

# The Global **NEW LIGHT** of MYANMAR

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Sunday, 21 June 2026

## New birdwatching initiative takes flight at Kyonkapyin-Tapseik Sanctuary

**A** birdwatching programme has been launched in the Kyonkapyin-Tapseik Wildlife Conservation Area, located in Wakema Township, Ayeyawady Region. The initiative is being led by the Kyonkapyin-Tapseik Community Conservation Association (KTCCA), which aims to generate income for locals through tourism-linked biodiversity conservation efforts.



A section of the Kyonkapyin-Tapseik Wildlife Conservation Area, home to around 100 bird species, including endangered, rare, and resident varieties, thriving in their natural habitat.

“The primary goal is to provide income for locals when tourists visit. We have local guides available to explain bird species to visitors. There are also set fees for those who choose to travel by boat,” said an official from the organization.

While the sanctuary previously attracted interest from international tourists for its biodiversity, the post-COVID era has

seen a rise in visits from domestic travellers.

“We first started the birdwatching programme before COVID-19, and it was quite popular. We had to stop during the pandemic, but we could resume around 2023. Now, we see domestic visitors coming

to watch the birds with great interest,” the official added.

Currently, the area is home to approximately 100 bird species, encompassing endangered and rare species, as well as native birds.

The KTCCA is work-

ing in collaboration with local people to conserve the area and conduct educational outreach. Thanks to increased local participation in these conservation efforts, the biodiversity in the area reportedly continues to flourish. — MT/ZN



Myanmar coffee beans with tasting samples on display.

## MWCN Cup Tasters Championship set for inaugural event in 2026

AIMING to facilitate the development of Myanmar’s coffee sector and enhance the sensory skills of coffee experts, Myanmar Women Coffee Network (MWCN) will organize the MWCN Cup Tasters Championship 2026 for the first time in July.

The competition will be held on 2 and 3 July at Yangon Speciality Coffee Hub inside the Secretariat Yangon.

Contestants will need to quickly and accurately identify the unique aromas and flavours of Myanmar coffees throughout the competition. Prizes will be awarded for the champion, first runner-up, and second runner-up. Coffee enthusiasts and experts interested in participating can register via the Google Form by 25 June. The admission fee is K150,000, and each contestant will receive a championship T-shirt.

A pre-competition workshop is also being planned, and the date and time will be announced soon. — TWA/ZS

### BUSINESS PAGE 7



MFVP delivers direct and efficient B2B supply chain



The photo shows weighing sundried rubber for packaging.

## Agri Dept invites bids for rubber-based products, machinery parts

THE Perennial Crops Division of the Department of Agriculture, under the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation, is inviting Myanmar entrepreneurs to submit open tenders for the production of various rubber-based value-added products and agricultural machinery spare parts. **SEE PAGE 2**

**CYCLE TYRE**      သုံးဘီးဆိုင်ကား တာယာ      **LIGHT TRUCK TYRE**

**CAR TYRE**

Sales Department Ph- 09 254272843, 09 453255545	STARMART NINE MILE Showroom (9)mile, Pyay Road, Yangon Ph-09 30860180	KHA YAE PIN MART Mingalardone, Pyay Road, Yangon Ph- 09 671443555	STARMART MANDALAY Wholesale Corner of 26 <sup>th</sup> and 66 <sup>th</sup> road, Mandalay Ph-09 661702244
STARMART Nay Pyi Taw Yangon-Mandalay Highway Road, Ywar Gauk Ward, Pyinmana Ph- 09 685119077			

# NATIONAL



## U Maung Maung Soe appointed as Ambassador of Myanmar to Republic of Belarus

THE President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has appointed U Maung Maung Soe, Ambassador of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the Republic of Belarus. — MNA

## U Wai Linn appointed as Ambassador of Myanmar to Socialist Republic of Vietnam

THE President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has appointed U Wai Linn, Chargé d' Affaires/Ambassador of the Embassy of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar in Hanoi, as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. — MNA

## Agri Dept invites bids for rubber-based products, machinery parts

### FROM PAGE 1

The production will take place on a designated 10-acre plot of land located on Pale Myothit (Bochan) Road in Mingaladon Township, Yangon Region.

Tender documents can be purchased at the Supply and Logistics Division, Department of Agriculture,

Office 43 in Nay Pyi Taw until 7 July. The deadline for submitting tender applications is also at 1 pm on 7 July.

Interested business entities can enquire for further details at the Supply and Logistics Division or by dialling 067 3410210 or 067 3410518. — NN/KK



The picture indicates the rubber plantation and the latex from the stems of rubber trees.

## Amyotha Hluttaw forms friendship groups with Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan

THE Hluttaw Friendship Associations were established at the seventh day of the second regular session of the Third Amyotha Hluttaw to further enhance parliamentary cooperation and multi-sectoral relations between Myanmar and Russia, Belarus, and Kazakhstan.

At the meeting held on the morning of 18 June, the following five-member parliamentary friendship associations were established for each country.

The Myanmar-Russia Parliamentary Friendship Association was chaired by U Chit Swe, the representative of Ayeyawady Region Amyotha Hluttaw Constituency 10, while Major Zawana (Defence Services Personnel Representative) was appointed as Secretary.

The Myanmar-Belarus Parliamentary Friendship Association was chaired by Brig-Gen Than Tun Aung (Defence Services Personnel Representative), while Captain Daw Su Myat Wai

(Defence Services Personnel Representative) was appointed as Secretary.

The Myanmar-Kazakhstan Parliamentary Friendship Association was established with U Rakuri Pung, the representative of Kachin State Amyotha Hluttaw Constituency 1, serving as Chairperson and Major Tint Lwin Aye (Defence Services Personnel Representative) serving as Secretary.

The establishment of these parliamentary

friendship associations aims to strengthen parliamentary relations with the respective countries, facilitate the exchange of experiences, and enhance multi-sectoral cooperation.

In addition, at the same meeting, several affairs committees, including those for farmers' affairs, youth affairs, women, children, the elderly rights, and education promotion, were also established to effectively address domestic affairs. — TWA/MKKS

## Weather

### Myanmar Daily Weather Report

Issued at 7 pm Saturday, 20 June 2026

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

**FORECAST VALID UNTIL NOON OF 21 June 2026:** Rain or thundershowers will be scattered in Kayah and Chin states, fairly widespread in Mandalay, Magway, lower Sagaing and Taninthayi regions and widespread in the remaining regions and states with likelihood of isolated heavy falls in Nay Pyi Taw, Yangon, Bago, Ayeyawady and upper Sagaing regions and Kachin and Rakhine states. The degree of certainty is 100 per cent.

**THE CONDITION OF CUMULONIMBUS CLOUD:** The cumulonimbus clouds are developing in Yangon, Bago, Magway, Sagaing, Ayeyawady and Taninthayi regions and Kachin, Kayah, Kayin, Chin, Mon, Rakhine and Shan states. In the area along the movement of cumulonimbus clouds, the weather phenomena such as strong winds accompanied by rain, thunder, lightning and hails may occur and therefore it is recommended to be aware in advance of these phenomena.

**STATE OF THE SEA:** The sea will be moderate in the Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about 6-8 feet off and along the Myanmar Coasts.

**OUTLOOK FOR THE SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS:** Increase of rain in upper Sagaing Region and Kachin and Mon states.

**FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGH-**

**BOURING AREA FOR 21 June 2026:** One or two times of rain or thundershowers. The degree of certainty is 100 per cent.

**FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 21 June 2026:** One or two times of rain or thundershowers. The degree of certainty is 100 per cent.

**FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 21 June 2026:** Isolated rain or thundershowers. The degree of certainty is 100 per cent. — DMH

### Flood Bulletin

Issued at 7 am MST on 20 June 2026

ACCORDING to the 6:30 am MST observation today, the water level of the Nanyin Stream at Mogaung has exceeded by about one foot above its danger level. It may rise about 0.5 foot during the next one day and may remain above its danger level.

According to the 6:30 am MST observation today, the water level of the Nankaung Stream at Mogaung has exceeded by about 0.5 foot above its danger level. It may rise about 0.5 foot during the next one day and may remain above its danger level.

It is especially advised to the people who settle near the stream banks and low-lying areas in Mogaung Township, to take precaution measure. — DMH

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

## Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker and members arrive in Moscow, Russia

AT the invitation of Mr Igor Sergeyenko, Speaker of the House of Representatives of Belarus, and Mr Vyacheslav Volodin, Chairman of the State Duma of the Russian Federation, Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U Khin Yi, accompanied by officials from the Pyithu Hluttaw Office, departed Yangon on 19 June and arrived at Suvarnabhumi Airport in Bangkok, Thailand, at 9:25 am local time.

They then continued their journey to Sheremetyevo International Airport



Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U Khin Yi holds talks with the Deputy Speaker of the State Duma of Russia in Moscow.

in Moscow, Russia, where they arrived at 7:15 pm local time. At the airport,

the Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker and his delegation were welcomed by Mr Sholban

Valerievich Kara-ool, Deputy Speaker of the State Duma of Russia, officials from the Belarusian Parliament, Myanmar Ambassador to Russia U Myo Moe Aung, and embassy staff.

