts (painting, sculpture, and crafts)
- Film and media
- Music
- Cultural tourism
- Traditional crafts and design
- Digital creative industries
- Cultural heritage-related industries
- Other creative sectors

The Role of Myanmar Traditional Handicrafts

In Myanmar, cultural and creative industries are deeply rooted in the country's intangible cultural heritage. These include the Ten Traditional Crafts (Pan

Sel Myo), Thanaka, traditional handicrafts, and various forms of traditional artistic expression.

The Ten Traditional Crafts – namely blacksmithing (Pan Be), goldsmithing (Pan Tein), bronze smithing (Pan Tin), masonry (Pan Tau), construction (Pan Yan), sculpture (Pan Pu), stucco work (Pan Tamaut), wood turning and lathe work (Pan Pwut), painting (Pan Chi), and lacquerware (Pan Yun) – are not only of significant artistic value but also contribute substantially to economic development. As such, they represent a vital component of Myanmar's CCI sector.

A notable example can be

stands out as one of the most significant cultural heritage sites. Recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, Bagan is renowned for its thousands of temples, pagodas, and ancient architectural masterpieces.

These cultural assets serve as key resources for the development of cultural tourism. In addition, the Bagan region hosts a wide range of CCI-related activities, including the production of traditional foods such as fermented bean paste (Pon Yay Gyi), jaggery, and various preserved goods, as well as handicrafts such as textiles and lacquerware. Such industries play an im-



found in the Bagan region, where lacquerware (Pan Yun) is particularly prominent. This craft exemplifies the integration of traditional design, artistic creativity, and skilled craftsmanship. Lacquerware products contribute to heritage preservation, tourism development, and the livelihoods of local artisans, thereby reinforcing the role of CCIs in sustainable development.

Moreover, the integration of traditional handicrafts with tourism generates income opportunities for local communities, strengthens cultural identity, and enhances both economic and social value.

Myanmar is home to numerous attractive tourist destinations, among which Bagan

Cultural Tourism

Myanmar is home to numerous attractive tourist destinations, among which Bagan

By Mar Lar Aung (Culture)

Regional and International Cooperation

The Mekong Institute, with support from the Mekong-Korea Cooperation Fund (MKCF), has been implementing the "Creative4Mekong" project to strengthen creative industries in the region.

As part of this initiative, representatives from Mekong countries participated in a knowledge-sharing programme in South Korea in December 2024.

the Siem Reap Declaration on Promoting a Creative and Adaptive ASEAN Community to Support the Cultural and Creative Economy, adopted in 2022 in Siem Reap. This declaration aims to strengthen the sustainability of CCIs and enhance cultural and economic resilience across ASEAN Member States.

Background and Rationale

At the 9th Meeting of the ASEAN Ministers Responsible for Culture and Arts (AMCA) in 2020, discussions focused on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the cultural sector and identified strategic priorities for recovery.

Subsequently, at the ASEAN Regional Workshop on Creative Economy (ARWCE) in 2021, the ASEAN Creative Economy was defined as economic activities derived from human creativity, rooted in heritage, culture, arts, design, science, and media.

Linkages with Regional Frameworks

The ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework (ACRF) recognizes cultural and creative industries as a key sector for post-pandemic recovery, highlighting their role in fostering resilience and sustainable development.

Significance of ASEAN Declarations

ASEAN cultural declarations aim to:

- Recognize the importance of culture and the arts
- Safeguard and enhance cultural heritage

ASEAN and Cultural Cooperation

ASEAN and Cultural Cooperation

As a member of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), Myanmar actively supports regional cultural policies and frameworks, which are endorsed at the ministerial level and further adopted at ASEAN Summit meetings.

One significant milestone is



- Promote the development of CCIs
- Strengthen regional cultural cooperation

Cooperation and Future Actions

ASEAN Member States are working collaboratively to:

- Promote research and innovation in CCIs
- Strengthen the capacity of cultural professionals
- Enhance cultural awareness and knowledge exchange
- Develop cultural tourism
- Expand the use of digital technologies

Through these efforts, CCIs are expected to become a major driving force for sustainable and resilient development in the ASEAN region.

Melaka Declaration on Cultural Heritage Value Creation

In October 2025, ASEAN Member States adopted the Melaka Declaration on Cultural Heritage Value Creation. This declaration emphasizes the rights of



Member States to identify, protect, and promote their cultural heritage while fostering inclusive and sustainable development.

It also highlights the importance of investing in cultural and creative industries and promoting cultural tourism as a means of generating economic opportunities.

