

The Global **NEW LIGHT** of MYANMAR



Officials inspect the progress in renovation process at ancient Bawbawgyi Stupa.

UNESCO-listed Bawbawgyi Stupa under restoration

The Bawbawgyi Stupa, notable for its cylindrical base and banana bulb-shaped design, dates back over a thousand years to the Pyu era.

THE UNESCO-listed Bawbawgyi Stupa in southwest of the ancient city of Sri Ksetra, Pyay Township, Bago Region, is being restored following damage caused by the Mandalay earthquake.

Cracks appeared around the stupa's circular structure due to impacts of the severe earthquake, while small banyan trees growing on the monument

were found to pose long-term risks to its stability, prompting urgent conservation work.

Restoration is being carried out without altering its original design, with efforts expected to be completed before the monsoon season to prevent further damage from rainwater entering the cracks. Nearby pagodas including Phayama Pagoda will also be inspected

and repaired as necessary.

The Bawbawgyi Stupa, notable for its cylindrical base and banana bulb-shaped design, dates back over a thousand years to the Pyu era and is closely associated with historical accounts of King Duttabaung of the Sri Ksetra dynasty and Queen Panhtwar, making it one of the most prominent ancient monuments in Myanmar. — ASH/KZL

Myanmar exports about 300,000 tonnes of rubber in 2025-2026 FY, earning over US\$400 million

THE Myanmar Rubber Planters and Producers Association (MRPPA) reported that Myanmar exported about 300,000 tonnes of rubber in the 2025-2026 financial year, earning more than US\$400 million in export revenue.

“At the end of the 2025-2026 financial year, we were able to export about 300,000 tonnes as expected, earning more than US\$400 million in export revenue.

SEE PAGE 7



This photo features raw rubber sheets produced locally.

ARTICLE

Building a Shared Future: Myanmar's Foreign Policy and Regional Partnerships

By Min Min Zan

PAGE 8-9

NATIONAL

PAGE 5



Atthakatha texts of Tri Pitakat treatises donated to venerable monks

NATIONAL

PAGE 6



Yangon-Mandalay rail journey time reduced to around 10 hours after upgrades

NATIONAL

PAGE 7

ME conflicts spur need to boost emergency food reserves

NATIONAL

Field survey on electric meter reading conducted in Nyaungshwe



Reading of consumption units at electric meters was carried out in Nyaungshwe Township.

IN order to be accurate reading of electricity units in consumption, Nyaungshwe Township, Shan State (South), electrical engineering office has conducted a field survey at each household in the township.

The field survey on electricity meter reading has been underway in Nyaungshwe from 1 to 5 May, led by township electrical engineer U Sein Lin, electricians and staff.

The electricity meter read-

ing is also intended to reduce cases of power loss and prevent the illegal consumption of electricity, and households are asked to sign as recognition of reading their monthly energy usage. — Htun Htun/ZS

Weather

Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 7 pm Sunday 3 May 2026)

BAY INFERENCE: The weather is partly cloudy to cloudy over the Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL NOON OF 4 May 2026: Rain or thundershowers will be widespread in upper Sagaing Region and Kachin and Shan states, fairly widespread in Nay Pyi Taw, Yangon, lower Sagaing and Ayeyawady regions and Chin and Rakhine states, scattered in Mandalay, Magway and Taninthayi regions and isolated in the remaining regions and states. Degree of certainty is 80 per cent.

THE CONDITION OF CUMULONIMBUS CLOUD: The cumulonimbus clouds are developing in Nay Pyi Taw, Yangon, Mandalay, Magway, upper Sagaing, Ayeyawady and Taninthayi regions and Kachin, Chin and Shan states. The area along the cumulonimbus clouds movement, the weather phenomena such as strong winds accompanied with rain, thunder, lightning and hails may occur and therefore it is recommended to be aware

in advance of these phenomena.

STATE OF THE SEA: The sea will be slight to moderate in the Myanmar waters. The wave height will be about 4-7 feet off and along the Myanmar Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Likelihood of scattered rain or thundershowers in upper Sagaing and Taninthayi regions and Kachin, Chin, Rakhine and Shan states.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 4 May 2026: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is 100 per cent.

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 4 May 2026: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is 100 per cent.

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 4 May 2026: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is 80 per cent. — DMH



ကမ္ဘာ့ကြက်ခြေနီနေ့
World Red Cross Day

ညီညွတ်မှုအားနဲ့တို့ကူညီ လူသားချင်းစာနာတဲ့ကြက်ခြေနီ
United in Humanity

၂၀၂၆ ခုနှစ်၊ မေလ(၈)ရက်

KBZ Centre Mandalay to install 16 additional dialysis machines to expand free treatment



Patients are seen receiving free kidney dialysis treatment at KBZ Centre Mandalay.

KBZ Centre Mandalay, which provides free kidney dialysis services to patients, has announced that it will install 16 additional dialysis machines to expand its capacity to serve more patients.

Currently, the centre offers free dialysis for patients facing financial hardship. Starting from 2 February 2026, it has been operating six days a week from Monday to Saturday using four machines to treat 24 patients. With the 16 new machines, the centre will operate 20 machines and treat 120 patients per week.

Application forms for patients will be distributed from 9 am to 4 pm on 4, 5, and 6 May. Patients must have an established

Arteriovenous (AV) fistula, have been undergoing dialysis treatment for at least three months, and be free of Hepatitis B and C. Forms can be collected by the patients themselves or by a family member, together with the original and a photocopy of the patient's Citizenship Scrutiny Card. Completed applications must be submitted back to the centre from 18 to 20 May. Following a screening process, it will contact the selected patients.

For inquiries for pre-registration, the public can contact the KBZ Centre Mandalay's Call Centre at 09 941 600 999 and U9 mobile users can also dial the Short Code: 1010. Lines are open between 9 am and 4 pm from Monday to Friday. — MT/ZN

NATIONAL

Emphasizing training to turn out skilled workers for docking vessels

THE docked vessels must be completed to the required standards and launched within the designated timeframe, said Union Minister for Transport U Mya Tun Oo, during his inspection tour of the 12,000-tonne dry dock of the Myanmar Shipyards in Kamayut Township, Yangon Region, as well as the Setsan Shipyard of the Myanmar Port Authority in Mingala Taungnyunt Township on 2 May.

Upon arrival at the slipway facility of the 12,000-tonne dry dock of Myanmar Shipyards, the managing director briefed the Union minister on the docking and repair progress of two LPG tankers, the current capacity for vessel docking, and the feasibility of developing a hard-standing slipway along the Hline River bank. In response, the Union minister emphasized the importance of prioritizing workplace safety, providing continuous training to ensure a steady supply of skilled labour, and enhancing staff health awareness.

Following this, the Union minister inspected the con-



Union Minister for Transport U Mya Tun Oo inspects the repair progress of two LPG tankers at the 12,000-tonne dry dock of the Myanmar Shipyards in Kamayut Township, Yangon, on 2 May.

struction site of a 76-metre general cargo landing craft and the main engine installation work for a 190-foot coastal liner at the hard-standing slipway near the repair workshop, instructing that all work must strictly follow approved ship designs to ensure structural integrity and directing the Department of Marine Administration to coordinate and oversee inspections with rigorous quality control throughout the process.

Subsequently, the Union

minister inspected the Welding Training School established within the repair workshop, instructing officials to expand training programmes to create employment opportunities and to arrange competency assessments as well as the issuance of recognized certificates upon completion of training.

Subsequently, the Union minister arrived at the Setsan Shipyard of the Myanmar Port Authority in Mingala Taungnyunt Township. There, the

managing director reported on shipyard data, the status of vessel construction and repair operations, revenue generation, and the ongoing repair work on the tugboat Manaung (3), which was docked at the yard. In response, the Union minister instructed that, in the construction and repair of vessels, strict adherence to approved designs, high standards of workmanship, and the use of quality materials must be ensured, while also directing that

priority be given to workplace safety and necessary supervisory inspections, and noting that, as State-owned economic enterprises, they must conduct market research and explore new opportunities to increase revenue for both the department and the State.

Following this, the Union minister and his party inspected the tugboat Manaung (3), which was undergoing repairs at the dock. — MNA/TH

Rice donated to residents in Padauk Myaing Smart Village of Myitkyina Township

KACHIN State Chief Minister U Khet Htein Nan, accompanied by state ministers and state-level departmental officials, met local residents yesterday evening at Shwe Padauk Hall in Palana (1) Padauk Myaing Smart Village, located in the Palana village-tract of Myitkyina Township.

