

# SAC to transfer power to election winner

It is essential to systematically document the actions and achievements of the current government during its tenure.



The second-day session of the Union Government Meeting in progress yesterday, chaired by SAC Chairman Premier Senior General Min Aung Hlaing.

**T**HE second-day session of the Union government meeting continued at the Office of the State Administration Council Chairman in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning, attended by SAC Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing.

Speaking on the occasion, the Senior General revealed that, as the current government will hand over the State responsibilities to the winning party of the election, it is necessary to systematically compile records on undertakings of this government, he added.

In the electric power sector, the Senior General said that, due to various reasons, existing planned electricity generation projects could not be implemented, resulting in an insufficient electricity supply. As a clear example, if the Myitsone hydropower project had not been halted, it could have produced 6,000 megawatts. If the existing power plants were combined with the Myitsone project, not only would the country's electricity needs be met, but there could even be a surplus.

**SEE PAGE 3**

## Salient points from the speech delivered by the Senior General at the second-day session of the Union government meeting

1. If the Myitsone hydropower project had not been halted, it could have produced 6,000 megawatts.
2. If the existing power plants were combined with the Myitsone project, not only would the country's electricity needs be met, but there could even be a surplus.
3. Responsible authorities have to strictly and thoroughly verify whether the aid reaches the actual earthquake victims, and they have to promptly issue the relief supplies received from foreign countries to those in urgent need.
4. It is also necessary to strive for shaping the major cities in the regions and states, including Nay Pyi Taw, into Green Cities, Clean Cities, and Smart Cities.

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Consider everything logically

By Swan Pyae

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Travellers flock to scenic Kalaw-Inlay-Taunggyi route

## BUSINESS

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Myanmar exports 30,000MT of fish worth US\$29.46M in Apr



# NATIONAL

## Public-participated security stronger and more effective

- There is no such thing as perfect or complete security; however, security that involves public participation can be stronger and more effective.
- Public security is achieved through the active and informed participation of the people in security-related activities.

*(An excerpt from the speech delivered by Chairman of the State Administration Council, Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at the meeting on security and development of Yangon Region on 8 October 2024)*

# Travellers flock to scenic Kalaw-Inlay-Taunggyi route



Some tourists visit to enjoy the beauty of the Inlay Lake by boat.

LOCAL tourism operators have reported that there are many travellers visiting the Kalaw-Inlay-Taunggyi route with beautiful natural scenery.

Families with children, relatives and friends are visiting before school starts.

“The weather is nice with cool rain. The scenery is very

beautiful. Some families visit with children before school starts. Some also visit with their friends and relatives. The early monsoon season is a great time for taking photos with its beautiful natural scenery,” said a local tour operator.

Tourist destinations include Ohsi Hill, Kalaw Clock Tower, Kalaw rail station, Htinshu

Taw, Kalaw Viewpoint, ancient Mahamuni Hnee Pagoda and interesting sites around Kalaw, and the Taunggyi-Inlay tour includes the Bawa Samsara Bridge, Culamuni Pagoda, Shwephonepawint Pagoda, Inlay PhaungdawOo, Alotawpauk Pagoda, traditional weaving, silversmithing, floating farms, and wineries.



A person who visited the Kalaw wine farm and flower plantation.

In addition to the Kalaw-Inlay-Taunggyi tour, domestic travellers visit Bagan-NyaungU, PyinOoLwin, Kyaiktiyo, Hpa-an,

Ngwehsaung, and other domestic tours, as well as outbound destinations such as Thailand and Vietnam. — MT/ZN

## Royal Thai Embassy to host Thai Festival 2025 in Yangon on 21-22 June 2025

THE Royal Thai Embassy in Yangon will organize Thai Festival 2025 in Yangon on 21-22 June 2025 at the Yangon Ballroom, Novotel Yangon Max Hotel, with the sponsorship from True-Dtac, Myanmar International Airways, Novotel Yangon Max, as well as the partnership from Tourism Authority of Thailand, Thai Trade Centre, Yangon, Thai Business Association of Myanmar, Thai-Myanmar Business Council, GMM Grammy, ONE31 and GMMTV.

Following the first event in 2024 at the Junction City, Yangon, the festival this year will promote Thailand’s soft power through Thai products, food, cul-

ture, tourism, wellness and music. Around sixty vendor booths in the festival will showcase Thai food and drink, cosmetics, fashion, tourism, communication services, wellness packages and artist merchandise.

The stage activities in the festival include Thai contemporary dance, Thai cooking demonstration, special activities and interviews by one Thai and two Myanmar actors, which are soon to be announced, and live music performances by famous Thai artistes, including Dome Jaruwat, Gam Wichayanee, Num Kala, GMMTV’s Perth Tanapon-Santa Pongsapak and Aou Thanaboon-Boom Tharatorn,



as well as Baron Hayne, the winner of the T-Pop Star Challenge, Myanmar Season 1, the biggest Thai music singing contest in Myanmar.

Moreover, “T-Pop Star Challenge, Myanmar Season 2” will

return to the festival. The eight finalists will perform live, and the winner of the contest will receive US\$3,200. Information about the contest, as well as how to vote online for the contestants, can be found at www.

tpopstar.com, Facebook and YouTube: T-Pop Star Challenge, Myanmar.

Further information about the Thai Festival 2025 in Yangon can be viewed at the website:

<https://www.thaifestivalmyanmar.com/2025>, Facebook Page: Thai Festival in Myanmar, <https://www.facebook.com/share/19ymjQtWgA/?mibextid=wwXIfr>, Instagram: @thailandinmyanmar, <https://www.instagram.com/thailandinmyanmar?igsh=MTAyN2xmY2gyZH-piaA==>, and YouTube: Royal Thai Embassy, [https://youtube.com/@royalthaiembassyyangon?si=\\_qWo29c7TKJUJw1T](https://youtube.com/@royalthaiembassyyangon?si=_qWo29c7TKJUJw1T). — GNLM



NATIONAL

Residents Urged to Prioritize Public Safety Amid Armed Terrorist Threats

ARMED terrorists have been launching attacks by using residential homes and administrative buildings in towns and villages as cover, where they have forcibly settled. They aim to shield themselves from Tatmadaw counterattacks while also persuading temporarily displaced persons to return to their native areas and recruiting new members. That enables terrorists to use civilians as human shields. Tatmadaw is committed to safeguarding the sovereignty of the State and will respond to these threats based on intelligence and prevailing conditions. Therefore, residents in areas where terrorists have taken control must prioritize their safety and protect themselves from being exploited by these groups.

(Excerpt from guidance given by Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing to Shan State cabinet members and state-level departmental officials on 3 September 2024)

SAC to transfer power to election winner

FROM PAGE 1

Regarding the damage caused by the major Mandalay earthquake, the Senior General urged responsible authorities to strictly and thoroughly verify whether the aid reaches the actual earthquake victims, and they have to promptly issue the relief supplies received from foreign countries to those in urgent need.

He stressed that it is also necessary to carry out solar power production activities, as the demand for solar energy may significantly increase in the future. It is recommended to establish small-scale solar factories in the regions and states.

Regarding the fuel sector, the Senior General noted that some US\$5 billion worth of fuel is imported yearly. To reduce fuel consumption, the import of electric vehicles is allowed, but foreign exchange requirements limit the import process. Greater encouragement and implementation of public transportation can help reduce imported fuel. Efforts must also continue to shift toward an electric-powered transport system. Shortly, battery-powered locomotives will arrive and be ready for use.

The Senior General underscored that training must be given to members of the Myanmar Police Force to enhance their capacity, while welfare, proper accommodation and uniforms must be provided for them.

In the security sector, he emphasized that the State faces the loss of revenue from vehicles and motorbikes without registration and driving these vehicles and motorbikes may cause hardship in security measures. So, regional and state authorities need to restrict the driving of unregistered vehicles and motorbikes.

He instructed the Ministry of Border Affairs to carry out the development of agriculture and livestock farms in border regions. Graduates from the University for the Development of National Races and degree colleges have



SAC Vice-Chairman Deputy PM Vice-Senior General Soe Win puts forward discussion points at yesterday's meeting.

to serve duties at different levels to benefit the State.

