

Four Objectives of the National Defence and Security Council

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

Pangpet Steel Mill eyes 200,000 tonnes of pig iron in 2026–27 FY

The mill is currently cooperating with a Russian company to manage the remaining three sub-workshops, and once all workshops are fully operational, simultaneous production of 200,000 tonnes of pig iron will commence.

The No 2 Steel Mill (Pangpet) in Taunggyi Township, Shan State (South), is making efforts to manufacture 200,000 tonnes of pig iron in the 2026-2027 financial year. Under the Steel Mill (Pangpet) project, 200,000 tonnes of pig iron are expected to be produced within one year. Nineteen out of 22 sub-workshops have operated on a trial run. The mill is currently working with a Russian company to manage the remaining three sub-workshops. Once all the workshops are in full swing, production of 200,000 tonnes of pig iron will be simultaneously underway.

“Pig iron production has been on the trial run at 19 workshops, in cooperation with Russia’s TPE Company Limited. The three workshops, oxygen production plant, Romelt smelting furnace and waste-heat power plant are yet to be completed. Once they are completed, pig iron will be produced. The capacity is 200,000 tonnes per year as per the original design. The two types of iron ore can be sourced near the mill, with reserves of 70 million tonnes. Limestone is also available in the village near the mill. Dolomite can also be sourced from



Officials are seen inspecting the No 2 Steel Mill (Pangpet) in Taunggyi Township, Shan State (South).

a place in Hopong Township about six miles away from the mill. The mill will call for tender to procure sand from the Pynnyaung area and coal from the Keshi area. The No 1 Mining Enterprise under the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation have sought a permit to explore raw material sites,” said an official of the project. That pig iron can be used in iron smelting operations in the No 1 Steel Mill in Myingyan. — ASH/ KK



NATIONAL PAGE 7

More Mon State farmers turn to salt as early-season prices surge



BUSINESS PAGE 10

Fuel oil reference prices continue to decline

ARTICLE

The Youth Peace Forum: Why Myanmar’s Youth Hold the Key to a New Beginning

By Zaw Oo

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# NATIONAL

Myanmar Gazette

Appointment and Duty Assignment of Permanent Secretary and Director-General

THE National Defence and Security Council has appointed and assigned U Maung Maung Than, Director-General of the Union Minister’s Office of the Ministry of Labour, to the duties of the Permanent Secretary and Director-General.

- Let us encourage production for prosperity of the Nation.
- Let us ensure education sector for the development of the Nation.
- Let us protect our environment for the prosperity of the Nation.

Notification 1/2026

CONTINUED FROM YESTERDAY

26. Bhaddanta Theravamsa, KyunU Monastery, KyunU Model Village, Pyinmana Township, Nay Pyi Taw
27. Bhaddanta Obhasa, Sasana Waiponla Monastery, Kyathay-aing Village, Tatkon Township, Nay Pyi Taw
28. Bhaddanta Candasiri, Zaygon Monastery, Kyitaungkan Ward 1, Pobbathiri Township, Nay Pyi Taw
29. Bhaddanta Revata, Masoeyein Monastery, Shwechi Ward, Pyinmana Township, Nay Pyi Taw
30. Bhaddanta Theravamsa, Thiri Mingala Moekaung Monastery, Shwekonpaw Village, Tatkon Township, Nay Pyi Taw
31. Bhaddanta Vicara, Sasana Mandaing Monastery, Gatchaing Village, Tatkon Township, Nay Pyi Taw
32. Bhaddanta Dhammapala, Monastic Education School, Shwemyogyi Gainghtaik Monastery, Shwemyogyi Village, Tatkon Township, Nay Pyi Taw
33. Bhaddanta Kumara, East Aungdhamma Yeiktha Monastery, Ayemon Village, Kawa Township, Bago Region
34. Bhaddanta Vannasara, Khemanandayon Tawya Monastery, South Tagondaing Village, Shwegyin Township, Bago Region
35. Bhaddanta Candasiri, Maha Withutayama Gandayon Monastery, Kyanigan Ward, Shwedaung, Bago Region
36. Bhaddanta Paññasami, KanU Achaypyu Pariyatti Buddhism Learning Centre, Awaing Village, Bago Township, Bago Region
37. Bhaddanta Nanissara, Maha Pylonchantha Phayagyi Monastery, Shankwin-Myolechaung Village, Gyobingauk Township, Bago Region
38. Bhaddanta Tejasiri, Zay Monastery, Zay Ward, Ottwin, Bago Region
39. Bhaddanta Indaka, Zeebingon Bayme Monastery, Zeetawgyi Village, Kyaukdaga Township, Bago Region
40. Bhaddanta Tejaniya, Shauktaung Monastery, Shauktaung Village, Ngaphe Township, Magway Region
41. Bhaddanta Sumangala, South Hsinka Monastic Education Primary School, Hsinka Village, Chauk Township, Magway Region
42. Bhaddanta Dhammavamsa, Pattapaing Monastic Education Middle School, Phulon Village, Yesakyo Township, Magway Region
43. Bhaddanta Kelasa, Bonpyan Monastery, Ywathitgyi Village, Pwintbyu Township, Magway Region
44. Bhaddanta Sasana, Hsimeetun Monastery, Hsimeetun Village, Taungdwingyi Township, Magway Region
45. Bhaddanta Vicitta, Phayagyi Monastery, Ward 3, Sinbaungwe, Magway Region
46. Bhaddanta Osadha, Pyithsimayon Monastic Education Post-Primary School, North Leyar Village, Magway Township, Magway Region
47. Bhaddanta Khemasiri, Tazeekauk Monastery, Tazeekauk Village, Thayet Township, Magway Region
48. Bhaddanta Jotaka, Myatalaingkyin Monastery, Mya Village, Meiktila Township, Mandalay Region
49. Bhaddanta Mettananda (a) Bhaddanta Pavara, Myitta Yaungchi Monastery, Kywenwahtauk Village, PyinOoLwin Township, Mandalay Region
50. Bhaddanta Indavamsa, Hmansi Monastic Education Post-Primary School, Ward 4, Madaya, Mandalay Region
51. Dr Bhaddanta Sobhana, Myat Parami Sasana Yeiktha Monastery, Thayetpin Village, Kyaukse Township, Mandalay Region
52. Bhaddanta Janaka, North YwaU Monastery, Thetwin Village, NyaungU Township, Mandalay Region
53. Bhaddanta Paññadipa, Pariyatti Yadana Beikman Monastery, Asin Model Village, Ye Township, Mon State
54. Bhaddanta Candima, Alal Monastery, Hangan Village, Ye Township, Mon State

55. Bhaddanta Jotañana, Pariyatti Kyaungthit Monastery, Setse Model Village, Thanbyuzayat Township, Mon State
56. Bhaddanta Vepulla, Buddhagawtha Mon Monastery, Myaynigon Ward, Mawlamyine, Mon State
57. Bhaddanta Narinda, Nyaungwaing Pariyatti Buddhism Learning Centre, Theingon Ward, Thaton, Mon State
58. Bhaddanta Pandita, Paditayama Monastery, Satyonsu Ward, Sittway, Rakhine State
59. Bhaddanta Indaka, Neinmitayon Monastery, Ward 4, Hline Township, Yangon Region
60. Bhaddanta Tejaniya, Mani Yadana Monastery, Pyatthat Monastery, North Ngahtetgyi Ward, Bahan Township, Yangon Region
61. Bhaddanta Kancanasara, Zeyamingala Pariyatti Buddhism Learning Centre, Ward 13, Hline Township, Yangon Region
62. Bhaddanta Kancana, Satubonmika Maha Thatipahtan Monastery, Ward 3, Kayan, Yangon Region
63. Bhaddanta Bhaddanta Tikkhañanavudha, Bodhigon Dhamma Yeiktha Monastery, Bodhigon Village, Twantay Township, Yangon Region
64. Bhaddanta Javana, Seinyaungchi Monastery, Ward 85, Dagon Myothit (Seikkan) Township, Yangon Region
65. Bhaddanta Agga, Tekkatho Aggaparami Monastic Education Post-Primary School, Kyaungsu Village, Htantabin Township, Yangon Region
66. Bhaddanta Vilasa, Wizayayanthi Monastery, Thewa Village, Taikkyi Township, Yangon Region
67. Bhaddanta Saddhammasiri, Sasanadipan Monastery, Tetthit Village, Htantabin Township, Yangon Region
68. Dr Bhaddanta Vasettha, Myittawadi Dhamma Vihara Monastery, Mezaligon Village, Hlegu Township, Yangon Region
69. Bhaddanta Candima, Kyaikdaezwe Monastery, Hlayhlaw-in Village, Hlegu Township, Yangon Region
70. Bhaddanta Vannasiri, Thanlwin Monastery, Ward 1, Mayangon Township, Yangon Region
71. Bhaddanta Revata, Win Myitta Monastery, Rakhineyoe gyi Village, Htantabin Township, Yangon Region
72. Bhaddanta Nandiya, Thukhananda Dhammayeiktha Monastery, Ward 137, Dagon Myothit (East) Township, Yangon Region
73. Bhaddanta Sobhana, Nawngpamon Monastery, Nawngpamon Village, Mongpan Township, Shan State
74. Bhaddanta Ovada, Loimwe Monastery, Loimwe Village, Mongpan Township, Shan State
75. Bhaddanta Vepulla, Ywagyi Yaytha Phayakyein Monastery, Inpawkhon Village, Nyaungshwe Township, Shan State
76. Bhaddanta Khemacara, Nawngkhe Monastery, Nawngkhe Village, Taunggyi Township, Shan State
77. Bhaddanta Kosalla, Swamtawng Monastery, Swamtawng Village, Mongping Township, Shan State
78. Dr Bhaddanta Paññananda, Dhammapala Monastery, Kunlon Village, Taunggyi Township, Shan State
79. Bhaddanta Vepulla, Theravada Buddhist Missionary Monastery, Loimwe Village, Kengtung Township, Shan State
80. Bhaddanta Candasiri, Thiri Mingala Swamseng Monastery, Ward 2, Mongyai, Shan State
81. Bhaddanta Tejaninda, Nampang Theravada Buddhist Missionary Monastery, Nampang Village, Mongphyat Township, Shan State
82. Bhaddanta Nandasiri, Wamkyan Theravada Buddhist Missionary Monastery, Monghnyin Village, Mongkhet Township, Shan State

TO BE CONTINUED



NATIONAL

Residents Urged to Prioritize Public Safety Amid Armed Terrorist Threats

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

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

MoI Union Minister inspects cotton ginning factory in Yamethin, calls for value-added processing

UNION Minister for Industry Dr Charlie Than, accompanied by departmental officials, arrived at the Cotton Ginning Factory (Yamethin) in Yame-thin, Mandalay Region, yesterday morning, where the factory manager provided a briefing on factory-related information and operational conditions.