Key Agreements

The declaration outlines five priority actions:

- Strengthening legal and institutional frameworks for cultural value chains
- Promoting a whole-of-ASEAN approach to new economic models
- Investing in training and capacity-building programmes
- Enhancing partnerships among cultural institutions and stakeholders
- Improving monitoring and evaluation mechanisms

Challenges Faced Within the ASEAN Region

Despite significant progress, the development of CCIs in ASEAN faces several challenges, including:

- Limited financial resources
- Weak intellectual property protection systems
- Limited access to modern technologies
- Constraints in market expansion
- Declining interest among younger generations in traditional crafts

- Difficulties in accessing raw materials

Conclusion

Cultural and creative industries have become an essential pillar of sustainable development, contributing not only to economic growth but also to the enrichment of cultural life and community identity. Myanmar, with its rich cultural heritage and vibrant traditional arts, holds strong potential for advancing its CCI sector.

However, realizing this potential requires comprehensive and well-coordinated efforts. These include the formulation of effective policies, the strengthening of intellectual property protection, the provision of targeted financial support, and the implementation of capacity-building programmes.

Equally important is the promotion of digital transformation through the development of online platforms, digital marketplaces, and e-commerce systems. In addition, fostering collaboration among government institutions, the private sector, international partners, and cultural practitioners is crucial.

Through sustained multi-stakeholder cooperation, strategic investments, and policy reforms, Myanmar's cultural and creative industries can achieve long-term, sustainable development and serve as a key driver of cultural and economic growth within the ASEAN region.

DELICACY

The Myanmar New Year is just around the corner. When Thingyan arrives, everything associated with the festival – its decorations, scents, music, and festive atmosphere – fills the air. Thingyan songs, Thingyan drums, Thingyan dances, mandats (pandals or pavilions), festival flowers, and Thingyan accessories all come alive during this season. Among them, Thingyan food is also an essential part of the celebration.

Therefore, instead of our usual weekly feature on regional dishes, this week we highlight Thingyan foods that appear only once a year, during the Thingyan festival.

Traditional Myanmar Cuisine (Thingyan Food)

Mont Lone Yay Baw

(Glutinous Rice Balls with Jaggery Filling)

MONT Lone Yay Baw is traditionally prepared during Thingyan as part of the festival customs. Families make it at home to offer as alms, to enjoy together, and to share with neighbours. That is why this dish is often regarded as one of the signature foods of Thingyan.

Here is a simple recipe that you can try at home; it's not complicated and doesn't take much time. Give it a try!

Ingredients

1. Glutinous rice flour – 120 grammes
2. Rice flour – 40 grammes
3. Salt – about ¼ teaspoon
4. Water – 110 millilitres
5. Jaggery – 80 grammes
6. Fresh coconut (as desired)

Method

Mix the glutinous rice flour, rice flour, and salt in a bowl.

(If you use only glutinous rice flour, the dough becomes too sticky, so a small portion of regular rice flour is added.)

Gradually add the 110 millilitres of water into the bowl and knead until a soft, pliable dough is formed – not too soft, not too hard.

Cover and let the dough rest for about 15 minutes.

Cut the jaggery into small chunks. Prepare a pot of boiling water for cooking the rice balls.

After 15 minutes, start shaping the dough. Take a small portion (about the size of a longan fruit) and roll it in your palm. Flatten it slightly and make a small indentation with your finger. Place a jaggery piece inside and cover it with dough, sealing it well. (If not sealed properly, the jaggery may leak out during boiling.)

Once the water is at a rolling boil, drop the balls in. When they float to the surface, boil for one more minute, then remove with a strainer. Place them briefly



A dish of Shwe Yin Aye, one of delicious Thingyan foods.

(about 1 minute) in cold water.

Remove from the cold water, coat with freshly grated coconut, and your delightful Thingyan Mont Lone Yay Baw is ready to serve.

A dish of Mont Lone Yay Baw.



Shwe Yin Aye

(A Cool and Refreshing Thingyan Dessert)

Thingyan falls in the peak of the hot summer season. That is why the Myanmar people created a dessert perfectly suited to the heat, called Shwe Yin Aye, a name that itself evokes coolness and refreshment. Here is the recipe for this iconic Thingyan dessert.

Ingredients (for 10 servings)

1. Mont Let Saung jelly – 1,000 millilitres
2. Sago pearls – 25-tical portion, cooked
3. Glutinous rice (steamed) – 3 cups
4. Plain bread – 10 slices

5. Coconut jelly — one 25-gramme packet, cooked
6. Coconut milk — 1½ cans (about 600 millilitres)
7. Sugar — 250 grammes, melted with a little water
8. Ice (as desired)
9. A pinch of salt

Method

For convenience, buy ready-made Mont Let Saung jelly from a shop.