For development undertakings, the Senior General pointed out that all regions and states must have a stadium with a 400-metre track and grandstand, gymnasium and swimming pool each. Youths must be trained systematically from basic education to become outstanding athletes.

In the youth affairs, he spotted that since young people are the ones who will shape the future of the nation, nurturing disciplined and well-rounded youth equipped with knowledge, literature, and technical skills is essentially building the future of the country.

He underlined that efforts must be made to develop agro-based industries. For example, by successfully implementing paddy cultivation, it is possible to establish industries based on paddy.

He gave guidance that it is necessary to strive for shaping the major cities in the regions and states, including Nay Pyi Taw, into Green Cities, Clean Cities, and Smart Cities.

Chief Ministers of the Regions and States, and Union Ministers were urged to strive for development per their re-

spective ministries and according to each Region and State under their responsibility.

Afterwards, a video clip on the construction of highways, meeting set standards and cultivation of shade trees was presented.

At the meeting, Union ministers reported on the implementation of projects by relevant ministries and efforts to achieve success in projects.

SAC Vice-Chairman Deputy Prime Minister Vice-Senior General Soe Win stressed the need for the chief ministers of regions and states to make preparations for holding the multiparty democratic election at the end of this year. Preparations must be made to systematically hand over the State power to the winning party after the election. It is necessary to systematically supervise service personnel so as not to cause misunderstandings among people from the tenure of this government to the time of handover of the State power to the elected party.

He continued that regarding security, in the eastern border areas of the country, illegal gambling activities, online financial frauds, human trafficking,

and acts of terrorism have occurred. The government has cooperated with neighbouring countries to address and resolve these issues. Additionally, those arrested in connection with these illegal activities and terrorism from neighbouring and other countries have also been transferred back accordingly.

The Vice-Senior General highlighted that it is necessary to carry out various methods to ensure the receipt of accurate tips and reports related to illegal trade. Due to such tips and reports on illegal trade, over 4,000 cases have been seized to date, and responsible citizens who provided the information have also been appropriately rewarded.

He recounted that SME member cards have been issued to over 4,300 out of more than 80,000 businesses across the nation. MSME businesses from Mandalay and Sagaing regions, Nay Pyi Taw Council Area and Shan State are trying to resume operations with the assistance of the government after suffering the impacts of the Mandalay earthquake.

The Vice-Senior General noted that as the school enrolment week will commence on 22 May, officials of regions and states have to systematically supervise the attendance of all students at schools and minimize the decline of student grades.

Joint Secretary General Ye Win Oo reported on needs to emphasize security measures for safety of students retaking the matriculation examination and students and parents for school enrolment as terrorists commit destructive acts, taking action against offenders for tarnishing religions and undermining patriotism, and seizures of narcotic drugs, arms and ammunition and systematic functioning of checkpoints.

Also, present at the meeting were Council Secretary General Aung Lin Dwe, council members, Union-level dignitaries, the Nay Pyi Taw Council chairman and deputy ministers. — MNA/TTA



# NATIONAL

## Manpower Department seeks applicants for international consultancy



Computer and face-to-face tests for the position of Assistant Immigration Officer to serve in the Ministry of Immigration and Population were being conducted on 29 April 2024.

AS the Ministry of Immigration and Population intends to compile and publish annual robust population estimates, the Population Department has now invited applications for the position of international consultant.

Based on the 2024 Population and Housing Census data, the ministry will annually compile and publish population es-

timates to be used in socio-economic development planning and policy-making for the coming years. For this purpose, an international consultant with experience in this area will be selected, and interested parties are invited to submit a proposal.

Applications must be submitted to the Department of Population, Office 48, Nay Pyi

Taw, and the application guidelines will be available at [www.dop.gov.mm](http://www.dop.gov.mm) from 12 to 30 May. Applications submitted after the specified date and time will not be accepted. For more information on the application form and rules, applicants may contact the phone number and email during office hours. — Htet Oo Maung/ZN

## Six rising stars crowned at 20<sup>th</sup> Japanese Translation Contest

AT the 20<sup>th</sup> Japanese Literature Translation Contest, each three candidates of the advanced level and entry level tests won outstanding scores, said the Japan Foundation.

Jointly organized by the Japan Embassy to Myanmar, the Myanmar Association of Japan Alumni and the Japan Foundation-Japan Culture House in Yangon, the event was held in February 2025.

At the translation contest, judges selected

three candidates in the advanced level and three candidates in the entry level won outstanding scores. The Japan Foundation released the short-listed candidate names at an advanced level, and of those, Htoo Htoo Aung Khine is the first winner, Thin Thiri Su is the second winner, and Su Shoon Lae Lae Phyo is the third winner.

At the entry level, Ngwe Zin Thike is the first winner, Shin Bhone Wai is the second winner, and May La Won Pyae is the third winner. — MT/ZS

## Myanmar Libraries Foundation hosts leadership meeting & book donation drive

THE Myanmar Libraries Foundation held its Central Executive Committee meeting and book donation ceremony at the Foundation's Hall in Yangon at 10 am yesterday.

Foundation Chairman U Nyunt Swe first delivered a speech, followed by donors who explained the purpose of their book donations. Chairman U Nyunt Swe then received the donated books and presented certificates of appreciation to the donors.

At the donation ceremony,

Police Lt-Col (Retired) U Thein Htun (writer Sit Ye Eain) donated 200 books worth K1.6 million, and writer Saddhammajotikadhaja Pantaya Mya Kyi donated 50 books worth K750,000.

Following the donation event, the Central Executive Committee meeting was convened to discuss and coordinate future activities. Those wishing to donate cash and books may contact the secretary at 09 5142564 or the office head at 09 420700326. — MNA/MKKS



Myanmar Libraries Foundations Chairman U Nyunt Swe presents a certificate of appreciation.

## Rescue work continued in quake-hit areas

A devastating earthquake hit Myanmar on 28 March. As of 20 May, the death toll reached to 3,728, with 5,104 injured and 79 missing in six regions and states that were severely stricken.

The Myanmar Fire Brigade, local and international rescue teams, carried out the search and rescue operations promptly in the impacted ar-

eas.

To date, 653 survivors have been rescued from collapsed buildings, and the bodies of 806 deceased have been recovered.

Local and foreign donors have continued to support the affected communities with financial assistance and essential supplies, and the inventory of donations will be released soon. — MNA/KTZH

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NATIONAL

MNHRC inspects Hnget-Aw-San Boys' Training School

THE inspection team, led by U Kyaw Soe and U Than Win, members of the Myanmar National Human Rights Commission (MNHRC), conducted an inspection visit to the Hnget-Aw-San Boys' Training School in Kawhmu Township, Twantay District, Yangon Region, on 20 May 2025 under Sections 43 and 44 of the MNHRC Law.

They inspected the situation of fundamental rights of the boys who are detained in the centre including health-care services, food supply, provision of purified drinking water, adequate dormitories, availability of Citizenship Scrutiny Card, supporting programmes for physical and

mental development as well as right to education, vocational training, communication with their families, reintegration with their families and freedom of religion. MNHRC also donated general knowledge books for the boys.

The MNHRC inspection team will send its findings and recommendations to the relevant department for necessary action under the MNHRC Law. — MNHRC

The MNHRC inspection team views the training session at the Hnget.



31 foreigners deported for telecom fraud, 13 detained

A total of 31 foreigners involved in telecom fraud and other online crimes were deported to their respective countries through the Myanmar-Thailand Friendship Bridge (No 2) on 20 May. The deportees included one South Korean, seven Nigerians, 10 Indians, one Russian and 12 Filipinos. They entered Myanmar illegally via border routes through neighbouring countries and were found operating online scams and gambling activities in areas such as Myawady-Shwe Koko, Moehtawthalay (KK Park) and Kyaukkhat in

Kayin State.

The deportations were carried out per legal procedures and in the spirit of humanitarianism and bilateral relations. Officials from the Ministry of Immigration and Population oversaw the process and coordinated with representatives from the respective countries, handing over proper documentation.

A total of 13 foreigners, including eight Filipinos, one Nigerian, three Indians and one Chinese national, were apprehended on the same day for similar offences in the same

border areas.