In response to the briefing, the Union Minister stated that cotton farmers should work together to increase their incomes by processing their cotton on a small scale rather than selling it directly as raw material. He noted that when individual farmers' small-scale efforts develop into micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), local communities will benefit from increased em-



Union Minister Dr Charlie Than is pictured during his inspection tour at the Cotton Ginning Factory (Yamethin) yesterday.

ployment opportunities. He added that if businesses involved in producing cotton yarn, fabric and garments from cotton are successfully implemented, the domestic garment sector will

develop further.

The Union Minister also emphasized the need to ensure that all cotton ginning machines at the factory operate at full capacity by securing the necessary spare parts in advance. He further explained that in areas without access to electricity, cotton ginning and oil mills can be operated using solar photo-voltaic (PV) systems, and that efforts must be made to raise public awareness of installation techniques.

According to reports, the Union Minister inspected the operation of a two-roller cotton ginning machine powered by solar energy, as well as the repair work being carried out on another two-roller cotton ginning machine. — MNA/MKKS

UEC Member holds talks with Asian Peace and Reconciliation Council Chair

UNION Election Commission Member U Aung Saw Win received Chair of the Asian Peace and Reconciliation Council (APRC) Professor Dr Surakiart Sathirathai and his delegation at the diplomatic hall of the Yangon Region government yesterday afternoon.

The APRC Chair extended greetings and expressed his pleasure and congratulations on the successful, free, and fair conduct of Phases I and II of the 2025 general election in Myanmar, and he extends his support for Myanmar's electoral process. During Phase III of the election, scheduled for 25 January, arrangements will also be made for an election observation team to observe the election process, and the team will pro-

vide reports on their findings, assessments, and recommendations. He then asked about the progress of holding the 2025 general election.

The UEC member explained conducting of Phase I of the general election 2025 on 28 December 2025 and Phase II on 11 January 2026, holding the transparent, free and fair election under the law, allowing international and internal election observation teams to monitor the election process, arrangements for internal and international media to cover the election news transparently, voting of people in relevant phases of the election, use of Myanmar Electronic Voting Machine, progress of advance voting at home and abroad, experiences



UEC Member U Aung Saw Win receives Professor Dr Surakiart Sathirathai, Chair of the Asian Peace and Reconciliation Council (APRC), yesterday.

in changing election system, and preparations to hold Phase III of the election successfully. The UEC member invited them to observe Phase III of the election on 25 January.

They also exchanged views on the successful holding of Phase III of the general election and cooperation with the APRC.

Also, present at the meeting were Chairman of Yangon Region Election Subcommission U Khin Maung Kyaw and officials. — MNA/TTA



# NATIONAL



## National Objectives for 79<sup>th</sup> Union Day 2026

1. To work together among all ethnic nationals to achieve the country’s prosperity and food security, the national goal of the country.
2. To cooperate hand-in-hand with the government, Tatmadaw and all ethnic nationals in successfully implementing the measures for stability and rule of law.
3. To strive together with ethnic armed groups to establish a lasting peace, while propagating justice, freedom and equality within the country.
4. To build a Union based on democracy and federalism, practising a genuine and disciplined multiparty democratic system through the friendship, trust, unity and collaboration of ethnic people.
5. To cooperate, ensuring the development of education, health and socioeconomic status of ethnic nationals and the emergence of a developing country.

# Govt, public ensure successful polls despite disruptions to Phase II

THE government leads the phases of a multiparty democratic general election, which is essential for initiating the multiparty democratic system, with participation of the people, while striving to ensure a peaceful, prosperous and developed country under the multiparty democratic system. On 11 January, the government successfully held the multiparty democratic general election phase II.

However, destructive elements seeking to disrupt the peace, stability, and development of the nation, as well as terrorists who cannot tolerate the harmonious efforts of the government and the people, have attempted to undermine the socio-economic life of the population and disrupt election-related activities. As a result, they committed attacks aimed at creating panic among eligible voters who were casting their ballots in a peaceful and orderly manner.

On 11 January, when the multiparty democratic general election phase II was held, terrorist groups carried out a series of attacks aimed at disrupt-



The photo shows the house of the Taungthonlon Village administrator set on fire by the terrorist group in Kangyi Village-tract of Kyunsu Township, Taninthayi Region.

ing the election process. They dropped bombs using drones in Pruhsa of Kayah State, set fire to the administrator’s house in Taungthonlon Village, Kangyi Village-tract, Kyunsu Township, Taninthayi Region, and attacked Gangaw, Seikpyu, Salin, and Kanma in Magway Region using fixed-wing drones, rockets, bombs, and small arms. In addition, homemade rockets were launched, and bombs were dropped in ChaungU, Budalin,

and Myinmu of Sagaing Region, while drone bomb attacks were carried out in Htantabin Township of Bago Region. These attacks were intended to disrupt election activities, cause casualties among voters, and create public panic.

Terrorist and destructive groups are employing various methods in an attempt to ensure the failure of the multiparty democratic general election process, which represents the path to-

ward a multiparty democratic system desired by the people, to undermine national stability and peace, to delay the nation-building and development processes being jointly implemented by the government and the people, and to damage election-related activities. Beginning from the pre-election period, they have committed bomb attacks using sound mines, improvised explosive devices, and drop bombs, issued threat letters, and spread

false propaganda and fabricated reports through malicious and exile media outlets, among other acts of sabotage. Nevertheless, the government and the people are continuing to work together to uphold public stability and peace and to carry forward national development processes.

At present, despite acts of obstruction and sabotage, Phases I and II of the multiparty democratic general election have already been successfully conducted. To continue advancing the multiparty democratic system through prudent and measured means, responsible citizens who support and welcome democracy and who desire national peace and stability, as well as the improvement of the people’s social well-being, are urged to cooperate with the relevant authorities to ensure the successful holding of Phase III of the multiparty democratic general election. Hence, the people are also requested to promptly report to the relevant authorities any information on terrorist activities or suspicious matters they may encounter. — MNA/TTA

## Photo News

### Multiparty Democratic General Election Phase II in Paukkhaung and Padaung Townships successfully held

PHASE II of the multiparty democratic general election held in Paukkhaung Township and Padaung Township in Pyay District, Bago Region, from 6 am to 4 pm on 11 January 2026 was successfully concluded. — Maung Shwe Win (Pyay)





NATIONAL

General Aung San Declares Firm Stand Against Election Disruption

“Our Government shall not permit any disruption of the forthcoming election. The electoral process shall remain free and fair, and no interference shall be exercised upon those who participate in it. Yet, let it be firmly declared that any attempt to disturb or sabotage the election shall be met with the full weight of authority”.

(An excerpt from the radio address regarding the election, delivered by General Aung San on 13 March 1947)



MORE than 250,000 domestic and international tourists visited the Bagan ancient cultural region during the international New Year holiday period, according to the Directorate of Hotels and Tourism (Bagan branch).

From 1 to 4 January, during the four-day New Year public holiday, visitors travelled to prominent pagodas, stupas and temples across the Bagan Cultural Zone, as well as the Ayeyawady riverbanks near Buu Pagoda and Lawkananda Pagoda. Tourists also visited villages producing traditional handicrafts and local products.

“During the four-day international New Year holiday, we recorded more than 250,000 domestic and international visitors to Bagan. As tourist numbers increased compared to last New Year, tourism-related businesses and residents benefited,” said Deputy Director U Win Aung from the Directorate of Hotels and Tourism (Bagan branch).

The holiday coincided with



Tourists visit the Bagan Ancient Cultural Zone during the New Year holiday. PHOTO: ZWE MARN

the school break, enabling students, families, company staff, factory and workshop workers, government employees and the

general public to travel to the ancient cultural region using various modes of transport. International tourists also visited

Bagan, leading to full occupancy at hotels and guesthouses. Due to favourable cool winter weather, travel conditions were

more comfortable than last year, encouraging many visitors to choose two-day to three-day and four-day travel programmes.

The steady influx of tourists during the New Year period boosted local livelihoods, including the sale of regional products, handicrafts and food, as well as services such as horse carts, electric bicycles, electric motorbikes, rental vehicles and other tourism-related businesses.