During the meeting, the chief minister, state ministers, and officials presented 100 bags of rice (24-pyi per bag) for 511 households in the smart village. They also donated 200 educational and fiction and non-fiction books to the village's Smart Library, which was established under the Smart Village Project to enhance rural livelihoods. Ad-



Kachin State Chief Minister U Khet Htein Nan observes the smart library of Padauk Myaing Village in Myitkyina Township.

ditionally, they provided vinyl posters for the rural livelihood elevation fund and the Smart Village Project, along with ma-

terials supporting village waste management.

Following this, the Head of the Township Rural Devel-

opment Department explained the work plans and activities being implemented under the Smart Village Project in Palana (1) Padauk Myaing Village. The chief minister provided the necessary assistance to facilitate these efforts.

Subsequently, the chief minister urged the residents, stating that the state government is making its utmost efforts to promote the development of the agriculture and livestock sectors by providing free seeds and disbursing loans through the State Economic Promotion Fund to improve the socioeconomic conditions of local people. He added that, due to the unity of the residents of Padauk Myaing Village, funds

have been allocated and the implementation of the Smart Village Project is now underway.

Subsequently, the Chief Minister inspected the 18 ft × 27 ft Smart Library building completed under the Rural Development Department's Smart Village Project, reviewed the procurement of educational and fiction books, periodicals, and library equipment funded under the project, and coordinated with departmental officials and village authorities to ensure the library's sustainability, including the appointment of a librarian and the gradual improvement of reading habits and library facilities. — Kachin State IPRD/TH

NATIONAL

F&R Union Minister virtually joins 29th ASEAN+3 Finance Ministers' and Central Bank Governors' Meeting (AFMGM+3)

THE 29th ASEAN+3 Finance Ministers' and Central Bank Governors' Meeting (AFMGM+3) was held on 3 May in Samarkand, Uzbekistan and attended by Dr Kan Zaw, Union Minister for Finance and Revenue virtually.

In the morning session of fiscal exchange, representative from the ASEAN+3 Macroeconomic Research Office (AMRO) presented optimizing budgetary performance management and revenue strategies for demographic change and Finance Ministers from the ASEAN+3 countries made recommendation on it. At the meeting, regarding fiscal management, the Union Minister discussed that Myanmar's budget is being prepared based on the Medium Term Fiscal Framework (MTFF) and that appropriate projects are being coordinated with public policies. The financial linkages and budget allocations between the Union and Region and State governments are also being implemented through the MTFF through policy-based budgeting and rule-based budgeting, and financial activities of the government. Regarding demographic changes and tax revenue management, the Union Minister



Union Minister Dr Kan Zaw takes part in The 29th ASEAN+3 Finance Ministers' and Central Bank Governors' Meeting (AFMGM+3) in Samarkand, Uzbekistan, virtually on 3 May.

highlighted that since 66.9 per cent of the population in Myanmar is between the ages of 15 and 64, there is an opportunity to increase tax revenue. Taking this opportunity, strategies are being developed to increase the country's tax collection. Currently, efforts are being made to expand the tax base without increasing tax rates.

In the afternoon session

of economic review and policy dialogue, representatives from the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and AMRO made presentations on global and regional economic outlook and thematic issues. Upon presentations, Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors from the ASEAN+3 countries made recommendations and sugges-

tions.

In the session of strengthening ASEAN+3 financial cooperation, representatives from ADB, IMF, and AMRO offered presentations on updated ASEAN+3 strategic direction and ASEAN+3 future initiatives, progress of the Chiang Mai Initiative Multilateralization (CMIM), Asian Bond Markets Initiatives (ABMI), Disaster Risk Finance,

and Southeast Asia Disaster Risk Insurance Facility. Upon the presentations, Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors from the ASEAN+3 countries made recommendations and suggestions.

The Joint Statement of the 29th ASEAN+3 Finance Ministers' and Central Bank Governors' Meeting was finalized and approved.

The 29th ASEAN+3 Finance Ministers' and Central Bank Governors' Meeting (AFMGM+3) was held during the 59th Annual Meeting of the Asian Development Bank which are being held in Samarkand, Uzbekistan from 3 to 6 May. Deputy Prime Minister Mr Yuncheol Koo from the Republic of Korea, Japanese Finance Minister Ms Satsuki Katayama, Chinese Assistant Minister Ms Junhong Chang, Finance Ministers from Plus 3 countries, Deputy Finance Ministers, Central Bank Governors, Deputy Governors of the Central Banks from ASEAN member states, ADB President Mr Masato Kanda, IMF Deputy Managing Director Mr Kenji Okamura, AMRO Director/CEO Mr Yasuto Watanabe attended the meeting. — MNA

ASEAN+3 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors stress regional cooperation and financial stability amid rising global uncertainty

A delegation led by Dr Khin Naing Oo, Governor of the Central Bank of Myanmar, attended the 29th ASEAN+3 Finance Ministers' and the Central Bank Governors' Meeting (29th AFMGM+3), held yesterday in Uzbekistan, via videoconferencing.

At the meeting, representatives from the International Monetary Fund, the Asian Development Bank, and the ASEAN+3 Macroeconomic Research Office



Governor of the Central Bank of Myanmar Dr Khin Naing Oo participates in the 29th ASEAN+3 Finance Ministers' and Central Bank Governors' Meeting held in Uzbekistan, via video conferencing, yesterday.

presented briefings on global and regional macroeconomic outlooks, as well as energy security challenges arising from the situation in the Middle East. In response to these presentations, the ASEAN+3 finance ministers and central bank governors in attendance emphasized the importance of safeguarding multilateralism in addressing rising regional challenges and

SEE PAGE 5

Global NEW LIGHT of MYANMAR

www.gnlm.com.mm



CIRCULATION & DISTRIBUTION

(+95) (01) 8604532,
Hotline - 09 255597511

ADVERTISING & MARKETING

(+95) (01) 8604530,
Hotline - 09 251022355
marketing@gnlm.com.mm
subscription@gnlm.com.mm

Printed and published at the Global New Light of Myanmar Printing Factory at No.150, Nga Htat Kyee Pagoda Road, Bahan Township, Yangon, by the Global New Light of Myanmar Daily under Printing Permit No. 00510 and Publishing Permit No. 00629.
gnlmnews@gmail.com,
newsroom@gnlm.com.mm
www.gnlm.com.mm

Write for us

We appreciate your feedback and contributions. If you have any comments or would like to submit editorials, analyses or reports please email aungthuya@gnlm.com.mm with your name and title.

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

Atthakatha texts of Tri Pitakat treatises donated to venerable monks

A ceremony to donate computer-typeset editions of the Atthakatha texts of Tri Pitakat treatises was held at the Maha Pasana Cave in Mayangon Township, Yangon Region, yesterday morning.

Venerable monks led by Sayadaw Dr Bhaddanta Candima Bhivamsa, Chairman of the State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee, attended the event together with Union Minister for Religious Affairs U Tin Oo Lwin, the Yangon Region Chief Minister and donors.

Attendees observed the Five Precepts while members of the Sangha recited Paritta. The Union minister then explained the purpose of donating the computerized editions of the



Union Minister for Religious Affairs U Tin Oo Lwin presents the books which are computer-typeset editions of the Atthakatha texts of Tri Pitakat treatises to Sayadaw Dr Bhaddanta Candima Bhivamsa yesterday.

Atthakatha treatises.

Officials and donors formally presented the books to venerable monks from Buddhism learning centres across Yangon Region, while cash for nine prerequisites were also handed over.

A total of 51 volumes of Atthakatha treatises were compiled digitally starting in January 2024 and printed in September 2025. Work is ongoing on 26 volumes of Atthakatha treatises revised at the Sixth Buddhist Synod, two of which have already been completed. The published texts are also being prepared in e-book format to support Buddhist studies and teaching activities. — MNA/KZL

ASEAN+3 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors stress regional cooperation and financial stability...

FROM PAGE 4

uncertainties, and of strengthening regional solidarity and cooperation. They also expressed full support for continuing policy dialogues aimed at maintaining macroeconomic and financial stability among ASEAN+3 countries, and affirmed that they would remain vigilant in monitoring financial market volatility and potential risks, while standing ready to respond in line with domestic conditions.

