

Hluttaw Sessions To Revitalize Legislation Through Bill Debates



The Hluttaw Session Convening Central Committee and Work Committees' Coordination Meeting 1/2026 is underway yesterday, presided over by U Aung Lin Dwe, Patron of the Hluttaw Session Convening Central Committee and Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker.

The upcoming second regular sessions will revitalize the Hluttaw sector through the deliberation of bills and the raising and discussion of sterisk questions, according to the Hluttaw Session Convening Central Committee and Work Committees' Coordination Meeting 1/2026 held yesterday.

The meeting, aimed at ensuring the successful convening of the second regular sessions of the Third Union-level Hluttaws, was held yesterday afternoon at the meeting hall of the Zabuthiri Building in the Hluttaw Complex, Nay Pyi Taw, and was attended by U Aung Lin Dwe, Patron of the Hluttaw Session Convening Central Committee and Speaker of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw.

In his opening remarks, the Patron of the Hluttaw Session Convening Central Committee stated that the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Office had prepared and issued

a parliamentary calendar for holding the second and third regular sessions between 2 June and 31 December and had already distributed it to the relevant organizations for advance notification. He also noted that invitation letters had been sent to Hluttaw representatives to attend the second regular sessions of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw, the Pyithu Hluttaw, and the Amyotha Hluttaw, and that representatives had been requested to arrive in Nay Pyi Taw no earlier than 30 May and no later than 31 May.

The Patron of the Hluttaw Session Convening Central Committee also stated that, to successfully hold the second regular session of the Hluttaw, the attending members of the central committee and the work committees, including the Accommodation Committee, the Communications, Sound Control and Voting Machine Operations Committee,

the Transport Committee, the Ceremony Preparation Committee, and the Information Committee, must collaborate and coordinate according to their respective responsibilities.

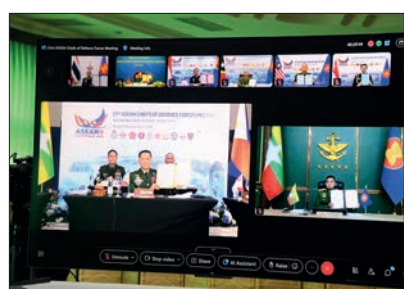
He also stated that, regarding the electricity sector, measures should be systematically implemented to ensure that there are no power outages within the Hluttaw premises and major Hluttaw halls during the sessions, including during the operation of communications systems and the voting machine system.

Subsequently, officials from the attending work committees presented the implementation status of their respective sectors in preparation for successfully holding the second regular sessions, after which the Patron of the central committee provided supplementary remarks on their presentations and delivered the concluding address.

Following that, the Patron of the central committee proceeded to Nay Pyi Taw Sipin Guest House No 2. There, he inspected the arrangements to provide one room for each Hluttaw representative to ensure comfortable accommodation, the measures taken for cooking and fire safety, the preparation of television and reading rooms for access to daily news and information, and the setup of a healthcare clinic for medical emergencies, after which necessary instructions were given.

Also present at the meeting were Chairman of the Hluttaw Session Convening Central Committee Jeng Phang Naw Taung, Vice-Chairman U Maung Maung Ohn, Union ministers, the chairman of the Nay Pyi Taw Council, members of the central committee and work committees, and officials from the respective Hluttaws. — MNA/TH

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NATIONAL

Myanmar, China mark 7th International Tea Day in Yangon

THE 7th International Tea Day, the China-Myanmar Cultural Salon of Tea for Harmony 2026, took place at the National Museum in Yangon yesterday.

The event was co-hosted by the Chinese Embassy to Myanmar and Myanmar Tea Association (MTA), and supported by the National Museum (Yangon), China Media Group (CMG), Myanmar Anhui Chamber of Commerce, Myanmar Yunnan Chamber of Commerce, Myanmar Bowen School and GESC. More than 300 representatives from China-Myanmar governmental departments, organizations, schools, companies and

media.

The attendees discussed tea culture, development measures for the tea sector, consumption, health and enhancement of cooperation.

The event also showcased tea beverages and cuisines, cultural performances such as music of Chinese Guzheng, Erhu and Myanmar harp, tea dance, Yijinjing, Paper-cutting, and Tea Ceremony. — Bala/KTZH

The seventh International Tea Day is underway yesterday in Yangon.



Myeik Schools Launch 2026-2027 Enrolment Drive Posters



Myeik officials mark school enrolment signage launch with a group photo.

TO widely inform parents and the public about the school enrolment week, the posters bearing the motto “Let’s Enrol All School-Age Children for Sustainable Development of the Country”, were erected yesterday morning at schools in Myeik.

The posters bearing the motto “Let’s Enrol All School-Age Children for Sustainable Development of the Country”, measuring six feet by three feet each, were erected at BEHS 1, BEMS 5 and BEHS 5 by township management and admin-

istration committee chairman U Pyi Hein Kyaw, district education officer U Than Htike, departmental officials, head-teachers, and teachers.

The school enrolment week is from 25 to 31 May, and officials will continue installing awareness posters and notices to widely inform parents and the public, including instructions for principals and teachers, appeals to parents and guardians, enrolment campaign notices, and information related to school enrolment activities. The schools are

scheduled to open on 1 June nationwide.

According to the Township Education Office, preparations are currently underway at various schools in Myeik township to enable students to attend classes for the 2026-2027 academic year. In Myeik township, there are 18 high schools, eight high schools (branch), 12 middle schools, nine middle schools (branch), 24 post-primary schools, 72 primary schools, five private schools, and eight monastic schools. — Khine Htoo (IPRD)/KTZH

Yenangyoung launches new school enrolment awareness push



Yenangyoung education personnel pose for a documentary photo yesterday alongside the newly installed school enrolment signage.

AN awareness poster campaign for the 2026-2027 academic year school enrolment programme was launched in Yenangyoung Township on the morning of 21 May to encourage all school-age children to enrol in school under the theme: “Let’s Enrol All School-Age Children for Sustainable Development of the Country.”

Attendees collectively erected the poster in front of the Township Education Officer’s Office at 7:30 am. Regional Hluttaw representative

U Aung Naing Win, Chairman of the Township Administration and Management Committee U Aung Zin Oo and committee members, departmental officials, Township Education Officer Daw Sanda Aye, and officials formally opened the campaign by sprinkling scented water.

According to the Township Education Office, enrolment for the 2026-2027 academic year will begin on 25 May at all basic education schools across the township. — Ko Soe Gyi/KZL

Daily newspapers available online

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News and Periodicals Enterprise

NATIONAL

Defence Services C-in-C attends 23rd ASEAN Chiefs of Defence Forces Meeting (23rd ACDFM)

THE 23rd ASEAN Chiefs of Defence Forces Meeting (23rd ACDFM) convened yesterday via videoconference to strengthen regional military cooperation.

The Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, who chaired the 23rd ASEAN Chiefs of Defence Forces Meeting (23rd ACDFM), delivered an opening address.