Domestic and international visitors most frequently toured 18 prominent pagodas and stupas in the Bagan Cultural Zone. The area is home to more than 3,000 pagodas and temples, with over 400 ancient religious sites of particular interest clustered within a single zone. These include monuments from 55 successive Bagan dynasties, as well as later-period heritage from the Pinya, Inwa, Nyaungyan and Konbaung eras, which continue to attract strong interest from international tourists. As a result, Bagan remained lively with visitors throughout the New Year period, according to officials. — Thitsa (MNA)/KZL

Over 6.9M pilgrims visit Shwedagon Pagoda in 2025

MORE than 6.95 million pilgrims, including over 76,000 foreign tourists, visited the Shwedagon Pagoda in Yangon Region during the one-year period of 2025, according to U Bo Thin, a member of the Shwedagon Pagoda Board of Trustees.

“On working days, around 20,000 pilgrims visit the Shwedagon Pagoda each day, while on Saturdays and Sundays the daily number rises to between 40,000 and 50,000,” U Bo Thin said. “As for foreign visitors, there are at least about 150 per day, and they mainly come from China, Thailand and Vietnam.”

As the number of pilgrims has been gradually increasing in the current period, visiting hours at the Shwedagon Pagoda have been arranged from 5 am to 9 pm each day. — ASH/KNN

Buddha Pujaniya festival arranged at Mann Shwesettaw Pagoda for 75 days starting 22 Jan

THE Mann Shwesettaw Pagoda Festival, which is held annually in Minbu (Sagu) Township, Magway Region, will be celebrated grandly from 22 January to 17 April.

The annual Buddha Pujaniya festival at Mann Shwesettaw Pagoda is traditionally held from the 5<sup>th</sup> waxing day of Tabodwe until the first day of the Myanmar New Year. This year, it will last 75 days. According to U Aye Ko, chairman of the Pagoda Board of Trustees, more than 700 booths and 800 lodgings have been prepared for the festival.

“This year, we have made every effort to ensure that pilgrims can enjoy the festival with peace of mind. We have provided all necessary facilities for pilgrims from across the country, including



This photo features arrangements for visitors during the Buddha Pujania festival at the Mann Shwesettaw Pagoda.

24-hour clinics for healthcare. This year, we have arranged more than 700 shops and over 500 guest rooms. In addition, we plan to operate a bus service to the elephant camp near the pagoda, and we have installed barriers in deep-water areas to ensure the safety of pilgrims bathing in Mann Creek,” said U Aye Ko.

On the opening day of the Mann Shwesettaw Pagoda Festival, the lower and upper Buddha footprints are open to the public, and on the closing day of the festival, both footprints are closed again. The lower footprint is covered with a transparent glass, allowing it to be viewed and admired even outside the festival period.

During the Mann Shwesettaw Pagoda Festival, pilgrims from all over the country are allowed to stay overnight. In addition, Shwesettaw, Mann Creek, and the Elephant Camp, which includes an elephant museum, will be open throughout the festival period. The festival attracts the largest number of pilgrims on Saturdays, Sundays, the full moon day of Taboung, and during the Thingyan Festival. — ASH/MKKS



# NATIONAL



Triumphant Tatmadaw troops are seen being warmly welcomed.

## People welcome frontline Tatmadaw members

FRONTLINE Tatmadaw members who fought bravely against armed terrorists and PDFs in Madaya, Singu and Thabeikkyin townships of Mandalay Region and achieved successive victories were warmly welcomed on their victorious return. A ceremony to welcome them

took place at Hmawby station in Yangon Region yesterday, and Yangon Command Commander Maj-Gen Pyae Sone Lin, departmental officials, students, artistes and locals participated in the event. Tatmadaw members were honoured for restoring security and stability for the

residents in different regions and states. The commander and attendees presented the victorious returning troops with sprigs of Eugenia and presented cash prizes to them. Traditional drumming, singing and dancing were also added to the welcome. — MNA/KTZH

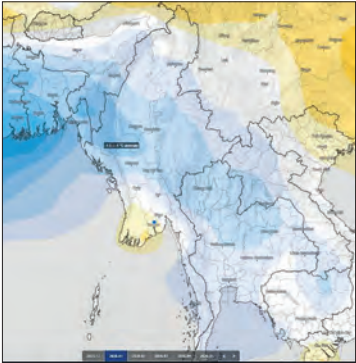
## Yangon, other regions to face cold spell in Jan and Feb

IN January and February, the temperature will be about 0.1 degree Celsius below the average annual temperature in Yangon Region, Ayeyawady Region, Rakhine State, Mon State and Taninthayi Region and between 0.2 and 1 degree Celsius in the rest regions and states, said meteorologist U Win Naing.

It will be around the average annual temperature or higher between 0.1 and 0.8 degrees Celsius in Sagaing Region, Mandalay Region, Nay Pyi Taw, eastern Shan State and Taninthayi Region in March, while it will remain normal in the rest regions and states.

The coldness will remain through the first four months of 2026, and the nighttime and early-morning temperatures in lower Sagaing Region will be 0.2-0.5 degrees Celsius lower than the average until May, he said.

The maximum average temperature of regions and states will be 31-35 degrees Celsius in January and February, and 36-39 degrees Celsius in March and April. The possibility of forming clouds will increase in May,



The weather chart shows the west wind at 45 miles per hour and a temperature of minus eight degrees Celsius.

and the temperature will decline back to around 35 degrees Celsius after raining.

After the deep depression (DD) in the south of the Bay of Bengal in the first month of 2026 ended without developing into a cyclone, inland temperature, sea surface temperature and humidity will decline in late March 2026 and due to the elevated air pressure, upper air cyclonic circulation and storms are impossible to happen.

The strong west wind from 18,000 feet (FL180) and the -8 °C temperature will make the whole country feel colder. — MT/ZS

## Raids in Hsipaw, Mongyai uncover 3 major drug production bases

THE information was released on seizures of related accessories used in telecom fraud, online gambling and drug processing in Hsipaw and Mongyai townships on 9, 10 and 11 January 2026.

According to estimates based on the chemical substances currently seized at the second location, approximately 20 kilometres southwest of Mongyai, about 27 tonnes of ICE could be produced, with an estimated value of K540 billion. If converted into tablet form, approximately 810 million stimulant tablets could be manufactured.

If these stimulant tablets reach the market, illicit drugs worth about K1,620 billion will have been circulated. Based

on analysis of the equipment and materials seized at the site that were used in drug manufacturing, it was found that drug production at a scale exceeding 27 tonnes of ICE or about 810 million stimulant tablets was being carried out regularly.

At the said location and the third location, a large quantity of packaging bearing the label Guanyinwang and Chinese characters was also seized.

In 2025, out of a total of 37.815 tonnes of ICE seized nationwide in Myanmar, 11.686 tonnes were packaged with Guanyinwang labelled packaging and 0.96 tonne were packaged with Chinese labels, totalling 12.646 tonnes, with an estimated value of K252.92 bil-

lion. Based on these findings, it was revealed that the quantity produced and distributed from these two locations accounted for about 33.44 per cent of the total amount of ICE seized across the nation in 2025.

Therefore, the three drug manufacturing sites uncovered and seized on 10 and 11 January 2026 have been identified as primary drug production bases in Myanmar. — MNA/KTZH

Seized blank packages for Ice, labelled Guanyinwang, recovered at the second and third sites southwest of Mongyai.





NATIONAL

Forests play a vital role in national development and food security

❖ “Forests are essential for the country’s long-term development, ensuring food security, promoting public health and well-being, and protecting against natural hazards. Trees and forests also serve as key elements in building Green Cities, Clean Cities, Smart Cities, and Green Villages.”  
(Excerpt from the speech delivered by State Administration Council Chairman and Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at the second monsoon tree-growing ceremony for 2025 in Nay Pyi Taw Union Territory on 4 July 2025)

Notice for Overseas Departure

1. Concerning skilled Myanmar workers who plan to depart abroad under their own arrangement using PJ passports, a public notice was published in the Myanma Alinn newspaper dated 28 March 2025. In addition, the country-specific deployment Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), whether through agency arrangements or self-arranged departures, were published in state-run newspapers from 22 March 2025 to 28 March 2025, and also shared on the Ministry’s Facebook Page, Safe Migration Facebook Page, and Safe Migration Telegram Channel. These notifications clearly stated that applications related to permission to depart abroad must be submitted to the Department of Labour at least five days in advance, excluding public holidays.

2. In accordance with that notification, the Department of Labour has been scrutinizing and granting permissions for OWIC processing and overseas departure of skilled workers or workers returning from leave, whether under agency arrangements or self-arranged plans.
3. However, according to the lists submitted by the international airports, it has been found that those who possess OWIC cards for returning from leave under self-arranged plans are departing abroad without complying with the provisions stated in paragraph 1 and without submitting applications to the Department of Labour.

4. The procedures required for permissions to depart abroad have already been announced on the Ministry’s official website [www.mol.gov.mm](http://www.mol.gov.mm), Safe Migration Facebook Page and Safe Migration Telegram Channel.