The participants further noted that efforts would continue to promote trade and investment opportunities, ensure smooth operations, and strengthen supply chains. They reaffirmed their support for a fair, transparent, and rules-based multilateral trading system in line with the principles of the World Trade Organization. In light of increasing uncertainties, they underscored the importance of ASEAN+3 cooperation in supporting regional stability and resilience. In addition, they discussed and reaffirmed the role of regional financial cooperation in relation to expanding multilateral participation under the Chiang Mai Initiative, which is being implemented with the support of the ASEAN+3 Macroeconomic Research Office.

During the discussions, Dr Khin Naing Oo, CBM Governor, noted that although ASEAN+3 economies had entered 2026 with stable growth supported by easing inflation, increasing global geopolitical tensions and volatility in energy prices could lead to greater uncertainty in economic growth.

She highlighted that energy security has become a key factor for macroeconomic stability, and that it is necessary to strengthen regional energy cooperation and enhance sustainable financing. He also pointed out that central banks need to remain vigilant in maintaining exchange rate stability, adopt appropriate exchange rate policies, and manage capital flows effectively. In addition, strengthening foreign exchange markets and maintaining adequate foreign currency reserves are of critical importance. She added that the Central Bank of Myanmar would continue to cooperate closely with ASEAN+3 member countries to support regional economic resilience and stability.

The meeting then reviewed progress on the expansion of multilateral participation under the Chiang Mai Initiative. It was explained that, in order to respond promptly to short-term

balance of payments (BOP) difficulties arising from external shocks and to facilitate the implementation of the Rapid Financing Facility, the agreement on the expanded Chiang Mai Initiative — revised for the fourth time — should be signed as soon as possible in accordance with each country's domestic procedures. The ASEAN+3 finance ministers and central bank governors agreed to expedite these processes.

Furthermore, as part of advancing ASEAN+3 financial cooperation, participants exchanged views and endorsed matters relating to the upgrading of the Asian Bond Markets Initiative into a broader Asian Bond and Financial Markets Initiative, the roadmap (2026-2028) for financing arrangements to address potential losses caused by natural disasters, and the opportunities, challenges, and future directions of cross-border digital payment systems.

The meeting concluded with the endorsement of the joint statement of the 29th ASEAN+3 Finance Ministers' and Central Bank Governors' Meeting. It was also announced that the 30th meeting will be held in Japan in 2027. — MNA/KNN

“Cherry” ferries maintain Yangon-Dala services after bridge debut

EVEN after the opening of the Myanmar-Korea Friendship Bridge (Dala Bridge), the “Cherry” ferry services operating between Yangon and Dala are continuing to run as usual, according to the Inland Water Transport (Delta Division).

The Pansodan-Dala ferry route operates 41 round trips per day, with one vessel departing every 20 minutes.

“Although passenger numbers have fallen by about one-fifth since the opening of the Myanmar-Korea Friendship Bridge, the number of ferry trips has not been reduced, and services are continuing as normal. The first ferry departs from the Dala side at 5:30 am, and the last service from Pansodan Jetty runs until 7:30 pm. To ease the burden on passengers, the fare remains unchanged at K300. At Pansodan Jetty, rest areas have been provided for passengers' comfort, and wheelchairs are available for the sick and the elderly,” said an official from Inland Water Transport (Delta Division).

There are three “Cherry” ferries operating on the Pansodan-Dala route. They run on a rotation system, with two vessels in service and one on standby each day. Safety measures are in place, including the provision of life jackets and lifebuoys, and the ferries are operated by experienced personnel. — ASH/MKKS

NATIONAL

Yangon-Mandalay rail journey time reduced to around 10 hours after upgrades

ACCORDING to Myanmar Railways, the Yangon-Mandalay train journey, which previously took more than 19 hours, now takes only 10 hours following the upgrading of the railway line.

With the completion of track improvement works on the Toungoo-Nay Pyi Taw and Nay Pyi Taw-Mandalay sections, the line has significantly improved. Modern signalling systems have been installed, and contemporary locomotives and carriages are now in use, enabling a substantial reduction in travel time.

On the Yangon-Mandalay-Yangon route, trains will stop at nine stations in total: Toegyauhgale, Bago, Nyaunglebin, Toungoo, Pyinmana, Nay Pyi Taw, Yamethin, Thazi and Kyaukse. 5-up DEMU express



The 5-up DEMU express passenger train is seen in operation on the Yangon-Mandalay route.

train departs from Yangon at 6:00 am and arrives in Mandalay

at 4:00 pm, while 6-down DEMU express train leaves Mandalay

at 6:00 am and reaches Yangon at 4:10 pm, making the total

journey time approximately 10 hours.

Myanmar Railways has been operating the 5-up and 6-down express passenger services on the Yangon-Mandalay route using modern air-conditioned DEMU coaches since 1 May. In addition to these newly extended services, the existing 11-up and 12-down express trains continue to run regularly on the same route.

Furthermore, the newly introduced air-conditioned 5-up/6-down DEMU trains consist of six coaches each — four first-class and two upper-class — accommodating up to 312 passengers. Ticket prices for the full journey are set at K34,000 for first class and K48,000 for upper class per passenger. — ASH/KNN

Road accidents nationwide reach 888 in Q1 of 2026



Scenes from some of the traffic accidents that occurred nationwide.

DURING the first three months of 2026, a total of 888 traffic accidents occurred nationwide, resulting in 486 fatalities and 1,208 injuries, according to the Ministry of Transport.

Yangon Region recorded the highest number of acci-

dents during this period, with 199 incidents, leading to 273 injuries and 96 deaths.

Ayeyawady Region reported the second-highest number of accidents, with 135 cases, in which 191 people were injured and 64 lost their lives. Meanwhile, on the Yangon-Manda-

lay Expressway, 46 accidents were recorded, causing 52 injuries and 30 deaths.

During the same period in 2025, there were 856 traffic accidents nationwide, with a total of 1,265 injuries and 453 fatalities. — ASH/KZL

YBS 27 extends route to Thukha Dagon Housing

STARTING from 1 May, the YBS-27 bus line, which is under the management of Trans Link Co, has been extended to Thukha Dagon Housing for a more convenient commute.

Under the extended route, the bus journey starts from Thukha Dagon Housing and ends at Mingala Market after passing Thabyagyan junction, mental health hospital, Dagon University, 7/8 junction, 46 junction, Khema, Bailey, Ka-Nya-Na office, Yadana Road, Kyaukkon, Tamway Market and Yuzana Plaza.

“The expansion of the bus route is good and more convenient for commuters. But it takes

about 30 minutes to wait between buses, so we want the bus line to run more buses,” said a bus passenger.

Buses will run at 10-20-minute intervals during the schedule from 5 am to 4:30 pm for passengers do not have to wait for long.

The previous route started at the mental health hospital to Min Ye Kyaw Swa Road, ward 133, Dagon University, Pyidaungsu Road, Bohmu Ba Htoo Road, U Wisara Road, Bailey-Thanthuma Road, Yadana Road, Moegaung Road, East Horse Race Course Road, Kyaikkasan Road, Yuzana Plaza and Mingala Market. — MT/ZS



This image features a YBS 27 bus.

Daily newspapers available online

FOR those who would like to read the Myanmar 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



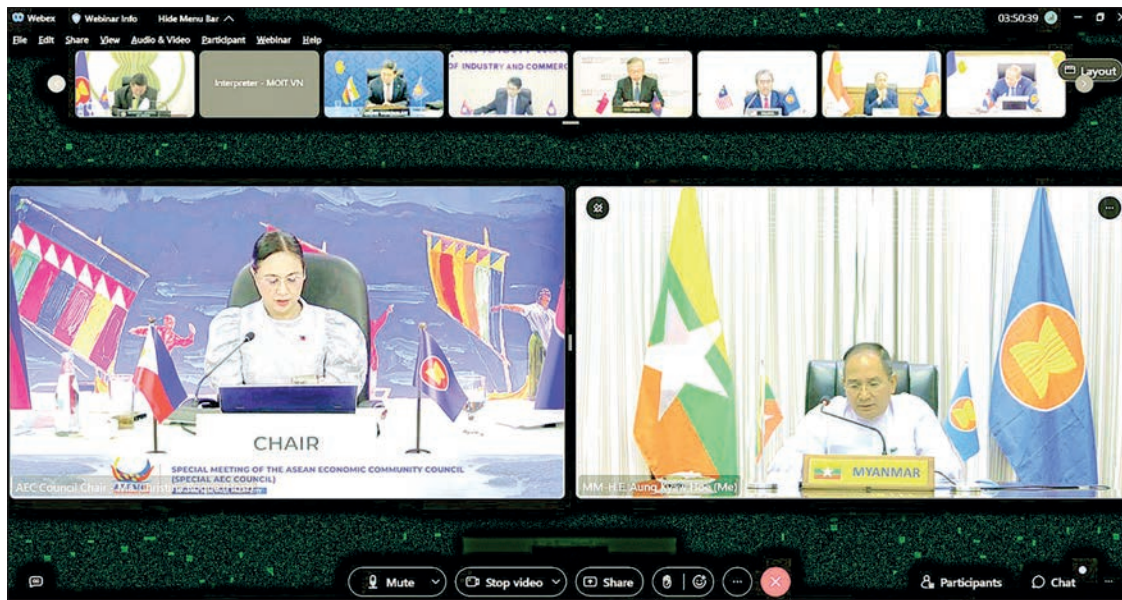
NATIONAL

ME conflicts spur need to boost emergency food reserves

THE ongoing situation in the Middle East presents challenges that could impact not only ASEAN's energy security but also food systems, supply chains, and overall economic performance. Consequently, it is essential to increase emergency food reserves, stated U Aung Kyaw Hoe, Union Minister for National Planning, Investment and Foreign Economic Relations.