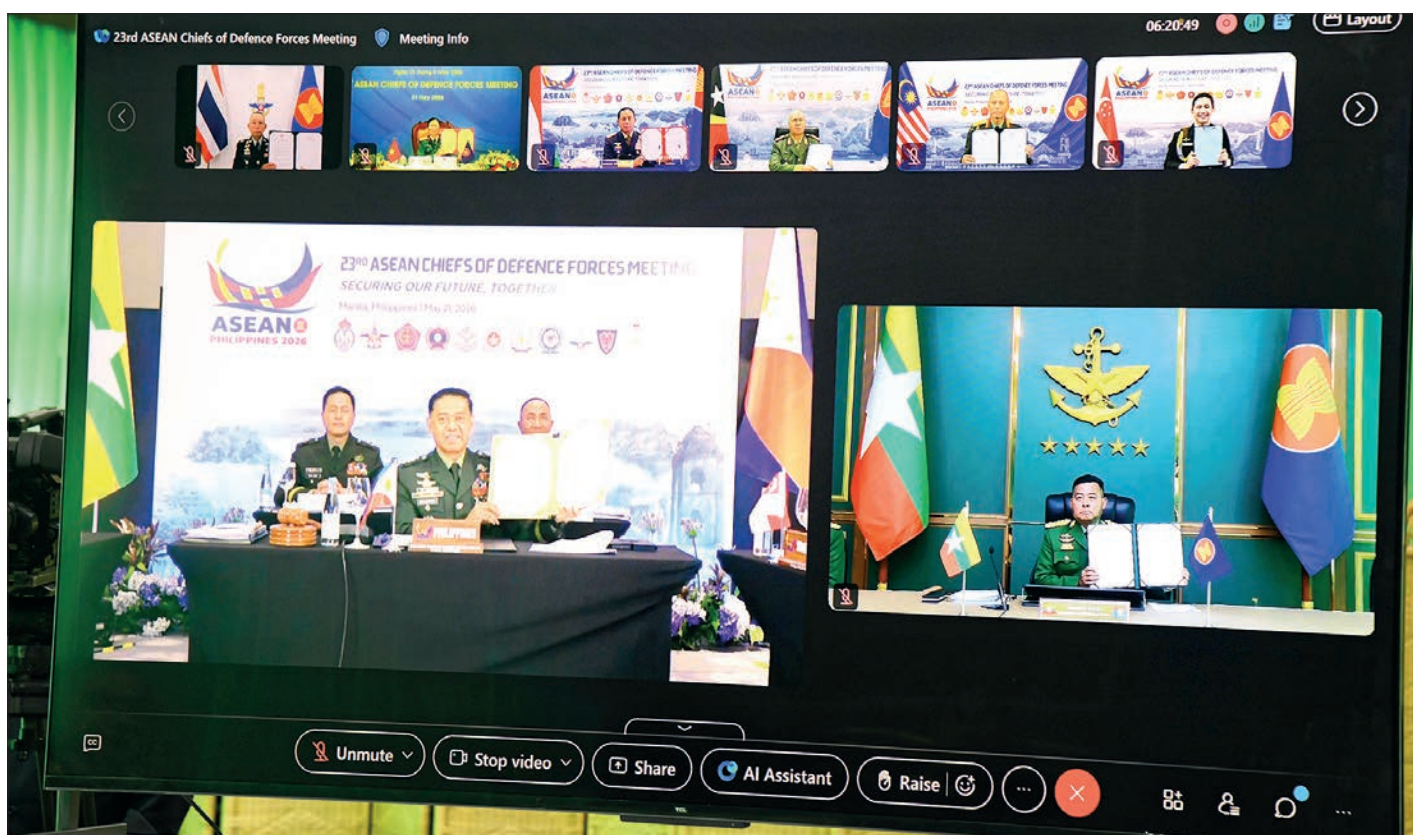
Maj-Gen Benedict D Balaba, Chief of Staff for Intelligence of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, who chaired the 23rd ASEAN Military Intelligence Meeting (23rd AMIM), and Chief of Staff for Operations Maj-Gen Elmer B Suderio of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, who chaired the 16th ASEAN Military Operations Meeting (16th AMOM), read out the reports of relevant meetings.

The leaders of delegations from the armed forces of ASEAN member states in attendance discussed their views on the theme "Securing Our Future, Together" in turn, following the alphabetical order of the countries.

In his discussion, Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services General Ye Win Oo of the Myanmar Tatmadaw said that since its establishment, ASEAN has been a united organization founded on strong principles and noble objectives. Likewise, ASEAN armed forces have continuously focused on enhancing efforts to promote regional stability, peace, development, and future security. The theme of this year's meeting, "Securing Our Future, Together", is highly relevant to the current situations faced by ASEAN armed forces and is also a strategic necessity. Furthermore, it highlights and reinforces ASEAN's core objectives and activities.

At present, major powers are increasingly refraining from using direct military invasion against other countries. Instead, in order to exert control and influence over those countries, they are employing a wide range of approaches through assistance and support, including political, economic, social, ideological, propaganda, military, and diplomatic means. In particular, some major powers are competing in efforts to bring small countries in the Asia-Pacific region under their influence, ranging from political and economic leverage to military influence. This includes forming alliance blocs and conducting military exercises as part of their strategic competition to expand their influence.

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar has now successfully held a free and dignified election, and Hluttaws comprising elected representatives who will practically implement the will of the people, along with a democratically elected



Defence Services Commander-in-Chief General Ye Win Oo joins the 23rd ASEAN Chiefs of Defence Forces Meeting (23rd ACDFM) online yesterday.

government, have emerged. In order to strengthen the country's journey toward building a democratic nation, efforts to establish a region-based federal system compatible with the country's conditions will continue, while work related to the safety of national interest, the rule of law, and administrative reforms will be accelerated. The new government also wishes to reaffirm that it will pursue an independent, active, and non-aligned foreign policy, strengthen existing friendship and cooperation with neighbouring countries and partner countries, and continue to promote regional interests in a balanced manner.

The foundation for regional peace, stability, development, and future security depends on the security environment of each member state. Therefore, in order to strengthen regional stability in the future and address complex and multifaceted challenges, all member states will be able to overcome and respond to them only through unity and cooperation. In line with the theme of today's meeting, "Securing Our Future, Together", it was emphasized that, for the future social development of the peoples of ASEAN member states, as well as for regional stability and security, the Myanmar Tatmadaw will actively cooperate and work together with ASEAN member states.

Likewise, the General discussed that ASEAN and the ASEAN armed forces should work together in unity to build a stable, peaceful, and secure communi-

ty based on the long-standing friendly relations among the peoples within the ASEAN region.

The Two-Year Activity Work Plan (2026-2028) of ASEAN Defence Forces was approved. Moreover, the Joint Statement of the 23rd ASEAN Chiefs of Defence Forces Meeting (23rd ACDFM) was also affirmed. They signed the joint statement and had documentary photos taken with the ASEAN Chiefs of Defence Forces.

The Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, who chaired the 23rd ASEAN Chiefs of Defence Forces Meeting (23rd ACDFM), delivered a handover speech and handed over the ASEAN Flag and Chairmanship responsibilities of the 24th ASEAN Chiefs of Defence Forces Meeting (24th ACDFM) to the Chief of Defence Force of the Singapore Armed Forces (SAF).

The Chief of Defence Force of the Singapore Armed Forces delivered a speech accepting the chairmanship responsibilities and a concluding remark.

Also, present at the meeting were a delegation led by Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services General Ye Win Oo of Myanmar, Commander of the Royal Brunei Armed Forces (RBAF) Maj-Gen Dato Paduka Seri Haji Muhammed Haszaimi bin Bol Hassan and delegation members, Commander-in-Chief of the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces General Vong Pisen and delegation members, Chief of Staff of the Indonesian National Armed Forces General Agus Subiyanto and delegation

members, Deputy Minister of National Defence and Chief of the General Staff of the Lao People's Army Lt-Gen Saichay Kommasith and delegation members, Chief of Defence Force of Malaysia General Dato Seri Haji Malek Razak bin Sulai Man and delegation members, Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces of the Philippines General Romeo Saturnino Brawner Jr and delegation members, Chief of Defence Force (CDF) of the Singapore Armed Forces Vice-Admiral Aaron Beng Yao Cheng and delegation members, Chief of Defence Forces of the Royal Thai Armed Forces General Ukirs Boontanondha and delegation members, Chief of Defence Force of the Timor-Leste Defence Force Lt-Gen Domingos Raul and delegation members, and Deputy Defence Minister and Chief of the General Staff of Vietnamese People's Army General Nguyen Tan Cuong and delegation members.

Likewise, the 16th ASEAN Military Operations Meeting (16th AMOM) was held on 19 May, attended by a delegation led by Chief of Staff (Army) Lt-Gen Than Htaik of the Office of the Commander-in-Chief (Army) and the 3rd ASEAN Military Intelligence Community Leaders' Conference (AMICLC 3) and the 23rd ASEAN Military Intelligence Meeting (23rd AMIM) by Chief of Military Affairs Security Lt-Gen Kyaw Ko Htaik and party on 19 and 20 May through videoconferencing. Commitments to strengthening relations and enhancing cooperation among ASEAN armed forces have been further solidified. — MNA/TTA

NATIONAL

Science & Tech Union Minister explores Russian Industrial Digitalization Expo

UNION Minister for Science and Technology Dr Myo Thein Kyaw, who is currently in Nizhny Novgorod, the Russian Federation, visited the exhibition booths displayed at the Digitalization of Industrial Russia 2026 Forum yesterday evening.

At the booths, Russian technology companies showcased the use of artificial intelligence technologies, bioinformatics technologies, and cybersecurity technologies across various socioeconomic sectors, efforts to manufacture communication equipment and related devices domestically, and attempts to produce related applications and equipment within Russia. The use of Digital Twin technology in Moscow's urban management and the application of bioinformatics technologies across multiple sectors were displayed.

The Union minister also observed the independent operating systems free from foreign reliance, cybersecurity and data management applications, technological devices, and software at Astra Group's booth.

During the discussion with Astra Group, the Union minister discussed technical assistance and support for Myanmar to independently develop operating systems and software, human resource development, and the signing of an MoU between Moscow Technical University of Communications and Informatics (MTUCI) and Naypyitaw State Polytechnic University (NSPU) for human resource development and implementation of technological research. — MNA/KTZH



The Myanmar delegation led by Union Minister Dr Myo Thein Kyaw discusses with Astra Group in the Russian Federation.

Yangon Region CM attends Chongqing International Friendship Cities Cooperation Conference 2026

THE opening ceremony of the Chongqing International Friendship Cities Cooperation Conference 2026 was held on 19-20 May at the Yuzhou Hotel in Chongqing, China and was attended by a delegation led by Yangon Region Chief Minister U Aung Naing Thu.