5. Thus, it is hereby notified that OWIC cardholders who wish to depart for foreign countries must obtain approval from the Department of Labour in accordance with the prescribed rules and regulations before departing abroad, effective 14 January 2026.
- Ministry of Labour

More Mon State farmers turn to salt as early-season prices surge

IN the current salt season, Mon State is seeing an increase in the number of producers, and early harvests are fetching high prices, U Naing Hu, a local salt entrepreneur, told The Global New Light of Myanmar (GNLM).  
Due to the high salt prices last year, more producers have entered the industry this season, leading to an increase in the number of salt fields. Salt production began in early January, and prices have remained strong since the start of the harvest.  
“Because of the good price, there are more salt farmers compared to last year. We are



This photo shows salt fields in Thanbyuzayat, Mon State.

seeing more salt fields. Since salt was scarce and prices were high last year, people began working on abandoned fields. Currently, the early-season prices are good. If this trend continues, it will be very beneficial for the salt farmers,” he stated.  
While early coarse salt

fetches only K160 per viss last year, it is currently reaching up to K750. Salt produced in Mon State is distributed nationwide, and the market demand remains strong, he added.  
While the industry is growing, salt producers are facing labour shortages, resulting in



higher wage costs. Under favourable weather conditions, Mon State typically produces around 40,000 tonnes of salt annually. However, due to various weather conditions last year, production dropped significantly to only about 16,000 tonnes.  
— MT/ZN

Two bear species on display at local zoos

MYANMAR is inhabited by two different bear species, the sun bear and black bear, and they can be seen in local zoos.  
Of the eight bear species in the world, the sun bear and black bear inhabit Myanmar. Visitors can explore these distinctive and interesting animals at Yangon Zoo, Yadanabon Zoo and Nay Pyi Taw Zoo.  
Sun bears are the smallest species with short and shiny fur and have a U-shaped or crescent chest patch. They inhabit tropical lowland forests.  
Black bears are mid-sized with long, rough and thick fur and have a distinct V-shaped white or cream patch. They inhabit highland humid forests and migrate to the lowland in winter.  
Both species are omnivores and consume a variety of fruits, insects, invertebrates, roots and nuts. — MT/ZS



Two different bears - sun bear and black bear.



Myanmar reports no new COVID-19 cases

THE Ministry of Health tested 47 samples from 8 pm on 4 January 2026 to 8 pm on 11 January 2026, and no new cases were detected.  
Currently, there is no need to worry about infection and deaths from COVID-19, but all need to follow personal hygiene methods, and the high-risk groups.  
• Elderly people (aged 60 and above)  
• People with diabetes, chronic respiratory diseases, and cancer  
• Pregnant women (especially those beyond the third month of pregnancy) are prioritized to receive COVID-19 booster shots.  
More detailed COVID-19 information can be found on the website of the Ministry of Health, [moh.gov.mm](http://moh.gov.mm).  
Myanmar CDC  
Public Health Department, Ministry of Health



# OPINION

## United strength among parents, teachers and students

THE School Family Day ceremony is an education-related event jointly organized and participated in by teachers, parents, and students. It is not merely a single ceremony, but one that is systematically conducted at the different levels. By holding the School Family Day ceremony, closer unity and cooperation are fostered among teachers, parents, and students, and it also contributes to the overall development and advancement of education.

Myanmar's education system is oriented toward the development of comprehensive education and is designed to teach, train, and nurture balanced development across multiple dimensions, namely physical, intellectual, moral, aesthetic, and vocational aspects. Only by developing these dimensions in a balanced and harmonious manner can well-rounded human resources with the necessary educational competencies emerge, capable of facing and addressing the challenges of the times.

The School Family Day Festival creates an environment that inspires and motivates students and young people to develop skills and acquire knowledge. Young learners, being naturally curious and eager to explore, gain the ability to learn effectively. In this way, teachers and parents provide guidance and support to help students develop the capacities needed to grow into responsible citizens who can take on the duties of the nation in the future and contribute positively to society.

of and embrace the values of proper education, while rejecting harmful influences.

The School Family Day Festival creates an environment that inspires and motivates students and young people to develop skills and acquire knowledge. Young learners, being naturally curious and eager to explore, gain the ability to learn effectively. In this way, teachers and parents provide guidance and support to help students develop the capacities needed to grow into responsible citizens who can take on the duties of the nation in the future and contribute positively to society.

Therefore, education is the ability to distinguish right from wrong, to think creatively, and to use knowledge effectively. To develop creativity and innovative abilities, teachers and parents must guide and teach students, while students themselves are encouraged to actively strive, acquire, and apply these skills. Education should inspire young people to reach the point where they can independently use what they have learned.

# The Youth Peace Forum: Why Myanmar's Youth Hold the Key to a New Beginning

By Zaw Oo



Youth delegates from Shan State arrive in Nay Pyi Taw, welcomed by locals with tradition performances on 11 January 2026.

“On one front, rural youth have faced the collapse of local economies. With jobs fleeing their communities, many found themselves with no livelihood to support their families. Out of desperation, some have migrated overseas. Many joined nearby armed groups, living off the land and fighting wars on multiple fronts. In 2022 and 2023, many overzealous young recruits made heavy sacrifices to take over garrisons and towns. Yet, geopolitical tides shifted. When external pressures demanded the relinquishing of these hard-won gains years later, the sacrifices of these young fighters were effectively set aside. Many are now disillusioned, feeling like pawns in a political game where their ideals were discounted”

### The Pulse of a Generation

The genesis of this forum was not a top-down directive, but a response to data. A nationwide survey conducted three months ago sought to measure the "barometer" of youth sentiment regarding the elections. The findings were illuminating. Despite the bleak conditions on the ground, the survey revealed that the highest expectation among young people was the achievement of peace.

While seasoned analysts might argue that the conditions for immediate conflict resolution are

dim, the youth view the post-election landscape as a narrow window of opportunity — a chance to reduce violence and renew dialogue. This solid expression of will and their desire to roll up their sleeves and work on peacebuilding provided the spark for this week's Forum. It is an acknowledgement that the peace process can no longer be an abstract conversation among older men in suits; it must address the

visceral reality of the young.

### A Tale of Two Trajectories

The Forum is convening at a moment when Myanmar's youth are trapped in a destructive dichotomy. The stories shared during the survey paint a picture of a generation saying, "Enough is enough."

On one front, rural youth have faced the collapse of local economies. With jobs fleeing their com-

munities, many found themselves with no livelihood to support their families. Out of desperation, some have migrated overseas. Many joined nearby armed groups, living off the land and fighting wars on multiple fronts. In 2022 and 2023, many overzealous young recruits made heavy sacrifices to take over garrisons and towns. Yet, geopolitical tides shifted. When external pressures demanded the relin-

quishing of these hard-won gains years later, the sacrifices of these young fighters were effectively set aside. Many are now disillusioned, feeling like pawns in a political game where their ideals were discounted.

On the other end of the spectrum, the country saw a massive brain drain. Talented urban youth, seeing foreign direct investment dry up and modern industries crumble, left for neighbouring economies in search of greener pastures. However, the global reality has been harsh. Facing waves of hyper-nationalism and struggling economies abroad, these skilled tech and management professionals often found themselves rejected or underemployed in menial jobs. In extreme cases, some were arrested and deported to third countries with socio-economic conditions far worse than those in their home.

Both trajectories have led to the same scenario: disillusionment. As they are trapped in a vi-

“A New Mechanism for Dialogue  
The organization of the Forum reflects meticulous effort by the NSPNC, various ministries, and private sector partners. Participants have been invited from all walks of life, grouped not by ethnicity alone, but by their shared aspirations for progress. Forty experienced facilitators — drawn from universities, technical departments, and the private sector — will guide 32 working groups through a structured process of "framing, norming, and storming" to generate actionable outputs. For the first time, a significant portion of the peace agenda is being organized around youth dialogue rather than just about it.”

cious cycle of frustration and wasted potential, Myanmar's youth are realizing that the only sustainable future is one they build at home.

### Breaking the Vicious Cycle

This vicious cycle represents an existential threat to the Union. The intensification of conflict was fueled by radicalized youth joining non-state actors; therefore, de-escalation requires convincing them that there is a viable alternative to radicalism. Similarly, restoring the economy requires proving that Myanmar — with its rich natural resources and demographic dividend — has better prospects than a life of second-class status abroad.

The Youth Peace Forum is designed to address these exact challenges. It is creating a space where youth from displaced communities can sit across from peers who are struggling to keep innovative tech startups alive amidst the chaos. Together, they will explore how conflicts can be managed and reduced. They will brainstorm post-conflict reconstruction, ranging from mental health rehabilitation for a generation traumatized by violence to protecting youth from silent storms of drugs and cyber scams. Most importantly, they will strategize on economic recovery and rebuilding the trust necessary for true nation-building.

A New Mechanism for Dialogue  
The organization of the Fo-

rum reflects meticulous effort by the NSPNC, various ministries, and private sector partners. Participants have been invited from all walks of life, grouped not by ethnicity alone, but by their shared aspirations for progress. Forty experienced facilitators — drawn from universities, technical departments, and the private sector — will guide 32 working groups through a structured process of "framing, norming, and storming" to generate actionable outputs. For the first time, a significant portion of the peace agenda is being organized around youth dialogue rather than just about it.

o Day One focuses on intergenerational bridging. Senior leaders and peace negotiators will share their reflections, but more importantly, they will listen. Government officials, EAO leaders, and community organizers will hear directly from youth representing the 15 states and regions.

o Day Two shifts to capacity building and ideation. Ten experts will cover critical topics ranging from peace education and sports to AI, cyber-scam prevention, and entrepreneurship. Following this, the youth will break into World Café-style sessions, moving from discussion to consensus building. By the end of the day, they will have developed visions, missions, and strategies that are attainable in their local communities.

o Day Three is the call to

action. Teams will present their project proposals and action research topics in a plenary session. In a move to ensure ownership, the evaluation will be democratic: 85 per cent of the scoring will come from the youth peers themselves, with experts providing the remaining 15 per cent based on feasibility.