The Union minister made these remarks during the Special Meeting of the ASEAN Economic Community Council Ministers concerning the Middle East conflict, held on 30 April.

Regarding the potential impact of this crisis on global food



The Special Meeting of the ASEAN Economic Community Council Ministers is being held via videoconferencing.

supply chains and price stability, he further noted that disruptions in trade routes and rising transportation costs are putting significant pressure on businesses that rely on food imports.

He also called for an acceleration of investments in renewable energy, such as solar, wind, and hydropower, noting that the volatile global energy market affects countries dependent on energy imports.

According to reports from the World Food Programme, the escalation of conflicts in the Middle East has caused fuel prices to surge, which in turn has also driven up food prices across Myanmar. — Htun Htun/ZN

Thai Film Festival 2026 in Myanmar to show three Thai films



Film posters of the three Thai movies.

THE Thai Film Festival 2026 in Myanmar will be celebrated from 8 to 10 May at J Cineplex at Junction City in Yangon and three Thai films which are related to Myanmar will be shown, according to Thai Festival in Myanmar.

It is a preliminary show for the Thai Festival 2026 in Yangon, which is scheduled on 27 and 28 June. The Thai Film Festival 2026 in Myanmar is organized by Thai Embassy in partnership with GDH559, J Cineplex and Myanmar Airways International. At the event, the three Thai films namely Gohan, The Red Envelope and Friend Zone will be shown.

Booking code for ticket can be sought at www.thaifestivalmyanmar.com/2026/film as of 2 May

and 60 per cent of seating for each showing time is available for reservation. Tickets can be taken out free at J Cineplex ticket counter with booking code for arrivals in 45 minutes before showtime.

The rest 40 per cent of seats will be provided free on a first come, first served basis from 9 am on 9 and 10 May. With opening ceremony, the showtime for Gohan is scheduled from 5 pm to 8 pm on 8 May and Friend Zone and The Red Envelope will be shown from 10:30 am to 1:00 pm and from 1 pm to 4 pm on 9 May and 10 May.

Booths for taking photos are also arranged and for more details, people can visit www.thaifestivalmyanmar.com/2026/film. — MT/ZS

Myanmar exports about 300,000 tonnes of rubber in 2025-2026 FY, earning over US\$400 million

FROM PAGE 1

Export volumes could have been higher if weather conditions — the main influencing factor — had been more favourable. Normally, October, November, December, and January are the peak harvesting months. However, last year, rainfall continued through October and November, delaying production. The increase in exports was

therefore also influenced by weather conditions," said an official from the MRPPA.

Although the global market price of rubber is nearly \$2,150 per tonne, rubber exported from Myanmar fetches only \$1,700 to \$1,900 due to quality requirements. Myanmar mainly exports rubber to China, its largest market, as well as to countries such as Singapore, Malaysia, Indone-

sia, South Korea, and Japan.

There are 1.64 million acres of rubber plantations in Myanmar, of which about 850,000 acres are used for extraction of rubber latex. Mon State produces the largest volume of rubber in the country, followed by Taninthayi Region and Kayin State, while other regions and states also contribute to rubber production. — ASH/TH



This photo features raw rubber sheets produced locally.

OPINION

Initiate improvement of press freedom for all

WORLD Press Freedom Day (WPDF) 2026 offers a critical moment to reaffirm freedom of expression and to align journalism, technology (including AI), and human rights actors around practical ways to strengthen information ecosystems for the future.

According to UNESCO's World Trends Report 2022-2025, press freedom has experienced its steepest decline since 2012. This decline is comparable to that seen during the most unstable periods of the 20th century – the two world wars and the Cold War.

Myanmar is a country that is envisioning and implementing the building of a Union based on a democratic and federal system. In a democratic country, the role of the media is particularly important. Therefore, successive democratic governments have placed special emphasis on the role of the media and have supported the development of the media sector.

As such, it is necessary to implement the theme for World Press Freedom Day 2026, "Shaping a Future at Peace: Promoting Press Freedom for Human Rights, Development, and Security". The 2026 theme emphasizes the critical role of independent journalism in fostering accountability, trust, and peace, while highlighting the impact of AI on information ecosystems and the need to protect journalists in conflict zones.

Therefore, during the first term of the democratic government elected by the people in 2014, the News Media Law was enacted for the development of the press and the advancement of the media sector. The purpose of the News Media Law explicitly states "to enable the media industry to firmly stand as the fourth estate."

The State has shown particular interest in and given priority to the media sector, and has also provided support by fulfilling possible needs for the development of the industry. Likewise, the media community is expected to comply with journalistic ethics in order to contribute to the improvement of public social life, to promote the widespread development of journalism and media-related technologies, and for Myanmar's media industry to study and adopt modern media technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI) in accordance with international standards and professional ethics.

In the effort to develop the media sector and to enable free reporting and broadcasting in accordance with the law, media professionals themselves must enhance their own capacities, and all forms of reporting and presentation must comply with accepted professional ethics. In particular, in developing Myanmar as a democratic and developing country, press freedom should be exercised in a constructive manner, ensuring that it does not violate the national interest or the rights of any individual.

As such, it is necessary to implement the theme for World Press Freedom Day 2026, "Shaping a Future at Peace: Promoting Press Freedom for Human Rights, Development, and Security". The 2026 theme emphasizes the critical role of independent journalism in fostering accountability, trust, and peace, while highlighting the impact of AI on information ecosystems and the need to protect journalists in conflict zones.

Building a Shared Future: Myanmar's Foreign Policy and Regional Partnerships

By Min Min Zan

AS A proud citizen of Myanmar, I often reflect on our nation's journey and its place in the global community. In an increasingly interconnected world, Myanmar's foreign policy and its regional partnerships are more crucial than ever for fostering stability, economic growth, and a shared future for all. The recent visit of Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi to Myanmar on 25 April 2026 stands as a powerful reaffirmation of the enduring bonds and forward-looking cooperation that define our relationships with key regional partners, particularly our closest neighbour, China.

The historical ties between Myanmar and China, affectionately known as "Pauk-Phaw" (fraternal kinship), are deeply rooted in shared history and mutual respect. This friendship is not merely symbolic; it is built on a foundation of trust and shared principles that have guided our interactions for decades. The recent high-level engagement, where Foreign Minister Wang Yi met Myanmar's new President U Min Aung Hlaing in Nay Pyi Taw, underscored the continued vitality of this comprehensive strategic cooperative partnership. From a citizen's perspective, such visits are vital, signalling a commitment to dialogue and collaboration that directly impacts our nation's trajectory. The "Pauk-Phaw" spirit, characterized by mutual understanding and a willingness to support each other through various challenges, forms the bedrock of this unique relationship. It is a

bond that transcends mere diplomatic exchanges, reflecting a genuine desire for shared prosperity and regional harmony.

President U Min Aung Hlaing emphasized Myanmar's consistent regard for its relationship with China as its most important bilateral tie. This sentiment resonates deeply within our nation, recognizing the profound impact of this partnership on our development and stability. Myanmar's unwavering commitment to the One-China policy was also reiterated, showcasing our adherence to international norms and our respect for China's core interests. Furthermore, Myanmar expressed high appreciation and active support for the China-proposed four global initiatives, indicating a shared vision for global governance and multilateral cooperation. These gestures are crucial in building a robust framework for future collaboration and mutual understanding. The four global initiatives – the Global Development Initiative, the Global Security Initiative, the Global Civilization Initiative, and the Global Data Security Initiative – offer a comprehensive approach to addressing contemporary global challenges, and Myanmar's support underscores its commitment to a more equitable and peaceful world order.