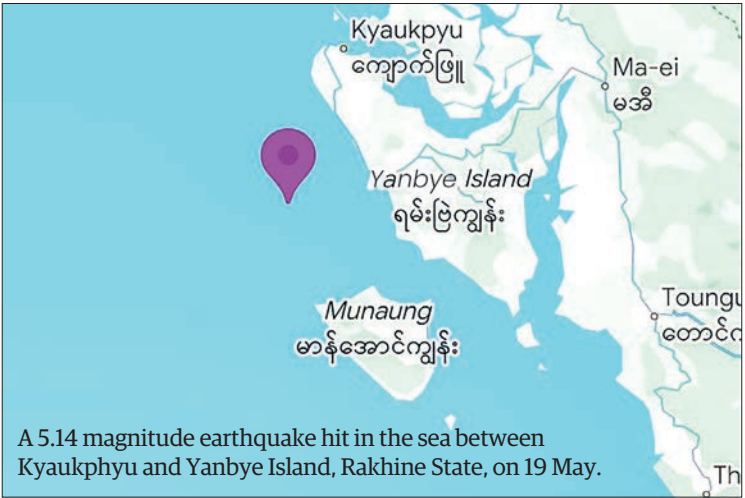
Between 30 January and 20 May 2025, authorities detained a total of 9,099 foreigners who had entered Myanmar illegally. Of these, 8,469 were deported to their home countries, while 630 are currently held in preparation for deportation.

The Myanmar government is continuing its efforts to crack down on online scams and gambling activities, working closely with neighbouring and international partners to identify and prosecute all those involved, including foreign nationals. — MNA/KZL



Immigration officials oversee the deportation of undocumented foreign entrants.

3.7-magnitude quake strikes near Tatkon on 20 May morning



A 5.14 magnitude earthquake hit in the sea between Kyaukphyu and Yanbye Island, Rakhine State, on 19 May.

A 3.7 magnitude earthquake in 10 kilometres struck about 19 miles west of Tatkon Township, Ottara Thiri District in Nay Pyi Taw Union Territory on 20 May morning, announced by the Myanmar Department of Meteorology and Hydrology.

DMH said it was the 177th recorded aftershock.

“The international geophysics departments said it was a 3.9 magnitude. Recently, the frequency of aftershocks and the force seem a little bit often and

a little bigger. So, I would like to suggest that people be alert,” said an earthquake observer.

On the same day, another aftershock of 3.10 magnitude hit near Kume in Kyaukse District, Mandalay Region. Early morning on 19 May, a 5.14 magnitude earthquake hit the sea between Kyaukphyu and Ramree Island in Rakhine State.

About 180 aftershocks hit Myanmar after the powerful quake occurred on 28 March. — Htun Htun/ZS

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NATIONAL



This photo features the Mahamuni Buddha Image adorned with its newly renovated crested headdress.

Mandalay’s Mahamuni set to reopen for devotees every Sabbath

THE Mahamuni Buddha Image, currently under renovation following the Mandalay earthquake, is scheduled to open to the public every Sabbath, according to a statement from the Image Board of Trustees.

On regular weekdays, devotees can worship at the Mahamuni Buddha Image from the entrance of the eastern archway. However, on Sabbaths, arrangements are made to allow them to enter and worship directly in front of the Mahamuni Buddha statue.

“On the Sabbath day, we were allowed to enter through the eastern archway from 8 am to 4 pm. We are grateful that arrangements have been made for us to enter from the front of the pagoda, as before,” said a local pilgrim. The bejewelled diamond orb of the pagoda, which was damaged by the earthquake, will be rededicated, while the pennant-shaped vane and golden umbrella will be renovated and enshrined for worship. — Htun Htun/TH

‘Ma Chit Thint Thaw’ cast engages fans in Yangon

A fan meeting event for the cast members and fans of the TV series ‘Ma Chit Thint Thaw’ (Not Meant to Love) was held on the afternoon of 19 May at the promotion area of the Myanmar Plaza in Yangon, according to actress Lin Zarni Zaw.

The storyline of the series was created by Mupine Hnin Hsi, with the script written by Moe Ni Lwin. It was directed by Nyan



Scenes from the fan meeting with the cast and attending artistes.

Htin and produced under the title ‘Saung Nya Pya Tho’.

Speaking at the event, actress Lin Zarni Zaw said, “To be honest, when it comes to this series’ fan meeting, I do not have that many fans myself. But I got to meet some younger fans who came to support us. I took memorable photos with them. It was very heartwarming to see them unexpectedly. I honestly did not think fans of my age group would show up. I was overjoyed and grateful for the surprise”.

‘Ma Chit Thint Thaw’ features a lineup of artistes including Aung Ye Lin, Ye Yint Thaw, Thein Hmway Than Sin, Ye Mon, Zaw Win Maung, Lin Zarni Zaw, Lin Lin (Makeup), Han Lay, Su Htet Gaday, Htet Yan Aung, Henry San, Pyae Phyo San, Sai Phone Min Thant and Aung Khant Kyaw. — ASH/KZL

MRCS grants K21.85M to 473 quake-hit households in Pinlaung

MYANMAR Red Cross Society (MRCS) provided K21.85 million to earthquake-stricken 473 households in Pinlaung Township, southern Shan State, on 17-18 May 2025, with K50,000 per household.

Women’s and men’s health and personal care items, mosquito nets, blankets, tarpaulin, clothes and kitchen utensils are also provided to each household. Mattresses for 30 elders above 65 years old and housing materials to 52 wholly damaged houses were also distributed. MRCS is exerting their efforts to reach out its a helping hand to the various regions that were battered by the earthquake. — ASH/KK



An MRCS official is seen handing over relief items to quake survivors in Pinlaung Township.

Miss Cosmo Myanmar 2025 to represent nation on global stage

MINGALARPAR Miss Myanmar Organization has announced that Myint Myat Moe has been selected to represent Myanmar at the Miss Cosmo 2025 international beauty pageant as Miss Cosmo Myanmar 2025.

Myint Myat Moe previously earned the City’s Power of the Year title at Miss Cosmo Myanmar 2025 and was the 1<sup>st</sup> Runner-Up at the Miss Grand Myanmar 2024 competition.

Speaking about her journey, Myint Myat Moe shared: “To be honest, I never really planned to enter pageants. I used to think I wouldn’t be able to do it, but my mum always told me, ‘Just give it a try – there’s no such thing as impossible.’ Even though we compete for titles, when we meet each other, we feel like one big family. We always get along well and support one another. I admire all of my seniors.

“I try to learn something from each of them. Rather than being jealous, I focus on picking out the good qualities in everyone and working to improve myself. I believe it’s important to refine my strengths and keep striving to be better. Ultimately, it’s about effort and destiny.

“I’m doing my best and am very grateful to Saya Htoo Arnt Lwin. I’m currently preparing myself by

learning from my seniors and getting ready step by step”.

A press presentation ceremony for Myint Myat Moe, Miss Cosmo Myanmar 2025, will be held during the first week of June, featuring special international guests and an exciting programme of events. — ASH/MKKS



Miss Cosmo Myanmar 2025 Myint Myat Moe.



# CBM sells US\$3M on 19 May

THE Central Bank of Myanmar (CBM) sold US\$3 million on 19 May after sales of \$300,000 and 1.6 million baht on 16 May.

CBM pumped \$138,500 and three million baht on 15 May and over 4.3 million baht on 14 May into the financial market.

CBM announced on 13 May that it would sell \$23.67 million to fuel oil traders and 50 million baht to importers. CBM sold over \$1.62 million on 13 May and over \$820,000 and 1.5 million baht on 12 May. CBM also injected over 3.6 million baht on 9 May again in the financial market after over 5.3 million baht and 723,000 yuan on 8 May, and \$710,000 on 7 May into the financial market.

CBM announced on 6 May that it would sell \$33 million and 200 million baht to those engaged in the fuel oil industry. CBM sold 397,843 yuan on that day. CBM injected over \$42 million, over 20 million baht and 500,000 yuan in April, over \$126 million, 320 million baht and 3.6 million yuan in March, over \$88 million, 7.5 million yuan and 161 million baht in February and over \$124 million, over 13.8 million baht and over 4.8 million yuan in January. CBM aims to curb the instability in the foreign exchange market and currency devaluation. According to CBM's notification on 15 March, it has been collaborating with law enforcement agencies to combat and prosecute those who attempt to manipulate the currency market under the existing laws. CBM allowed authorized dealers (private banks) to operate online foreign exchange trading freely as per the market rate, depending on supply and demand, starting from 5 December 2023. — NN/KK



The office building of the Central Bank of Myanmar in Yangon.