Afterwards, in a private lounge at the airport, they held discussions on the friendship among Myanmar, Russia, and Belarus, inter-parliamentary cooperation, and the establishment of parliamentary friendship associations to further strengthen cooperation. — MNA/MKKS

## MoWA Union Minister attends 31<sup>st</sup> MWEA AGM

THE 31<sup>st</sup> Annual General Meeting of the Myanmar Women Entrepreneurs' Association (MWEA) was held at the Lotte Hotel in Yangon yesterday.

At the meeting, Union Minister for Women's Affairs Dr Thet Thet Zin delivered an address.

She highlighted that the Myanmar Women Entrepreneurs' Association (MWEA), established in February 1995, has been actively promoting women's participation and the role of business in the socioeconomic development of the country for the past 31 years.

She stated that the association takes pride in the achievements of its members, noting that 93

Myanmar women have received the Myanmar Women Entrepreneur Award, in addition to recipients of the ASEAN Outstanding Women Entrepreneur Award. She also congratulated the recipients of the Myanmar Women Entrepreneur Awards in advance.

Subsequently, Yangon Region Chief Minister U Aung Naing Thu, President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry U Aye Win, Founder, Patron and Adviser to the MWEA Dr Yee Yee Myint, and MWEA Chair Dr Myat Thida Myint delivered speeches. — MNA/MKKS



Union Minister Dr Thet Thet Zin (2R) explores exhibits at yesterday's event.

## Flood protection measures inspected in Monywa



The Sagaing Region chief minister and officials inspect flood prevention and preparedness measures.

SAGAING Region Chief Minister U Ko Lay, together with regional ministers, inspected flood prevention and preparedness measures along the Chindwin River embankments in Monywa yesterday.

He checked embankment strengthening works, readiness of rescue boats, and emergency response drills being conducted in preparation for possible river water level rise during the monsoon season. He

also observed sandbag barriers placed at vulnerable flood-prone areas in the city.

During the inspection, he instructed relevant departments to ensure adequate rescue equipment, maintain the strength of embankments, and complete all preventive measures in a systematic and timely manner. He also coordinated necessary arrangements on-site to improve flood protection readiness. — Region IPRD/KZL

## Tatmadaw secures Khampat, tightens Kalay-Tamu security

THE Tatmadaw has been undertaking operations to regain full control of the Kalay-Tamu route, an important corridor for Myanmar-India border trade. As part of these efforts, Tatmadaw regain full control of Khampat, a strategically important town along the route for border trade and communications, yesterday.

To fully restore control over the Kalay-Tamu route, Tatmadaw columns marched in a coordinat-

ed manner while carrying out phased security operations. Troops marching from Kalay recaptured the villages of Ashaygontha village, 56<sup>th</sup>-Mile village, and 55<sup>th</sup>-Mile village, which had been temporarily occupied by terrorist groups, on 7 June. Similarly, they also captured Nan Mootar, Yan Lin Paing and their vicinity areas in the same day, whereas Yazagyo village and Yazagyo dam on 13 June, Yan Myo Aung



Triumphant Tatmadaw troops are seen following the restoration of control over the strategic Khampat town.

village on 15 June, Sawbwa Yay Shin village on 16

June and Kyun Taw Yay Shin village on 17 June.

Tatmadaw columns marching from Kalay recaptured Khunnaing and Nankhaukhauk villages on 19 June, Nankatate village and Khampat town yesterday. Insurgent groups reportedly retreated in disarray toward the north after suffering significant casualties. Security operations are continuing in and around the area to ensure stability.

Khampat, recaptured yesterday, is a sub-township within Tamu Township in Sagaing Region. Located near the Indian border, it is an important town for bilateral border trade along the Kalay-Tamu route. On 3 Novem-

ber 2023, PDF terrorist groups temporarily occupied the town and used local ethnic residents as human shields while establishing strong defensive positions. As a result, border trade routes were disrupted, bilateral goods flow ceased, and import-export activities relied upon by local residents came to a standstill. Moreover, the activities of terrorist groups caused losses and disruptions affecting border security, regional administration, and the resumption of trade operations, resulting in adverse impacts on both Myanmar and India.

**SEE PAGE 4**

# INTERVIEW/NATIONAL

## Mekong Forum Shines as Beacon for Six-Nation Tourism

MYANMAR hosted the Mekong Tourism Forum from 14 to 19 June in Yangon, and the national tourism authorities and representatives from Myanmar, Cambodia, China, Laos, Thailand and Vietnam, and international experts attended the event. The experts discussed cooperation in the tourism sector and proper measures to promote that industry. Here is the interview with the responsible persons of Myanmar.

### U Maung Myint (Union Minister, Ministry of Hotels, Tourism and Culture)

We organized the Mekong six-country forum to promote tourism. During the forum, participants exchanged information, discussed future cooperation plans, and explored opportunities for collaboration in the tourism sector. Myanmar and Cambodia also signed an agreement on bilateral tourism cooperation. Similar initiatives were undertaken before, but



Union Minister U Maung Myint.

they were delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We are now resuming these efforts, and there are promising prospects for success through cooperation among travel agencies.

Global tourism can be divided into European and Asian. In Europe, tourism has declined due to economic downturns and fuel-related challenges, which have led to the cancellation of many flights. In Asia, Myanmar has experienced a 50 per cent decline in tourist arrivals from China. To address this, we plan to produce tourism promotional videos and present them in China to showcase Myanmar's



Director-General U Aung Aye Han.

peaceful and beautiful tourist destinations. In 2019, there were 14 to 15 direct flights from China to Bagan. We are working to regain that level.

Before the President's visit to the People's Republic of China, discussions with Chinese diplomats included tourism-related matters. We believe tourism can significantly contribute to Myanmar's economy, and we expect tourism promotion to be among the topics discussed during the visit. Tourism has also declined in Thailand and Malaysia. Therefore, it is not surprising that Myanmar's tourism industry has experienced a downturn as well. However, the



U Yan Win. PHOTOS: ZWE MARN

important question is how we can recover. We are conducting awareness campaigns among hotelier, travel agencies, and the public. We are also working with local authorities to promote tourism through cultural development and destination marketing. Previously, the tourism sector relied on international visitors. Today, domestic tourism is playing a greater role, and efforts are underway to revitalize destinations such as Bagan. If Myanmar cooperates with neighbouring countries in promoting tourism, the country's tourism industry will undoubtedly experience a revival.

**SEE PAGE 6**

## Firefighting, SAR Teams Showcase Skills at Kandawgyi



The drill is underway yesterday.

A water-based firefighting and search-and-rescue capability demonstration was held on the morning of 19 June at Kandawgyi Lake in Bahan Township, Yangon Region.

Yangon Region Chief Minister U Aung Naing Thu delivered the opening remarks and observed various demonstrations, including assault boat operations, air boat maneuvering,

connector boat performance, fire boat water firefighting, rescue operations using intelligent lifebuoys, and diver-assisted underwater rescue using dive suits.

He also presented honorary cash awards to the participating teams and inspected search and rescue equipment procured by the Yangon Region Government. — Zwe Htet Ko (IPRD)/KZL

## Agri, livestock projects inspected in Thayawady

BAGO Region Chief Minister U Myo Swe Win, together with regional ministers, inspected agriculture and livestock activities in Thayawady District on the morning of 19 June.

At Thaephyu Village-tract in Thayawady Township, he observed land preparation for a 300-acre model farm and monsoon paddy cultivation using a drum seeder. He also met local farm-

ers, delivered remarks, and demonstrated soil pH testing.

He later visited a duck farming project with 3,000 egg-laying ducks under the State Economic Promotion Fund in Chanthagon village-tract, Letpadan Township, and inspected a straw mushroom production business in Gyobingauk Township, encouraging local entrepreneurs. — IPRD/KZL

## Tatmadaw secures Khampat, tightens...

### FROM PAGE 3

Moreover, during the period in which terrorist groups temporarily controlled Khampat and surrounding towns and villages, they carried out acts such as destroying roads and bridges used by the public, collecting illegal tolls from cargo trucks

and passenger vehicles, threatening and extorting civilians with weapons, conducting arrests and killings, burning vehicles, looting goods, and engaging in other acts of violence. It was also found that they established bunkers with sand bags in houses, departmental and religious

buildings, planted mines in town and village areas and dug within compounds for trenches and used as fortified military positions.

Currently, Tatmadaw columns are now carrying out cleanliness activities and rehabilitation activities in Khampat and other recaptured areas. These in-

clude removing debris and damage caused during the conflict, repairing roads and bridges, and conducting mine-clearance operations to facilitate the swift return of locals. Moreover, they will beef up security measures to region control of and reopen Kalay-Tamu route. — MNA/KTZH

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Due to limitation of space we are only able to publish "Letter to the Editor" that do not exceed 500 words. Should you submit a text longer than 500 words please be aware that your letter will be edited.

# NATIONAL

## Weekly Roundup

**14 June**

### **First trees planted this monsoon**

President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Min Aung Hlaing attended the first national-level monsoon tree-growing ceremony for 2026.