Economically, the discussions during Foreign Minister Wang Yi's visit focused on advancing the construction of the China-Myanmar Economic Corridor (CMEC). This initiative is a cornerstone of our bilateral cooperation, promising



President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Min Aung Hlaing and Member of the Political Bureau of the Chinese Communist Party Central Committee and Minister of Foreign Affairs Mr Wang Yi exchange commemorative gifts in Nay Pyi Taw on 25 April. PHOTO: MNA/GNLM

to enhance infrastructure, boost trade, and foster economic development across our nation. The CMEC is not just a series of projects; it represents a pathway to improved connectivity, increased investment, and expanded opportunities for our people. From improved transportation networks,

such as railways and highways connecting our two nations, to enhanced energy cooperation, including the proper operation of oil and gas pipelines, these developments are expected to create jobs, stimulate local economies, and integrate Myanmar more deeply into regional supply chains.

For ordinary citizens, this means better access to markets for their produce, more employment opportunities in infrastructure development and related industries, and ultimately, a higher quality of life. The strategic importance of the CMEC cannot be overstated, as it positions Myanmar as a

crucial link in regional trade and economic integration, fostering sustainable growth and reducing poverty.

Beyond economic cooperation, a significant focus of the recent visit was on maintaining border peace and stability. The commitment from both sides to work together on this critical issue is particularly reassuring. Myanmar faces complex challenges along its borders, and China's support in ensuring tranquillity is invaluable. This collaboration extends to intensifying the crackdown on cross-border crimes, including online gambling and telecom fraud. These illicit activities pose serious threats to our society, impacting individuals and undermining the rule of law. The joint resolve to eradicate these problems and take concrete measures to ensure the safety of Chinese personnel, institutions, and projects in Myanmar demonstrates a shared responsibility for regional security and the well-being of our communities. Such efforts are essential for fostering a secure environment conducive to sustainable development and cross-border exchanges, protecting our citizens from exploitation, and maintaining social order.

Foreign Minister Wang Yi, for his part, stressed that China's policy towards Myanmar remains consistent and unwavering. China firmly supports Myanmar in following a successful development path that suits its national conditions and is supported by its people. This principle of non-

interference, coupled with support for our national sovereignty, security, and territorial integrity, is a cornerstone of our relationship. China's commitment to assisting Myanmar in achieving national peace, reconciliation, and social harmony is also deeply appreciated. These assurances from a powerful neighbour provide a sense of stability and confidence as our nation navigates its internal processes. The vision of building a China-Myanmar community with a shared future perfectly aligns with the development and revitalization needs of both countries, serving the fundamental interests of both peoples. This shared future emphasizes mutual prosperity, collective progress, and a commitment to navigating challenges together, ensuring that both nations can thrive in an increasingly complex global landscape.

Furthermore, China expressed its willingness to support Myanmar's participation in more dialogue and cooperation mechanisms and the enhancement of its interaction with ASEAN. This support for Myanmar's regional and international engagement is crucial for our nation's diplomatic standing and its ability to contribute to broader regional stability. It signifies China's recognition of Myanmar's role in Southeast Asia and its desire to see our nation thrive within the regional framework. As citizens, we understand that a strong and engaged Myanmar benefits not only ourselves but also our neighbours and the wider international community.

Myanmar's active participation in regional forums, facilitated by China's encouragement, can lead to greater diplomatic influence and a stronger voice on issues of mutual concern, further solidifying our position as a responsible member of the international community.

In sum, the recent visit of Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi to Myanmar on 25 April 2026 was a pivotal event that reaffirmed the strength and potential of the Myanmar-China partnership. From a citizen's perspective, these high-level engagements are far more than diplomatic exchanges; they are vital indicators of a shared commitment to a future where Myanmar can achieve lasting peace, robust economic growth, and a respected place in the community of nations, supported by strong and reliable regional alliances. The renewed emphasis on economic cooperation through the CMEC, the joint efforts to ensure border stability and combat crime, and China's unwavering support for Myanmar's sovereignty and internal harmony all contribute to a positive outlook. As we move forward, maintaining and nurturing these partnerships will be paramount to realizing our aspirations for a stable, prosperous, and harmonious Myanmar. The path to a brighter future for Myanmar is paved with strong regional ties, and the continued commitment from our Chinese neighbours is a welcome and positive step in this direction, offering hope and tangible benefits for all our people.

IN THE rapidly advancing digital age of the 21st century, the meaning of patriotism has transformed into a broader, more progressive, and more meaningful concept. In the past, patriotism was often associated with armed resistance and battlefield courage. However, in today's world, patriotism is no longer limited to physical struggle. Instead, it is expressed

Empowering Youth for a Strong and Prosperous Nation

By Ms Monn

through knowledge, innovation, responsibility, and the determination to uplift one's nation in peaceful

and productive ways.

Modern youth are living in an era filled with opportunities.

With access to global knowledge, digital platforms, and advanced technology, they possess the power to shape not only their own futures but also the destiny of their country. Therefore, patriotism today means striving to improve oneself

while simultaneously contributing to the development, dignity, and global recognition of one's nation.

At the heart of every young individual lies a powerful sense of purpose. This purpose should be guided by the question: "How can I

use my knowledge and abilities to benefit my country?" When young people begin to think in this way, their personal growth naturally aligns with national progress.

Education as the Cornerstone

of True Patriotism

Education plays a fundamental role in shaping responsible and capable citizens. A nation's growth and sustainability depend heavily on the intellectual strength, moral values, and vision of its youth. Education equips individuals with the ability to think critically, solve problems, and adapt to change – qualities that are essential in

today's competitive global environment.

However, education alone is not enough. Without a sense of patriotism, knowledge may be used solely for personal gain rather than for the greater good. Likewise, patriotism without knowledge can lead to misguided actions and emotional decisions.

SEE PAGE 11

DELICACY/NATIONAL

Tea Leaf Salad

Tea Leaf Salad is a traditional Myanmar dish. In Myanmar, green tea leaves are mainly cultivated in Shan State, and according to Myanmar folklore, the Shan people were the first to consume tea leaf salad.

When tea leaves are harvested, some are dried to make tea, while others are fermented for use in tea leaf salad. The fermented tea leaves used in the salad are called “Ah-nyunt”.

The ingredients used in making tea leaf salad vary depending on the region, but all are locally produced within Myanmar. Tea leaves mostly come from Shan State in the east, various beans from the central region, and dried shrimp from the coastal areas in the south. Other ingredients such as garlic, onion, oil, tomatoes, chillies, and cabbage are also sourced from different parts of the country.

Tea Leaf Salad not only represents the colourful unity of Myanmar’s diverse regions but also reflects the hard work of local communities. It is beloved by the Myanmar people and is an essential dish at religious ceremonies, festivals, and social gatherings. It is also customarily served to guests at home or in restaurants. Because tea leaves contain caffeine, consuming the salad after meals helps reduce drowsiness and fatigue.

Tea Leaf Salad can be eaten as a snack or paired with rice. Its unique taste and aroma have also won the hearts of foreigners.

Ingredients

1. Fermented tea leaves
2. Tomatoes
3. Garlic
4. Lemon
5. Green chillies
6. Dried shrimp
7. Fried garlic
8. Roasted sesame seeds
9. Salt
10. Seasoning powder
11. Fish sauce
12. Fried split peas
13. Fried chickpeas
14. Fried peanuts



Traditional Myanmar Delicacy



Preparation Method

First, cut two medium-sized tomatoes into chunks. Add a small amount of fermented tea leaves. Mix in salt, seasoning powder, and fish sauce to taste.

Squeeze in lemon juice.

Add 2-3 green chillies and 4-5 cloves of garlic, peeled.

Combine all ingredients in a bowl and mix thoroughly. (Optional: add shredded ginger or cabbage according to preference.)

Finally, top with dried shrimp, green chillies, and fried garlic. Serve with hot plain tea for a delicious Myanmar Tea Leaf Salad.

Notes

Street vendors also sell Tea Leaf Salad as “corn tea leaf salad”. Some people mix tea leaves with rice and

top it with a fried egg, creating “tea leaf rice”. Others prepare a sour-spicy version by washing the tea leaves, squeezing them dry, and mixing them with salt, lemon juice, garlic, green chillies, and oil.