# Myanmar exports 30,000MT of fish worth US\$29.46M in Apr



Female workers processing seafood at a cold storage facility.

MYANMAR conveyed about 30,000 metric tonnes of fish with an estimated value of US\$29.46 million in April of the current FY (2024-2025), according to the Department of Fisheries.

Myanmar exported \$13.67 million worth of over 10,231 metric tonnes of fish by sea, while \$15.79 million valued 19,640 metric tonnes of fish were sent to neighbouring countries through land borders.

Myanmar's fish export reached over 27,250 metric tonnes in the corresponding period of the previous financial year (2023-2024), generating over \$28.553 million.

The figure showed a significant increase of over 2,620 tonnes (\$0.9 million) compared to that of the previous FY. Myanmar steadily exports seafood to 40 countries, including China, Thailand, Bangladesh and Japan through maritime and border trade channels.

More than 20 fish species, including hilsa, rohu, catfish, and seabass, are conveyed to foreign markets, according to the Myanmar Fisheries Federation.

There are over 140 cold-storage seafood processing factories in Myanmar. The Department of Fisheries processes a licence renewal yearly. — NN/KK

# MADB to disburse monsoon agri loans this year

MYANMA Agricultural Development Bank (MADB) notified that it has started to pay out monsoon agricultural loans to farmers this year.

MADB, under the Ministry of Planning and Finance, yearly provides agricultural loans to farmers across the country. Farmers have already cleared previous loans before the monsoon cultivation season.

Only when they paid off the debts could they take out new loans for the next growing season. MADB offers both short-term and long-term loans in line with rules and regulations.

Starting from 19 May, the respective bank branches have disbursed loans to those farmers who have paid debts and interest. The interest per annum is set unchanged at five per cent this year as well.

Those who want to get access to 2025 agricultural loans need to contact the MADB branches in the respective townships at the earliest. — NN/KK



Farmers diligently transplanting rice in the paddy field.



# Leverage the production of quality tea products

WHILE its origins trace back thousands of years to areas like northeast India, north Myanmar, and southwest China, tea has become a global staple. Historical records show that tea was consumed in China as early as 5,000 years ago. Nowadays, tea plays a crucial economic role, especially in developing countries. Millions of families rely on tea cultivation and processing for their livelihoods. Tea plantations on a commercial scale can be employed in remote, impoverished regions and serve as a major source of income and export revenue. It also contributes to rural development, poverty reduction, and food security, making it one of the most important cash crops in many nations.

Beyond its economic value, tea is also known for its health benefits. It contains anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties and may aid in weight management. Tea holds cultural significance in many societies, symbolizing hospitality, tradition, and wellness.

International Tea Day, observed on 21 May, celebrates tea’s cultural heritage, health benefits, and economic importance. This year’s theme highlights the vital role of women in the tea sector. The day also underscores the need for sustainable tea production “from field to cup” to ensure long-term benefits for people and the environment.

The United Nations encourages increasing tea consumption in producing countries and addressing the decline in traditional importing nations. International Tea Day promotes global action toward sustainable tea practices, raising awareness of its role in combating hunger and poverty.

In Myanmar, most of the hilly areas and the Shan plateau are the main sources to produce various finished tea products for domestic consumption as well as export. Myanmar’s green tea and salad tea are very delicious and can penetrate the international market with a better packaging system to attract not only Myanmar citizens abroad but also foreigners.

teau are the main sources to produce various finished tea products for domestic consumption as well as export. Myanmar’s green tea and salad tea are very delicious and can penetrate the international market with a better packaging system to attract not only Myanmar citizens abroad but also foreigners.

The theme for International Tea Day 2025 is “Tea for Better Lives”, according to the Food and Agriculture Organization. This theme emphasizes the cultural heritage, health benefits, and economic importance of tea, while also highlighting the need for sustainable production practices. As the tea culture occupies the heart of consumers worldwide, Myanmar needs to seek the best ways of production and packaging systems in line with the production procedures of an international level. Myanmar entrepreneurs need to emphasize the introduction of their various products made of tea to the international market to secure business achievement while supporting the Gross Domestic Product of the State with incomes from tea products.



Photos show PDF terrorists manufacturing weapons and bombs in the school.

# Consider everything logically

By Swan Pyae

AS TATMADAW (Army, Navy, and Air) has been exerting targeted pressure and launching attacks on certain bases of the NUG, PDF, and some EAOs that are destroying Myanmar, it is already evident that there will be retaliation and false accusations from the supporters of these terrorist groups. Such things are no longer unusual in Myanmar politics.

When insurgents get hurt, this is how they speak, react, and put on dramatic, manipulative performances with wicked ways. The truth has yet to be known, but the lies have already spread far and wide, both domestically and internationally. This is the skillful work of professional saboteurs. No matter how it happened, innocent schoolchildren have lost their lives under the ruthless and heartless actions of a deceitful group of traitors who aim to destroy the nation.

**Taking a human shield with beseeching**

This is about a village called Ohtainkwin in Dabayin Township, Sagaing Region. Those terrorists accused Tatmadaw (Air) of bombing a school where classes were being held, resulting in the deaths of students. Now, whether the incident is logical or natural, whether it is justifiable or not, should we analyze it critically before forming an opinion? However, you try to think about it, it’s impossible to make sense of it. This is not a matter of blind denial. It’s just that this is the Myanmar Tatmadaw. Tatmadaw is structured with rules and codes of conduct, and

it is a military that is recognized internationally, and it always pays attention to the needs of the people. It is Tatmadaw that protects the people. Because Tatmadaw fears harming civilians, and because it fears civilians being caught in the crossfire, it always acts with caution and consideration. That’s why, when encountering today’s destructive forces, Tatmadaw has to face many extremely difficult situations, and in some areas, it is not able to be as effective as it should be.

In places where there are students, religious and cultural heritage sites like pagodas and monasteries, extra caution is needed. Therefore, destroyers with malicious intent often set up camps specifically at schools, pagodas, and monasteries. They forcefully equip school-aged boys and girls with arms. They train them how to shoot small arms and how to make bombs so that they can kill people.

There is plenty of photographic evidence for this kind of information. In a way, it’s just emotional manipulation – using human shields and pretending to be victims to avoid casualties. Tatmadaw deliberately refrains from operating in such areas to avoid risks to itself. If any harm does occur due to military action, they use it to spread news internationally, portraying it as Tatmadaw indiscriminately attacking civilians, thereby setting traps through misinformation. Thus, Tatmadaw has repeatedly urged civilians to stay away from the terrorists and not to stay near them.

## Just a scenario out of many scenarios

In reality, this deception story is just one of the fabricated tales deliberately created by the NUG and PDF. There was even a firsthand account from a villager, who used to support the NUG and was present during the events and openly said, ‘If they want to kill me for speaking the truth, so be it.’ According to his statement, the PDF had been stationed at that school for a long time. The school had become a place where bombs to be installed at drones were being produced.

That day, there was a school photo session, so students and their parents were invited to the school. Since it was a place where explosive devices were being made, parents naturally didn’t want to send their children there. However, the children and their parents were not so lucky. The bombs exploded with a loud blast, killing and injuring a total of 22 people — 20 children and two teachers. A resident disclosed, “It wasn’t an airstrike. The explosion occurred because PDFs were carelessly making homemade landmines and bombs, which led to the detonation. If it had been an airstrike, the victims would have been severely mutilated, and the school would have suffered even more damage. Everyone in the village knows it was because of the PDFs. You’re welcome to come and investigate. The PDFs have threatened to kill anyone who speaks out, which is why no one dares to say anything.”

## Assess and evaluate such an incident logically

Why, and based on what principles, can we say that the accusations made by the NUG, PDF, and their supporters are incorrect and false? Why does the government have a solid foundation and credibility for its official denials? How inaccurate and unreliable are the one-sided accusations and information from them? Let’s compare and think about it carefully.. The truth is, this period is not the time for schools to open; it is the intense summer vacation period. So why are schools open now? Even if someone says it’s because it’s the NUG government which wants to open schools whenever it wants, how can we trust that they are opening schools at such a time and under such circumstances and directives when the NUG does not encourage education? The reason why it’s said that the NUG does not support education is because of the incidents where the NUG killed teachers and destroyed schools.