(For those who want to make it themselves: mix 8 tablespoons of rice flour, 2 tablespoons of corn flour, and a little salt in hot water. Cook on low heat until thick, add food colouring, then pour slowly into cold water to set.)

To make the coconut jelly: boil 300 grammes of sugar with 1 can of coconut milk, water (1.5 litres) and 50 grammes of gelatin until dissolved. Pour into a tray about 2 inches deep and let it cool and set. Cut into cubes.

To prepare the steamed glutinous rice: rinse until the water runs clear, soak for at least 6 hours, drain, place on a steaming tray lined with a thin cloth, and steam until cooked. Turn the rice occasionally for even cooking.

Dilute the coconut milk (600 millilitres) with 1,000 millilitres of water.

Melt the sugar with a little water into a syrup.

To serve:

In a bowl, add the Mont Let Saung jelly, steamed glutinous rice, coconut jelly, sago, bread pieces, and ice. Pour in the coconut milk mixture, drizzle with sugar syrup, add a couple of ice cubes, and your delightful, cooling Shwe Yin Aye is ready to enjoy with your whole family. — MOON

NATIONAL

Highway bus lines instructed not to raise ticket prices during Thingyan



Highway buses seen at Aung Mingala Highway Bus Terminal.

YANGON Region Public Transport Committee (YRTC) has instructed highway bus lines not to raise ticket prices and sell reasonably during Thingyan.

In order to provide convenient travel for passengers until their destination, highway bus lines based at Aung Mingala and Dagon Ayeya highway bus terminals have been instructed to sell tickets

at reasonable prices and offer a smooth journey according to bus schedules, said YRTC joint secretary U Lyan Cing Mang.

“Highway bus lines will run on demand if there are many passengers during Thingyan, and we’ve also instructed them to sell tickets at a reasonable price,” he said.

The State leader himself has given instruction to provide adequate fuel for public

transport vehicles, so the public don’t need to worry about it, he added.

There are a total 215 bus lines with 1,566 buses at Aung Mingala and 103 bus lines with 724 buses at Dagon Ayeya, according to YRTC statistics. Further, additional buses have also been arranged for Thingyan, in case of breakdown or other unexpected incidents, said YRTC. — MT/ZS

ME Singapore issues advisory as workers seek help over labour disputes

THE Myanmar Embassy to Singapore has released an advisory for citizens planning to work in Singapore, following a rise in requests for assistance from workers facing disputes with their employers.

For Myanmar nationals, the embassy provides support by investigating their difficulties, intervening in cases where employment agencies are found to be dishonest, coordinating with the Ministry of Manpower (MoM) in Singapore and the Ministry of Labour in Myanmar to protect workers’ interests and address grievances.

This advisory follows various reports in news outlets and on social media regarding the struggles of Myanmar migrants in Singapore.

The embassy highlighted

several critical problems: contractual misunderstanding, some agencies’ pressure on individuals to sign contracts without sufficient time to read, job mismatches, extortion, wage discrepancies, and financial and legal loss.

To avoid these pitfalls, the embassy advises those planning to work in Singapore to acquire basic English or Chinese language skills, to use only registered employment agencies, to carefully review all terms in contracts before signing, and to maintain clear records of the names and addresses of the agencies. If difficulties arise, workers should approach the embassy with complete documentation and the embassy will then contact the relevant ministries to facilitate assistance. — MT/ZN



Myanmar Embassy to Singapore

100,000 baht paid to family of deceased Myanmar worker following fatal accident in Thailand