The ceremony was attended by delegations from 29 countries and 38 cities, representatives of nine international friendship organizations, diplomats from 17 countries, Consuls-General from consulates-general based in Chongqing and Chengdu, and representatives from foreign businesses and business associations. During the event, participating cities were introduced, and the achievements of cooperation among Chongqing's international friendship cities were showcased.

On the afternoon of 20 May, the delegation led by the Yangon Region Chief Minister



The Myanmar delegation led by Yangon Region Chief Minister U Aung Naing Thu is pictured during the Chongqing International Friendship Cities Cooperation Conference 2026.

attended the seminar on cultural and tourism promotion of international partnership friendship cities, held at the Foreign Affairs Office of the Chongqing Municipal Government. Later that evening, at the Yuelai Wyndham Hotel, they attended the signing ceremony of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on establishing sister-region relations between the Yangon Region of the Republic of the

Union of Myanmar and the Chongqing Municipality of the People's Republic of China. The MoU was signed by U Myo Myint Aung, Chairman of the Yangon City Development Committee and Mayor of Yangon, and Mr Huang Maojun, Deputy Mayor of the Chongqing Municipal Government. The delegation reportedly returned to Yangon by air yesterday afternoon. — Zwe Htet Ko (IPRD)/TH

Officials inspect rural water supply project in Ywangan

OFFICIALS from the Ywangan Township Rural Development Department, Danu Self-Administered Zone, Shan State (South), conducted a field inspection of a pipeline installation project in Htaminpaung Village, yesterday.

The project aims to mitigate summer water scarcity and ensure a year-round supply of clean drinking water for rural residents. During the visit, Ywangan Township Rural Development Department Head U Thein Myat Htaik and engineers inspected the ongoing installation of a 3,800-foot-long water pipeline connecting the water source to the village.

Following the inspection, the

Township Head met with village officials to emphasize the importance of engineering works and ensuring timely completion within the timeframe. He also coordinated and addressed the suggestions and requirements presented by the local villagers.

The water supply project is being implemented with an allocated Union budget of K22.31 million. Executed through a collaborative effort between engineers from the Township Rural Development Department and villagers since the first week of May, the project has now reached approximately 30 per cent completion. — Cho Than Nyunt (Rural)



Local villagers and engineers work together on the Ywangan rural water supply project.

The people are urged to receive vaccination of COVID-19 without fail as full-time vaccination of COVID-19 and receiving booster shots can effectively mitigate infection of the virus, severe suffering from the disease and increase of death rate due to the disease.

NATIONAL

Bagan Hotels, Eateries Save Four Eras of Murals

THE mural paintings of four eras are being preserved at hotels and restaurants during this low season in the Bagan Ancient Cultural Heritage Zone.

Hotels, motels, and restaurants in Bagan usually carry out renovation works during the off-season. The paintings representing the four eras of Myanmar culture are painted on brick walls and bamboo walls for both local and foreign visitors to be able to experience and appreciate Bagan's cultural heritage.

To create these artworks, artists are invited from Myinkaba Village in Bagan. During the low travel season, mural painting jobs offered to artists in Bagan and other regions provide convenient employment opportunities.

"When tourist arrivals decline in Bagan, we are often hired to paint artworks representing the four eras at hotels and restaurants. Once tourism resumes in August, we will re-

turn to selling hand-painted artworks, figurines, and paintings to visitors at Bagan pagodas. We paint the four-era images on either brick walls or bamboo walls using watercolour paints.

in Bagan can still be seen preserved today in Myinkaba Village only," said U Zeya, artist from Myinkaba village.

The mural paintings commonly portray the lifestyles,

square feet for paintings on brick walls.

The ability of artists from Myinkaba village to continue creating these mural paintings dates back to the Bagan era, af-

accompanied King Manuha and helped construct temples and pagodas in the Myinkaba area created mural paintings at that time. These artistic traditions and heritage remain preserved



Charges depend on the wall size and are calculated per square foot. When travellers arrive in Bagan and see artworks from the Bagan era along with those from other eras, it enhances the image of the Bagan cultural region. The traditional heritage of the craftsmen who accompanied King Manuha after his arrival

culture, and religious affairs of the Bagan, Pinya, Inwa, and Konbaung eras. Hotels mostly feature traditional Bagan cultural paintings, while restaurants often display paintings from all four eras. Artists from Myinkaba village charge around K20,000 per square feet for paintings on bamboo walls and K25,000 per



Bagan hospitality businesses display historic interior mural paintings to preserve local heritage. **PHOTOS: ZWE MARN**

ter King Anawrahta conquered Thaton and brought King Manuha, the 25th of the Thaton dynasty, to Bagan. The craftsmen who

in Myinkaba village to date, continuing the preservation of Myanmar's traditional cultural arts. — Thitsa (MNA)/KTZH

5th Myanmar-Philippines Foreign Policy Consultations held

THE 5th Myanmar-Philippines Foreign Policy Consultations, co-chaired by U Ko Ko Kyaw, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Myanmar, and Mr Leo M Herrera-Lim, Undersecretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Philippines, was held at the Department of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Philippines on the morning of 18 May 2026.

They cordially exchanged views on enhancing diplomatic relations and cooperation, strengthening trade and investment ties, advancing energy cooperation, and combatting transnational crimes, and promoting people-to-people contacts. The discussion further covered Myanmar's political developments, including the key priorities of the newly elected Government and Myanmar's cooperation to normalize its relations with ASEAN. The two sides exchanged views



Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs U Ko Ko Kyaw shakes hands with Filipino Undersecretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs Mr Leo M Herrera-Lim during the consultations on 18 May.

on regional and global issues such as the ongoing conflict in the Middle East and its impact on the region, as well as the matters of common interest of both countries.

After the meeting, the Myanmar delegation, led by the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs, attended the luncheon hosted by Undersecretary of the Depart-

ment of Foreign Affairs of the Philippines, Mr Leo M Herrera-Lim.

On the evening of 18 May 2026, the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs visited the Myanmar Embassy in Manila, the Philippines. Following a tour of the Embassy, he met the Embassy staff and gave necessary guidance. — MNA

Tanai villagers receive Mya Sein Yaung project funds



The handover ceremony of the Mya Sein Yaung revolving project funds is underway yesterday in Tanai, Kachin State.

THE Tanai Township Rural Development Department, under the Ministry of Cooperatives and Rural Development, disbursed the Mya Sein Yaung revolving project funds at Mongkhun Village in Tanai Township, Kachin State, yesterday. The project aims to enable rural residents to expand their family income-generating businesses. During the ceremony, U Tun Min Lwin, Head of the Tanai District Rural Development Department, explained the objectives of the Mya Sein Yaung project fund disbursement.

Subsequently, township officials discussed the project framework, interest rates,

loan periods, and regulations. They then handed over the revolving fund of K87.1 million to the members of the Mongkhun Village project working committee.

Under the field supervision of the officials, the village project committee systematically distributed the 12th batch of low-interest loans directly to 153 project members. The disbursement included K65.3 million to 122 individuals for agricultural businesses, K6.3 million to 11 individuals for livestock breeding, and K15.5 million to 20 individuals for trading businesses, totalling K87.1 million. — Sein Lwin (Rural)

NATIONAL

Industry & MSME Development Union Minister attends industrial development seminar

THE seminar on capacity building for the development of industries and industrial zones was held yesterday morning at the SME Centre on Kyaik-wine Pagoda Road, Mayangon Township, Yangon Region. Union Minister for Industry and MSME Development Dr Charlie Than attended the event virtually from the meeting room in Office 30.

The Union minister first stated that he believed the seminar would support the implementation of the development of industries and industrial zones in accordance with the enacted Industrial Zone Laws and Rules, based on the current situation.

Subsequently, capaci-



The seminar on capacity building for the development of industries and industrial zones is underway yesterday, attended by Union Minister Dr Charlie Than.

ty-building matters for the development of private industries

and industrial zones were discussed, and the ceremony was

concluded.

Afterwards, the Union min-

ister received a delegation led by Mr Sergey A Kopylov, Deputy Director-General of Tyazhpromexport Co Ltd (TPE) of the Russian Federation, at the ministry.

During the meeting, they discussed the procedures required for the earliest possible commissioning of the Heat Recovery Power Station (HRPS) at the No 2 Steel Mill (Pangpet) project, issues concerning assistance from the Government of the Russian Federation for the resumption of operations at the smelting workshop using the Romelt process, and matters related to negotiating, amending, and signing contractual terms and conditions in line with project requirements. — MNA/TH

Myanmar seeks GACC registration for durian exports



Officials view durians grown in Myanmar.

TO achieve the goal of initiating durian exports to China, the world's largest durian buyer, Myanmar will seek registration with the General Administration of Customs of China (GACC), according to the Department of Agriculture.

At present, Myanmar's durian market mainly relies on domestic consumption; however, it is planned to start exporting to foreign markets on a large scale.

To access the world's top durian consumer, the department is seeking GACC registration for direct exports

to China.

In Myanmar, durians are mainly grown in Mon State, Taninthayi Region, Kayin State and Bago Region, and some durian farms have been established on a trial basis in Yangon Region and Ayeyawady Region. Durians are produced in vast quantities in May, June and July.