Depending on the type of tea leaves, the salad can taste sour, mild, or bitter. There are many variations, such as Elder’s Salad, Grandmother’s Salad, Youth Salad, Mandalay Salad, Yangon Salad, Shuu-shell (Fiery) Salad, Sour-Spicy Salad, and Kyetchaynee (Red Cross) Salad. These diverse styles show how the people of Myanmar enjoy tea leaf salad in many different ways.

— MOON



MGHRDC to conduct Inspection & Quality Control Training on 25-29 May

THE Myanmar Garment Human Resources Development Centre (MGHRDC) will offer Inspection and Quality Control Training on 25-29 May.

The course will cover essential qualifications of a QC, basic guidelines and

rules, essential components required for QC inspection, fabric inspection methods for all styles and items, quality management and control, fabric inspection techniques, and standard operating procedures. Experience instructors from

Maple Trading and Myanmar GF Co Ltd will share both theoretical and practical knowledge regarding additional topics of relevance.

The training will be conducted from 9 am to 4 pm. The course fee is

K100,000 (only for member factories). Those who want to attend the course can register by contacting MGHRDC at 400/A, Lower Mingaladon Road, Sinngu Ward, Insein Township via 09 795405583, 09 940858350, and 09 770289289. — NN/KK

ARTICLE/ENVIRON WORLD

Empowering Youth for a Strong and Prosperous Nation

FROM PAGE 9

Therefore, education and patriotism must go hand in hand, supporting and strengthening each other.

Young people must aim beyond academic success. Obtaining degrees and certificates should not be the final goal. Instead, education should be viewed as a tool for creating positive change in society. A well-educated youth who is also deeply committed to their country becomes a powerful agent of transformation. By combining knowledge with a strong sense of duty, they can contribute meaningfully to national development.

Skill-Based Contribution: The True Expression of Patriotism

True patriotism is not expressed through words alone but through actions. In today's world, contributing to society through one's skills and expertise is one of the most effective ways to serve the nation.

For example, a young software developer can design digital solutions that improve communication, education, or business systems. Entrepreneurs can create job opportunities by establishing local businesses. Healthcare professionals can dedicate their time and knowledge to improving public health, especially in underserved areas. Teachers can nurture the next generation by providing quality education and moral guidance.

Each individual, regardless

of their field, has the potential to make a difference. Even small contributions can collectively lead to significant national progress. When young people take pride in their work and aim to serve society, they strengthen the foundation of the nation.

Preserving Culture and Promoting Soft Power

Culture is the soul of a nation. It reflects history, identity, and values that have been passed down through generations. For a country to maintain its uniqueness in a globalized world, preserving cultural heritage is essential. Young people should embrace their traditions with pride while adapting them to modern contexts. Cultural practices, traditional arts, local cuisine, and festivals are not outdated elements but valuable assets that can be shared with the world.

In the digital era, social media and online platforms offer powerful tools for promoting culture internationally. Creative content, such as videos, blogs, and digital storytelling, can attract global audiences and enhance the country's image. This form of cultural promotion, often referred to as "soft power", plays a crucial role in strengthening a nation's reputation and influence.

At the same time, learning international languages, especially English, allows young people to communicate effectively on a global scale. By bridging local identity with global communication, youth can represent their

country with confidence and pride.

Economic Awareness and Supporting Local Development

A strong economy is essential for national stability and growth. Youth play a vital role in economic development, not only as consumers but also as creators and innovators. By utilizing local resources, such as natural materials, agricultural products, and human talent, young people can build sustainable businesses. Supporting local industries helps reduce dependence on imports and strengthens the domestic economy.

Choosing locally produced goods is a simple yet meaningful act of patriotism. When people support "Made in Myanmar" products, they contribute to job creation, income generation, and community development. Over time, this collective effort can lead to economic independence and resilience.

Entrepreneurship among youth should be encouraged and supported. With creativity, determination, and access to technology, young entrepreneurs can transform ideas into successful ventures that benefit both themselves and their country.

Environmental Responsibility and Sustainable Patriotism

In the modern world, patriotism extends beyond national borders to include care for the environment. Protecting natural resources is essential for ensuring

a sustainable future. Young people must take responsibility for preserving the environment by adopting eco-friendly practices. Simple actions such as planting trees, reducing waste, conserving water, and protecting biodiversity can have a significant impact.

A healthy environment contributes to a nation's strength and well-being. By safeguarding nature, youth are not only protecting their homeland but also contributing to global sustainability efforts. This form of "green patriotism" reflects a forward-thinking and responsible mindset.

Unity, Diversity, and Social Harmony

A strong nation is built on unity. True patriotism embraces diversity and promotes harmony among people of different backgrounds, cultures, and beliefs. Young people must cultivate empathy, respect, and understanding. In times of difficulty, supporting one another regardless of differences demonstrates the highest level of humanity and patriotism. By working together towards common goals, citizens can overcome challenges and build a stable and prosperous society. Unity does not mean uniformity; it means recognizing differences while maintaining a shared commitment to national progress.

Responsible Use of Technology and Information

In the digital age, information spreads rapidly. While this

creates opportunities, it also presents challenges such as misinformation and harmful content. Young people must develop critical thinking skills to evaluate information carefully. Instead of reacting emotionally or spreading unverified news, they should seek accurate sources and promote truth.

Using digital platforms responsibly is a modern form of patriotism. By encouraging positive communication, constructive discussions, and mutual respect online, youth can contribute to a healthier and more informed society.

Youth as the Architects of the Future

Youth are the driving force behind a nation's future. Their energy, creativity, and determination have the power to shape a better world. Patriotism acts as the guiding force that directs this energy toward meaningful goals. It inspires individuals to work hard, act responsibly, and contribute to the greater good.

Building a strong and developed nation does not require grand gestures alone. It begins with small, consistent efforts – studying diligently, working honestly, helping others, and making responsible choices. True patriotism lies in dedication, integrity, and a genuine desire to serve one's country. When every young person commits to these values, the nation will naturally progress toward a brighter and more prosperous future.

Turning waste into power: Chinese-invested plant boosts Bangkok's green shift

The plant adopts high-temperature incineration and waste heat recovery to achieve harmless treatment and resource utilization.

IN the Nong Chaem Waste Management Center, western Bangkok, Thailand, garbage trucks enter a waste-to-energy plant, where waste is converted into electricity. In the plant, no smoke can be seen from the towering

chimney and there is no smell of garbage in the air. It's hard to imagine that mountains of garbage were once piled up in the same place just over a decade ago.

Operated by C&G Environmental Protection (Thailand) Co,

Ltd, a China-invested company, the plant has been in operation since 2016, with a daily processing capacity of 500 tonnes of waste. To date, it has treated over 1.68 million tonnes in total and generated over 636 million kWh of electricity



The facility processes municipal solid waste using stoker-type incineration technology to generate power PHOTO: C&G ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

for the city's grid.

"Bangkok produces more than 10,000 tonnes of waste daily, most of which is disposed of in landfills," said Ning He, CEO

of the company. "Leachate and odors generated during transportation and disposal used to pose significant environmental challenges," he said. — Xinhua

ECONOMY WORLD

India expanded crude sourcing base to 41 countries: Hardeep Singh Puri



The minister said that long-term planning played a key role in managing the crisis.

UNION Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas Hardeep Singh Puri on Friday said India expanded its crude oil sourcing base to 41 countries from 27 earlier, as part of efforts to strengthen energy security during the global energy crisis.

“What has happened during this energy crisis in India, it happened because the government absorbed the shock at the fiscal system level rather than passing it immediately on to the consumer’s wallet,” Puri said while speaking at the Vibrant

Gujarat Regional Conference - South Gujarat. He added that long-term planning played a key role in managing the crisis. “Because preparations made over the last 10 years, the decade, came into play exactly when they were needed. We diversified our sources; crude sourcing has now expanded from 27 countries to 41,” he said.

Highlighting supply diversification, the minister noted, “We started procuring LPG from the US, Norway, Algeria, apart from the Middle East.”

On boosting domestic production, Puri said, “Orders were issued to maximise LPG yield at refineries, and we increased our domestic production by 60 per cent. From 36,000 MT per day to 54,000 MT per day.” He added that consumption patterns were also evolving. “Out of a total daily consumption of 90,000, which we also brought down because we are shifting from LPG to LNG, that is pipe gas, and also because we are incentivising the movement to natural gas,” he said. — ANI

Highlighting supply diversification, the minister noted, “We started procuring LPG from the US, Norway, Algeria, apart from the Middle East.” **PHOTO: ANI**

Travel rush underway at start of 5-day stretch in Golden Week holidays

ROADS, train stations and airports in Japan were congested Saturday as people headed to their hometowns or departed for domestic and overseas vacations at the start of a five-day stretch in the Golden Week holidays.