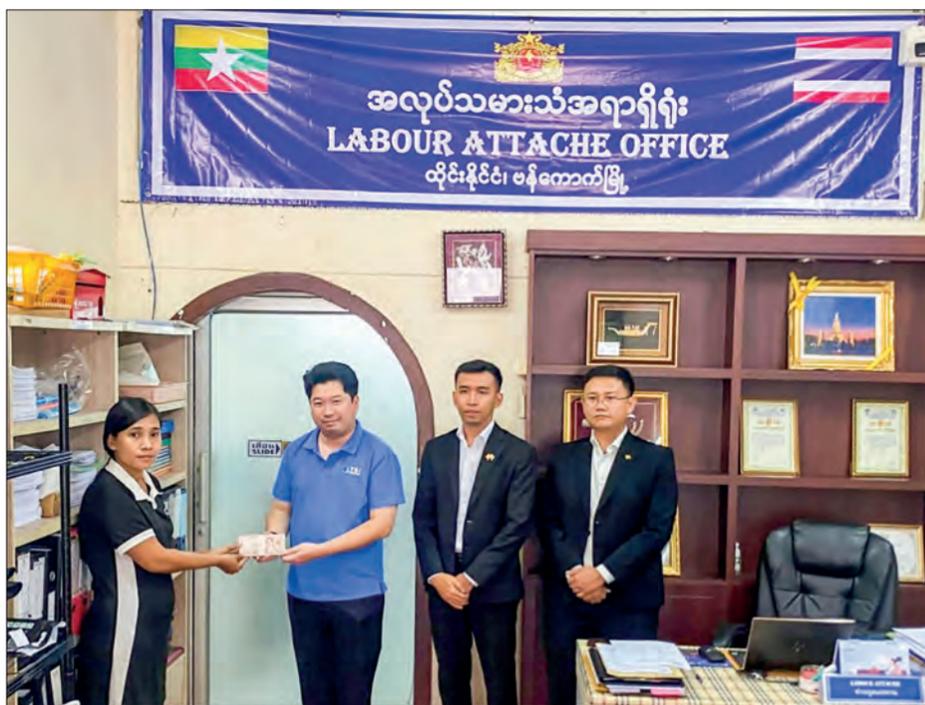
A private health insurance company has provided an insurance payout of 100,000 baht to the family of a Myanmar female worker who passed away following a road accident in Thailand, according to the Office of the Labour Attaché.

The office released a statement on 26 March, confirming that payment was made to family members of Ma Khin Hnin Wai who sustained fatal injuries in a vehicle accident in Mae Sot, Thailand.

The office emphasized its ongoing commitment to ensuring that Myanmar workers receive the legal compensation and benefits they are entitled to. On 9

March, the Myanmar Labour Attaché and officials met the Director General of the Department of Labour Protection and Welfare (DLPW) of Thailand on strengthening bilateral cooperation regarding labour affairs.

Myanmar migrants can seek labour-related assistance by contacting the following hotlines during office hours: Call Centre: 020030015; Labour Attaché (Bangkok): 0618108454 / 0626890119 / 0652206952; Labour Attaché (Mae Sot): 0652206953; Labour Attaché (Chiang Mai): 0945866607; Labour Attaché (Ranong): 0634818121. — MT/ZN



A family member of deceased Myanmar worker receives the 100,000 baht insurance payout.

ECONOMY WORLD

India's imports surge as exports stay flat, raising economic concerns

India's merchandise trade performance has weakened at the margin even as import demand has surged sharply.

EXTERNAL sector pressures are building up for the Indian economy amid a volatile global backdrop, with recent data from the Finance Ministry's Monthly Economic Review for March 2026 pointing to a deterioration in trade dynamics, widening imbalances, and emerging stress from capital flows and commodity prices.

According to the review, India's merchandise trade performance has weakened at the margin even as import demand has surged sharply. The report noted that "merchandise exports declined marginally by 0.8 per cent (YoY)," reflecting subdued external demand conditions and the impact of global uncertainties.

In contrast, import growth has been significantly stronger, with the review highlighting that "imports have increased



The Ministry said the rise in merchandise imports was mainly due to a sharp increase in gold and silver imports, which grew very quickly.

PHOTO: PIXABAY

by 24.1 per cent (YoY), widening the merchandise trade deficit considerably." A key driver of this surge in imports has been precious metals.

The Ministry observed that "this increase in merchandise imports was primar-

ily driven by a rise in gold and silver imports," which recorded exceptionally high growth rates. This trend has added to pressures on the trade balance at a time when export momentum remains fragile.

— ANI

75% of Japan prefectures boosting programmes for coexistence with foreigners

AROUND 75 per cent of Japan's prefectures have allocated funds in their initial budget proposals for the new fiscal year starting Wednesday to establish initiatives or expand existing programmes to promote coexistence with foreign residents, a Kyodo News survey showed.

The measures focus on fostering interaction with local communities and raising awareness of everyday rules and norms. The move comes amid an influx of foreign workers into Japan as the rapidly graying country struggles with a labour shortage.

In a survey of Japan's 47 prefectures conducted from February to early March, eight, including Fukui and Okayama, said they had both introduced new programmes and expanded existing ones for multicultural coexistence. Sixteen reported that they had established new programmes, while 11 indicated that they were expanding existing ones. A lack of understanding of Japan's community rules and social norms is seen as underlying friction between local and foreign residents, observers say.