### The Agenda for the Future

This competition of peace ideas among youth ensures that while the best initiatives are highlighted, every participant leaves empowered. The ultimate goal is not just a document, but a shift in mindset — from fighter or victim to peacebuilder and architect.

The recognition of youth in the peace process is long overdue. Marginalized and disenfranchised young people, unfortunately, became part of the problem during the rising conflicts of the last half-decade. However, by recognizing their plight and reorienting their immense energy toward economic reconstruction and social mediation, they become the most potent solution we have.

The Youth Peace Forum is not just an event; it is the setting of a new agenda for the post-election period. If we empower them to pioneer, this time, the youth shall succeed. And if the youth succeed, Myanmar can finally find its way back to peace.

The opinions are the author's own.



NATIONAL  
BUSINESS

Fuel oil reference prices continue to decline

FUEL oil reference prices decreased a bit this week, ending 15 January 2026, with K2,325 for Octane 92 and K2,380 for Octane 95, K2,135 for diesel and K2,545 for premium diesel.

The prices were set at K2,380 for Octane 92 and K2,440 for Octane 95, K2,135 for diesel and K2,580 for premium diesel last week ending 8 January.

The price index set by Mean of Platts Singapore (MOPS), the pricing basis for many refined products in Southeast Asia, influences the domestic fuel prices, according to the Supervisory Committee on Oil Import, Storage and Distribution of Fuel Oil.

The committee is governing the market to ensure a stable price and secure supply. Furthermore, the Central Bank of Myanmar has been injecting foreign currencies into the fuel oil sector to help cut the price. Under the guidance of the Supervisory Committee, the Petroleum Products Regulatory



Vehicles queue up to refuel at a Yangon petrol station.

Department has been issuing daily reference wholesale prices to ensure price stability for energy consumers.

The committee is inspecting the fuel stations to see whether they are overcharging. Authorities are taking action

against petrol station retailers who are found to be overcharging, rather than adhering to the set reference rate, under the

Petroleum and Petroleum Products Law 2017.

As per the statement, 90 per cent of fuel oil in Myanmar is imported, while the remaining 10 per cent is produced locally. Domestic fuel prices are highly correlated with international prices. The State is steering the market to mitigate the losses experienced by importers, sellers, and energy consumers. Consequently, the government is trying to distribute the oil at a reasonable price compared to that of regional countries.

Some countries levied higher tax rates and hiked oil prices than Myanmar did. However, Malaysia's oil sector receives government subsidies, and the prices are about 60 per cent lower than those of Myanmar. Every country adopts different policy patterns to fix oil prices, the Supervisory Committee on Oil Import, Storage and Distribution of Fuel Oil stated. — NN/KK

CBM sells over US\$34M, THB11M, CNY300 in Dec

THE Central Bank of Myanmar (CBM) pumped US\$34 million, 11 million baht and 300,000 yuan into the market in December 2025.

CBM made an injection of over \$21 million, 2.4 million yuan and 1.5 million baht in November.

CBM injected over \$2.48 million, 5.75 million yuan and 4.98 million baht in October, along with sales of over \$54 million purchased from CMP companies. CBM aims to curb the instability in the foreign exchange market and currency devaluation. According to CBM's notification on 15 March 2024, it has been collaborating with law enforcement agencies to combat and



File photo shows the facade of the Central Bank of Myanmar (CBM) Yangon Branch.

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

Unauthorized land use subject to effective legal action

THE District Administration and Management Committee of PyinOoLwin District has announced that non-compliant land usage will result in legal actions.

The public has been informed of the lawful utilization of land via the state-owned newspapers.

Furthermore, certain plots of land in extended areas adjacent to the ward via the government gazette, as well as farmland, upland, forest land, vacant land, and virgin land adjacent to village land, are being illegally utilized. Unregulated subdivision of land included in the municipal area, fencing, construction of permanent structures, and unauthorized buying/selling activities are found, and legal actions are being taken against unlawful individuals.

Although public announcements related to the authorized land use through the state-owned newspapers, unscrupulous businesspeople and brokers are selling those plots of land with deceptive methods on social media platforms like Facebook, TikTok, causing individuals to suffer losses and face penalties.

Relevant departments and institutions are conducting field inspections and taking legal actions against unlawful use of land to ensure compliance with the law. The statement warned the public of loss risk from purchasing land that does not have a permit.

Thus, the committee reiterated that effective legal actions will be taken against unregulated land use. — NN/KK

Daily newspapers available online

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

News and Periodicals Enterprise

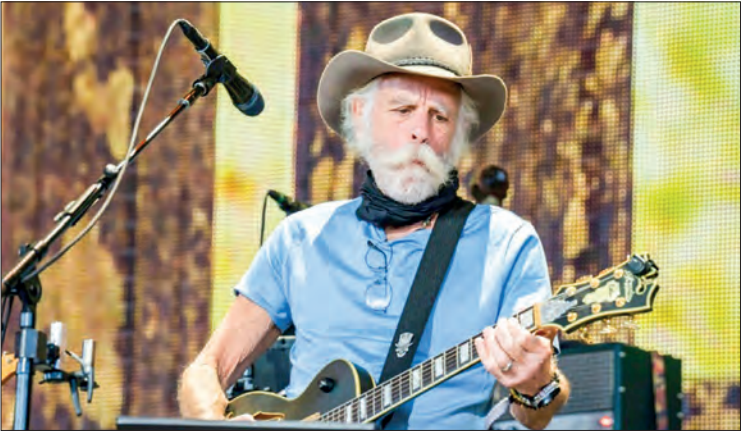


## Grateful Dead cofounder Bob Weir dies at 78

BOB Weir, celebrated singer-guitarist and cofounder of The Grateful Dead, has died at 78. His family confirmed the news in a heartfelt social media post, noting he passed peacefully after battling cancer and lung issues. They described him as a guiding force whose artistry reshaped American music, building a sense of community and belonging for generations of fans.

Weir's career spanned more than six decades, marked by his role as guitarist, vocalist, and

storyteller. Diagnosed in July 2025, he continued performing, returning to his hometown stage for the 60 year celebration of his music. His family reflected on those performances as gifts of resilience, embodying his spirit of drifting and dreaming without fear of where the road led. Tributes have poured in across social media. Bravo host Andy Cohen remembered him as "impossibly beautiful and wildly fiery", underscoring the profound impact Weir had on music and culture. — AFP



Bob Weir, a founding member of the Grateful Dead, performs at the Farm Aid Music Festival in Noblesville, Indiana on 24 September 2023. PHOTO: AFP/FILE

## Indonesia suspends access to Grok over AI-generated sexualized content

*The Ministry of Communications and Digital Affairs stated the move is to protect women, children, and the public from harm caused by AIgenerated explicit imagery.*



This photograph taken on 13 January 2025 in Toulouse shows screens displaying the logo of Grok, a generative artificial intelligence chatbot developed by xAI, the American company specializing in artificial intelligence and it's founder South Africa-born American businessman Elon Musk. PHOTO: LIONEL BONAVENTURE / AFP

INDONESIA has temporarily blocked access to Grok, an AI chatbot developed by xAI, citing concerns over the generation and dissemination of sexualized images, including

non-consensual deepfake content.

The Ministry of Communications and Digital Affairs said the move is necessary to protect women, children, and

the public from harm linked to AI-generated explicit imagery that officials see as a serious violation of human rights and digital security.

"The ministry has also requested Platform X to promptly provide clarification regarding the negative impacts arising from the use of Grok," Communications and Digital Affairs Minister Meutya Hafid said in a statement on Saturday.

The action is based on the ministry's authority under Ministerial Regulation No 5 of 2020 on Private Electronic System Providers, particularly Article 9, which obliges every provider to ensure that their electronic systems do not contain, facilitate, or disseminate prohibited electronic information or documents, according to the minister. — Xinhua

## 'Godzilla Minus One' sequel confirms 2026 release date

THE highly anticipated sequel to 2023's surprise hit Godzilla Minus One is set to storm theatres as Godzilla Minus Zero. Directed and written once again by Takashi Yamazaki, the film will premiere in Japan on 3 November 2026 — Godzilla Day, marking the anniversary of the original 1954 release — before arriving in North American cinemas on 6 November, distributed by GKids.

Production is currently underway at Toho Studios, with

Robot producing and Shirogumi handling visual effects. While plot and cast details remain tightly guarded, the title was revealed during Godzilla Fest in November 2025, following the sequel's announcement in 2024. GKids president David Jesteadt emphasized the honor of continuing the franchise's legacy, promising another monumental cinematic event.

Godzilla Minus One captivated audiences with its postWorld

War II setting and story of a disgraced Kamikaze pilot finding redemption against the monstrous Godzilla. Made on a modest \$15 million budget, it grossed \$113 million worldwide, earned praise from Hollywood luminaries like Steven Spielberg, and won the franchise's first Oscar for Best Visual Effects. — ANI

Godzilla Minus One captivated audiences with its postWorld War II setting. PHOTO: TOHO



## Bridget Stokes to direct 'Zugzwang'

EMMY-WINNING director Bridget Stokes is all set to direct a genre-bending detective story 'Zugzwang'.

In 2022, Stokes made history as the first Black woman to win an Emmy for directing a variety series, recognized for her work on HBO's A Black

Lady Sketch Show, created by Robin Thede.