Another point is that the Myanmar Tatmadaw (Air) bombs they talk about as the 500 pounds (lb) and 1,000 pounds (lb) bombs are extremely powerful bombs. If they had exploded, such a wooden school building would have been destroyed for sure. According to ground reports, currently, there is no damage to the building walls; only some cracks on the ceiling and some peeling of corrugated iron sheets are seen, but no major destruction. There are no large holes or fire marks caused by explosions, and no dead bodies, like bits of shrapnel or other broken items, are found. Other furnishings are also undamaged. Furthermore, as the NUG said, there are no large craters caused by bombs either. So, the bombs that exploded were not the originally mentioned 500 lb or 1,000 lb bombs; instead, they turned out to be cluster bombs, causing scattered small explosions.

PanOrient News which was issued on 17 May 2025 quoted a retired military ordinance and explosives expert saying that the standard airforce bombs weigh 500 lbs or 1,000 lbs and would have obliterated the small woodframed school building, most of which remains standing. No bomb crater was found at the site. Moreover, it clearly stated the doubt of the expert that this possibility as a standard cluster bomb would break up in mid-air and send over 200 bomblets over a wider area of up to 7 acres.

According to experts, cluster bombs can break apart into many smaller bombs while still in the air before hitting the target. From the original large bomb, fragments can scatter up to around seven acres, with about 200 bomblets spreading out. These bombs are the type that can repeatedly cause serious harm to human lives. Because these kinds of bombs can keep fragmenting even after breaking apart, caution is necessary. Cluster bombs don’t just affect a single spot on the ground where they land – they can spread over many

areas. There can be many pieces of dead bodies, and lots of damage can be found. For these reasons, cluster bombs may or may not be possible, but since there is no solid evidence, and because even 500 lb or 1000 lb bombs have been denied by the sources themselves, it’s unlikely...

Let’s assess more conflicting points. The backpacks and books of the children

who were hit by the bomb did not get torn or blown away by the blast—why are they still intact and perfectly in place? The deception tactics are not consistent, lack certainty, and seem suspicious. When the photos sent by NUG were checked with an AI detector, it was also found that the accuracy percentage was completely off.

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PanOrient News

May 17, 2025, 6:23 pm-Tokyo

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**Myanmar government refutes story of school bombing**

Saturday, May 17, 2025



PanOrient News: YANGON: Myanmar's government has refuted stories that one of its aircraft bombed a school at O Hten Twin village school in Sagaing Region.

Media reports claim that 22 people – 20 children and two teachers – died in the information reported is inconsistent and inaccurate.



Initially, the reports said that the school was hit with a bomb from a Myanmar fighter aircraft, but a retired military ordinance and explosives expert told PanOrient News that the standard airforce bombs weigh 500lbs or 1000lbs and would have obliterated the small wood-framed school building, most of which remains standing. No bomb crater was found at the site.

The National Unity Government then changed the story to say that the munition used was a cluster bomb that came in through the ceiling while a class was in session. The expert also doubt this possibility as a standard cluster bomb would break up in mid-air and send over 200 bomblets over a wide area of up to 7 acres.



Myanmar's government says members of the rebel People's Defense Force were teaching some of the local students how to make improvised explosive devices when an accident occurred.

They also point out that it is the summer holiday season for schools, so no normal classes were taking place. The government says media people in Mae Sot know what really happened there but are out to blame the Myanmar government. The purpose of false reports, say the government, is to try and stop the supply of jet fuel to Myanmar.

A photo of children's bags outside the "bombed out" school are said to be those of the victims, but they seem unusually clean for a supposed bombing.

One of the photos supplied by the National Unity Government was evaluated as 100 percent fake by an online AI image checker. Another of the photos supposedly of a dead boy shows him with his eyes open and his body turned, as if he is awake. The bags in another photo are said to belong to the children, so why haven't they been returned to the children or their parents. For bags that have reportedly been in a bomb attack, they are surprisingly clean and intact. (Photos: Supplied)

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Videos

Social Distance in a Rush

Pope Francis, Abe Talk

Kosovo Japan Summit

A Hong Konger Seeks Independence

Japan: Get Nukes

Photos

'Free Palestine'

Chomping Down on Bad Habits

Halaween Girl, Egyptian Style

Japan-USA Transportation Diplomacy

Arab Japan Friendship Continues

PanOrient News mentions a news story with the title of Myanmar government refutes story of school bombing on 17 May 2025.



# Consider everything logically



Photo shows damaged parts of the blast at the school in Ohtainkwin Village in Dabayin Township.

## FROM PAGE 9

Because of this, now organizations like OHCHR and UNICEF Myanmar remain silent. When looking at the photos of those who have died, some pictures show their eyes open, as if they are not dead but just waking up. The photos with captions and texts that are circulated repeatedly are also edited several times. When they talk about the events, they do it live, and you can also watch the person speaking. For

example, there is a former Assistant Lecturer from Kalay Government Technological College named Daw Yati Ohn, who has been part of the Civil Disobedience Movement (CDM) since 2021. Sometimes she carries a gun, fights on the front lines, and does humanitarian work. Whenever Tatmadaw drops bombs by plane in places like Sagaing and Chin, she immediately arrives at the scene, filming videos with emotional cries, and she is someone who can spread propaganda.

What I want to analyze is that, in the case of Myanmar, some issues are not simple, and the idea that there can never be a coincidence is simply not true. Recently, in the central and southern regions of the country, the NUG, PDF, and EAOs have been launching multi-front offensives. Meanwhile, in the northeastern and northern regions, due to military successes by the Tatmadaw against terrorists, it seems that the NUG is providing support to the weakening side — that's also part of the picture. Because of this situation, it appears that pressure is being applied on the Tatmadaw from multiple fronts. I also see that this is being used to uplift the morale of PDFs who had been returning to the legal fold due to a gradual loss of motivation and less hope. Through these justifications, they are trying to gain international sympathy — essentially crying in front of the world — and using that to raise international funds and donations.

As long as the terrorists continue to treat every place they exist as a human shield, no matter how cautiously Tatmadaw issues repeated warnings to avoid harm, they and their accomplices will keep fabricating such orchestrated incidents and deceptive stories stemming from their actions. In this latest fabricated story, what the saboteurs failed to notice is that they keep reusing the same simple tactics over and over again. As a result, public trust and acceptance of them have continued to decline.

Whatever the case may be, what I want to say to the terrorists and their supporters is this: Please put aside your egos so that we don't have to witness more heartbreaking incidents like this. For those who have truly lost their lives, please reveal only the genuine truth. Also, they have to show a bit of thoughtful reasoning when considering right and wrong, cause and effect. They have to stop justifying wrong values, misguided policies and goals, wrong methods, and unethical practices. This is all I can urge.

*Translated.*

# Huawei launches PCs running self-developed operating system

CHINESE tech giant Huawei on Monday unveiled two laptops powered by HarmonyOS, marking the debut of its self-developed operating system on personal computers (PCs). The launch of the Huawei MateBook Pro and MateBook Fold Ultimate Design signals the company's push to expand HarmonyOS beyond smartphones and tablets into a PC market long led by Microsoft's Windows and Apple's macOS. At the launch event in Chengdu, capital of southwest

China's Sichuan Province, Huawei's executive director Yu Chengdong said that the HarmonyOS-powered computers integrated software, hardware, devices, and cloud services to fundamentally reshape the PC experience. Huawei said HarmonyOS was the first Chinese operating system to unify mobile and desktop ecosystems, allowing developers to use a single toolset for deployment across devices, cutting technical barriers and development costs.