— Kyodo



This initiative comes as the country faces a labour shortage and an increasing influx of foreign workers. **PHOTO: KYODO**

NEWS IN BRIEF

Libya seeks international probe into tanker

INTERNATIONAL organizations should investigate the attack on a Russian gas tanker in the Mediterranean off Libya's coast, Adel Abdelkafi, national security adviser to the Libyan Supreme State Council (SSC), told Sputnik.

The Russian Ministry of Transport said on 3 March that the Russian gas tanker Arctic Metagaz had been attacked by unmanned Ukrainian boats off the coast of Libya, in close proximity to Malta's territorial waters in the Mediterranean Sea.

"This issue [the attack on the gas tanker] requires the attention of relevant international bodies or organizations with experience in resolving such incidents, in order to prevent negative consequences for the Libyan coast, Libyan territory, and its citizens," Abdelkafi said.

He emphasized that, along with international organizations, the attention of Mediterranean coastal states was also crucial to preventing such attacks, protecting the marine environment, and ensuring the security of these countries. — SPUTNIK

Hormuz tensions threaten Türkiye's food security



Turkish farmers face rising fertilizer and fuel costs as Hormuz tensions disrupt supply chains.

PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA

AS geopolitical tensions in the Strait of Hormuz disrupt global supply chains, Turkish agriculture is hit hard. Farmers and experts warn that soaring fertilizer costs are now a direct threat to the country's food security.

The Strait of Hormuz serves as a global agricultural artery. According to data from the International Fertilizer Association, Gulf nations account for

approximately one-third of the global export supply of urea and nitrogen-based fertilizers.

The maritime instability has hence translated into a swift 30 per cent price surge for Turkish producers since the start of the war, said Halim Orta, an academic at Tekirdag Namik Kemal University and a wheat farmer in Türkiye's Thrace region.

Orta told Xinhua that the

crisis has shifted from a logistical concern to a struggle for survival, adding that the price of urea rose within days from 20 to over 30 Turkish liras (US\$0.68) per kg.

This agricultural pressure is further compounded by a volatile energy market. While diesel prices stood at approximately 60 liras (\$1.35) at the beginning of March. — Xinhua

S Africa's solar, storage expo concludes with strong partnerships, business engagement

THE three-day Solar and Storage Live Africa 2026 concluded on Friday with strong business engagement, partnership-building and deal-making, the organizer said.

"We are proud to be at the forefront of promoting the energy transition, and this year's event has been nothing short of outstanding," Manas Sahu, the event's marketing manager, told Xinhua.

Noting that about 650 companies exhibited and more than 200 speakers

addressed the conference, he said that the show floor "has been filled with cutting-edge innovations, and the level of engagement across the event has been truly remarkable".

The exhibitors mainly came from China and South Africa, alongside participants from countries including Ghana, Kenya, Botswana, among others, Sahu said, reflecting Africa's growing role as a hub for renewable energy investment and innovation. — Xinhua



Visitors visit the booth of TCL during the Solar and Storage Live Africa 2026 in Johannesburg, South Africa, 25 March 2026. PHOTO: CHEN WEI/XINHUA

Memory chip shares shed \$100 bln as AI hardware shortage diminishes



SHARES of memory chip manufacturers have shed nearly \$100 billion in market value this week, as the once-acute shortage of artificial intelligence-driven hardware continues to recede — a scarcity that

Micron Technology, the US memory specialist, has suffered losses exceeding \$70 billion in market capitalization since last Friday's close, a 15 per cent decline amid a sweeping Wall Street sell-off. PHOTO: MICRON TECHNOLOGY

had previously propelled semiconductor stocks to record heights.

Micron Technology, the US memory specialist, has suffered losses exceeding \$70 billion in market capitalization since last Friday's close, a 15 per cent decline amid a sweeping Wall Street sell-off, according to a report by the Financial Times.

Sandisk, the flash memory manufacturer that emerged as the top-performing stock in the

S&P 500 last year, has seen approximately \$15 billion erased from its valuation over the week, while data storage peers Western Digital and Seagate have each shed billions of dollars.

Travis Prentice, Chief Investment Officer at California-based asset manager Informed Momentum, observed: "These stocks had experienced astronomical gains, so it is only logical that even marginal news would trigger a pull-back." — ANI

Japan's school backpack sales start early, prices keep rising

THE shopping season for traditional school backpacks for first graders in spring 2027 has begun early in department stores and supermarkets in Japan — more than a year before the children enter school.

The average price of "randoseru," sturdy bags made to last throughout the six years of elemen-

tary school, is now about 1.7 times higher than it was 15 years ago, partly reflecting higher material costs and added features.