Now, Stokes wrote and will direct the fantasy-noir, which centres on a private detective named Lady who, the logline explains, "takes on a risky case in hopes of redemption, only to find herself pulled into an

ever-expanding world of corruption," as per Variety. Christina Elmore has come on board as a lead. The project will also feature Hannah Love Lanier ("Lioness"), Kathreen Khavari ("This Is Spinal Tap 2") and Angel Laketa Moore ("A Black Lady Sketch Show"). — ANI

## Emmy-winning director Tom Cherones passes away

EMMY-WINNING producer, director Tom Cherones, known for his work on 'Seinfeld', has passed away at 86, reported Deadline. The filmmaker died at his home in Florence, Oregon, after a prolonged battle with Alzheimer's disease. Tom Cherones famously directed and produced the second 'Seinfeld' episode titled 'The Stakeout', which was released in May 1990. He received six Emmy nominations along the way and even won the coveted trophy for Outstanding Comedy Series, sharing it with creators Jerry Seinfeld and Larry David in 1993. — ANI



ECONOMY  
WORLD

Shinkansen operator recycles retired cars to extract aluminium alloys

A Japanese shinkansen bullet train operator has stepped up efforts to recycle retired train cars using a patented method to remove coatings and other residues and extract high-purity aluminium alloys.

Central Japan Railway Co, which operates the Tokaido Shinkansen between Tokyo and Osaka, now uses the material for purposes ranging from building new train cars to making baseball bats. The Nagoya-based company, also known as JR Central, said the initiative can significantly reduce carbon dioxide emissions compared with producing new aluminium, helping to mitigate the impact on the environment.

Retired shinkansen cars were previously used as de-oxidizers in steelmaking, as stripping off the paint, thermal insulation and adhesives was deemed difficult.

JR Central's real estate subsidiary in Tokyo attempted to remove those deposits starting in 2018, but it failed to resolve the issues, including the high cost.



File photo shows a retired 700 series Tokaido Shinkansen bullet train. (PHOTO COURTESY OF CENTRAL JAPAN RAILWAY CO) PHOTO: KYODO

In 2020, however, the unit obtained a patent for a method to efficiently extract aluminium free of impurities by using shredders and other equipment to process retired cars into chips.

Recycling aluminium can reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 97 per cent compared with producing new material, equivalent to about nine tonnes of CO2 per tonne of aluminium,

the company said. The material has since been used in new shinkansen cars, train stations, hotels and apartments, and other products such as spoons.

"We aim to contribute to environmental protection by accelerating our efforts toward carbon neutrality and resource circulation," Naoya Nobayashi, an employee at JR Central, said. — Kyodo

NEWS IN BRIEF

Vietnam's air passenger traffic hits record 83.5 mln

VIETNAM'S aviation industry handled 83.5 million passenger trips in 2025, up 10.7 per cent from the previous year, marking the highest level ever recorded, local media VnExpress reported Monday.

International routes led the growth, with passenger traffic reaching 46.6 million, up 12 per cent year on year, while cargo volumes soared 22 per cent to about 1.3 million tonnes, according to the report.

Passenger traffic on domestic routes totalled 36.9 million, an increase of 8.4 per cent, while cargo volume stood at 226,800 tonnes, remaining flat as compared to 2024.

Vietnamese carriers now operate 113 international routes and 55 domestic ones. Total passenger traffic in 2026 is projected to reach around 95 million, while cargo throughput is expected to exceed 1.6 million tonnes. — Xinhua

Norwegian firm to build Africa's largest combined solar and battery storage project in Egypt

EGYPT on Sunday signed an agreement with Norwegian firm Scatec to build a massive renewable energy complex, which the company said will be the largest combined solar and battery storage installation in Africa.

The "Energy Valley" project, located in the Suez Canal Economic Zone (SCZone), includes a 1.95-gigawatt solar power plant and a 3.9-gigawatt-hour battery energy storage system, Scatec said in a press release, adding that the project will be capable of delivering 24-hour-a-day clean electricity, generating an estimated 6,000 gigawatt-hours annually.

In a statement released by the Egyptian cabinet, Prime Minister Mostafa Madbouly, who attended the signing ceremony, said the project would significantly support Egypt's clean energy goals. — Xinhua

Gold hits record high, dollar falls as US targets Fed

THE dollar weakened and gold hit a record high Monday as investors digested news that the US Justice Department is probing the Federal Reserve, raising fears over the central bank's independence against President Donald Trump's push for lower rates.

European stocks wavered after a strong showing in Asia, seen on the back of solid gains on Wall Street before the weekend.

Fed Chair Jerome Powell confirmed the "unprecedented" subpoenas against the bank in a rare video address on Sunday, which he blasted as part of Trump's pressure campaign for aggressive rate cuts.

"The probe has unnerved markets and raised questions about what might happen to the Fed once Powell steps down in May," said Russ Mould, invest-

ment director at AJ Bell.

"There is a fear that Trump is meddling too much with policies that are meant to be set independently," he added.

Gold climbed close to \$4,600 an ounce while silver approached \$85 an ounce as investors sought traditional safe havens.

The dollar fell against major peers, as did the price of the benchmark 10-year US Treasury bond, sending its yield slightly higher.

"The threat of criminal charges is a consequence of the Federal Reserve setting interest rates based on our best assessment of what will serve the public, rather than following the preferences of the president," Powell said in his statement.

He said the bank received grand jury subpoenas on Friday related to his Senate testimony



A refiner pours liquid gold from a furnace into casts at the ABC Refinery smelter in Sydney on 29 April 2025. PHOTO: AFP

in June, which had been in part about a major renovation of Federal Reserve office buildings.

The Fed has indicated it will hold interest rates steady at its next monetary policy meeting this month.

The development came on the heels of Friday's soft US jobs

report that showed just 50,000 new positions in December, though the unemployment rate slipped to 4.4 per cent.

Asian markets advanced Monday, led by gains in Hong Kong and Shanghai and tracking Wall Street's record close at the end of last week.

Tokyo was closed for a holiday.

Most stock markets have enjoyed a solid start to 2026, with indices in Frankfurt, London, Paris and Seoul hitting record highs last week, largely on optimism for the tech sector and gains in defence sector shares.

Oil prices fell in volatile trading Monday as protests in Iran and the US seizure of Venezuela's crude supplies stoke geopolitical risks.

Trump said Sunday that he was considering military action against Iran following reports of hundreds of deaths during a violent crackdown on the protesters.

"We're looking at it very seriously," Trump told reporters on Air Force One. "The military is looking at it, and we're looking at some very strong options." — AFP



# Oil majors eye Venezuela as US pushes \$100B investment drive



A sculpture of a hand holding an oil drilling rig is pictured outside the state-run oil company Petroleos de Venezuela SA (PDVSA) in Caracas on 26 February 2025. PHOTO: AFP

ENERGY giant Shell has expressed its readiness to resume investments in Venezuela’s oil industry, the company told Sputnik.

“We are ready to go and looking forward to the investments...,” the statement said.

Shell left onshore oil operations in Venezuela around 1975-1976, when Venezuela nationalized its oil industry.

The company also said it currently has opportunities for investments worth several billion dollars, which are subject to approval by the

Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC).

US oil and gas corporation Chevron is prepared to contribute to strengthening the US energy security as part of its ongoing business activities in Venezuela, the company told Sputnik.

Chevron’s spokesperson Bill Turenne emphasized that through its presence in Venezuela, Chevron will prioritize employee safety, asset protection, and compliance with the existing US sanctions regime toward Caracas.

Chevron remains the

sole US company currently operating in Venezuela, under a license issued and periodically renewed by the American government.

On Friday, US President Donald Trump warned American oil companies that at least \$100 billion would need to be invested in Venezuela. Trump emphasized that the US is ready to process and sell oil from Venezuela. According to the US president, the heavy oil from the Latin American country has good applications for road construction. — SPUTNIK

## Public Announcement

Pursuant to the instructions from and on behalf of my client, **YANGON GOLDEN PARAGON INVESTMENT COMPANY LIMITED**, the developer of the Emerald Bay Project located in Shukhinthar Road, Shukhinthar Ward, Thaketa Township, Yangon Region, I hereby make the following public announcement.

On March 29, 2023, August 16, 2024, August 20, 2024, August 27, 2024, and November 30, 2025, respectively, my client sent notices to the purchasers of the following units who bought them under installment plans but have long defaulted on the payment of the remaining purchase price. In those notices, my client requested the purchasers to settle the outstanding balance without further delay and informed them that, if the defaults continued, the agreements would be terminated in accordance with the terms of the agreements.

Despite receiving these legal notices, the purchasers have continued to fail to pay the remaining balance and comply with the terms of their agreements. Therefore, I hereby announce that all agreements between the purchasers and my client have been terminated and are now void in accordance with the agreements’ terms. Consequently, only my client retains the rights to own, transfer and sell the following units freely.

- (1) A 1535.97-square-foot residential unit located at Room No. 1003, 10<sup>th</sup> Floor, Tower 1, Emerald Bay Project;
- (2) A 911.07-square-foot residential unit located at Room No. 3104, 31<sup>st</sup> Floor, Tower 1, Emerald Bay Project;
- (3) A 1037.21-square-foot residential unit located at Room No. 309, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Tower 2, Emerald Bay Project;
- (4) A 985.65-square-foot residential unit located at Room No. 606, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor, Tower 2, Emerald Bay Project;
- (5) A 527.93-square-foot residential unit located at Room No. 902, 9<sup>th</sup> Floor, Tower 2, Emerald Bay Project;
- (6) A 527.93-square-foot residential unit located at Room No.1910, 19<sup>th</sup> Floor, Tower 2, Emerald Bay Project;
- (7) A 527.93-square-foot residential unit located at Room No. 2010, 20<sup>th</sup> Floor, Tower 2, Emerald Bay Project.
- (8) A 1006.40-square-foot residential unit located at Room No. 2608, 26<sup>th</sup> Floor, Tower 2, Emerald Bay Project.