With their durian production, Thailand, Malaysia, and Vietnam have led the durian market, and Myanmar has now increased production and explored new potential markets. — MT/ZS

Kungyangon receives Mya Sein Yaung project funds

THE Kungyangon Township Rural Development Department, under the Ministry of Cooperatives and Rural Development, disbursed K90 million of the Mya Sein Yaung revolving project funds at Seikgyi and Mayan villages in Kungyangon Township, Yangon Region, yesterday.

Daw Su Thidar Lin, Head of the Kungyangon Township Rural Development Department, first explained that the project funds are being distributed to enable rural residents in Seikgyi and Mayan villages to expand their family income-generating businesses and to implement village infrastructure developments using the accumulated project funds.

Subsequently, officials clarified the project guidelines, interest rates, loan periods, and regulations. They then handed over the revolving fund of K90 million to the members of the respective village project working committees.

Under the field supervision of the Kungyangon Township Department officials, the village project committees systematically distributed the low-interest loans directly to the members for agriculture, livestock breeding, and trading businesses. The disbursement included K45 million to 151 project members in Seikgyi Village and another K45 million to 156 members in Mayan Village, totalling K90 million. — Karan (Rural)



Distribution of Mya Sein Yaung project funds is in progress yesterday in Kungyangon, Yangon Region.

NATIONAL

Routes Reopen: Essential Supplies Flood into Haka

VEHICLES transporting food supplies, consumer goods, construction materials, and educational and medical supplies arrived in Haka on 21 May after key transport routes linking towns in Chin State were reopened, according to reports.

Tatmadaw said it has been carrying out counter-terrorism operations in areas temporarily controlled by terrorists, in cooperation with residents, to ensure peace and stability for the public.

The convoy, accompanied by departmental officials, travelled along the Kalay-Thaingning-Falam-Haka route after authorities reopened transport links connecting Haka, Falam, Tiddim, and Tonzang. Locals welcomed the vehicles' arrival with traditional drum perfor-



Convoy transporting essential goods and departmental staff enters Haka, Chin State.



mances, auspicious branches, and flower garlands.

The supplies included basic food items, household goods, school textbooks, stationery, medicines, and construction

materials intended to support local livelihoods, healthcare services, and reconstruction activities.

Residents had previously faced shortages of food, con-

sumer goods, and medicines, as well as rising commodity prices and transport difficulties, while road access along the Kalay-Falam-Haka route remained disrupted. Officials

said the newly arrived supplies would be distributed to locals and that passenger and cargo transport services had now resumed along the route. — MNA/KZL

Bids Open for Loikaw Development Projects



The tender opening event for rural development project in Loikaw, Kayah State, is in progress yesterday.

A tender opening ceremony for rural productive roads, bridges, and water supply projects to be implemented in Kayah State during the 2026-2027 financial year was held at the Kayah State Rural Development Department office yesterday.

During the event, U Ye Win, Minister for Electricity, Energy, Industry and Transport and Chairman of the Kayah State Government Tender Committee, delivered

the opening address.

Subsequently, U Myint, Head of the Kayah State Rural Development Department, explained the criteria and procedures for tender submission, scrutiny, and selection. Following the briefing, the company profiles and technical proposals submitted by participating entrepreneurs were opened and reviewed in the presence of the tender committee members.

Under the allocated Kayah State budget of K1,000 million for the 2026-2027 FY, the projects encompass five rural production roads, 12 rural production bridges, and 13 rural drinking water supply tasks across various townships. Contracts will be officially signed with the winning companies to execute these infrastructure developments within the current financial year. — Maung Khaing (Rural)

Yangon Zoo Welcomes Critically Endangered Orangutans

THE Yangon Zoological Gardens has announced that rare young orangutans, listed as critically endangered in the wild, have arrived at the zoo and are now available for public viewing.

On 21 May, it was announced that a pair of Bornean Orangutans had arrived at the zoo. Orangutans are tailless apes that are highly intelligent and share very close genetics with humans. In the Malay language, their name translates to "people of the forest".

They were last exhibited at the Yangon Zoo approximately 40 years ago. Now, the public will

once again have the opportunity to meet them, and the zoo invites everyone to come and personally observe the adorable behaviours and movements of this cute male orangutan, Leo, and female orangutan, Pinky.

Orangutan species are found in Southeast Asia on the islands of Sumatra and Borneo. These lovely animals typically live in the wild by building nests high up in trees, using their long, strong arms to swing from tree to tree. They are known to be capable of independently solving problems and even handling and using tools. — MT/ZN



A glimpse of the Bornean Orangutan species that has arrived at the Yangon Zoological Gardens.

OPINION

ARTICLE POEM

Unite the persons with impairment to society

THE State enacted the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Law in 2015 to protect and promote the rights of persons with disabilities, and the by-laws were issued in 2017. The National Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was reconstituted on 24 August 2023, and the activities of disability classification and registration of persons with disabilities were carried out in four townships during the 2022-2023 fiscal year.

Among the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set by the United Nations, Goal 8 includes creating decent employment opportunities and ensuring equal pay for persons with disabilities, as well as reducing youth unemployment and promoting their inclusion in the labour market. Goal 10 also emphasizes enabling persons with disabilities to participate in social, economic, and political activities.

To further improve the quality of life of persons with disabilities, ensure equal rights with others, and promote respect for their dignity and capabilities, the entire society is encouraged to work together.

Accordingly, parents and guardians, local authorities, and social organizations are urged to provide collective support and assistance so that qualified persons with disabilities can access education to improve their lives.

The 2024 Population and Housing Census data stated that 2.29 million people, accounting for 7.6 per cent of the population aged five years and above, have at least one type of disability in Myanmar. By type of disability, the most common categories nationwide are 4.1 per cent visual impairment, 3.1 per cent people with difficulty in mobility, such as handling objects, walking, or climbing stairs, 2.8 per cent people with memory or learning difficulties, and 2.7 per cent people with hearing impairment.

The Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement has established institutions, including a school for the blind in Yangon and Sagaing, schools for deaf children in Yangon and Mandalay, a training school for adults with disabilities in Mayangon Township, Yangon Region, training schools for children with disabilities in Yangon and Mandalay, and a care home for children with disabilities in Yangon.

Persons with disabilities need access to vocational education, employment opportunities, and personal income to live with dignity and independence. In Myanmar, persons with disabilities are supported through inclusive education, where they learn alongside others in mainstream schools, as well as through special education schools established for students with visual, hearing, and intellectual disabilities. In addition, vocational and technical training programmes are being provided to help them acquire skills and earn their own income.

To further improve the quality of life of persons with disabilities, ensure equal rights with others, and promote respect for their dignity and capabilities, the entire society is encouraged to work together. Accordingly, parents and guardians, local authorities, and social organizations are urged to provide collective support and assistance so that qualified persons with disabilities can access education to improve their lives.

The 2024 Population and Housing Census data stated that 2.29 million people, accounting for 7.6 per cent of the population aged five years and above, have at least one type of disability in Myanmar. By type of disability, the most common categories nationwide are 4.1 per cent visual impairment, 3.1 per cent people with difficulty in mobility, such as handling objects, walking, or climbing stairs, 2.8 per cent people with memory or learning difficulties, and 2.7 per cent people with hearing impairment.

The Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement has established institutions, including a school for the blind in Yangon and Sagaing, schools for deaf children in Yangon and Mandalay, a training school for adults with disabilities in Mayangon Township, Yangon Region, training schools for children with disabilities in Yangon and Mandalay, and a care home for children with disabilities in Yangon.

Persons with disabilities need access to vocational education, employment opportunities, and personal income to live with dignity and independence. In Myanmar, persons with disabilities are supported through inclusive education, where they learn alongside others in mainstream schools, as well as through special education schools established for students with visual, hearing, and intellectual disabilities. In addition, vocational and technical training programmes are being provided to help them acquire skills and earn their own income.

To further improve the quality of life of persons with disabilities, ensure equal rights with others, and promote respect for their dignity and capabilities, the entire society is encouraged to work together. Accordingly, parents and guardians, local authorities, and social organizations are urged to provide collective support and assistance so that qualified persons with disabilities can access education to improve their lives.

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The Importance of Being a Good Citizen and Loving One's Country

By Maung Lumaw Oo

ACOUNTRY can only become peaceful, successful, and developed when its citizens act responsibly and contribute positively to society. Being a good citizen means respecting laws, helping others, protecting the environment, and working together for the improvement of the nation's interests. Every citizen has a responsibility to support and protect their country through good behaviour, education, and hard work.

One of the most important qualities of a good citizen is

responsibility. Responsible citizens obey domestic laws, respect public places, and avoid actions that may harm society. Even simple actions such as keeping the streets clean, helping neighbours, and showing kindness to others can create a healthier and more united community. When citizens behave responsibly, society becomes more peaceful and organized.