HarmonyOS, or Hongmeng in Chinese, is an open-source operating system designed for various devices and scenarios. Originally launched in 2019, it has since been applied across smartphones, tablets, wearables, smart home appliances, and new energy vehicles. Analysts said Chinese companies had launched domestic computer operating systems before, but those were mostly derivative works built on the open-source Linux kernel, lacking a truly independent technol-



This photo shows the HarmonyOS-powered Huawei MateBook Pro. Chinese tech giant Huawei on Monday unveiled two laptops powered by HarmonyOS, marking the debut of its self-developed operating system on personal computers (PCs). The launch of the Huawei MateBook Pro and MateBook Fold Ultimate Design signals the company's push to expand HarmonyOS beyond smartphones and tablets into a PC market long led by Microsoft's Windows and Apple's macOS. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

ogy system. The development and launch of HarmonyOS PCs took five years and involved over 10,000 research and development (R&D) personnel, with more than 2,700 patents filed, according to Huawei. — Xinhua



WORLD

Digital innovation reshapes heritage frontier for Chinese museums

DIGITAL innovation, spanning immersive exhibitions, artefact restoration and preventive conservation, is reinvigorating China's museums and transforming historical treasures into interactive storytellers.

At the foothills of the Helan Mountains in northwest China's Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, the Xixia imperial mausoleums complex and its accompanying museum captivate travellers exploring the mysterious Tangut (Dangxiang) culture.

The ethnic group thrived in parts of northwest China between the 11<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries, controlling key trade routes.

Preserved in a vitrine, a green-glazed Kalavinka statue, a Buddhist mythological hybrid blending human facial features with a bird body, conceals intricate carvings along its plinth.

Upon pressing the cabinet's interactive button, a magnified 3D hologram replicates every detail with vivid textual explanations of the treasure.

Visitors can manipulate the digital twin with gesture controls, rotating the virtual artifact to ex-



An aerial drone photo taken on 10 October 2024 shows a Xixia imperial tomb at the foot of Helan Mountain, northwest China's Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region. PHOTO: XINHUA

amine its craftsmanship from all angles and zooming in for a closer look.

"Through this device, I can magnify the details of cultural relics to see their intricate decorative patterns. It's marvelous," said a visitor from east China's Hangzhou who only gave her surname, Zhu.

The smart cultural relic

display cabinet, utilizing OLED screen systems, transforms static artifacts into interactive 3D holographic projections to create immersive viewing experiences, said Shi Peiyi, curator of the mausoleum museum.

"By revolutionizing static displays through digital innovation, we create interactive storytelling that empowers visitors

to decode the history embedded within relics," Shi said.

China's cultural digitization agenda gained momentum in 2021 when the central government unveiled a plan to advance the preservation of cultural relics and related technological innovation during the 14<sup>th</sup> Five-Year Plan period (2021-2025).

The policy document has

driven transformative advancements. At the Sanxingdui Ruins, a Bronze Age marvel in southwest China's Sichuan Province, digital technologies have revolutionized cultural relic restoration.

Among countless unearthed fragments, AI has assisted archaeologists in identifying compatible segments for restoration. A striking example of technological achievement is a bronze statue depicting a kneeling figure atop a beast, crowned with a ceremonial vessel.

By scanning fragments to create 3D models, archaeologists employed AI to analyze geometric patterns, calculate alignment probabilities and simulate structural stability.

Through this approach, researchers collected fragments from separate excavation sites to reconstruct this sculpture.

The digital revitalization of the Ya'er Lake Grottoes, a part of the Jiaohe Ruins along the ancient Silk Road in Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, further exemplifies China's efforts to preserve and display cultural relics. — Xinhua

Japanese agent injured by falling tree at Cannes Film Festival: media

THE agent for an actor in the Japanese film "Brand New Landscape" has been injured by a falling palm tree at the crowded main street in Cannes where an international film festival is under way, according to Reuters.

The man in his 30s damaged his vertebrae and nose when the three-metre tree fell onto the sidewalk of Croisette Boulevard on Saturday afternoon, the news agency said, citing local authorities and festival organizers.

"Brand New Landscape," directed by Yuiga Danzuka, is part of the lineup of Directors' Fortnight, an independent parallel section of the Cannes Film Festival. The festival runs through 24 May.

The exact cause of the accident, which occurred near the festival venue, is yet to be determined. But local media have said the tree could have been weakened by termites. — Kyodo

Russian ballet patriarch Yuri Grigorovich dies at 98

LEGENDARY Russian ballet figure Yuri Grigorovich, who was for three decades the lead choreographer at Moscow's famed Bolshoi Theatre, has died aged 98.

Born in the Soviet city of Leningrad to a ballet family, Grigorovich's career — as a dancer then choreographer — spanned 80 years.

For much of it, he was the artistic powerhouse behind the Bolshoi, which he was said to have run with an iron fist.

"Yuri Grigorovich, one of the key figures in the world of ballet in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, has died," the Bolshoi said on social media.

"An entire era has come to an end," Saint Petersburg's Mariinsky Theatre, where he started his career, posted online.

Grigorovich made his name staging classics such as The Nutcracker, Swan Lake and The Stone Flower. The latter was his most famous piece, based on the composer Sergei Prokofiev's music.

"He was able to see in artists what we ourselves did not notice. He helped us unleash (ourselves) on stage, making



(FILES) Picture taken on 4 April 2003 shows legendary Russian ballerina Natalia Bessmertnova (L) during a rehearsal at the Bolshoi theatre with her husband famous choreographer Yuri Grigorovich in Moscow. Famous Soviet and Russian choreographer Yuri Grigorovich passed away at the age of 98, local media report. PHOTO: AFP

us feel and experience every moment," Bolshoi's principal dancer Denis Rodkin told the TASS state news agency.

Grigorovich was also the choreographer for performances at Moscow's 1980 summer Olympics opening ceremony and presided over various ballet competitions, including the French Benois de la Danse, known as the "ballet Oscars".

In 1995, the ballet patriarch had to part ways with the Bolshoi over allegations the theatre had become artistically stagnant during the last decade of his 30-year tenure. — AFP



ECONOMY

WORLD/AD

Economists warn recession risks for US economy

ECONOMISTS have warned of recession risks for the US economy amid rising government debts, a dim growth prospect and weak consumer sentiment.

JPMorgan’s chief US economist Michael Feroli said, “We believe recession risks are still elevated, but now below 50 per cent,” down from a previous estimate of 60 per cent on US sweeping tariff measures announced in early April.

JPMorgan Chase CEO Jamie Dimon said he wouldn’t take the risk of recession “off the table.”

“Hopefully we’ll avoid it, but I wouldn’t take it off the table at this point,” he said in an interview with Bloomberg last week. “If there is a recession, I don’t know how big it would be or how long it would last.”

US billionaire investor Steve Cohen said at an investment conference in New York on Wednesday that “We aren’t in a recession yet, but we have significant slowing growth,” adding the chance of a US recession now stands at about 45 per cent.

Moody’s on Friday stripped the United States’ top-notch ratings, citing rising government debt and interest payments. “Successive US administrations and Congress



This photo taken with a mobile phone on 7 February 2025 shows a customer shopping for eggs at a Walmart in El Monte, Los Angeles County, California, the United States. PHOTO: XINHUA

have failed to agree on measures to reverse the trend of large annual fis-

cal deficits and growing interest costs,” it said. — Xinhua

Indonesia targets 5.2-5.8% economic growth in 2026

THE Indonesian government has set an economic growth target of 5.2 to 5.8 per cent for next year, according to Finance Minister Sri Mulyani Indrawati on Tuesday. “This growth rate is a strong foundation for reaching up to eight per cent in the next few years, supporting the achievement of the Advanced Indonesia 2045 vision,” Indrawati said during her presentation of the 2026 Macroeconomic Framework and Fiscal Policy Guidelines at a House of Representatives plenary session.

Inflation is expected to remain within the range of 2.5±1 per cent, with an exchange rate target of 16,500-16,900 rupiah per US dollar and 10-year government bond yields projected at 6.6-7.2 per cent.

Additionally, the government aims for oil lifting at 600,000-605,000 barrels per day and gas lifting at 953,000-1,017,000 barrels of oil equivalent per day, supported by investment and technology. — Xinhua

Singapore’s domestic wholesale sales fall 7.2% in Q1

SINGAPORE’S domestic wholesale sales fell 7.2 per cent year-on-year in the first quarter of 2025, according to data released Tuesday by the Department of Statistics.

Excluding petroleum, domestic wholesale sales declined by 7.8 per cent.