As duly authorized by Yangon Golden Paragon Investment Company Limited,

Daw Khaing Thanda Lwin  
LL.B, DBL, M.A (Business Law)  
Advocate (Sr. No. 19671)

21-01, Crystal Tower, Kyuntaw Road, Kamayut Township,  
Yangon Region.  
kailwin35@gmail.com

# Indonesia plans nationwide single rice price policy in 2026

INDONESIA is preparing to implement a nationwide single rice price policy starting in 2026 in a bid to reduce price disparities between regions, Coordinating Minister for Food Affairs Zulkifli Hasan was quoted by local media as saying on Monday.

The policy is aimed at ensuring uniform rice prices across the country,

including in eastern Indonesia, with the government providing support for distribution financing to address logistical challenges.

“We don’t want eastern Indonesia to pay higher prices. In 2026, we will strive to apply a single rice price nationwide,” Hasan said after a coordination meeting on food affairs. — Xinhua

## CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V PHC GALAXY VOY.NO. (106196)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V PHC GALAXY VOY.NO. (106196)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **13-1-2026** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **TMIT-2** where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.  
Phone No: **2301928**

Shipping Agency Department  
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:  
**M/S CHUN AN INTERNATIONAL LOGISTICS CO LTD**

## CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V AREZOO VOY.NO. (SCY1195)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V AREZOO VOY. NO. (SCY1195)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **13-1-2026** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MIP** where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.  
Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department  
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:  
**M/S LAND AND SEA INTERMODAL LOGISTICS SDN BHD LINE**



# ROLLING UPDATES

## WORLD

## India and Germany eye defence industry boost to ties



India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi (C) flies a kite with his portrait alongside German Chancellor Friedrich Merz (L) during the International Kite Festival in Ahmedabad on 12 January 2026. **PHOTO: AFP**

INDIA and Germany are looking to boost defence industry cooperation, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said Monday after hosting Chancellor Friedrich Merz in his home state of Gujarat.

Merz said Berlin also wants a closer security partnership with New Delhi, including deeper “cooperation between our defence industries” to cut India’s traditional dependence on Russia for military hardware.

Merz began his two-day India visit

— his first to Asia since taking office in May — two weeks ahead of an EU-India summit and as India and the European bloc are working on a free trade agreement.

Both countries announced several agreements and joint declarations after the leaders’ meeting with an aim to boost their \$50 billion trade.

The announcements included strengthening defence industry cooperation and on semiconductors and critical

minerals.

The two countries “are working together on secure, trusted, and resilient supply chains and our MoUs on these issues will strengthen our partnership”, Modi said.

“Closer cooperation in security and defence shows mutual trust and shared views,” Modi added.

“We will work on a roadmap to increase defence industrial cooperation, which will open new opportunities for co-development and co-production.”

The meeting between the Indian and German leaders comes at a time when both are facing economic and security challenges from the world’s two biggest economies, China and the United States.

Merz said Berlin was “committed to an international order in which we can live freely and securely, because the world is currently undergoing a process of realignment”.

“It is increasingly characterized by great power politics and thinking in terms of spheres of influence, which is why we must join forces to weather these rough winds,” he added.

“That is why we also want to move closer together in terms of security policy, such as conducting joint exercises between our air forces and navies for security in the Indo-Pacific.” — AFP

## Trump reiterates intention to acquire Greenland “one way or the other”

US President Donald Trump on Sunday once again claimed that the United States will acquire Denmark’s Greenland “one way or the other”.

Speaking aboard Air Force One, Trump said that with regard to Greenland, he was not considering leasing or short-term arrangements, but “acquiring” the territory.

“We’re talking about acquiring, not leasing, not having it short term, we’re talking about acquiring,” said Trump, adding it’s insufficient for the country to merely maintain military bases on the island.

“I’d love to make a deal with them. It’s easier, but one way or the other, we’re going to have Greenland,” Trump asserted.

Asked if the US demand for Greenland will damage NATO and European allies, Trump said, “If it affects NATO and it affects NATO, but you know, they need us much more than we need them.”

“I’m the one that saved NATO,” Trump claimed, again questioning whether NATO allies would support the United States when it is needed.

“I just wonder whether or not, if we needed NATO, would they be there for us? I’m not sure they would,” the president said. — Xinhua

## Top Japan diplomat urges “robust” implementation of Gaza peace plan

JAPANESE Foreign Minister Toshimitsu Motegi on Sunday visited Israel and urged the Middle Eastern nation to steadily implement a US-brokered peace plan aimed at ending the conflict in the Gaza Strip, while affirming Japan’s willingness to play a role in achieving the goal.

In talks with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Motegi emphasized that the “robust” implementation of the Gaza peace plan is crucial for improving the situation and urged Israel to “take appropriate responses” to ensure humanitarian assistance is provided in Gaza, according to the Japanese Foreign Ministry.

After more than two years of war, a cease-fire in the Gaza Strip between Israeli and Hamas forces took effect in October last year under the first phase of the peace deal led by the administration



Japanese Foreign Minister Toshimitsu Motegi (L) and his Israeli counterpart Gideon Sa’ar shake hands in Jerusalem on 11 January 2026. **PHOTO: KYODO**

of US President Donald Trump. Israel has continued its attacks, although not

at the same intensity as seen before the cease-fire. — Kyodo

## Rights and freedom of all countries to conduct activities in Arctic according to law should be respected: spokesperson

CHINA’S activities in the Arctic, aiming to promote peace, stability, and sustainable development in the region, are in line with the international law, and the rights and freedom of all countries to conduct activities in the Arctic in accordance with the law should be fully respected, a Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson said here Monday.

Spokesperson Mao Ning made the remarks at a regular news briefing after US President Donald Trump recently said that the United States needs to take control of Greenland to prevent China and Russia from taking over Denmark’s Arctic territory.

Mao said the Arctic involves the overall interests of the international community, and the United States should not use other countries as a pretext for pursuing its own interests. — Xinhua



SPORTS

Carrick is frontrunner for interim Man Utd job: reports

MICHAEL Carrick is in pole position to be named as Manchester United’s interim manager until the end of the season, according to media reports on Monday.

The BBC and Sky Sports said talks between the 44-year-old and the club’s hierarchy had progressed well, with United keen to make an appointment before players returned to training on Wednesday.

Carrick previously had an unbeaten three-game stint as caretaker boss at Old Trafford in 2021.

The former midfielder, who won 12 major trophies in his 12-year playing career at United, was appointed manager of Middlesbrough in October 2022.

Carrick guided Middlesbrough to the Championship play-offs in his first season in charge but was dismissed in June after finishing 10<sup>th</sup> in the second tier.

United have also been in discussions with former boss Ole Gunnar Solskjaer about a return to the club.

The Red Devils dismissed Ruben Amorim last week after a dismal 14-month stint under the Portuguese coach.

Caretaker boss Darren Fletcher has overseen a 2-2 draw against lowly Burnley in the Premier League and a 2-1 defeat to Brighton in the FA Cup.

United’s exit from both domestic cup competitions at the

first hurdle, plus a lack of European football, means they will play only 40 matches this season — their lowest number since the 1914/1915 campaign.

The 20-time English champions are seventh in the Premier League, but just three points outside the top four and one point behind fifth-placed Brentford.

A top-four finish would guarantee a return to the lucrative Champions League and top five is likely to be enough thanks to the strong performance of English sides in European competition so far this season.

United host local rivals Manchester City on Saturday in what could be Carrick’s first game in charge. — AFP



Manchester United’s English caretaker manager Michael Carrick (R) speaks with Manchester United’s Portuguese midfielder Bruno Fernandes (L) after the English Premier League football match between Manchester United and Arsenal at Old Trafford in Manchester, north west England, on 2 December 2021. **PHOTO: OLISCARFF / AFP / FILE**

Arsenal powers past Portsmouth; M United crashes out of FA Cup third round



Arsenal’s Brazilian midfielder (11) Gabriel Martinelli (2R) celebrates scoring the team’s third goal during the English FA Cup third round football match between Portsmouth and Arsenal at Fratton Park in Portsmouth, southern England on 11 January 2026. **PHOTO: GLYN KIRK / AFP**

PREMIER League leader Arsenal overcame conceding an early goal to reach the fourth round of the FA Cup with a 4-1 win away to Championship side Portsmouth.

Gabriel Martinelli scored a hat-trick for Arsenal, who showed how effective they are from set pieces after Colby Bishop rewarded Portsmouth’s bright start with a third-minute opener.

Arsenal equalized following a scramble after a corner

in the seventh minute, and Martinelli scored his first after another corner in the 25<sup>th</sup> minute.

Although Noni Madueke missed a first-half penalty for Arsenal, Martinelli completed his hat-trick with a far-post finish following a well-worked team move and a header from another corner to keep the Gunners in the race for four titles this season.

Manchester United’s bad season got worse after a 2-1

defeat at home to Brighton ended its interest in this year’s FA Cup.