Education and self-improvement are also important duties of citizens, especially young people. Students should focus on gaining knowledge and developing useful

skills because they are the future generation of the country. Educated and skilled citizens can contribute to national development in areas such as science, technology, business, medicine, and education. A strong country depends on capable and hard-working people.

Loving one's country is not only about words or emotions. True patriotism is shown through actions and contributions to society. Citizens should respect their culture, traditions, national heritage and national identity while also helping their communities



grow stronger. In difficult times, unity and cooperation among citizens are essential for national stability and progress.

Nowadays, many young people dream of going abroad for education, jobs, or better opportunities. While learning from other countries and gaining technical know-how and international

experience can be beneficial, it is also important to remember one's homeland. When too many educated and talented people leave their country permanently and never return, the nation may lose skilled workers, professionals, and future leaders. This can slow national development and create difficulties for future

generations. Therefore, young people who study or work abroad should also think about how they can contribute back to their country in the future. They can return with new knowledge, skills, and experiences to help improve education, technology, healthcare, and society. A country grows stronger when its citizens use their abilities for the benefit of their own nation.

Moreover, good citizens should show honesty, kindness, and respect toward others regardless of differences in background or opinion. Peaceful societies are built through understanding, cooperation, and mutual respect.

In conclusion, being a good citizen and loving one's country are important responsibilities for every individual. National development does not depend only on governments and leaders but also on ordinary citizens. Therefore, people should strive to become educated, responsible, and compassionate individuals who contribute positively to society and help build a peaceful and successful future for their country.

IN TODAY'S technological era, trees continue to play a vital role in improving the quality of life, especially in urban environments, as recognized in many government Sustainable Development Strategies. Trees provide us with invaluable resources such as oxygen, soil stability, beautiful landscapes, timber, medicine,



Trees for a Greener Future

By Ms Moon

cosmetics, shelter, and environmental balance.

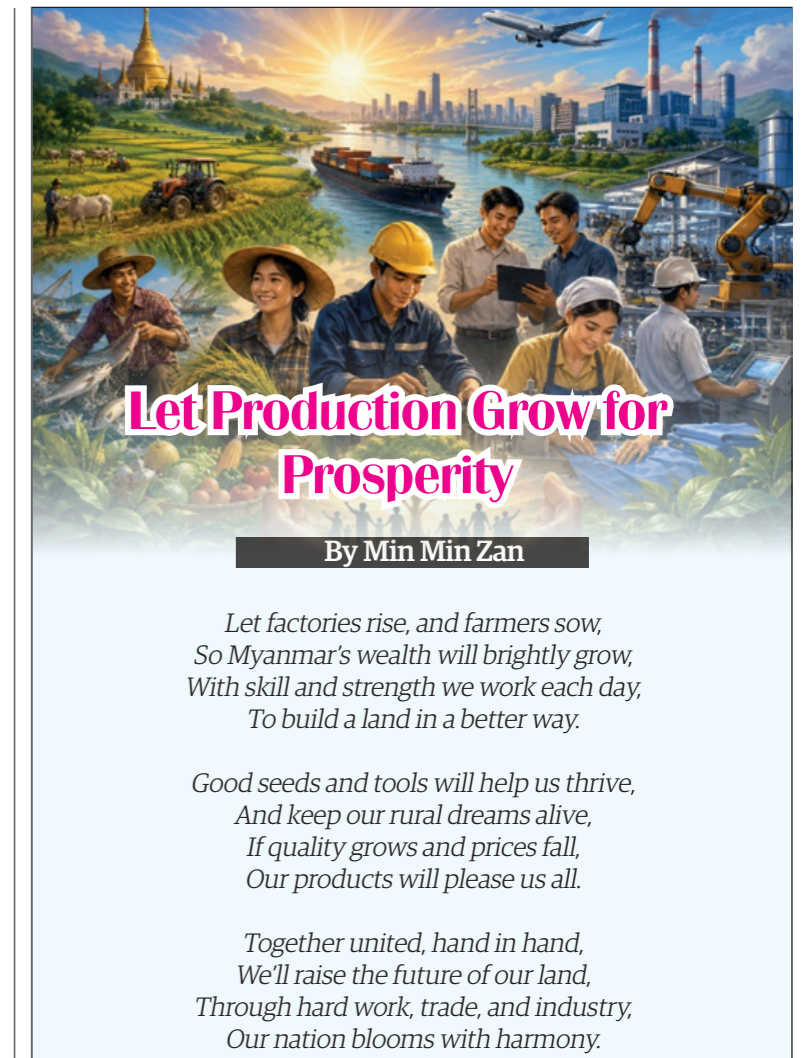
Planting and preserving trees in urban areas helps reduce the heat island effect caused by roads, pavements, and large commercial buildings by blocking and deflecting sunlight. Moreover, trees reduce the greenhouse effect by absorbing carbon dioxide and filtering dust and pollutants from the air. Many communities are also home to ancient trees that stand as historical landmarks and symbols of local pride.

Trees absorb and store rainwater, helping to prevent floods, droughts, storms, and other natural disasters. In addition, trees make our world greener, healthier, and more beautiful. From the fresh buds of spring to the colourful leaves of autumn, trees create breathtaking scenery both indoors and outdoors. Hundreds of living creatures depend on trees for shelter, food, and survival. Leaves, flowers, fruits, and branches provide homes and nourishment for birds, insects, and animals. We are all familiar with apples, oranges, mangoes, and countless other fruits and nuts that trees generously provide, along with delicious natural syrups.

Trees also play an essential role in maintaining good health. Many medicines are produced

from plants and trees. The bark of certain trees contains important chemicals used in medical treatments. For example, quinine and aspirin are both made from bark extracts. Furthermore, trees have a wide range of practical and commercial uses. Wood was one of humanity's earliest sources of fuel and is still used for cooking and heating by nearly half of the world's population. Trees also provide timber for construction, furniture, tools, sports equipment, paper, pencils, notebooks, and thousands of everyday household items.

In conclusion, people should stop cutting down trees because they absorb carbon dioxide, reduce global warming, and provide the oxygen necessary for all living beings to survive. Nowadays, preserving trees has become an important responsibility for everyone around the world. Therefore, we should encourage our neighbours, friends, and especially young people to understand the importance of trees by planting and caring for them whenever possible. Trees are an inseparable part of our lives, and it is difficult to imagine a healthy world without them. For a greener, happier, and healthier future, we must prevent deforestation and plant more trees.



Let Production Grow for Prosperity

By Min Min Zan

Let factories rise, and farmers sow,
So Myanmar's wealth will brightly grow,
With skill and strength we work each day,
To build a land in a better way.

Good seeds and tools will help us thrive,
And keep our rural dreams alive,
If quality grows and prices fall,
Our products will please us all.

Together united, hand in hand,
We'll raise the future of our land,
Through hard work, trade, and industry,
Our nation blooms with harmony.

NATIONAL

Public military service trainees welcomed home



Graduates from the People's Military Service Training 2 are seen being warmly welcomed back.

FAMILIES and residents warmly welcomed back public military service graduate personnel from Batch 2/2024 after they completed their assigned service duties.

Tatmadaw said the trainees had voluntarily joined under the People's Military Service Law and served in security, defence and disaster response duties alongside permanent military personnel during their service period.

On 18 May, military commands awarded certificates of completion, commemorative medals and honour certificates to the trainees before they returned to their respective hometowns and families.

Upon their arrival, family members and locals greeted them with garlands, eugenia sprigs, honorary cash awards and traditional drum performances in various wards and villages. Social media posts

also showed scenes of reunions and public welcomes for the returning servicemen.

According to reports, authorities are also coordinating employment opportunities, vocational training and job placement support for those who have completed their service period through relevant ministries, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry and overseas employment agencies. — MNA/KZL

Disaster teams kick off search and rescue training course



This image shows the search and rescue training session for disaster response.

JOINTLY organized by Myanmar Rescue Organization (Kayin State) and Myanmar Fire Brigade (Kayin State), a search and rescue training

course for 2026 will be opened, as preparedness for disaster response.

The Myanmar Rescue Organization (Kayin State) said

they successfully conducted an advanced search and rescue training in 2020 for the first time with 35 trainees and could provide search and rescue operations in affected areas.

With an expected 50 trainees, they have now arranged a search and rescue training in 2026 for the second time, in order to respond to disasters in time.

To find out more about providing support for trainees, donors can call the organization's phone numbers: 09 694455441, 09 692424224 and 09 43138626. — MT/ZS

Ayeyawady, Bago Rural Communities Receive Mya Sein Yaung Loans

ACCORDING to the Ministry of Cooperatives and Rural Development, officials from the Department of Rural Development in Yekyi Township, Ayeyawady Region, disbursed the first round of revolving loans under the Mya Sein Yaung Village Project in Mae Kyet Ma Aing Village, on the morning of 21 May. The project aims to improve the socioeconomic lives of rural residents and reduce poverty.