On a quarter-on-quarter basis, seasonally adjusted domestic whole-

sale sales fell 5.3 per cent. Excluding petroleum, the drop was sharper at 7.3 per cent.

Most wholesale trade industries recorded year-on-year declines in domestic sales. Sales in the chemicals and chemical products sector fell 36.7 per cent, mainly due to reduced demand for petrochemical products. — Xinhua

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V SITC HAKATA VOY.NO. (2516S)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V SITC HAKATA VOY.NO. (2516S)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **21-5-2025** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MITT** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department  
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S SITC CONTAINER LINE CO., LTD

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

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

Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department  
Myanma Port Authority

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Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V MSC SUPARNA F VOY.NO. (SB519A)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **21-5-2025** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **AWPT** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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ing up to 40% (averaging 10-20%) across a wide range of functional household goods. This includes durable kitchenware, effective



ROLLING UPDATES  
WORLD

WHO adopts landmark  
pandemic agreement



World Health Organization (WHO) Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus is seen on a screen delivering his report before delegates during the World Health Assembly in Geneva on 19 May 2025. **PHOTO: AFP**

THE UN health agency on Tuesday adopted a landmark Pandemic Agreement on tackling future health crises, struck after more than three years of negotiations sparked by the COVID-19 crisis. The accord aims to prevent the disjointed response and international disarray that surrounded the COVID-19 pandemic, by improving global coordination and surveillance, and access to vaccines, in any future pandemics.

The World Health Organization’s decision-making annual assembly adopted the plan on Tuesday at its Geneva headquarters.

“It’s an historic day,” WHO chief

Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus told AFP after the vote.

The text of the agreement was finalized by consensus last month, following multiple rounds of tense negotiations. The United States pulled out of those talks, following US President Donald Trump’s decision to withdraw his country from the WHO, a process that takes one year to complete.

“The world is safer today thanks to the leadership, collaboration and commitment of our member states to adopt the historic WHO Pandemic Agreement,” Tedros said in a statement. “The agreement is a victory for public health, science and multilater-

al action. It will ensure we, collectively, can better protect the world from future pandemic threats.

“It is also a recognition by the international community that our citizens, societies and economies must not be left vulnerable to again suffer losses like those endured during COVID-19.”

Path to ratification

The agreement aims to better detect and combat pandemics by focusing on greater international coordination and surveillance, and more equitable access to vaccines and treatments. — AFP

NEWS IN BRIEF

Iran’s leader warns US against making “nonsensical” remarks on Tehran’s uranium enrichment

IRAN’S Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei on Tuesday warned the United States against making “nonsensical” remarks regarding Tehran’s uranium enrichment during the ongoing indirect nuclear talks between the two countries.

He made the remarks at a ceremony in Tehran to commemorate the first anniversary of former Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi’s death, who died in a helicopter crash on 19 May 2024, according to footage of Khamenei’s speech published on his website.

Khamenei said, “I should give a warning to the other side. The American side that has entered the indirect talks and is negotiating should refrain from idle remarks.”

“For them to say that ‘we do not allow Iran to enrich uranium’ is a big mistake,” he added. “No one (in Iran) is waiting for permission from anyone. Iran has its independent policy and method and pursues its own agenda.” — Xinhua

Singapore reports 151 new HIV cases in 2024, over half diagnosed at late stage

SINGAPORE reported 151 new human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) cases in 2024, with 78 of them diagnosed at a late stage of infection, according to the latest data released by the Communicable Diseases Agency (CDA) on Monday.

About 62 per cent of the newly reported cases were detected during the course of medical care, with the majority already in the late stage of HIV infection.

The fact that more than half of the new cases were diagnosed late is a cause for concern, Wong Chen Seong, head of the national programmes for HIV, hepatitis C, and sexually transmitted infections under the CDA, told local media. He said that although both early- and late-stage patients can typically suppress the HIV viral load to undetectable levels after three to six months of treatment, those diagnosed at a late stage often already suffer from serious complications due to weakened immune systems. — Xinhua

UN ok’d to send ‘around 100’ aid trucks into Gaza: spokesman

THE United Nations said on Tuesday it has received permission to send some 100 trucks of aid into the war-shattered Gaza Strip, as humanitarian assistance trickled back into the territory. “We have requested and received approval of more trucks to enter today, many more than were approved yesterday,” Jens Laerke, spokesman for UN

Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), told reporters in Geneva, adding that the number was “around 100”.

“We expect, of course, with that approval, many of them, hopefully all of them, to cross today to a point where they can be picked up and get further into the Gaza Strip for distribution,” he said.

Aid trickled into the Gaza Strip on Monday for the first time in more than two months, following widespread condemnation of Israel’s total blockade, which has sparked severe shortages of food and medicine.

Israel has intensified a military offensive in Gaza, which it says is aimed at crushing Hamas. — AFP



Trucks carrying aid wait to enter the Gaza Strip from the Israeli Kerem Shalom crossing, on 20 May 2025, amid the ongoing war with the Palestinian militant movement Hamas. Israel announced it would let limited aid into Gaza and said the first five trucks entered on 19 May carrying supplies “including food for babies”. **PHOTO: AFP**



SPORTS

Mitoma scores  
10<sup>th</sup> league goal  
as Brighton  
down Liverpool

KAORU Mitoma became the first Japanese player to score 10 goals in an English Premier League season as he helped Brighton come from behind to beat champions Liverpool 3-2 at home on Monday.

Introduced in 65 minutes with Brighton trailing 2-1, Mitoma got them level within four minutes at Amex Stadium by stylishly burying the ball on the bounce with his left foot after Liverpool keeper Alisson denied Danny Welbeck's initial effort.

Japan captain Wataru Endo came on for Liverpool in 77 minutes at right back looking to contain his countryman, but a scintillating Mitoma played a part in 85<sup>th</sup>-minute winner as Matt O'Riley, released down the left by Mitoma, sent in a cross for fellow substitute Jack Hinshelwood to slot home.



Brighton's Kaoru Mitoma scores during the second half of a Premier League football match against Liverpool on 19 May 2025, in Brighton, England. **PHOTO: KYODO**

"It was our last home game (of the season) and we needed a win," Mitoma said a day before his 28<sup>th</sup> birthday. "I was aiming higher (in terms of the number of goals). This is a minimum."

Harvey Elliott tapped home the ninth-minute opener for Liverpool and Yasin Ayari completed a fine Brighton attack to draw them level in 32 minutes. Dominik Szoboszlai restored the visitor's advantage in first-half stoppage time when his cross from the right side of the box went straight into the far corner.

Mitoma is the fourth Japanese player to reach double figures in terms of goals in the top European leagues this season, after Reims' Keito Nakamura bagged 11 in the French Ligue 1, Holstein Kiel's Shuto Machino netted as many in the Bundesliga and Freiburg's Ritsu Doan also had 10 in Germany. — Kyodo

Myanmar women's team to compete in  
2025 ASEAN Championship

MYANMAR U-19 women's football team will take part in the 2025 ASEAN U-19 Women's Championship, which will be held in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, from 9 to 18 June, with a total of eight teams participating.

According to a lot-drawing event held on 9 May, Myanmar is placed in Group A alongside host Vietnam, Laos and Timor-Leste, while Group B includes defending champions Thailand, Indonesia, Cambodia and Malaysia.

This marks the fourth edition of the tournament, following previous editions in 2014, 2022 and 2023. Team Myanmar, coached by Daw Thet Thet Win, began training on 8 May in preparation for the championship. After the ASEAN tour-

nament, the team is also scheduled to compete in the AFC U-20 Women's Asian Cup qualifiers.

In the past three tournaments, Thailand has won the title twice, while Australia has won once. Myanmar reached the semifinal stage in all three editions and has claimed third place twice and fourth place once. — Ko Nyi Lay/KZL



Myanmar reached the semifinal stage in all three editions and has claimed third place twice and fourth place once.

Europa League final between Man Utd and  
Hotspur in Bilbao more than just football

THE Premier League will be transported to the Basque region of northern Spain on Wednesday when Manchester United face Tottenham Hotspur in the Europa

League final in Athletic Club Bilbao's impressive San Mames Stadium.

The match offers the winner the chance to qualify for next season's Cham-

pions League and to salvage something from what has been a dreadful domestic season for both teams.