**15 June**

### **State receives rare rough sapphire and cut crystal**

President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Min Aung Hlaing observed the large rough sapphire stone and the sapphire crystal at the President's Office. A uniquely beautiful and large rough sapphire stone weighing 14,300 grammes (71,500 carats) was discovered in Myanmar's Mogok gem region in 2020, together with a sapphire crystal weighing 354.77 grammes (1,773.85 carats).

**16 June**

### **President U Min Aung Hlaing leaves for China**

At the invitation of President of the People's Republic of China Mr Xi Jinping, a Myanmar high-level delegation led by President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Min Aung Hlaing left Tatmadaw Airport in Nay Pyi Taw on a special aircraft to pay a State visit to the People's Republic of China.

### **President U Min Aung Hlaing visits Aerospace City**

The high-level Myanmar delegation led by President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Min Aung Hlaing visited the Aerospace City.

### **Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker meets Bill Committee members**

Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U Khin Yi met mem-

bers of the Bill Committee at the Hluttaw Affairs Building (I-2).

**17 June**

### **Myanmar and Chinese Presidents meet**

President of the People's Republic of China Mr Xi Jinping welcomed President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Min Aung Hlaing, who is on a State Visit to the People's Republic of China, with a Guard of Honour at the Great Hall of the People, and they held talks.

### **Myanmar President, Chinese Premier hold talks**

President U Min Aung Hlaing met Chinese Premier Li Qiang at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing.

### **Head of State meets NPC Chair**

President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Min Aung Hlaing held a meeting with Chairman Zhao Leji of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress (NPC) at the Great Hall of the People.

**18 June**

### **President U Min Aung Hlaing receives Shanghai Mayor**

President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Min Aung Hlaing received Mayor of Shanghai Mr Gong Zheng at the Fairmont Peace Hotel.

### **China-Myanmar joint statement issued**

A Joint Statement of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and the People's Republic of China was issued to focus on Accelerating the Building of a China-Myanmar Community with a Shared Future.

### **Head of State visits China Railway Construction Corporation Limited**

President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Min Aung Hlaing visited China Railway Construction Corporation Limited (CRCC) in Beijing.

**19 June**

### **Head of State joins MCITP-2026 Shanghai**

President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Min Aung Hlaing delivered a speech at the opening of the Myanmar-China Investment and Trade Networking Summit (MCITP-2026) in Shanghai.

**20 June**

### **President U Min Aung Hlaing arrives back in Nay Pyi Taw**

President U Min Aung Hlaing and party arrived back at Nay Pyi Taw Airport, where they were welcomed back by Vice-Presidents U Nyo Saw and Nan Ni Ni Aye, Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker U Aung Lin Dwe, Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services General Ye Win Oo, and officials from the Chinese Embassy and the Military Attaché Office to Myanmar.

### **President U Min Aung Hlaing responds to queries raised by CCTV**

President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Min Aung Hlaing gave an interview to Ms Zou Yun, the top news presenter of CCTV news agency, at the reception hall of the Diaoyutai State Guest House on 17 June.

### **VP attends Myanmar National Culture Central Committee meeting**

Vice-President Nan Ni Ni Aye attended the ninth committee meeting of the Myanmar National Culture Central Committee. — GNLM/TTA

## Expansion of YGN power infrastructure depends on annual budget



This image shows a session of the Third Yangon Region Hluttaw.

TO achieve full electricity access within Yangon Region, the expansion of power substations and transmission lines will be implemented each year, depending on the annual budget. This information

was shared by Dr Myo Thaw, the minister of Electricity, Energy, Industry, and Transport, on 19 June.

He responded to a starred question raised by U Thein Naing, the Hluttaw representative from the Kyauktada Township Constituency 1, regarding the electrification plan, stable voltage and efficiency during the fifth day of the second regular session of the Third Yangon Region Hluttaw.

The minister stated that plans are in place to implement projects uti-

lizing the allocated state budget and the Yangon Region budget for the 2026-2027 financial year. As of 31 January 2026, data indicates there are approximately 1.7 million electricity consumers in Yangon, with a peak demand of around 2,000 megawatts.

However, the minister pointed out that the total nationwide electricity generation capacity currently meets only about 70 per cent of the demand, which results in electricity being distributed on a rotation basis. — TWA/ZN

## Lewe disburses K50.3M under VRFP

THE Department of Rural Development under the Ministry of Cooperatives and Rural Development held the sixth cycle of Village Revolving Fund Project (VRFP) loan disbursement in Lansin Village, Lewe Township yesterday.

Lewe Township Department of Rural Development Head Daw Sanda Win first explained the objectives, activities and benefits of the VRFP. Project staff then briefed participants on the interest rate, loan period and the rules and regulations governing the loan programme, and af-

terwards, the revolving fund amounting to K50.3 million was handed over to members of the Village Revolving Fund Project Committee.

The committee members disbursed K50.3 million of the revolving fund at low interest rates directly to 68 project members. Of the total amount, K30.2 million was provided to 45 farmers engaged in agricultural activities, K14.1 million to 20 livestock breeders, and K6 million to three small-scale traders in Lansin Village. — Cho Than Nyunt (Rural)

# NATIONAL

## Mekong Forum Shines as Beacon...

**FROM PAGE 4**

**U Aung Aye Han (Director-General, Directorate of Hotels and Tourism).**

As part of the Mekong six-country meeting, we first held discussions to exchange experiences and share national tourism initiatives so that participating countries could learn from one another and strengthen cooperation. The forum followed these preliminary discussions. As Tourism is for everyone, its benefits should be enjoyed by all segments of society—from large business owners to small and medium-sized enterprises, tour guides, and household-based entrepreneurs, and we held the forum with such objective. Next fact is that the forum was held to raise awareness among travellers about preserving natural resources, cultural heritage, and traditional customs, in addition to enjoying leisure travel.

In promoting tourism cooperation among the six countries, we are working step by step, beginning

with two-country and three-country tour packages and eventually creating a unified six-country Mekong tourism destination. Our primary focus remains on destinations such as Yangon, Mandalay, Inlay Lake, and Bagan, which are currently attracting domestic travellers.

Hosting the forum in Myanmar provided participants with experience of the country's stability and development. It also offered an opportunity to counter misinformation by presenting the true situation on the ground. Myanmar's tourism industry is built upon its natural resources and cultural heritage, which form the foundation of its tourism products.

**U Yan Win (President, Myanmar Tourism Federation)**

The tourism sector can only be successfully promoted through cooperation between the government and the private sector. If we gradually expand cooperation from bilateral initiatives to a six-country

tourism destination, all six participating countries will benefit from increased tourist arrivals. We try to operate a direct flight to Cambodia first. Because Cambodia receives a large number of tourists annually, Angkor Wat alone attracts four to five million visitors each year. If direct flights between Cambodia and Myanmar are operated, many of those travellers could also visit Myanmar. If direct air services are introduced as part of a Myanmar-Cambodia-Thailand tourism promotion initiative, Myanmar's tourist destinations are likely to become more vibrant during the coming open season with both domestic and international visitors. The six-country cooperation framework offers proper potential for tourism growth.

To develop tourism, we know how other countries conduct tourism promotions and raise funding for marketing activities, and so we are making efforts to implement similar strategies in Myanmar.

Continuous promotional campaigns are essential for sustainable tourism development. I believe Myanmar's tourism sector will develop significantly in the near future. Cambodia has long benefited from direct international air connections, which help maintain a steady flow of visitors. Easy travel arrangements, visa exemptions, and convenient banking and payment systems encourage tourists to spend more, increasing foreign earnings. Myanmar should adopt similar measures. As Myanmar reaches a more stable period and hosts the Mekong Forum, we now have an opportunity to announce to ASEAN and the world that both Myanmar's tourism sector and the wider Mekong six-country tourism region are moving toward greater development. A bright future is emerging for Myanmar's tourism industry, and I would like to assure every visitor that they will receive warm hospitality when they come to Myanmar. — Thitsa (MNA)/KTZH

## Final day placement test completed in Pakokku



Out-of-school children sit for the standard placement examination.

THE Placement Test (Special Programme) in Pakokku Township, Magway Region, began on 15 June, and students completed the Science subject on 20 June, the final day of the examination.

The placement test for out-of-school children in the 2026-2027 academic year has been conducted at two examination centres in Pakokku Township since 15 June. On 20 June, the final day of the middle-school-level examination, 603 students from Grades 6 to 8 completed the Science subject peacefully.

On 19 June, the final day of the primary-level examination, 818 students from Grades 1 to 5 completed the Social Studies subject. According to the Township Education Office, the examination results will be announced on 1 July.

Chairpersons and members of the district and township administrative committees, district and township education officers, and other relevant officials have been closely monitoring the examination process and providing necessary assistance. — Bamitha (Pakokku)/MKKS

## 80 assorted landmines cleared from Kanma-Myaing road in Myaing Township



Mine clearance underway as 20 additional devices are detonated along the Kanma-Myaing Road.

ACCORDING to the information from duty conscientious residents, security forces conduct mine clearance activities along Kanma-Myaing road in Pakokku Township as PDF terrorists plant land mines made of oil barrels in the pits on the road, intending that people face difficulties in travelling.