In Mae Kyet Ma Aing Village, loans amounting to K21.2 million were provided to 59 people engaged in agricultural work, K1.3 million to seven livestock breeders, K2.6 million to 17 people involved in the fisheries sec-

tor, and K4.9 million to 25 people engaged in trading businesses. Altogether, a total of K30 million was disbursed in the first round of loans.

Similarly, on 20 May, the Department of Rural Development in Pyay Township, Bago Region, also provided first-round low-interest loans during the 2026-2027 financial year in Paungtaya Village. Loans amounting to K15.60 million were granted to 27 people engaged in agricultural activities, while K4 million was provided to 11 livestock breeders. In total, K19.6 million was disbursed to 38 members, according to the Ministry of Cooperatives and Rural Development. — Htun Htun/KZL



Officials are seen disbursing revolving funds under the Mya Sein Yaung Village Project to people engaged in agriculture, livestock breeding, fisheries and trading businesses.

Potential Development of El Niño Conditions

Issued on 21 May 2026

THE Sea Surface Temperature (SST) over the Tropical Pacific Ocean near the equator indicate the possible development of El Niño conditions. According to forecasts from International Meteorological Agencies based on Numerical Weather Prediction Models, weak El Niño conditions may begin to develop from June, and strong El Niño conditions could occur towards the end of 2026.

Although El Niño is a phenomenon that occurs in the Pacific Ocean, its impacts can generally lead to irregular rainfall patterns, higher day temperatures, abnormal storm activity, drought and other extreme weather events.

Therefore, relevant sectors and organizations are hereby advised to make necessary preparations according to their respective fields. Updates regarding the development of El Niño conditions will continue to be issued promptly. — DMH

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Thukha Tawwin Housing Project (Phase II) in Nay Pyi Taw for sale

THOSE interested in purchasing apartments in the Thukha Tawwin Housing Project (Phase II), which is currently under construction in Zabuthiri Township, Nay Pyi Taw, can now apply to purchase the apartment units at the set prices, according to the Thukha Tawwin Housing Scrutinizing and Settlement Committee.

The project, located in Thukha Theikdi Ward, Zabuthiri Township, consists of four-sto-

rey buildings with four units per floor. Apartments include three-bedroom units (1,092 square feet) and two-bedroom units (732 square feet).

The fixed prices are K250 million for three-bed units and K175 million for two-bed units on the Ground Floor, K160 to 240 million on the First Floor, K140 to 220 million on the Second Floor and K130 to 185 million on the Third Floor.

Prospective buyers must

submit a PO Cheque (original) with a deposit of K23 million for three-bed units and K15 million for two-bed units payable to the Nay Pyi Taw Development Bank, together with the prescribed application form, to the Administration Department, Nay Pyi Taw Development Committee.

Apartments will be allocated by lottery based on the number of applications. Successful applicants must pay an initial 40

per cent of the apartment value within two weeks after the lottery draw. The remaining 60 per cent can be paid through one of three payment options: full payment within one month of the lottery draw, instalments over six months (10 per cent per instalment), or applying for a loan from the Nay Pyi Taw Development Bank (three-year repayment term) within one month.

Applications must be submitted within one month by 18

June, 2026. Citizens are eligible to apply for them. Interested individuals can enquire details through the NPTDC website www.nptdc.gov.mm, the NPTDC Webportal Facebook page, or the Thukha Tawwin Facebook page. They can also contact Thukha Tawwin Housing Scrutinizing and Settlement Committee at 067 3414617 and 067 8108242, and Nay Pyi Taw Development Bank at 067 3432738 and 067 3432739. — NN/KK

Myanmar, China biz matchmaking launches in Harbin

THE Myanmar-China Business Matching 2026 event, organized by the Myanmar-China Investment and Trade Promotion Association (MCITP), was held on 18 May at the Shangri-La Hotel in Harbin, Heilongjiang Province, the People's Republic of China.

Myanmar entrepreneurs and Chinese entrepreneurs from Heilongjiang Province discussed how to connect and explore business opportunities for potential partnerships. The event successfully resulted in the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the purchase of 1,000 tonnes of Seintalone mangoes and 1,000 tonnes of rubber from Myanmar.

The event was addressed by MCITP Patron U Aye Win, MCITP Chairman U Kyaw



The Business Matching 2026 event.

Win, Deputy Director Zhang Yu, Heilongjiang Provincial Foreign Affairs Office, and Mr Sha Lian, Secretary of the Provincial Federation of Industry and Commerce. MCITP Advisor Dr Zaw Oo presented on Myanmar-China

investment and trade opportunities.

Myanmar business representatives, provincial government department heads, and Chinese business entrepreneurs were present at the event. — ASH/KK

CBM to inject US\$81M to fuel oil businesses

THE Central Bank of Myanmar (CBM) announced on 20 May that it would sell US\$81 million to fuel oil businesses.

CBM injected over \$2.067 million into edible oil-importing companies and \$4,000 to CMP companies, in addition to \$22,984 worth of non-trade transactions.

CBM pumped over \$1.45 million into edible oil importing companies and over \$518,800 to CMP companies, along with \$350,366 worth of non-trade transactions on 19 May.

CBM sold over \$2.34 million to edible oil-importing companies and over \$30,170 to CMP companies on 18 May.

CBM sold over \$1.8 million to edible oil importing companies and \$5,000 to companies working on a Cut, Make and Pack basis on 15 May.

CBM sold over \$3.26 million to edible oil-importing companies, over \$10,470 to CMP companies and \$2 million to LNG-im-

porting companies on 14 May.

CBM sold \$1.8 million to edible oil-importing companies and \$137,260 to CMP companies on 13 May.

CBM over \$2.037 million to edible oil-importing companies and \$11,535 to CMP companies on 12 May.

CBM injected foreign currencies into the market, with a view to curbing 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 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

Trading Amount and Forex Rate in the Market on 21 May 2026

	US\$	Chinese yuan	Thai baht	India rupee
Exchange rates	3,648.00~3,669.00	555.30~558.70	125.30~125.70	43.60
Trading amount in the market	16,966,411.81	2,054,827.51	51,691,505.34	
The amount sold by CBM to the market				

The foreign currency amount traded in the foreign exchange market was for the import of edible oil, fuel oil, car/motorcycle spare parts, medicine and pharmaceutical raw materials, industrial raw materials, animal feed, and consumer goods. From the CMP sector revenue, US\$2.34 million was sold to the edible oil sector, US\$1.5 million to the LNG sector, US\$0.02 million to the CMP sector, and US\$0.35 million to the non-trade sector. — MNA



Fleet of bowsters rolls out from fuel terminal for nationwide distribution.

ECONOMY WORLD

From gas to groceries, rising prices weigh on US consumers



A man refuels a car at a gas station in New York, the United States, on 31 March 2026. **PHOTO: ZHANG FENGGUO/XINHUA/FILE**

Economists say one of the biggest contributors to inflation has been surging energy costs linked to conflict in the Middle East and disruptions to oil shipments through the Strait of Hormuz.

AMERICANS are paying more for groceries, petrol and other everyday necessities as inflation accelerates again, with economists increasingly pointing to geopolitical conflict and energy disruptions as key drivers of rising living costs.

The latest data from the US Bureau of Labour Statistics (BLS) show the Consumer Price Index, a broad measure of inflation, rose 3.8 per cent over the 12 months ending in April, the fastest annual rate since 2023.

Monthly inflation increased 0.6 per cent in April, while energy prices climbed sharply and gro-

cery costs continued to rise, leading to consumer dissatisfaction.

“Everything costs more now,” Maxi Baker, a Glendale resident and mother of two, told Xinhua, echoing growing consumer concerns over rising prices for almost everything. “Food, gas, clothes, rent, you name it, it’s going up”. Economists say one of the biggest contributors to inflation has been surging energy costs linked to conflict in the Middle East and disruptions to oil shipments through the Strait of Hormuz, one of the world’s most important energy corridors. — Xinhua

EU and US trade deal implementation compromise reached by EU

REPRESENTATIVES of the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union (EU) reached a compromise on Wednesday in Strasbourg, France, on legislation to implement the EU-US trade agreement, following months of delay and wrangling over safeguards against possible US non-compliance.

The provisional agreement came after earlier talks failed to produce an agreement,

with the European Parliament pushing for stronger protection mechanisms in case Washington breaches its commitments, while EU member states were concerned that tougher provisions could further anger the United States.

US President Donald Trump had threatened to sharply raise tariffs on EU exports if the bloc failed to implement the trade agreement by 4 July. — Xinhua

Foreign visitors to Japan fall in Apr amid Middle East tensions

THE number of foreign visitors to Japan in April fell 5.5 per cent from a year earlier to 3.69 million, a decline attributed to flight suspensions and reductions linked to the conflict in the Middle East as well as a diplomatic row with China, government data showed Wednesday.