With Darren Fletcher still in temporary charge of Manchester United, his side was outplayed by Brighton, who led 2-0 thanks to goals from Brajan Gruda and Danny Welbeck before Benjamin Sesko gave the home side late hope with a goal in 85 minutes, although hopes of an equalizer were ended when Shea Lacey saw an 89<sup>th</sup>-minute red card. — Xinhua

Napoli stay in touch with leaders Inter thanks to talisman McTominay

SCOTT McTominay kept Napoli in touch with Serie A leaders Inter Milan with a brace in Sunday’s entertaining 2-2 draw at the San Siro, after AC Milan were held to a 1-1 draw at Fiorentina.

The Scotland midfielder twice equalized to make sure that the reigning champions would stay four points behind Inter, who seemed set to move five clear of second-placed Milan after taking the lead through Hakan Calhanoglu’s penalty in 73 minute.

Instead Inter stay three points ahead of their local rivals, with Roma in fourth and level on 39 points with Napoli who were saved by a stellar performance from McTominay.

Calhanoglu’s spot-kick, rattled in off the post past penalty specialist Vanja Milinkovic-Savic, seemed to be the decisive blow with Inter in the ascendancy and Napoli livid.

The awarding of the spot-kick, for Amir Rrahmani stepping on Henrikh Mkhitaryan’s foot, sent Antonio Conte into a wild rage on the touchline and he was sent off for his rant at

officials in which he loudly called the decision “a disgrace”.

“I think we should move on and focus on the performance which was excellent, as was the reaction after conceding the penalty,” said assistant coach Cristian Stellini in place of Conte.

“That gives a lot of faith to a team that tonight, at a tough ground against the league leaders, showed itself worthy of being called champions.”

But with nine minutes remaining McTominay, who in the first half cancelled out Federico Dimarco’s brilliant early opener, deftly volleyed home his fifth league goal of the season from Noa Lang’s hooked cross to give Napoli a deserved point.

For Inter it was another missed opportunity in a big match, with just one point collected from their four fixtures played against Napoli, Milan and fifth-placed Juve who face Cremonese on Monday.

That is a worrying trend ahead of key Champions League clashes with Arsenal and Borussia Dortmund coming up later this month. — AFP





# Chinese astronauts conduct key training, experiments on space station

THE Shenzhou-21 crew aboard China's Tiangong space station have recently successfully completed a series of crucial in-orbit training exercises and advanced scientific experiments, laying solid groundwork for future missions and scientific discovery.

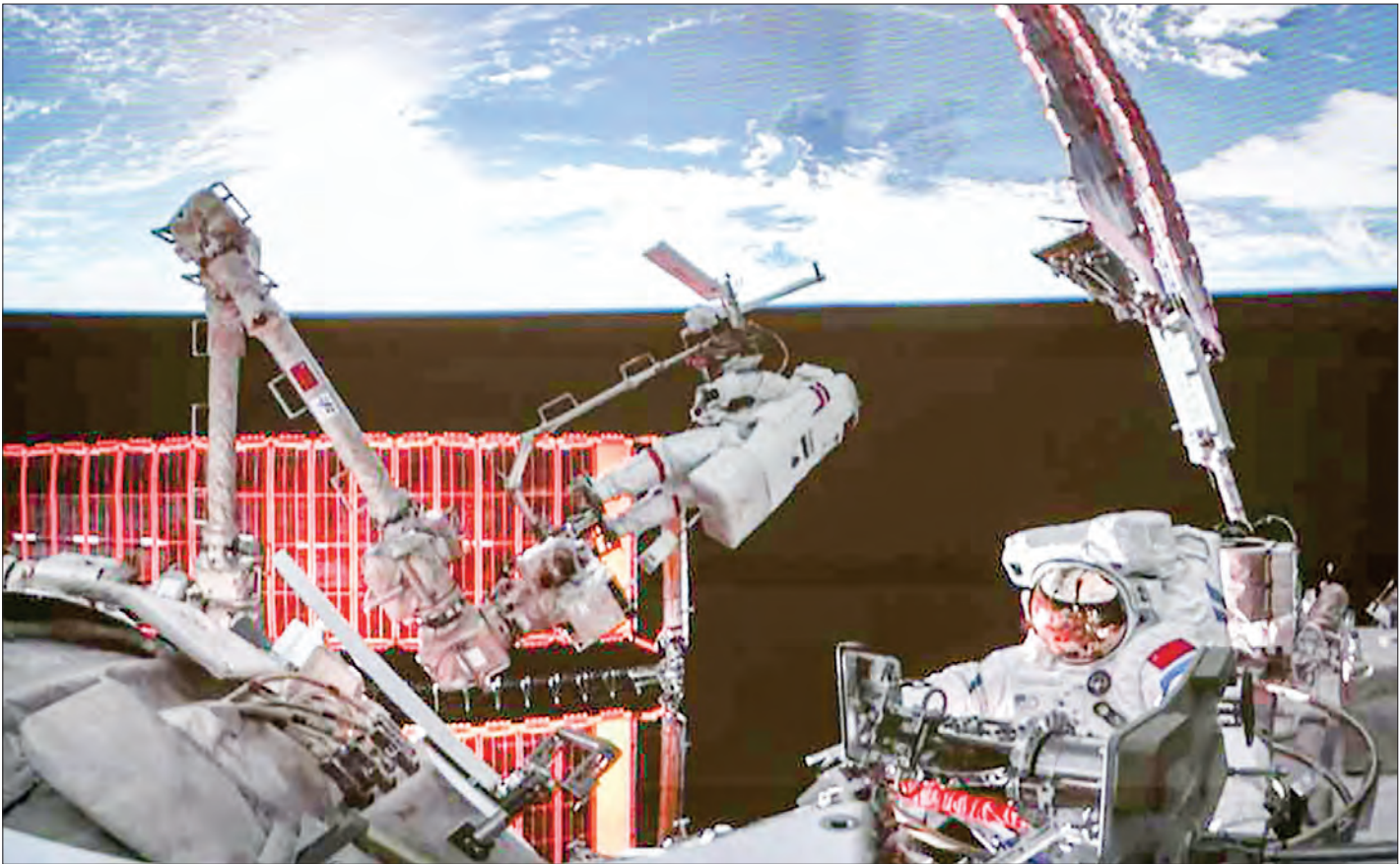
A video report by China Media Group on Sunday night showed the astronauts engaged in comprehensive drills, including teleoperated rendezvous and docking, medical rescue procedures and emergency evacuation training last week.

These activities are designed to enhance the crew's operational proficiency and emergency response capabilities during their long-term stay in orbit, it said.

According to the report, for the teleoperated docking training, astronauts practised using manual control devices to simulate the delicate process of guiding spacecraft. The medical drill focused on familiarizing the crew with the location and operation of medical equipment, reviewing protocols to ensure preparedness for potential health incidents.

Notably, the team conducted an emergency evacuation drill, simulating a fire scenario requiring a swift exit from the station module.

Beyond training, the crew made significant progress in several scientific research projects. In the field of space medicine, astronauts utilized VR headsets



This screen image captured at Beijing Aerospace Control Centre on 9 December 2025 shows Shenzhou-21 astronauts Zhang Lu and Wu Fei (R) performing extravehicular activities outside China's orbiting space station. PHOTO: XINHUA

and electroencephalogram (EEG) equipment to conduct studies on eye-brain coordination. This research aims to analyze the patterns and changes in astronauts' brain control signals under weightless conditions, potentially contributing to future brain-computer interaction technologies.

Simultaneously, the in-situ optical study of lithium-ion battery electrochemistry progressed smoothly.

The findings are expected to provide vital theoretical support for developing more reliable and efficient lithium-ion batteries for future space exploration endeavors. — Xinhua

## India-Russia energy cooperation expands with nuclear power projects - Business Alliance

ENERGY cooperation between Russia and India goes beyond fuel trade and includes nuclear energy projects and infrastructure development in the Arctic, Sammy Kotwani, president of the Indian Business Alliance (IBA) in Russia, told Sputnik.

"We are already seeing deeper layers [of energy cooperation] beyond pure oil trade: Russia and India are discussing new nuclear power plant options (including broader cooperation themes like SMRs [small modular reactors] and localization approaches being discussed in public reporting)," Kotwani said.

In addition to cooperation in nuclear energy, India is strategically interested in developing energy projects in the Arctic, including those related to logistics in the region, which would enable the country to ensure its energy security, Kotwani added.

— SPUTNIK



A Russian national flag and flags with the logo of Rosatom flutters at the construction site of a cooling tower at the Kursk II nuclear power plant near the village of Makarovka outside Kurchatov, Kursk region, Russia. In 2018, construction began on the Kursk II NPP, which is expected to replace the existing Kursk plant, the largest source of electricity for the region. PHOTO: SPUTNIK

## Portugal starts early voting for presidential election

MORE than 218,000 registered voters began casting ballots on Sunday through Portugal's early and mobile voting system for the presidential elections, as the country prepares to choose a successor to President Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa.

Sunday's early voting took place one week ahead of the main election day on 18 January, using a flexible system that allows voters to cast ballots at any designated polling station nationwide.

Meanwhile, presidential candidates continued campaigning across the country, with most activities concentrated in northern regions. The candidates in the race include Antonio Jose Seguro, Henrique Gouveia e Melo, Luis Marques Mendes, Joao Cotrim de Figueiredo, among others.

If no candidate secures an absolute majority in the first round, a runoff election between the two leading contenders is scheduled for 8 February.

Among those voting early on Sunday was President Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa himself, who registered for early voting "with the aim of calling attention to this modality that allows greater flexibility for Portuguese citizens to vote", according to a previous statement. Voting is not mandatory in Portugal. — Xinhua