The security forces

uncovered 20 large landmines, 17 homemade directional mines, 15 homemade improvised anti-vehicle mines, eight improvised explosive mines, six homemade mines made of PVC pipes, 12 locally made landmines, and two M-14 mines, totalling 80 assorted mines on both sides of Kanma-Myaing road

between Hninsikan and Thayetkan villages in Myaing Township on 19 June. They defused these mines and systematically removed the positions. Moreover, they cleared mines around 12 feet long and 28 feet wide damaged bridge near Thayetkan Village and repaired it for safety travels of people.

Security forces are continuing to take necessary security measures in order to identify and arrest the terrorists who planted mine and committed explosive attacks targeting major roads and railway lines used by the public, and to take effective legal action against them in accordance with the law. — MNA/TTA

## Myanmar detains 4 undocumented foreign entrants

MYANMAR detained four Chinese nationals involved in telecom fraud and other criminal activities in Kayin State.

The relevant officials conducted personal data collection processes to deport these undocumented foreigners as quickly as possible.

Between 30 January 2025 and 20 June 2026, a total of 14,718 illegal immigrants were identified and detained in Myanmar. Of this number, 13,550 individuals have already been deported through Thailand to their respective countries.

Among the remaining 1,168 individuals to



Immigration processes are underway for the deportation of undocumented foreign entrants.

be deported, there are 662 who were charged under the Myanmar Immigration (Emergency) Provisions Act section 3 (1)/13(1) and the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law, and 506 individuals are currently under deten-

tion while awaiting repatriation.

The government is strictly cracking down on online scams and online gambling by cooperating with other countries, including neighbouring countries. — MNA/KZL

## CBM injects US\$2.9M into import sector

ON 19 June, the Central Bank of Myanmar (CBM) sold over US\$2.88 million to edible oil-importing companies and \$84,000 to CMP companies. On 18 June, it sold more than \$26,000 to CMP companies and \$1.13 million to edible oil-importing companies. The previous day, 17 June, CBM sold over \$170,000 to CMP companies and more than \$24,600 to CMP companies on 16 June.

Additionally, on 15 June, CBM sold \$3.37 million to edible oil-importing companies and \$8,617 to CMP companies, along with over \$2,600 in non-trade transactions.

CBM has been con-

sistently injecting US dollars into the edible oil-importing sector, with the following transactions: \$286,000 on 11 June, \$1.38 million on 10 June, \$2.6 million on 9 June, \$3.6 million on 8 June, over \$2.9 million on 4 June, over \$2.89 million on 3 June, \$1.79 million on 2 June, and over \$646,800 on 1 June.

According to a CBM notification on 15 March 2024, the bank has been working with law enforcement agencies to combat and prosecute individuals attempting to manipulate the currency market under existing laws. Moreover, starting 5 December 2023, CBM allowed authorized dealers (private banks) to operate online foreign exchange trading freely, based on market rates determined by supply and demand. — NN/KK



The Central Bank of Myanmar (CBM) in Yangon.

## MFVP delivers direct and efficient B2B supply chain

THE Myanmar Fruit Flower and Vegetable Producers and Exporters Association (MFVP) facilitates market linkages between farmers in rural areas and food producers, creating direct Business-to-Business chains.

Currently, the association is focusing on market linkages for seasonal monsoon crops, responding to requests from member farmers in Shan State, according to MFVP Secretary Daw Nilar Oo.

In June, the association connected cabbage and Chinese cabbage farmers from Pindaya Township with the Eainchat food business, which is interested in forming seasonal supply deals for quality vegetables with specified volumes.

Moreover, member growers from Nyaung-



A vegetable stall at the New Thiri Mingala Market.

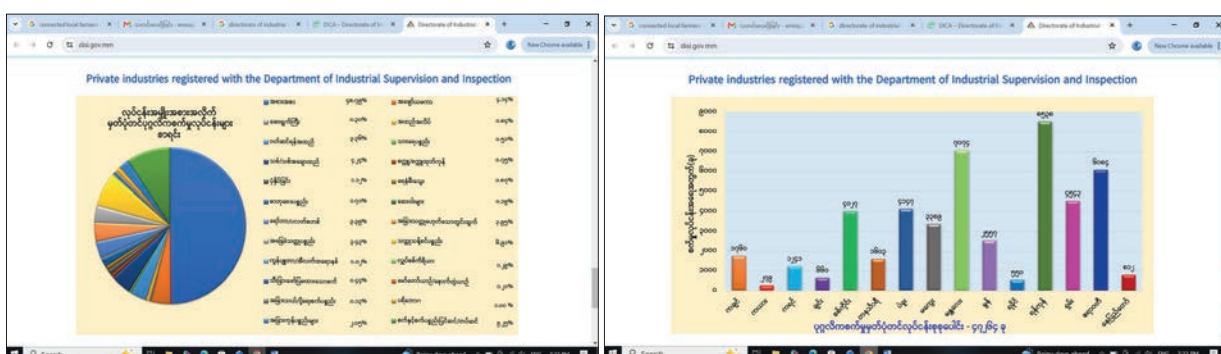
shwe Township and other townships in southern Shan State are actively participating in discussions with representatives of NOURISH Myanmar. This initiative aims to build resilient local market systems that enhance food security, improve nutrition outcomes and increase the incomes of rural communities.

This effort addresses challenges related to underpricing during peak harvest seasons, which often leads to significant food loss as farmers abandon crops due to plummeting prices. MFVP is working to create new, resilient market channels.

MFVP has also invited food producers to pur-

chase tomatoes, cabbage and Chinese cabbage from Pindaya, Kalaw, Aungban, Nyaungshwe and Pinlaung townships. The association seeks long-term deals with food producers to source agricultural raw materials directly from farmers. Interested business entities can contact MFVP at 01 218367. — NN/KK

## 500+ private industries registered with DISI in YGN by May 2026



PRIVATE industries registered with the Directorate of Industrial Supervision and Inspection (DISI) as of May 2026 reached 8,538 in the commercial hub Yangon Region, followed by Mandalay Region with 7,074 and Ayeyawady Region with 6,084.

A total of 47,264 private industries have been registered with the DISI as of May 2026. The registered private industries totalled 47,609 in the financial year 2023-2024, up

from 45,015 registered in the 2022-2023 FY. A total of 206 industries were officially listed in the 2024-2025 FY, reaching 47,815 private industries. Some were deregistered, and the number of private industries registered with the DISI decreased.

More than 48 per cent of the registered private industries are engaged in the food group. The lists of registered private industries are classified into 24 business groups;

food, tobacco, clothing, wood and sawn timber, printing, chemical, rubber and plastic, basic mineral, computer and electronic device, unclassified machine, beverage, fabric, leather, paper and paper products, charcoal fuel, pharmaceuticals, non-metallic minerals, metal refining equipment, electronics, vehicle and trailer, furniture and machines and equipment repair and installation.

The Directorate of Industrial Supervision

and Inspection (DISI) is dedicated to supporting small and medium enterprises (SMEs) by facilitating access to technical assistance and funding. Additionally, DISI helps businesses explore new markets, ensures the registration of private industrial enterprises in compliance with existing laws, and conducts safety inspections of boilers and electrical systems at worksites, as well as environmental impact assessments. — 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



# OPINION

## Take practice of Yoga to improve physical and mental capacity

YOGA represents harmony between the physical and mental aspects, discipline in thought and behaviour, and harmony between the individual and society. The essence of yoga is unity and integration. In fact, yoga is much more than a physical exercise.

Yoga is a practice designed to unify the body and mind, thoughts and actions, control and fulfilment, while also fostering harmony between humans and nature and promoting both physical and mental well-being. As we celebrate International Yoga Day together, it is an opportunity to reaffirm harmony within society, compassion, and peaceful coexistence, while continuing to

inspire yoga's spirit of unity among people, solidarity, and friendship between nations.

Yoga enables anyone, regardless of wealth or status, to achieve harmony between mind and body, and it is useful for preventing diseases, improving health levels, and managing lifestyle-related illnesses. Therefore, the purpose is to introduce yoga and its practice not only for individuals but also for the wider public, so as to achieve comprehensive health for society as a whole.

The draft resolution establishing the International Day of Yoga was proposed by India and endorsed by a record 175 member states. The proposal was first introduced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his address during the opening of the 69th session of the General Assembly. The resolution noted the importance of individuals and populations making healthier choices and following lifestyle patterns that foster good health. In this regard, the World Health Organization has also urged its member states to help their citizens reduce physical inactivity, which is among the top ten leading causes of death worldwide, and a key risk factor for non-communicable diseases, such as cardiovascular diseases, cancer and diabetes.

This year marks the 12th International Day of Yoga with the theme "Yoga for Healthy Ageing", which emphasizes the importance of Yoga for all ages. By combining gentle movement, stretching, breathing exercises, and mindfulness, yoga can help improve balance, flexibility, strength, and mobility, while also supporting mental well-being and stress management. Yoga offers an accessible way for many older adults to maintain their physical and emotional health. These benefits support several goals of the WHO Decade of Healthy Ageing (2021-2030), including promoting independence, reducing fall risk, enhancing quality of life, and encouraging person-centred approaches to health and well-being.