Typically, the search for randoseru starts as early as April of the previous year and peaks in May, with many parents and grandparents eager to secure popular models. Japan's shrinking

child population has now given them more money to spend on each child. Over the years, parents and grandparents have become increasingly engaged in the early buying trend known as "ran-katsu", a portmanteau of randoseru and "katsudo," or activity, in reference to the search for the box-like bags. — Kyodo

Changing Distributor for Registered Pesticide

Distribution of pesticide registered by **Shandong Weifang Rainbow Chemical Co., Ltd** is changing from **CHAROEN PORPHAND PRODUCE MYANMAR COMPANY LIMITED** to **RAINBOW AGROSCIENCES CO., LTD**. Any objection regarding to this transfer can notify at Co-Secretary, Pesticide Registration Board, Plant Protection Division, West Gyogone, Insein within 2 weeks.

No	Trade Name	Active Ingredient	Reg. NO.
1	Hoprole 30 WG	Indoxacarb 30% WG	F2024 - 2496
2	Raintap 50 SP	Cartap 50% SP	F2020 - 2528
3	Riceup 300 EC	Pretilachlor 300 g/l EC	F2020 - 2484
4	Carwin 85 WP	Carbaryl 85% WP	F2021 - 3122

RAINBOW AGROSCIENCES CO., LTD
Phone : 09456060160, 09456060180

ROLLING UPDATES

WORLD

Mongolia's ruling party nominates Uchral as new PM

The nomination follows the resignation of Prime Minister Gombojav Zandanshatar, who stepped down at his own request on Friday.



The Government Palace is a prominent building located on the north side of Sükhbaatar Square in downtown Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia. **PHOTO: REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE / WIKIMEDIA COMMONS**

THE ruling Mongolian People's Party (MPP) nominated Nyam-Osor Uchral as Mongolia's new prime minister at the party's conference on Sunday.

Uchral, aged 39, is the chairman of the MPP and currently serves as chairman of the State Great Hural, the Mongolian parliament.

The nomination follows the resignation of Prime Minister Gombojav Zandanshatar, who stepped down at his own request on Friday.

He is believed to have resigned due to internal disagreements within the party or in line with the convention that a chairman of the ruling party also serves as prime minister, according to local media reports. — Xinhua

N Korea's Kim oversees test of upgraded solid-fuel engine for ICBMs

NORTH Korean leader Kim Jong Un has overseen a test of an upgraded solid-fuel engine with enhanced maximum thrust, state-run media said Sunday, believed to have been developed for intercontinental ballistic missiles.

The ground jet test of high-thrust solid-fuel engines using the composite carbon fiber material was a part of the country's new five-year national defence development plan, which "set the steady upgrading of strategic strike means as a major goal," the official Korean Central News Agency said.

Kim last inspected a test of a solid-fuel engine in September 2025. — Kyodo

UN urges Houthis to refrain from further involvement in ME conflict

THE United Nations on Saturday urged Yemen's Houthis to refrain from any further involvement in the conflict in the Middle East, including through missile or drone attacks, noting that the group's attacks risk further expanding military conflict.

"We are concerned about the Houthi missile strikes against Israel earlier today. These attacks risk further expanding the military conflict in the region," Stephane Dujarric, spokesperson for UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, said in a note to correspondents. — Xinhua

Application of IAEA nuclear safety rules to Iran important step

THE application of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) nuclear safety rules to Iran has become an important step, Russian Permanent Representative to International Organizations in Vienna Mikhail Ulyanov said in an interview with Sputnik.

Ulyanov raised the question of why the IAEA Secretariat reacted so poorly to the attack only 200 metres (656 feet) from the operating nuclear reactor of the Bushehr nuclear power

plant. According to the representative, it turned out that by the time of the first relevant publication, the IAEA did not have the necessary information. They tried to get it, but they had no telephone connection to the Bushehr NPP. After receiving more detailed information from the Russian side, the agency issued a new message, which already described in more detail what happened at the station.

"At the same time [IAEA Director

General Rafael] Grossi for the first time clearly stated that the 'seven indispensable pillars for ensuring nuclear safety and security during an armed conflict' he proclaimed in 2022 in the Ukrainian context also apply to the situation in Iran. By the standards of the IAEA, this is a serious step forward. Before that, for almost a year, he had been trying in every possible way to fit these 'seven pillars' into the Iranian context," Ulyanov said. — SPUTNIK

War in the Middle East: latest development



People attend a rally against US-Israeli attacks on Iran, in New York, the United States, 7 March 2026. **PHOTO: ZHANG FENGGUO/XINHUA**

Pentagon prepares for weeks of ground operations in Iran

THE Pentagon is preparing for weeks of ground operations in Iran, as thousands of US soldiers and Marines arrive in the Middle East for what could become a dangerous new phase of the war should US President Donald Trump choose to escalate, The Washington Post reported on Saturday.