Japan’s busiest holiday season apart from New Year and Obon in the summer, Golden Week started in late April, with Saturday marking the latter half including four consecutive national holidays.

At JR Tokyo Station, a family from Chiba Prefecture said they were planning to travel to Kyoto and Nara prefectures in western Japan.

“I want to feed deer,” Nami Sotozaki, 4, said, apparently referring to the crackers tourists give to roaming deer in Nara.

In Osaka, station staff were busy guiding customers near ticket gates at JR Shin-Osaka Station, while people in the station building waited in line to buy souvenirs. — Kyodo



Passengers board a shinkansen bullet train at JR Tokyo Station on 2 May 2026. **PHOTO: KYODO**

“Living like a local” trend enhances China Travel allure



Visiting the Great Wall during the May Day holiday (May 1-5) is a vibrant but high-density experience.

PHOTO: XINHUA

AS China kicked off the five-day May Day holiday, a growing number of foreign tourists are traveling to the country not just to see the Great Wall or shop in fashionable malls, but to soak in 24-hour bathhouses, try traditional Chinese medicine treatments, and savor late-night hotpot in pajamas inside urban spas — a sign that experiencing everyday Chinese life has become a major draw for international tourists.

China is set to see a surge in cross-border travel during the holiday, with inbound and outbound passenger flows expected to average 2.25 million and peak at more than 2.4 million in a single day, the National Immigration Administration said. Beijing has already seen over 2.28 million foreign entries and exits this year, up 34 per cent year-on-year, reflecting sustained growth in inbound tourism.

Driving this wave are a growing number of international travellers, who are shifting from “travelling in China” and “shopping in China” to an all-around experience of local life, according to Dai Bin, president of the China Tourism Academy.

“Becoming Chinese’ has become a buzzword on overseas social media platforms,” Dai told Xinhua in a recent interview. — Xinhua

China blocks US sanctions on five Chinese firms over alleged Iran oil ties

CHINA'S Ministry of Commerce on Saturday issued a blocking ban prohibiting any recognition, enforcement or compliance with US sanctions imposed on five Chinese companies on the grounds of their alleged involvement in Iranian petroleum transactions.

The five companies are Hengli Petrochemical (Dalian) Refining Co, Ltd, Shandong Shouguang Luqing Petrochemical Co, Ltd, Shandong Jincheng Petrochemical Group Co, Ltd, Hebei Xinhai Chemical Group Co, Ltd, and Shandong Shengxing Chemical Co, Ltd.

According to the MOC announcement, the US measures include placing the companies on the Specially Designated Nation-

als List, freezing their assets, and banning transactions with them.

Since 2025, the United States, under its executive orders targeting other countries, has imposed sanctions on these Chinese firms for their alleged involvement in petroleum transactions with Iran, an MOC spokesperson, in response to the ban, said on Saturday. The US measures, the spokesperson said, improperly prohibit or restrict normal economic and trade activities between Chinese companies and third countries as well as their citizens, legal persons or other organizations, in violation of international law and basic norms of international relations. — Xinhua



Aerial photo taken on 17 May 2019 shows the industrial park of the Hengli Petrochemical (Dalian) Refining Co, Ltd on the Changxing Island in Dalian City, northeast China's Liaoning Province. **PHOTO: PAN YULONG/XINHUA/FILE**

Sri Lanka vehicle imports reach US\$613 mln in Q1

SRI Lanka imported vehicles worth US\$613 million during the first quarter of 2026.

According to official data from the Central Bank of Sri Lanka, in March alone, vehicle imports, including both personal and commercial vehicles, amounted to US\$195 million.

The figures indicate the continued return of vehicle imports after the government lifted the temporary suspen-

sion in a set of new regulations, which came into effect on 1 February 2025.

The suspension on vehicle imports had been introduced in early 2020 as Sri Lanka moved to control foreign exchange outflows amid external sector pressures. The restrictions remained in place during the country's economic crisis, when conserving foreign currency reserves became a key policy priority. — Xinhua



Imported vehicles from Japan are unloaded from a ship at Hambantota Port in Sri Lanka, 27 February 2025. **PHOTO: AJITH PERERA/XINHUA**

India services exports hit record \$418 bln

INDIA'S services exports have emerged as a key pillar of external sector resilience, according to the Finance Ministry's April Monthly Economic Review, with robust growth helping cushion widening merchandise trade pressures.

The report underlined that "services exports continue to provide thrust to the country's total exports," reflecting sus-

tained global demand for India's digitally delivered and professional services. In FY26, services exports recorded a healthy expansion of 7.9 per cent year-on-year, "crossing the US\$400 billion mark for the first time and reaching US\$418.3 billion".

This milestone not only signals scale but also a structural shift in India's export

composition. The share of services in total exports rose to 48.6 per cent in FY26 from 47 per cent in the previous fiscal, indicating a gradual pivot away from traditional merchandise-led trade. As the report noted, "the share of services exports in India's total exports increased to 48.6 per cent from 47 per cent in FY25." — ANI

US airlines step up as Spirit winds down

US air carriers on Saturday mobilized to help passengers and crew members stranded by the overnight shutdown of Spirit Airlines, after the low-cost carrier's last-minute talks with creditors and the White House collapsed.

Spirit, known for its bright yellow planes, succumbed to crushing fuel prices and announced in the early hours that it was "winding down its global operations, effective immediately", with all flights canceled and customer service no longer

available. Other carriers — including American, Delta, United and JetBlue — moved quickly to scoop up Spirit's customers, offering what some dubbed "rescue fares" to those waking up with cancelled itineraries. — AFP

Ethiopian Airlines celebrates 80 years of operation, reaching 145 global destinations

ETHIOPIAN Airlines celebrated its 80 years of operation on Friday, as a company that has promoted global connectivity and boosted tourism, according

to Mesfin Tasew, group chief executive officer (CEO) of the airline.

Ethiopian Airlines started its operation with five Dou-

glas C-47 aircraft back in April 1946, with a scheduled flight to Egypt's Cairo via Asmara from Addis Ababa, the capital of Ethiopia. — Xinhua

ROLLING UPDATES

WORLD



University head Zafarollah Kalantari says the damaged parts of the school will stay as they are. This will help people remember the conflict. This is an archived file photo of the university, used here to provide a visual reference of the campus. **PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA/FILE PHOTO**

Iran plans to turn university site hit in US-Israeli strikes into museum

Initial assessments had put the cost of the damage to the university's buildings and facilities at around \$11 million.

IRANIAN authorities plan to turn a bombsite at a university in central Iran into a museum about the impact of US-Israeli strikes, an official said.

"The current damaged site will be preserved as a war museum at the university to remain a document of the country's scientific oppression in history," said Zafarollah Kalantari, head of Isfahan University of Technology on Saturday.

He added that other land had been allocated for the "construction of a new building and provision of advanced equipment" for the university, according to the official IRNA news agency.

Kalantari said initial assessments had put the cost of the damage to the university's buildings and facilities at around \$11 million.

US-Israeli strikes hit the

institution in Isfahan — among the largest universities in Iran — in March during the war that began a month earlier and subsequently spread across the region.

Officials have said that strikes hit more than 30 universities across Iran, including in the capital Tehran, as well as residential areas and other civilian infrastructure.

— ANI

Korean Air bans roosters on US-Philippine routes

ANIMAL rights advocates were crowing on Saturday after Korean Air banned transporting roosters on flights from the United States to the Philippines, which has a huge cockfighting industry.

Filipinos wager tens of millions of dollars daily by some industry estimates as they watch two roosters armed with metal

spurs fight to the death in clashes that can end in less than a minute.

The United States is an important source of roosters for these fights, according to activists as well as local breeder Eduardo Eugenio, who told AFP shutting down US imports would have a "huge impact".

The South Korean carrier

said in a statement sent to AFP on Saturday that it had "suspended the transportation of roosters of all ages on routes from the United States to the Philippines".

"Korean Air is committed to the lawful and safe transport of live animals, in accordance with applicable laws and regulations," it added. — AFP

NEWS IN BRIEF

US State Department fast-tracks over \$8 bln in arms sales to Gulf nations

THE Trump administration has approved more than US\$8 billion in weapons sales to Gulf nations and Israel, invoking emergency powers to bypass congressional review requirements, according to statements from the US State Department, cited by The Hill.