Book Title	-	Future World, Future Myanmar
Author	-	Kyaw Kyaw Hlaing (SMART)
Publishing House	-	SMART Sarpay
Publication Date	-	January 2025 (1 <sup>st</sup> Edition)
Price	-	K12,000

## Future World, Future Myanmar

SMART Publishing House has published the book "Future World, Future Myanmar" written by Sayagyi U Kyaw Kyaw Hlaing, a successful and consistent author of motivational and knowledge-based literature.

The book explores both global and Myanmar-related issues. As AI emerges as a world-class technology, the author discusses how it can be adapted to suit Myanmar's language, culture, and local needs.

The book highlights the potential of AI to accelerate state development, particularly in Myanmar language processing (Natural Language Processing), agriculture, and education. It also explains how AI can improve the farmers' lives by enabling weather forecasting, pest detection, and other agricultural innovations in a country where agriculture remains the backbone of the economy.

Regarding AI...the author writes, "In the 21st century, digital technologies, particularly Artificial Intelligence (AI), have become deeply integrated into socio-economic life.

They become essential ones in our daily lives. There are many fields where people use AI every day without even realizing it. AI makes tasks faster and more efficient while driving innovation across various sectors. However, in addition to its benefits, AI also presents certain drawbacks."

On the other hand, he also presents a deep discussion of the potential threats that technology may pose to humanity in the article "The Dark Side of AI".

The author highlights the severe dangers of deepfake technology, including job displacement, privacy and security risks, targeted misinformation, and reputation damage used for political manipulation - vulnerabilities that pose a critical threat in a society like Myanmar.

The book further discusses ethical challenges associated with AI, including biases that may influence AI-driven decisions and the possibility that AI systems could operate beyond effective human control.

Another issue explored is "cognitive laziness" - the tendency to rely excessively on AI for answers and decision-making. The author argues that an overdependence on AI could gradually erode human critical thinking and creativity.

The book also raises concerns about increasingly robotic societies in which AI serves as an intermediary in human interactions, and such a situation can erode empathy and destroy genuine real-life experiences.

Comprising 205 pages, the book includes essays such as "AI for the Oil and Natural Gas Enterprises", "Myanmar and Artificial Intelligence", and "The Dangers of AI", among others.

Therefore, Future World, Future Myanmar is a highly recommended read for anyone interested in geopolitics, geoeconomics, modern AI technologies, and the future of Myanmar in an increasingly transformed global landscape.



Book Title	-	AI - An Artificial Intelligence Machine
Author	-	Zaw Nyunt
Publishing House	-	Life University
Publication Date	-	June 2025 (1 <sup>st</sup> Edition)
Price	-	K10,000

## AI - An Artificial Intelligence Machine

ARTIFICIAL intelligence (AI) has captivated today's youth like a beloved rose, driving a massive surge in global adoption as the younger generation eagerly embraces the technology.

AI, a powerful tool for modern businesses, saves time, reduces errors and can operate around the clock with 24/7 service. However, AI poses risks and challenges.

Life University Publishing House has released "AI - An Artificial Intelligence Machine", a pragmatic guide designed to help readers understand AI and seamlessly integrate its tools into daily life.

Written by former Myanmar Times editor Zaw Nyunt, the book frames AI as a practical stepping stone designed to help people build a better life.

The book is designated for three types of readers and is divided into three parts. The author stated that readers don't need to read it sequentially. If you

want general knowledge, read Part 1; if you're satisfied with that and want to use AI casually, read Part 2; and if you want to use AI more professionally and skillfully, read Part 3 and practice.

Chapter 1, titled "AI", explains that the term "artificial intelligence" was coined in 1956 by American computer scientist John McCarthy, the widely recognized father of AI. Decades prior, Alan Turing laid the conceptual groundwork for AI through his seminal paper on the "Imitation Game".

The chapter also highlights another pioneering scientist, Geoffrey Hinton - co-recipient of the 2024 Nobel Prize in Physics for his foundational work in deep learning - who is universally revered as one of the "Godfathers of AI".

Excerpting from the final part of the book under the title of "Challenges and Opportunities," "Today's era is called the Knowledge

Age. With the advent of AI, it could be called the 'AI-assisted Knowledge Age'.

Indeed, challenge and opportunity are like two sides of a coin; they go hand in hand.

Simply shifting your perspective could instantly bring an opportunity, although it seems like a challenge, just like flipping a coin from tails to heads.

With the help of AI, developing countries lagging can catch up in 10 or 15 years of proper effort to a level that took other nations 30, 40, or 50 years to achieve. Closing gaps that used to feel impossible to bridge is no longer just a fantasy. With AI opening up massive possibilities, anything is possible."

Divided into three parts containing 13 chapters and 61 articles, this book offers highly accessible AI knowledge designed to spark reader creativity and boost daily productivity.

## Let's Go to the Library

Min Min Zan

Come along, come along, don't be late,  
Books and stories await.  
Rows of pages, big and small,  
The library welcomes all.  
Quiet footsteps, soft and light,  
Reading books is such a delight.  
Fairy tales and facts to see,  
Open one and travel free.  
Learn new words and learn to share,  
Find new dreams and wonders there.

Every book's a shining key,  
Opening minds for you and me.  
So, take a book and read with joy,  
Every girl and every boy.  
Let us laugh and learn all day,  
At the library - hip hooray!



## ချုပ်ငြိမ်းခြင်း၏ တစ်ပိုင်းတစ်ပိုင်း

ဖျားသွေးကျွံ၍  
ခေါင်းမထူကြည့်နိုင်လေပြီ၊

ငိုနံ့တေးမှ  
သွေးပိုက်တန်းလန်း၊ အော်ယောင်ယမ်းသည့်  
ငန်းဖျားလူနာ၊ ဘယ်ရောက်ပါလိမ့်  
သေရာပြုမို့ မတွေ့သလော။

လူနာကတင် ဟင်းလင်းမြင်ရ  
သွေးစည့်နက်၊ ဓမ္မရာထက်မှာ  
စွန့်ထွက်အခြောက်၊ ပန်းခက်ခြောက်ကြွ  
ညောင်ရေခန်းမှ၊ ဝဲလွင်ကွသည်  
ဘဝတစ်ခု ဆုံးခြင်းနိမိတ်။



## Partial Sight of a Peaceful Death

By Hu Wo (Cuckoo's Song)

Having a low fever,  
From illness, I can recover.  
There next to me,  
Crying out in sleep, in a blood transfusion,  
Where has a patient with delirium been?  
Because of his death, is he not seen?  
The hospital bed is found free;  
Brown black bloodstains are on the bedding;  
Dry twigs with yellow spots have fallen,  
From the flower vase swirling and eddying...  
It is the precursor of a life's end again.

## May the Support Group for Elderly Doctors (SGED) prosper

due to the cetana (good will) and compassion of Mummy Gyi (Prof. Dr Myint Myint Khin) elderly doctors are supported such a group does not exist in any other country Myanmar being the first to establish SGED with medical check-ups for elderly doctors: a special group for all of us! the young look after the elderly doctors in turn in the Myanmar medical profession, the youth helps the elderly doctors to stand with pride elderly doctors meet yearly (in social gatherings) to socialize and chat with gusto 'tis the life of elderly doctors Ah, may this group progress and prosper!

By Dr Khin Maung Gyi (Singapore), Translated by Myint Zan



Translated on 17 June 2026.  
Translator's note: The translation commemorates the 12<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the passing of the founder of SGED, my late mother Professor Dr Myint Myint Khin who passed away on 19 June 2014.

# NATIONAL

## Entertainment

### Meeting held to select 2025 National Literary Awards



A preliminary meeting of subject-specific subcommittees for the selection of the 2025 National Literary Awards was held on 18 June 2026.

The meeting was held from 10 am to 11 am, and from 11 am to noon at the Sarpay Beikman meeting hall in Yangon.

The selection team members discussed matters regarding the selection of the 2025 National Literary Award. – Htun Htun/KTZH

The preliminary meeting of subject-specific subcommittees for the selection of the 2025 National Literary Awards is in progress.

### 3 great actors donate 250 dozen of books for MMPO children

ACADEMY Yan Aung, academy May Than Nu, and academy Soe Myat Thu Zar donated 250 dozen of notebooks to the Myanmar Motion Pictures Organization (MMPO) on 17 June in support of an upcoming donation event providing educational assistance, stationery, and school uniforms for the children of members of the organization, according to MMPO Vice-Chair U

Aye Kyu Lay.

"The artistes and production companies make donations for the educational support programme for the children of Myanmar Motion Pictures Organization members. On 17 June, they donated 150 dozen of exercise books," said U Aye Kyu Lay. The donation event will be in June at the Myanmar Motion Pictures Organization. – ASH/KTZH



From right to left shows Soe Myat Thuzar, Daw Myint Myint Khin, Yan Aung and MMPO officials.

### Author Ponnya Khin actively supports campaigns to promote reading Habits

POPULAR bestselling author Ponnya Khin has been voluntarily participating in events aimed at promoting reading habits.