Ground operation

Any potential ground operation would fall short of a full-scale invasion and could instead involve raids by a mix-

ture of Special Operations forces and conventional infantry troops, the newspaper quoted officials as saying on the condition of anonymity.

Such a mission could expose US personnel to an array of threats, including Iranian drones and missiles, ground fire and improvised explosives, the report noted, adding the Trump administration in recent days has vacillated between declaring that the war is winding down and threatening to amplify it. — Xinhua

SPORTS

Women's squad step up scientific training for AFC tourney

THE Myanmar U17 women's football team is intensifying scientific fitness training in preparation for the final stage of the 2026 AFC U17 Women's Asian Cup, aiming to achieve strong results.

The team faces a tough group stage alongside host China, Thailand, and Vietnam. Due to the high level of competition, they are making necessary adjustments and improvements ahead of the tournament.

Myanmar previously played two friendly matches against India U17 women's team in Yangon on 12 and 14 March, losing both matches. Following those results, the coaching staff has been addressing weaknesses and ac-



Players of Myanmar U17 women's squad seen in training session. PHOTO: MFF

celerating preparations, with a strong focus on fitness, accord-

ing to the Myanmar Football Federation.

Players have undergone Body Composition (InBody)

measurements, as well as Endurance and Fitness Tests, including the Yo-Yo test, to evaluate stamina and physical condition. Based on these results, individual training programmes and nutrition plans are tailored for each player. Dietary adjustments have been introduced, along with proper protein supplementation to enhance performance.

The Body Composition analysis provides detailed data on each player's muscle mass, body fat percentage, and hydration levels, allowing for more precise training and nutrition management.

The 2026 AFC U17 Women's Asian Cup will be held in China from 1 to 17 May. — Ko Nyi Lay/KZL

Malinin soars to 3rd worlds title, Fournier Beaudry/Cizeron cap golden season in Prague

ILIA Malinin of the United States reasserted his dominance with a commanding victory to secure his third consecutive world championship title, as the 2026 ISU World Figure Skating Championships concluded in Prague on Saturday.

On the final day of competition at the O2 Arena, the 'Quad God' delivered a free skate for the ages. Skating last among the men, Malinin opened with a massive quad flip and followed with a triple Axel, quad Lutz, and

three additional clean quadruple jumps, earning a free skate score of 218.11 points for a total of 329.40 - finishing nearly 23 points clear of the field.

"It was very awesome. I enjoyed every single part of it and I'm so glad to be here," Malinin said. "It feels really different, because going into this competition I had no expectations. I wanted to just come out here, enjoy the atmosphere and enjoy the environment of the figure skating world." — Xinhua



Ilia Malinin of the United States in action during the men's free skate at the 2026 ISU World Figure Skating Championships in Prague, the Czech Republic, 28 March 2026. PHOTO: ZHANG HAOFU/XINHUA

Snowboarding: Japan's Olympic champ Totsuka secures World Cup titles

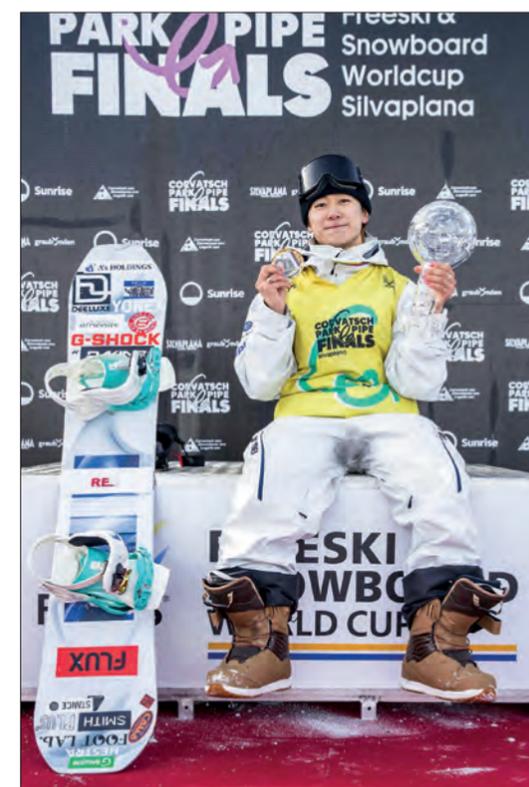
OLYMPIC champion Yuto Totsuka wrapped up a remarkable season Saturday by claiming two snowboarding World Cup overall titles with victory in the final round of the men's halfpipe circuit.