The approved sales include Advanced Precision Kill Weapon Systems (APKWS) for the United Arab Emirates, worth US\$147.6 million, as well as separate US\$992.4 million APKWS packages for Israel and Qatar.

The department also approved a US\$4.01 billion replenishment of Qatar's Patriot missile capabilities and a US\$2.5 billion Integrated Battle Command System sale to Kuwait. — ANI

Thousands evacuated as Mayon Volcano erupts

THE Philippines said on Sunday that thousands of people have evacuated the area south of Manila after Mayon Volcano erupted, and authorities advised the public to stay out of the six-kilometre radius danger zone.

The volcanology institute issued Alert Level 3 on its five-step scale, reporting strombolian activity and short-lived lava fountaining from one of the country's most active volcanoes. It also warned of possible landslides and lava flows.

Nearly 1,500 families are now staying in evacuation centres, according to the Department of Social Welfare and Development. Heavy ashfall blanketed several towns in Albay province on Saturday, disrupting traffic. — ANI

Iranian supertanker 'HUGE' bypasses US blockade

A Very Large Crude Carrier (VLCC) belonging to the National Iranian Tanker Company has successfully bypassed the US Navy to reach the Asia-Pacific, transporting over 1.9 million barrels of crude oil with an estimated value of nearly \$220 million, according to TankerTrackers.com.

In a post on X, the monitoring firm identified the vessel as "HUGE" and noted that it was last spotted off the coast of Sri Lanka more than a week ago. The tanker is currently reported to be traversing the Lombok Strait of Indonesia, heading towards the Riau Archipelago. TankerTrackers.com stated that "HUGE" had not transmitted on the Automatic Identification System (AIS) since 20 March following its departure from the Strait of Malacca for Iran. — ANI



In this photo taken on 5 July 2025, people watch a cockfight in Bulacan province, north of Manila. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

SPORTS



Photo shows Myanmar U17 team players and coach team. PHOTO: MFF

Myanmar U17 names final squad for AFC U17 Asian Cup

THE Myanmar Football Federation has announced the final 23-man squad for the 2026 AFC U17 Asian Cup.

The squad, released on the evening of 3 May includes most key players, with only a few absentees due to injuries.

Myanmar have been drawn in Group A alongside host Saudi Arabia, Tajikistan and Thailand.

They will face Saudi Arabia on 5 May, Tajikistan on 10 May and Thailand on 12 May, with kick-off times set late at night Myanmar time.—Ko Nyi Lay/KZL

Kostyuk stuns Andreeva to win first WTA 1000 title in Madrid

TWENTY-SIXTH seed Marta Kostyuk claimed the biggest title of her career on Saturday, defeating ninth seed Mirra Andreeva 6-3, 7-5 to win the women's crown at the Madrid Open.

Kostyuk celebrated with a backflip on court, capping a performance that extended her winning streak on clay to 12 matches and built on her recent WTA 250 title in Rouen, France.

The Ukrainian broke the Russian's serve for 3-2 in the first set and served it out. She then kept her composure in a topsy-turvy second set that featured five service breaks. Andreeva led 3-1 before Kostyuk won four of the next five games, saved two set points on her own serve at 4-5,

and then closed out the match 7-5.

Kostyuk converted all four break points she created, and dropped only one set in the entire tournament. Speaking to the press afterward, Kostyuk admitted she was surprised by her run. "If you look at the stats, up until last year I think I was like 2-7 in Madrid. I never thought I would be able to lift the title here," she said.

"It took me many years to reach this point, and one word I think about right now is consistency. It shows up every day, no matter how hard it is, no matter how much you love or hate what you do," Kostyuk said. "I'm very proud of myself and my team." — Xinhua

Spurs coaches train kids at MFF summer camp

PREMIER League club Tottenham Hotspur coaches conducted a special training session for children attending the second batch of the summer grassroots football programme organized by the Myanmar Football Federation (MFF) on 3 May.

The event, held under the "AYA Game Plan: AIA Score with Spurs" programme at the MFF Academy Artificial Ground in Yangon, featured opening remarks by officials from AIA Myanmar, MFF and AYA Bank. Representatives, coaches and participants also took group photos, and commemorative gifts were presented to Spurs coaches Kevin Moffatt and Tyler Blackwood.

The two Tottenham coach-



Premier League's Tottenham Hotspur FC coaches and Myanmar young football players are seen at the National Football Academy in Yangon on 3 May. PHOTO: MFF

es later led practical sessions, teaching basic football techniques to the young trainees

as part of the ongoing summer programme.— Shine Htet Zaw/KZL

How Schalke returned to the Bundesliga after their 'worst season ever'

AFTER three seasons in the second flight, Schalke's 1-0 home win over Fortuna Duesseldorf on Saturday returned the German giants to the Bundesliga.

For those inside the club, the road to promotion is about making good on a series of mistakes and bringing Schalke back where they belong.

Seven-time German champions Schalke are among Europe's best supported teams. Only two clubs in Germany — Bayern Munich and bitter rivals Borussia Dortmund — have

more than their 200,000 members.

In 2021, Schalke were relegated for the first time in three decades. Saddled with debt, a Covid-era relegation hit harder.

After an immediate return to the top flight, they suffered the same fate again — and this time did not bounce back so easily. CEO Matthias Tillmann, who joined the club in 2024, told AFP that Schalke being in the second division is a "mistake".

"We are not a second division club when it comes to fans, to infrastructure," he said. — AFP



Schalke fans celebrate the club's promotion to the Bundesliga. PHOTO: AFP



Iran sends 14-point counter-proposal to US

IRAN has submitted a 14-point plan to the United States, outlining a sweeping framework aimed at “ending the war” on all fronts, including Lebanon, according to Tasnim News Agency.

The proposal comes in response to an earlier nine-point plan sent by Washington, which allegedly included a two-month timeline for a ceasefire. Tehran, however, is said to have rejected any extended interim arrangement, insisting instead that a comprehensive resolution be achieved within 30 days and framed around a permanent “end to the war” rather than a temporary truce.

According to the report, Iran’s proposal includes firm security guarantees that would prohibit any future military aggression against Iran and require the withdrawal of United States forces from its “surrounding environment”.

It also calls for the lifting of existing naval restrictions and blockades, alongside the release of frozen Iranian assets held abroad and compensation for damages Iran attributes to sanctions and military pressure. Economically, the plan demands the full removal of all US and international sanctions imposed on Iran.

Regionally, the proposal extends beyond Iran-US tensions and calls for an end to what it describes as “war on all fronts”, explicitly including conflict dynamics involving Lebanon. — ANI

Iran demands a permanent end to the war rather than a short truce.



Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi (L) meets with Pakistani army chief Staff Asim Munir in Islamabad on 25 April. **PHOTO: IRANIAN MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS HANDOUT VIA AFP**

Seven OPEC+ countries plan to increase oil production limits

RUSSIA, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Kuwait, Algeria, Kazakhstan, and Oman have preliminarily agreed to increase the tar-

get production by approximately 188,000 barrels per day in June, despite the UAE leaving the alliance, media reported.



Seven OPEC+ countries have an agreement in principle to raise oil output targets by about 188,000 barrels per day in June. **PHOTO: REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE/ ISTOCK**

“Seven OPEC+ countries have an agreement in principle to raise oil output targets by about 188,000 barrels per day in June, the third consecutive monthly increase, pressing on with plans despite the war and the departure of the United Arab Emirates from the group this week,” the report said.

The sources noted that the increase in the production limit is comparable to the May increase of 206,000 barrels per day, it will simply exclude the UAE’s share, as the UAE announced its withdrawal from OPEC and OPEC+.

The actual quota increase will be symbolic because shipping through the Strait of Hormuz — a key route for oil supplies from Gulf countries — remains constrained. The meeting of the seven countries is scheduled to be held online on Sunday, where they plan to discuss oil production levels for June. — SPUTNIK

New Chongqing-Manila direct flight route launches

A direct flight route linking southwest China’s Chongqing Municipality with the Philippines’ capital Manila has been launched to facilitate air connectivity between China and the Philippines.

The route is operated by Air China with Boeing 737 aircraft, offering four round-trip flights every week.

Zeny C Pallugna, director of the Office of Market Development under the Philippines’ Department of Tourism, noted that China plays a vital role in the development of the Philippine tourism industry.

“With the enhanced air connectivity between China and the Philippines, we expect to attract a large number of Chinese tourists to experience our high-quality beaches, distinctive islands and the hospitality of local people,” she said. — Xinhua