"Since 2016, I have been involved in reading promotion activities. Although I have not had much time to participate in public literary talks, I have always willingly contributed to reading promotion events. I took a short break for a few years, but this year I have resumed my participation. Earlier in 2026, I gave talks at Hlegu Education Degree College, and just yesterday I spoke at Thanlyin Technological University," said Sayama Ponnya Khin.



She is well known for encouraging young people to read and is delighted whenever she sees young readers developing a love for books.

"I am especially happy that the young girl Eint Chit Thu, who won first prize in the Thuta Sonlin Buddha Win, is an avid reader. Her comments serve as motivation for young people to read more and help promote reading habits. In several interviews, Eint Chit Thu said that she wanted to meet me. She repeatedly asked the presenters at Mandalay FM to convey a message to me if they had the opportunity. Therefore, when Mandalay FM interviewed me and requested that I speak with her over the phone during the programme, I gladly agreed," she said. – Htun Htun/KTZH

### May Grace Parry wins Miss Universe Myanmar 2026

MAY GRACE PARRY, representing Hpa-an, was crowned Miss Universe Myanmar 2026 at the Miss Universe Myanmar 2026 Grand Final competition.

The grand final was held on 17 June at Hexagon Complex, located within Shwe Htut Tin Compound in Tamway Township, Yangon Region.

"I am extremely happy. I believe the supporters who wanted me to win are also happy. I will do my utmost best at the Miss Universe from the Miss Universe Myanmar," said Miss Universe Myanmar 2026 winner May Grace Parry. At the Miss Universe Myanmar 2026 Grand Final, May Grace Parry, representing Hpa-an, won Miss Universe Myanmar 2026, while Han Theint Theint Aung, representing Toungoo, grabbed First Runner-Up, and Kyaw Kyaw Eindra, representing Western Yangon, received Second Runner-Up.



Miss Universe Myanmar 2026 Winner May Grace Parry and other beauty pageants at the Miss Universe Myanmar 2026 Grand Finale.

Miss Universe Myanmar, May Grace Parry, will compete in the 75<sup>th</sup> Miss Universe 2026 to be held in Puerto Rico. – ASH/KTZH

### Medium Wave's song composer passes away

SONG composer Khin Maung Par (Medium Wave), 67, the younger brother of singer Khin Maung Toe, passed away from liver disease on the evening of 16 June at his home in Patheingyi Township, Mandalay Region, according to his family members.

The late songwriter continuously composed original songs throughout his career and, together with singer Khin Maung Toe, created many popular contemporary songs that gained widespread recognition among music lovers.

Among his songs,



Chitthu Alwan, Nay Nyo-nyo Yin Hnathwe Kan, Motethon LayOo, Pyo Myitta Moe, Lwansaya Khayanpya, Tanae Sone Ya Mal and Ahteekyan Kanchay Alwan are the most popular ones to date.

The funeral occasion of the deceased composer was held at Patheingyi cemetery on 17 June. – TWA/KTZH

### Exciting new mini-series 'Koe Thane' set to premiere on Maha App

FILMING has officially begun for the mini-series 'Koe Thein', which will be streamed on the Maha application, according to Maha Production.

The series is based on a story by Nya Hmwe Pan, with a screenplay by Thin Nanttha, and is directed by Ei (Aryon Oo). The ceremony for the launch of filming was held at Aung Min Khaung Datpaungsu Zedi in Kamayut Township, Yangon, on 17 June.

Cast members are Bhone Shein Khant, Ye Lwin Oo, Thantha Nyi, Thondray Oo, Myat Amara, Aung Thiha, and Nay Bhone Htet Kyaw. – Htun Htun/KTZH

### Solo art exhibition 'Threads of Family'

A solo art exhibition titled "Threads of Family", featuring paintings that vividly portray parental love, will be held, according to the source.

The exhibition held from 20 to 23 June at AYA SOMPO Gallery was handled by artist Win Zin.

"On the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of my mother's passing in 2025, I reflected deeply on my mother's immeasurable love and sacrifice in carrying me for nine months, giving birth to me through great hardship, and raising me with care. I also remembered my father's devotion in protecting, supporting, and pro-

viding for his children throughout their lives, even at the risk of his own life. As I commemorated the parental affection and marked my 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Diamond Jubilee birthday, I was inspired to express my gratitude through art at my 14<sup>th</sup> solo exhibition. This idea led me to create a series of paintings, which eventually became this exhibition, titled 'Threads of Family', at the Gallery by AYA SOMPO. The exhibition features 25 paintings of mothers' embraces and family life, created with a fresh artistic perspective," said artist Win Zin. – Htun Htun/KTZH

# WORLD

## Japan foreigner entry visa fees to be hiked 5-fold to 15,000 yen from July

*This marks the country's first revision to visa costs in 48 years (since 1978) to adjust for prolonged inflation and the severe depreciation of the yen.*

THE Japanese government on Friday decided to raise single-entry visa fees for foreigners five-fold to 15,000 yen (\$90) from 3,000 yen beginning in July, marking the first increase since 1978 amid inflation and the yen's depreciation.

Issuance fees for multiple-entry visas, which allow visitors to enter Japan multiple times over a set period, will be hiked from 6,000 yen to 30,000 yen.

"We do not expect the move to have an immediate impact on inbound tourism," Foreign Minister Toshimitsu Motegi said during a press conference. The hikes are expected to bring Japan's



The price hikes will cover escalating infrastructure costs for automated immigration systems and managing a record-high foreign resident population. PHOTO: KYODO

visa issuance fees closer to the levels implemented by the Group of Seven countries. — Kyodo

### At least one dies in train collision in England

TWO trains collided near Bedford in eastern England on Friday evening, killing at least one person and injuring several others, according to British Transport Police.

The incident occurred at around 5:15 pm local time when a Luton Airport Express service struck another East Midlands Railway service, British media reported.

"We know that a number of people have been injured and one person has very sadly died," British Transport Police said in a statement.

The local ambulance service said it had dispatched air ambulance and a Hazardous Area Response Team to the scene, urging the public to avoid the area. — Xinhua

## Iran issues new procedures for vessels requesting passage through Hormuz Strait

IRAN'S Persian Gulf Strait Authority (PGSA), the body responsible for maritime traffic in the Strait of Hormuz, announced on Friday new procedures for vessels seeking passage through the waterway, including a requirement that transit requests be

submitted at least 48 hours in advance.

In a post on social media platform X, the PGSA stressed that only vessels that comply with the requirements will be "cleared for passage promptly".

The PGSA said pas-



The Iran-flagged tugboat Basim sails near a ship anchored in the Strait of Hormuz off Bandar Abbas in southern Iran. PHOTO: AFP

sage requests must be submitted exclusively through its website and email address, and must include vessels' "valid and accessible" contact information.

To avoid delays, vessels are required to submit passage requests and necessary information "at least 48 hours prior to arrival at the strait area," it said. The PGSA also announced that, during the 60-day period specified in the newly signed peace memorandum of understanding (MoU) between Iran and the United States, ships will be exempt from charges related to passage through the strait. — Xinhua

### NEWS IN BRIEF

#### Trump unveils new 'Air Force One' gifted from Qatar

US President Donald Trump on Friday (local time) unveiled a new presidential aircraft, a modified Boeing 747 gifted by Qatar, describing it as a "flying White House" and one of the most advanced aircraft ever operated by the United States.

Speaking during the unveiling ceremony at Joint Base Andrews in Maryland, Trump praised the aircraft's transformation and capabilities, saying it had been completed in a remarkably short period.

"This plane was transformed into a flying White House at a level of luxury that nobody's ever seen before, probably even almost outside of an airplane," Trump said. "Nobody's ever seen anything like this, and in only 10 months, a timeframe no one thought possible," he added. — ANI

#### Nepal's Central Zoo closes after bird flu outbreak

NEPAL'S Central Zoo, located in the Kathmandu Valley, has been closed since Friday after bird flu was confirmed in several birds and animals. The zoo, home to a wide variety of wildlife, is one of the valley's major attractions for holidaymakers and tourists.

In a notice issued on Friday, the Central Zoo authority said it had been closed until further notice to protect the health and safety of the general public and visitors after bird flu infections were detected among animals and birds within the zoo premises.

Ganesh Koirala, information officer at the Central Zoo, told Xinhua that more than a dozen birds and a few animals had tested positive for the virus, forcing authorities to temporarily shut down the facility for disinfection.

"Some birds died due to bird flu," he said. — Xinhua

## US, Qatar discuss humanitarian fund to encourage Iran agreement

THE United States is working with Qatar on a plan to grant Iran access to \$6 billion in frozen assets for humanitarian spending, The Wall Street Journal reported on Saturday, citing informed sources.

The initiative is being considered as an incentive for Iran to conclude a comprehensive agreement with the United States on a final settlement, the newspa-

per reported.