It was the first decline since January, although the April figure marked the highest monthly total so far in 2026, according to the Japan National Tourism Organization. By country and region, visitors from the Middle East dropped 21.4 per cent to 22,300, as the US-Israeli war

with Iran disrupted air traffic at some airports and flights from

Europe through the Middle East to Japan. — Kyodo



Passenger line up to board a bus outside Kyoto Station. **PHOTO: ISTOCK/CRISTI CROITORU/FILE**

S Korea’s auto export turns downward in Apr

SOUTH Korea’s automotive export turned downwards last month amid continued Middle East tensions, government data showed Wednesday.

Car shipment declined 5.5 per cent from a year earlier to US\$6.17 billion in April, after rising in single digits in the pre-

vious month, according to the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Resources. Automotive export to the United States fell 5.3 per cent to \$2.74 billion, and shipments to the European Union retreated 13.1 per cent to \$828 million.

Those to Asia and the

Middle East tumbled in double figures due to Middle East tensions, leading to high oil prices.

Demand remained strong for eco-friendly vehicles, with exports rising 13.5 per cent to \$2.52 billion in April on a yearly basis. — Xinhua



Protecting EU sectors: priority protection will be given to industry, agriculture, and SME businesses. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**



The price in the greater metropolitan area covering the capital and its three surrounding prefectures in the reporting month slipped below 100 million yen for the first time in three months.

Central Tokyo average condo price rises 38.9% in Apr

THE average price of a new condominium in central Tokyo in April rose 38.9 per cent from a year earlier to 124.98 million yen (\$786,000), reflecting a rebound from the previous year's drop and rising construction costs, a research institute said Thursday.

The price in the greater metropolitan area covering the capital and its three surrounding prefectures in the reporting month slipped below 100 million yen for the first time in

three months, according to the Real Estate Economic Institute. Still, the price in the capital and Chiba, Kanagawa and Saitama prefectures, at 87.36 million yen, was up 24.8 per cent from a year earlier, the institute said. The number of new condos listed for sale in Tokyo and the neighbouring prefectures climbed 15.6 per cent to 1,163 units, with neighbouring Kanagawa Prefecture seeing a 60.4 per cent surge to 441 units. — Kyodo

New Zealand's exports up 12% in Apr

NEW Zealand's total exports rose 12 per cent year-on-year to 8.6 billion NZ dollars in April, driven by strong gains in meat, dairy, gold and crude oil, official data showed on Thursday.

Stats NZ said export values increased by 943 million NZ dollars from April 2025, with four key commodity groups accounting for nearly three-quarters of the overall rise.

Meat exports climbed 26 per cent to 1.3 billion NZ

dollars in April 2026, led by beef and sheep meat, said the statistics department.

Dairy exports, including milk powder, butter and cheese, increased seven per cent to 2.3 billion NZ dollars, with milk powder contributing most of the gain, the department said.

Gold exports jumped 145 per cent to 262 million NZ dollars, largely destined for Australia, while crude oil exports fluctuated month to month based on individual large shipments,

up 388 per cent year-on-year to 151 million NZ dol-

lars in April 2026, it said. — Xinhua



New Zealand is a global powerhouse in sheep meat production, with over 95 per cent of its lamb and mutton production exported. PHOTO: PIXABAY

Airbnb expands into hotels, cars, groceries

AIRBNB, facing tighter local regulations on short-term home rentals, announced Wednesday it is adding boutique hotels, car rentals and grocery delivery to its app in a bid to transform itself into a

one-stop travel shop. The rollout marks the latest step in Airbnb's push to capture more of the travel spending that currently flows to competitors like Booking.com and Expedia.

This evolution — 18

years after the company's scrappy beginnings in San Francisco — is one of Airbnb's answers to increasingly tough restrictions on short-term rentals in key markets.

In December, Spain hit

the company with a 65-million-euro (\$75 million) fine over more than 65,000 non-compliant listings, and Barcelona decided not to renew thousands of rental licences when they expire in 2028. — AFP

Australia's unemployment rate climbs to 4.5% in Apr

AUSTRALIA'S unemployment rate rose to 4.5 per cent in April, as employment declined and more people remained out of work than are typical for the month, official data showed on Thursday.

Employment fell by

19,000 in April, with full-time jobs down 11,000 and part-time jobs down 8,000, the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) said in a statement.

The decline was driven by a fall in female employment, the first since

August 2025, with full-time roles down 19,000 and part-time positions down 13,000, partly offset by gains in male employment, the statement said.

"Compared to what we usually see in April, more people remained

unemployed this month," with increases in those seeking both full-time and part-time work, said Sean Crick, ABS head of labour statistics. The number of unemployed increased by 33,000 in April, the ABS showed. — Xinhua

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V BEYPORE SULTAN VOY.NO. (26018)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V BEYPORE SULTAN VOY.NO. (26018)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **22-5-2026** 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 CONNEXT SHIPPING PTE LTD

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V ISEACO WISDOM VOY.NO. (174N)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V ISEACO WISDOM VOY.NO. (174N)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **22-5-2026** 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 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 NEW GOLDEN SEA LINES

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V ISEACO FORTUNE VOY.NO. (0B817S1NC)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V ISEACO FORTUNE VOY.NO. (0B817S1NC)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **22-5-2026** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MITT/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 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 CMA-CGM SHIPPING LINE PTE LTD

ROLLING UPDATES WORLD

Rare earths, rockets, and biotech: Russia-China global strategy unfolds

China-Russia rare-earth ties exceed business, countering the West and modelling major-power coexistence.



An employee checks a production line of a biotech company in Boxing County, east China's Shandong Province, 26 November 2023. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

“COOPERATION between the two countries at a strategic level probably will contribute to more of a continuation of the current market control,” Economics Professor John Gong told Sputnik, commenting on Vladimir Putin’s visit to Beijing.

He emphasizes that Russia-China collaboration, particularly on rare earths, goes “beyond just mutual business interests”, giving both nations a strategic card against the West while demonstrating a model of major-power coex-

istence.

Key areas of joint influence:

- Rare earths and critical minerals: Russia and China are teaming up to dominate supplies critical for green tech, batteries, and semiconductors, securing leverage against the West
- High-tech industries: Joint projects span biotech, chemicals, aerospace, and space tech, combining China’s fast-growing pharmaceutical edge with Russia’s vast resources

and engineering talent

- Shift to advanced manufacturing: Moving beyond raw materials, both nations focus on high value-added goods, boosting long-term economic resilience and global competitiveness

- Strategic & national security implications: This partnership carries significant strategic weight, reinforcing both countries’ positions in global supply chains and industrial geopolitics. — SPUTNIK

NEWS IN BRIEF

Western businesses submitting applications to attend SPIEF

WESTERN businessmen are submitting their applications to attend the Saint Petersburg International Economic Forum (SPIEF), but they are keeping it under wraps, Dmitry Birichevsky, Director of the Russian Foreign Ministry’s Department of Economic Cooperation, told Sputnik.

“Western businessmen are submitting their applications and registering. They are also keeping it under wraps. They might not even speak, but they hold some contacts on the forum’s sidelines,” Birichevsky said. The next edition of SPIEF, a major global business forum, is scheduled for 3-6 June. Sputnik is the forum’s general information partner. — SPUTNIK

Cuban FM denounces US indictment of Raul Castro

CUBAN Foreign Minister Bruno Rodriguez on Wednesday condemned the US indictment of former Cuban leader Raul Castro, saying the move was intended to reinforce a “fraudulent narrative” to justify intensified aggression against the Cuban people.

Rodriguez said on X that the US accusation against Raul Castro was “illegitimate and illegal”, and the act was based on lies and ignored documented historical facts about the 1996 downing of two aircraft operated by “Brothers to the Rescue”, a Cuban exile group in the United States.

Havana maintains that the aircraft were shot down in Cuban airspace and that Cuba acted in legitimate self-defence. — Xinhua

Britain seals nearly US\$5-bln trade deal with Gulf states

BRITAIN and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) have sealed a trade deal estimated to bring British exporters 3.7 billion pounds (US\$4.96 billion) worth of opportunities in the long run.

According to the British government’s statement issued on Wednesday, the deal would cut export costs, open up Gulf markets and strengthen economic ties with the six-member bloc, which groups Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, making Britain the first G7 country to secure a trade deal with the GCC. The British government said the deal could raise real wages by 1.9 billion pounds (\$2.55 billion) annually as it is expected to reduce costs for British exporters. Once fully implemented, it would eliminate about 580 million pounds (\$779.35 million) in duties each year on British goods exported to the GCC, with 360 million pounds (\$483.73 million) of that removed when the deal enters into force. — Xinhua

Germany to deploy Patriot system to Türkiye under NATO mission amid regional tensions

TÜRKIYE’S Defence Ministry said Wednesday that Germany will deploy a Patriot air defence system to Türkiye in June for a six-month mission under NATO measures aimed at strengthening the country’s air defences amid regional tensions involving the United States, Israel, and Iran.