Totsuka's win in Switzerland's Silvaplana secured his fourth halfpipe Crystal Globe, as well as his first overall park and pipe championship.

Adding to his men's halfpipe gold medal at the Milan Cortina Winter Games and victory in the newly formed Snow League, the 24-year-old from Kanagawa Prefecture has won every major title he has contested this season.

He scored 94.00 on his first run in Switzerland to beat Australia's Valentino Guseli by three points, with Chase Blackwell of the United States third on 88.75.

"I'm so happy to have won the last event of



Japanese snowboarder Yuto Totsuka competes in a men's halfpipe World Cup event in Silvaplana, Switzerland, on 28 March 2026. PHOTO: KYODO

the season," Totsuka said. "I'm incredibly happy to have also won the Crystal Globe." — Kyodo

Formidable Sinner faces Lehecka for second Miami Open title

WORLD number two Jannik Sinner is in formidable form heading into Sunday's Miami Open ATP final against Jiri Lehecka, where the Italian will try to add the title to his Indian Wells triumph this

month. Sinner is vying to become just the eighth man, and the first since Roger Federer in 2017, to complete the so-called "Sunshine Double" of Indian Wells and the Miami Open.

The four-time Grand Slam champion has reached the title match without dropping a set and is, in fact, on a record streak of 32 consecutive sets won at the Masters 1000 level. — AFP



China welcomes WTO interim arrangements on e-commerce agreement

China and 65 WTO members launched interim arrangements to enforce the E-Commerce Agreement while seeking full integration into WTO law.



Members adopt a pathway to bring E Commerce Agreement into force via interim arrangements. PHOTO: WTO

CHINESE Commerce Minister Wang Wentao has expressed support for the adoption of the World Trade Organization (WTO) agreement on e-commerce with interim arrangements announced on Saturday.

In his written remarks, Wang highlighted that the WTO Agreement on

Electronic Commerce (E-Commerce Agreement) establishes global rules for digital trade, which will effectively promote more inclusive and sustainable digital growth.

China supports the timely implementation of the agreement and hopes WTO can play a greater role in shaping digital

trade rules in the future, Wang added.

On Saturday, the co-conveners of the WTO negotiations on e-commerce — Australia, Japan, and Singapore — issued a joint statement in Yaounde, the capital of Cameroon, announcing the establishment of interim arrangements for the E-Commerce Agreement.

At the 14th WTO Ministerial Conference (MC14) on Saturday, 66 WTO members, including China, announced that the interim arrangements would provide a pathway to bring the E-Commerce Agreement into force, while continuing to work towards its incorporation into the WTO legal framework of rules. — Xinhua

Iran Guards threaten to hit US universities in Mideast

IRAN'S Revolutionary Guard on Sunday threatened to target US universities in the Middle East after saying US-Israeli strikes had destroyed two Iranian universities.

"If the US government wants its universities in the region to be free from retaliation... it must condemn the bombing of the universities in an official statement by 12 noon on Monday, 30 March Tehran time," said the statement published by Iranian media.

The statement added: "We advise all employees, professors, and students of American universities in the region and



Texas A&M University at Qatar is a branch of Texas A&M University located in Education City, Al Rayyan, Qatar. PHOTO: PIX FOR VISUAL PURPOSE/QATAR FOUNDATION

residents of their surrounding areas" stay a kilometre away from campuses.

Several US universities have campuses scattered

throughout the Gulf region, such as Texas A&M University in Qatar and New York University in the United Arab Emirates.

— AFP

Australia grants free transit amid fuel hikes

THE governments of the Australian states of Victoria and Tasmania on Sunday announced free public transport initiatives in response to rising fuel prices.

Victorian Premier Jacinta Allan said the state government would make all public transport services free for a month from Tuesday.

She said in a joint statement with Gabrielle Williams, Victoria's minister for Public and Active Transport, that the measure would make it more affordable for people to choose public transport amid a spike in fuel prices driven by the Middle East conflict and oil crisis.

"I'm determined to do everything within my control to help Victorians deal with rising fuel prices," Allan said.

According to the Australian Institute of Petroleum (AIP), the national average price for regular unleaded fuel hit a record-high of 2.38 Australian dollars (US\$1.6) per litre in the week ending 22 March marking an increase of 27 per cent since the outbreak of the ongoing conflict in the Middle East. — Xinhua