Under the proposed arrangement, funds currently frozen in Qatar would be used to purchase food, medicine, and other humanitarian goods. The mechanism could serve as a framework for future concessions regarding additional frozen Iranian assets, sources told the newspaper. Iran has not yet reportedly agreed to the proposal. — SPUTNIK

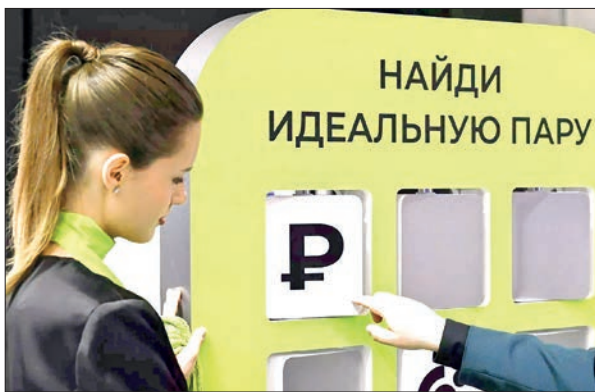
# ECONOMY WORLD

## Iran, Russia discuss developing financial mechanisms to facilitate trade

*Iran and Russia will complete payment system link in two months.*

RUSSIA and Iran are placing special emphasis on developing financial mechanisms that are independent of restrictive measures and aimed at facilitating trade, Iranian Central Bank Governor Abdolnaser Hemmati said on Friday. This week, the official visited Moscow on a trip focused on developing interbank ties and creating new mechanisms for expanding cooperation.

“We focused on creating mechanisms independent of prevailing restrictions and on using financial capacities to



SPIEF-2026. A forum participant at the ExpoForum Congress and Exhibition Centre on 3 June. **PHOTO: SPUTNIK**

urgently facilitate trade [between Russia and Iran], Hemmati said in a statement. The head of Iran’s central bank said

on Tuesday that Moscow and Tehran are expected to complete the third and final stage of linking the two countries’ payment

systems, Iran’s Shetab and Russia’s Mir, within two months. It would allow Iranians to make purchases in Russian stores using cards from Iran’s payment system.

In 2024, the two sides said they had completed two stages of integration that enabled payments and purchases through the Russian mobile application MirPay using NFC technology on Android smartphones, while also allowing Iranian cardholders to withdraw cash from ATMs in Russia. — SPUTNIK

## Panama Canal to pour \$8.5B into infrastructure to cut geopolitical risks

THE Panama Canal will invest about \$8.5 billion to develop its infrastructure to mitigate geopolitical risks, Boris Moreno, the canal’s vice president for operations, told Sputnik.

“We estimate investments at about \$8.5 billion,” Moreno said.

The money will be spent on a number of projects, including the construction of a dam to create a reservoir on the Rio Indio River, and concessions for two port terminals, with one on the Atlantic and one on the Pacific. The project also encompasses a concession for a liquefied petroleum gas pipeline with terminals for sending, loading and unloading on both coasts, he said.

Another strategic project involves extending

the land logistics corridor between the ports of the two oceans with a highway along the western bank of the canal, complementing the Transisthmian Highway on the eastern bank, Moreno said.

The vice president added that port terminal and gas pipeline projects are at the pre-qualification stage by tender participants, while the logistics corridor is still at an early stage, with various concepts still under review.

Moreno said that the goal of all these projects is to enable the canal to “remain independent of geopolitical fluctuations and offer a stable product that serves global trade and benefits the country, regardless of what may happen in any given region”. — SPUTNIK

## Cuba adopts 200 free-market reforms to end crisis

CUBAN lawmakers on Thursday adopted nearly 200 free-market reforms in a desperate bid to end a severe crisis and secure the end of a crippling US fuel blockade.

The 176 measures represent the biggest

shake-up of the island’s economic model since it began embracing communism six decades ago.

Cuba’s new reforms dramatically expand private enterprise: Mipymes (small businesses up to 100 people),

authorized in 2021, now dominate retail food and transport amid state shortages.

Prime Minister Manuel Marrero’s plan will allow large companies, multiple businesses per person, foreign invest-

ment without state joint ventures, share purchases in state firms, and transformation of state enterprises into commercial companies with company-level salary agreements. — AFP

## Diversification and local resources shield India from global energy disruptions

INDIA’S energy sector is demonstrating resilience



The report highlighted India’s growing role in the global data centre industry. **PHOTO: ANI**

amid ongoing geopolitical uncertainties and shifts

in global commodity markets, supported by diversified supply chains, strong domestic energy resources and infrastructure readiness, according to S&P Global Energy.

In its latest analysis, S&P Global Energy said India is successfully safeguarding energy security while positioning itself to meet rising demand from emerging sectors such as artificial intelligence (AI) and cloud computing.

According to the

report, a common trend across oil, power, data centres and coal markets is India’s focus on strengthening long-term energy security while supporting future economic growth.

On the oil front, S&P Global Energy noted that Indian refiners have been tactically navigating disruptions around the Strait of Hormuz to maintain domestic fuel security and preserve refining margins. — ANI



Projects aim to shield canal from geopolitics, stabilizing global trade. **PHOTO: CANAL DE PANAMA**

### NEWS IN BRIEF

#### Japan weighing 370 tln yen investment in 17 growth areas

THE government is considering setting a goal for the public and private sectors to invest around 370 trillion yen (\$2.3 trillion) in 17 growth areas by fiscal 2040, sources close to the matter said Saturday.

The target will be presented next week at a meeting on Japan’s growth strategy, which focuses on artificial intelligence, semiconductors, shipbuilding, aviation and space among other sectors.

The government calculated the amount by compiling market growth forecasts for each sector and capital spending plans in the private sector. — Kyodo

## 12.5 million barrels of oil went through Strait of Hormuz

US Vice-President JD Vance on Thursday (local time) said that 12.5 million barrels of oil transited through the Strait of Hormuz overnight, marking the highest volume since the start of the Iran conflict, and credited President Donald Trump's peace deal for easing tensions, stabilising energy markets and restoring maritime traffic in the region.

Briefing the members of the media, Vance said the administration's peace plan with Iran was already delivering tangible benefits for Americans, pointing to falling oil and gas prices and improved security in one of the world's most critical shipping lanes.

"The president's peace plan in Iran is already bearing real fruits for the American people. Last night, 12.5 million barrels of oil went through the Strait of Hormuz, which is a high since the beginning of the conflict," Vance said. He added that oil prices had nearly returned to pre-conflict levels, while gasoline prices had dropped below US\$4 per gallon for the first time since the conflict began. He said, "Oil prices are down nearly to their level from the pre-war conflict, gas prices dropped below US\$4 a gallon today for the first time since the conflict, and importantly, they're going to keep falling further given how low oil prices are." — ANI



12.5 million barrels of oil transited through the Strait of Hormuz overnight, marking the highest volume since the start of the Iran conflict. **PHOTO: PIXABAY**

## Innovations on show at Paris Vivatech fest

AROUND 15,000 startups from around Europe and beyond are showing off their wares at the Vivatech trade show in Paris until Saturday.

Here are just a few of the innovations being touted across the three floors of stands and displays:

### Healing bone implants

Berlin-based Blueprint Biomed is developing an artificial replacement for the grafts used in millions of patients every year to support bone healing.

"With this, we don't



A CycloTech drone on display at the VivaTech fair.

**PHOTO: AFP**

need to add any kind of autologous bone graft (from the patient's own body)," chief executive Aaron Herrera told AFP.

Grafts of the patient's own bone can fail, requiring follow-up surgery, or result in complications, he highlighted.

Blueprint's artificial structures, which can be created in many different shapes, are built on a 3D-printed scaffold of a biodegradable polyester called polycaprolactone, which supports a collagen structure.

Both substances are eliminated from the body within three months (collagen) to two years (polycaprolactone).

The company is looking for \$2.5 million as it heads towards human trials, hoping to implant its products into patients by 2028, Herrera said. — AFP

## Irish slump drags eurozone economy into red in first quarter

THE eurozone recorded an unexpected contraction in the first three months of 2026 due to a steep slump in Ireland's economic figures, according to revised data issued on Friday.

The economy 21-country eurozone shrank 0.2 per cent compared to the previous three-month period, according to the EU's statistics agency, which had earlier estimated first

quarter growth to be near-flat at 0.1 per cent.

The unusually steep downward revision was due to a sharper-than-estimated contraction in Ireland — where economic activity fell 12.1 per cent compared to an initial forecast of two per cent.

Ireland's statistics office, the CSO, said Thursday the exceptional revision was due to

the incorporation of data related to multinational companies, which carry significant weight in the Irish economy.

France's performance was also revised down at the end of May, with GDP falling by 0.1 per cent in the eurozone's second-largest economy instead of the flat reading previously reported by statistics agency Insee.

"Excluding the effect of Irish GDP, Eurozone growth remains remarkably steady at around 0.2 per cent per quarter," noted Rory Fennessy of Oxford Economics.

That said, the outlook for the eurozone remained lacklustre as the Middle East war and subsequent energy shock take their toll on the region's economy, with no end in sight. — AFP

## Disney-themed shinkansen train launched for Tokyo DisneySea 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary

A Disney-themed bullet train began running Friday on the Tokaido Shinkansen Line connecting Tokyo and Shin-Osaka stations to mark Tokyo DisneySea's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary, for a limited-time service through mid-March next year.