Defence Ministry spokesper-

son Zeki Akturk said the German system will replace one of the additional Patriot systems deployed in Türkiye by NATO. It will operate alongside a Spanish Patriot system already stationed in the country. Speaking at a news conference at a military base in the southwestern city of Izmir, Akturk said the deployment was

being coordinated with NATO allies in line with current security assessments. — Xinhua

Turkish Defence Ministry spokesperson Zeki Akturk speaks at a news conference at a military base in Izmir, Türkiye, 20 May 2026. **PHOTO: MUSTAFA KAYA/HANDOUT VIA XINHUA**



SPORTS



Neuer recalled to aid Germany World Cup bid

VETERAN goalkeeper Manuel Neuer was handed a surprise recall to Germany's 26-man World Cup squad on Thursday, coming out of international retirement to play in the tournament for a fifth time.

Nagelsmann confirmed the World Cup winner will play ahead of Oliver Baumann at this summer's tournament in the United States, Canada and Mexico.

Veteran goalkeeper Manuel Neuer is the only remaining member of the Germany squad that won the World Cup in 2014.
PHOTO: AFP

The 40-year-old retired from international duty in 2024 but coach Julian

"Everyone knows the aura and quality Manu has, what he brings to a team," Nagelsmann said at a squad announcement in Frankfurt of his "world class" keeper.

"We're planning with him as our number one," he added.

"He has an impact on his own team, on the opposition, and can create special moments."

Joshua Kimmich will retain the captaincy despite the long-time skipper's return. — AFP

Chinese FA imposes life bans to 17 individuals for gambling, match fixing

THE Chinese Football Association (CFA) on Thursday announced the third batch of sanctions related to match-fixing, gambling and other misconduct in Chinese football, handing lifetime bans to 17 individuals and imposing an additional six-point deduction on Meizhou Hakka Football Club. According to the CFA, 17 persons convicted by Chinese courts were suspended for life from any football-related activities, while 48 other practitioners received bans of five years or less for serious violations of industry discipline. The punishments were determined based on factors such as the nature of their misconduct, the amount of money involved, the frequency of violations and the degree of malicious intent. — Xinhua

Arteta alone in garden when Arsenal clinched Premier League title

MIKEL Arteta said he was barbecuing alone in his garden when Arsenal ended their 22-year wait to win the Premier League this week.

Manchester City's 1-1 draw at Bournemouth on Tuesday confirmed the Gunners as English league champions for the first time since 2004.

Arsenal boss Arteta said winning the trophy after six-and-a-half years at the helm, was "one of the best feelings I have ever had".

But he admitted he did not see any of the match involving closest challengers City at the Vitality Stadium.

Pep Guardiola's men had to win to take the title race into a final day.

"I was supposed to be here, (at the training ground), watching the game with the boys and certain staff because that's what they wanted — but I couldn't," he said on Thursday.

"I think 20 minutes later, before the game, I had to leave. I couldn't bring the energy that I wanted, and ultimately it was their moment as well to watch it together, to be themselves and just see what the outcome would be. — AFP



Arsenal manager Mikel Arteta takes a team training session.
PHOTO: AFP

La Liga heads for tense final day with Europe, survival at stake

LA Liga heads into a dramatic final weekend, with two European places and two relegation spots to be decided in a tense two-hour spell on Saturday night.

Barcelona has already been crowned champion, Real Madrid is guaranteed to finish second, and Atletico Madrid, Villarreal and Real Betis have

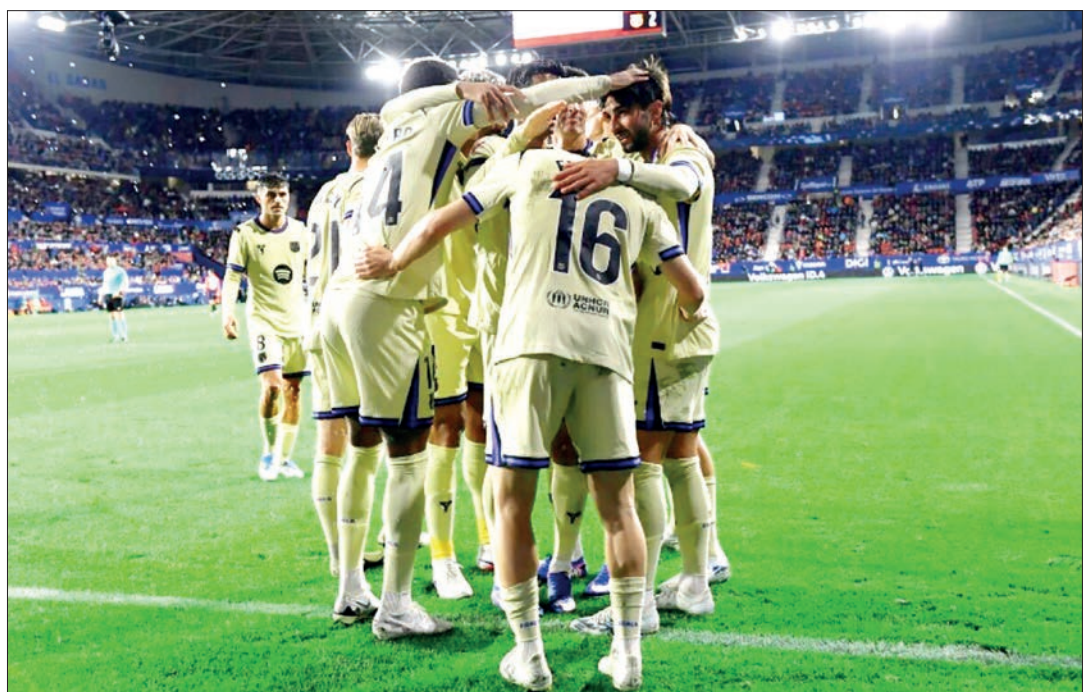
secured places in next season's Champions League.

Real Sociedad has qualified for the Europa League after winning the Copa del Rey against Atletico Madrid in March, leaving Celta Vigo in pole position to claim the second Europa League spot.

Sixth-placed Celta is three points ahead of Getafe and will

secure sixth place with a draw at home to Sevilla, which sealed its top-flight survival last weekend.

However, a Sevilla win at Balaidos, combined with a Getafe victory at home to Osasuna, would see Getafe leapfrog Celta into sixth and qualify for the Europa League. — Xinhua



FC Barcelona clinched their 29th league title following a decisive 2-0 El Clásico victory over Real Madrid. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**



Pakistan army chief due in Iran as Trump says talks on 'borderline'

A war of words has taken the place of open conflict but the impasse continues to weigh on the world economy.



Tehran's Enghelab Square, where a huge billboard has been erected in support of Iran's national football team for the 2026 World Cup.
PHOTO: AFP

PAKISTAN'S army chief was due in Iran Thursday, Iranian media reported, with Islamabad mediating as the Islamic republic examines a new US proposal to end the Middle East war.

The expected visit by Field Marshal Asim Munir, a powerful figure with a growing role in Pakistan's foreign relations, comes a day after US President Donald Trump warned that negotiations to end the war were on the "borderline" between a deal and renewed strikes.

A ceasefire on 8 April halted the war launched weeks earlier by the US and Israel, but negotiation efforts have so far failed to yield a lasting peace agreement.

A war of words has taken the place of open conflict but the impasse continues to weigh on the world economy, leaving everyone from investors to farmers in a painful state of uncertainty.

On Thursday, Iran's ISNA news agency said Munir's visit was aimed at continuing "talks and consultations" with Iranian authorities, without providing details. Other Iranian media carried the same report.

Pakistan hosted in April the only direct negotiations between US and Iranian officials to take place since 28 February, the day the war began.

Munir was at the centre of the action during that round of talks, greeting both delegations on their arrival and displaying remarkable bonhomie with US Vice-President JD Vance. — AFP

THE Civil Aviation Authority of Thailand (CAAT) said on Thursday that it has elevated surveillance and prevention measures for the Ebola virus disease within the country's civil aviation system.

This move follows the World Health Organization (WHO)'s declaration of the Ebola virus outbreaks in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Uganda as a public health emergency of international concern due to the risk of cross-border transmission.

The Thai public health ministry on Wednesday designated both African nations as dangerous communicable disease zones for the Ebola virus, prompting

Thailand tightens aviation Ebola screening after WHO emergency declaration

coordinated screening and response measures in civil aviation.

In a statement, the CAAT said it has joined planning sessions with the ministry's Division of International Communicable Disease Control and Quarantine, alongside carriers and other stakeholders, to align public health protocols across the sector. Authorities have urged the public to avoid non-essen-

tial travel to Congo and Uganda and neighbouring high-risk areas. Those who must travel are required to register through the Thai Health Pass system, while foreign nationals must accurately complete the Thailand Digital Arrival Card to support contact tracing and disease monitoring.

Airlines operating routes connected to affected regions have been instructed to inform

passengers of public health requirements, screen passengers at the point of origin, and share passenger seating and travel data with disease-control officers to enable rapid follow-up.

— Xinhua



Thailand's Suvarnabhumi Airport started to screen arrivals from Uganda and DR Congo for symptoms of Ebola. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**