Manchester United are 16<sup>th</sup> in the Premier League, with 10 wins and 18 defeats in the club's worst ever season since the competition began in 1988. The season saw Erik ten Hag sacked at the end of October with Ruben Amorim brought in to turn things around.

Amorim has failed to do that in the Premier League, but his side has progressed unbeaten to the final, beating hosts Athletic Club Bilbao in the semifinal after several controversial refereeing decisions all went its way.

Tottenham's campaign has been even worse, with speculation that coach Ange Postecoglou will leave in the summer even if his team lifts the trophy.

Spurs are 17<sup>th</sup> in the table with 21 defeats from 37 games, and although 63 goals scored points to a laudable commitment to attack, the 61 goals conceded also highlights chaotic defending. — Xinhua



Manchester United's Portuguese head coach Ruben Amorim looks on during a press conference at Old Trafford in Manchester, north-west England on 14 May 2025 during a media day ahead of their UEFA Europa League final against Tottenham Hotspur. The UEFA Europa League final will take place on 21 May in Bilbao. **PHOTO: AFP**





Vietnam's health  
ministry urges  
hospitals to prepare  
for potential  
COVID-19 rise

THE Vietnamese Ministry of Health has instructed hospitals across the country to prepare necessary facilities, isolation areas and medical supplies to accommodate COVID-19 patients in the event of a surge in cases, the Vietnam News Agency reported on Tuesday.

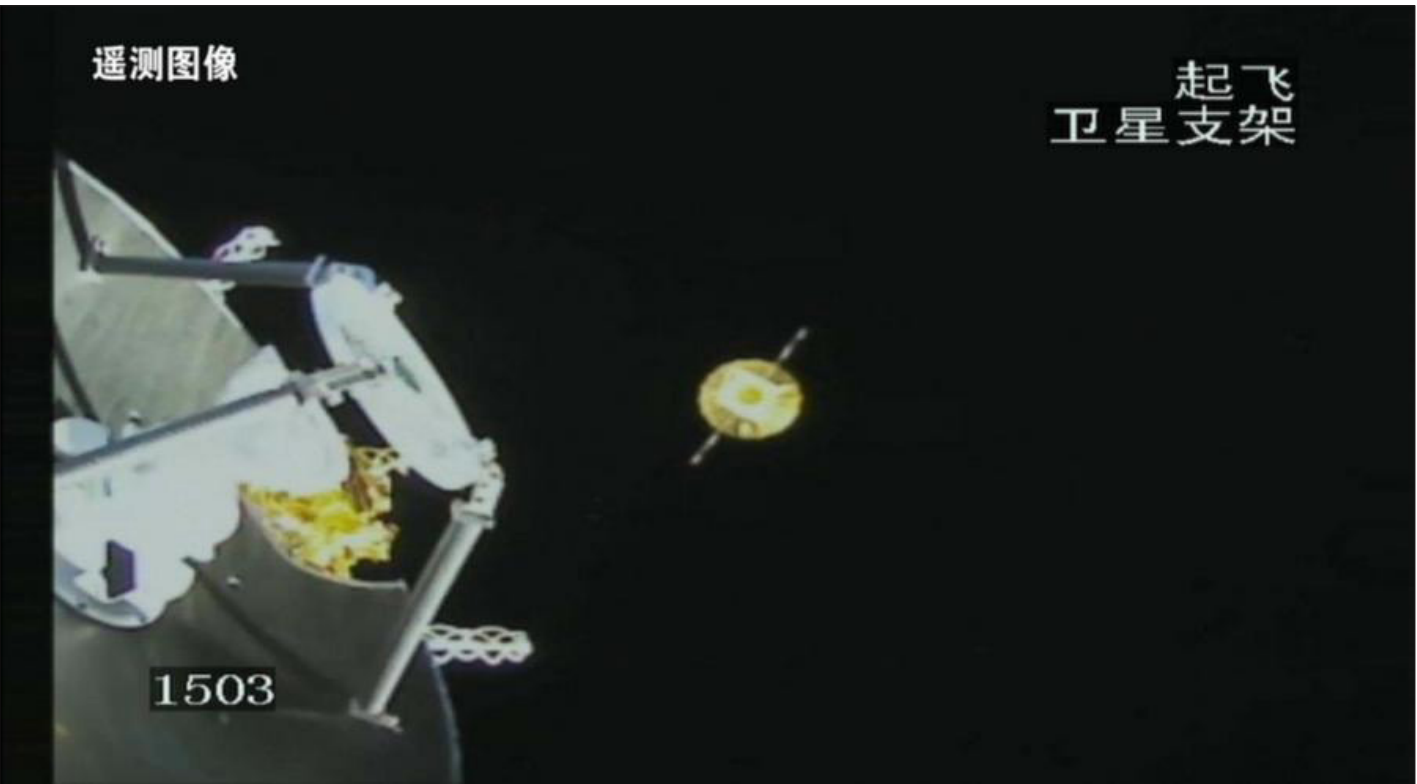
Healthcare facilities have been directed to strengthen infection prevention measures, particularly those targeting respiratory transmission, to minimize the risk of disease spread within medical examination and treatment areas. The ministry also emphasized the need to implement measures to protect high-risk groups, including pregnant women, patients with underlying health conditions, those with severe illnesses and the elderly. — Xinhua

Putin calls Malaysia  
'reliable, significant'  
partner of Russia

RUSSIAN President Vladimir Putin at a meeting with Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim in Moscow on Wednesday called Malaysia a reliable and important partner for Russia. The Malaysian prime minister arrived in Moscow for an official visit on Tuesday.

Economic ties between Russia and Malaysia are stable, the Russian president said, adding that although bilateral trade decreased only insignificantly last year, it remains good. — SPUTNIK

China's relay satellite  
operating smoothly, ready to  
support global lunar missions



This photo taken by satellite bracket camera of Long March-8 carrier rocket on 20 March 2024 shows the Queqiao-2 relay satellite (C) successfully separating from the carrier rocket with its solar wing and antenna successfully unfolded.  
PHOTO: CHINA NATIONAL SPACE ADMINISTRATION/HANDOUT VIA XINHUA

QUEQIAO-2, China's relay satellite for its lunar landing missions, is set to support future moon exploration endeavours by other countries, according to the country's Deep Space Exploration Lab.

The satellite, which supported Earth-moon communications for China's Chang'e-6 mission that has retrieved samples from the moon's far side, will provide relay services for lunar missions from China and other countries, the lab said on Monday.

Launched in March last year, Queqiao-2, also known as Magpie Bridge 2, is equipped with three scientific payloads — an extreme ultraviolet camera, a two-dimensional-coded energetic neutral atom-imager and an Earth-moon very long baseline interferometry (VLBI) experiment system.

The satellite has been stably operating in orbit for 14 months, performing scientific tasks including large-scale imaging of Earth's plasma and magnetosphere layers, and VLBI experiments in the

Earth-Moon system, according to the lab.

The satellite's extreme ultraviolet camera captured the first global 83.4-nanometre ionosphere image, providing crucial data for studying the impact of solar activity on the plasmasphere.

The satellite's VLBI experiment system, in coordination with the Shanghai 65-metre Radio Telescope, extended the observation baseline to 380,000 kilometres and successfully observed deep-space targets like radio source A00235 and the Chang'e-6 orbiter. — Xinhua



Trump says call with Putin went 'very well'

US President Donald Trump said Monday that his call with Russian President Vladimir Putin earlier in the day went "very well" and that the tone and the spirit of the conversation were "excellent".

"Just completed my two hour call with President Vladimir Putin of Russia. I believe it went very well...The tone and spirit of the conversation were excellent.

If it wasn't, I would say so now, rather than later," Trump wrote in a post on Truth Social.

Trump indicated that he had briefed Volodymyr Zelenskyy and European leaders including Ursula von der Leyen, France's Macron, Italy's Meloni, Germany's Merz, Finland's Stubb on the call and about the start of immediate talks. — SPUTNIK

(COMBO) This combination of pictures created on 19 May 2025 shows President Donald Trump (L) on the phone on 28 January 2017 in Washington, and Russia's President Vladimir Putin (R) on the phone in Moscow on 27 December 2023. PHOTO: DREW ANGERER AND GAVRIIL GRIGOROV / VARIOUS SOURCES / AFP