The 16-car N700A set features a "jubilee blue" livery to celebrate the theme park's anniversary, adorned with



A Disney-themed bullet train began running Friday on the Tokaido Shinkansen Line connecting Tokyo and Shin-Osaka stations to mark Tokyo DisneySea's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary. **PHOTO: KYODO**

various Disney characters. The seat headrest covers feature Mickey and Minnie Mouse.

The special train, a collaboration between Central Japan Railway Co and Tokyo DisneySea operator Oriental Land Co, will mainly run on the limited-stop Hikari and all-stops Kodama services on the bullet train line. — Kyodo

### CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V TRADER VOY.NO. (SB624A)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V TRADER VOY. NO. (SB624A)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **21-6-2026** 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 MEDITERRANEAN SHIPPING COMPANY S.A**

# WEEKLY WORLD NEWS DIGEST



Slovakia will cover most part of its natural gas needs in 2026 through supplies from Russia. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

## Russian supplies cover Slovakia's 2026 gas

June 20

SLOVAKIA will cover most part of its natural gas needs in 2026 through supplies from Russia, the Slovak state-owned energy company SPP told Sputnik.

"We will be able to cover the majority of our needs this year with supplies from Russia. We continue to guarantee uninterrupted natural gas supplies to all our customers, from households to large industrial clients," the company said.

SPP clarified that, in accordance with the new REPowerEU legislation - which entered into force in the second half of March - it had concluded an additional agreement with Gazprom Export for 2026, modifying the terms of natural gas supplies to Slovakia to ensure compliance with the new European requirements. – SPUTNIK

JUNE 19

### Russia lifts travel advisory for Gulf states

RUSSIA on Friday lifted its advisory warning citizens against traveling to the Gulf states following the signing of the US-Iran interim peace agreement, according to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

In a statement published on its website, the ministry said the decision was made in light of a memorandum of understanding (MoU) signed by the United States and Iran on Wednesday, which aims to end the military conflict and stabilize the regional situation.

The ministry said it no longer sees a need to maintain its earlier recommendation to Russian citizens to refrain from private travel, including tourist trips, to countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council, namely Bahrain, Qatar, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Oman and Saudi Arabia. – Xinhua

JUNE 18

### Spanish king to visit Mexican president

SPAIN'S King Felipe VI will visit Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum on 25 June during a World Cup trip in another sign of the countries' diplomatic thaw, the royal palace said on Thursday. Felipe "will make a stopover in Mexico City on Thursday, 25 June to accept the invitation of President Sheinbaum and hold a bilateral meeting in the National Palace", the palace said in a statement.

The monarch will then continue to Guadalajara where he will attend Spain's World Cup group-stage match against Uruguay the following day, the palace said.

Diplomatic relations had been strained since 2019, when Mexico demanded that the Spanish crown apologize for abuses committed during the conquest and colonization of the Americas in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. – AFP

JUNE 17

### India restores 21.76 million hectares of deforested land

INDIA has restored 21.76 million hectares of degraded and deforested land between 2011 and 2020, reaching nearly 84 per cent of its 26 million hectare Bonn Challenge target for 2030, according to an IUCN report.

The Bonn Challenge is a global effort to restore 150 million hectares of degraded and deforested landscapes by 2020 and 350 million hectares by 2030. Launched in 2011 by the German government and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), it operates as a flexible, country-driven framework to combat climate change, biodiversity loss, and land degradation.

Telangana led all states in area restored, followed by Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, and Odisha. Union Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav noted that restoration activities had generated around 1.22 billion person-days of employment. – ANI

JUNE 16

### Candidate De la Espriella vows crime crackdown

MILLIONAIRE lawyer Abelardo de la Espriella, who calls himself "The Tiger" and campaigns as an outsider, has pledged to crack down on crime in Colombia if elected president in this weekend's runoff vote.

US leader Donald Trump has endorsed the hard-right candidate who once called for the Colombian left to be "gutted", a statement he later retracted.

The 47-year-old is running for office for the first time following a lucrative legal career representing drug-trafficking paramilitaries, fraudsters and soccer stars.

De la Espriella lived in Florence, Italy, where he dabbled in opera, jetted around in private planes and promoted his rum and wine businesses before launching his presidential bid. He garnered over 43 per cent of the vote against leftist Senator Ivan Cepeda's 41 per cent in the first round last month, and the pair will face each other in a runoff on Sunday. – AFP

JUNE 15

### Report highlights youth leading Chinese tech

CHINESE youth are actively engaging in cutting-edge fields including aerospace, deep-sea exploration, and artificial intelligence as the country pursues scientific and technological modernization, a new think tank report said on Monday.

According to the report "Chinese Youth: Strivers and Global Contributors in the New Era" released by Xinhua Institute, scientific and technological modernization is a core pillar of Chinese modernization. As a new round of the global scientific and technological revolution and industrial transformation gathers pace, competition is becoming increasingly intense in fields such as artificial intelligence, aerospace technology, biomedicine, and new energy. Report urges high-level tech self-reliance to transition from a major manufacturer into an intelligent manufacturing powerhouse. – Xinhua

JUNE 14

### Protests erupt as G7 summit begins

A MASSIVE pre-summit protest erupted in Geneva, Switzerland, on Sunday, organized by a diverse coalition opposing the Group of Seven (G7). Convening under the "No G7" banner, multiple groups and organizations staged the demonstration in a unified effort to resist what they described as "fascism and imperialism".

French newspaper Le Monde, citing police sources, reported that around 20,000 demonstrators took part in the protest at around 7 pm on Sunday evening. Several clashes between protesters and the police were reported near the United Nations headquarters in Geneva.

Some shops in busy commercial areas and near government buildings in Geneva's old town had to board up their storefronts with wooden panels since last week. – Xinhua

# SPORTS

## Brazil turn corner but tougher World Cup tests await

BRAZIL eased the immediate pressure but remain some way from the finished article at the World Cup after closing in on a place in the last 32 with an improved performance against Haiti.

The five-time world champions beat the Caribbean side 3-0 on Friday in Philadelphia to move top of Group C, condemning Haiti — playing at their first World Cup in 52 years — to an early exit.

While the win came against modest opposition, it offered welcome relief for Carlo Ancelotti, who had come under rare scrutiny in Brazil following a drab 1-1 draw with Morocco in



Brazil's forward (9) Matheus Cunha (C) celebrates with Brazil's forward (7) Vinicius Junior (L) and Brazil's midfielder (20) Lucas Paqueta after scoring his team's second goal during the 2026 World Cup Group C football match between Brazil and Haiti at the Philadelphia Stadium in Philadelphia on 19 June 2026. PHOTO: AFP

the opener.

Brazil showed greater attacking bite and edged closer to qualification, but

questions remain about how they will fare against stronger opponents.

"We can compete with

any team. Whether it's Haiti or France, we have the quality to do so," Ancelotti said after claiming his first victory as a coach at a World Cup.

Ancelotti's decision to make two changes from the side that drew with Morocco paid off, most notably the inclusion of Matheus Cunha up front in place of Igor Thiago.

The Manchester United forward scored the opening two goals — his first at a World Cup — and his ability to drop into a deeper, playmaking role helped spark an attack that lacked creativity and punch against Morocco. — AFP

## Yadanapon sign Filipino midfielder



Midfielder Pauline San Buenaventura receives the Yadanapon jersey.

YADANAPON Women's Football Club has officially signed experienced Filipino midfielder Pauline San Buenaventura from Stallion Laguna FC to strengthen its midfield ahead of the Myanmar Women's League competition.

The 26-year-old midfielder will wear jersey number 29 and is expected to play a key role in the team's midfield due to her technical ability, composure, and experience, according to the club's announcement.

Pauline has over a

decade of playing experience and featured in the 2025-2026 AFC Women's Champions League with Stallion Laguna FC, competing against top Asian clubs in Myanmar, Vietnam, and Japan.

She also achieved strong domestic results in the Philippines, winning the 2024 PFF Women's Cup and finishing runner-up in the 2025 PFF Women's League, making her one of the most experienced international additions to the Yadanapon squad. — TWA/KZL

## De la Fuente faces selection dilemmas as Spain prepares for Saudi Arabia clash

SPAIN coach Luis de la Fuente has big decisions to make ahead of his side's second World Cup group game against Saudi Arabia on Sunday.

The 0-0 draw with Cabo Verde came as a surprise for a Spanish

team tipped to go far in the tournament. Although there is no reason Spain cannot go all the way, De la Fuente needs to find a solution to the sluggish play, which allowed Cabo Verde to sit deep and deny Spain room to play.

Saudi Arabia, buoyed by an impressive opening draw with Uruguay, are likely to use the same approach as Cabo Verde — stay compact at the back and look for chances on the counter-attack. That means De la Fuente will

have to change his tactics.

His first calls are about his wingers, Lamine Yamal and Nico Williams, both returning from injury and used as second-half substitutes on Monday. — Xinhua

## Türkiye manager backs players after World Cup exit

HEAD coach Vincenzo Montella said Friday that fate was not on Türkiye's side after a 1-0 loss to Paraguay eliminated his team from the World Cup.

The result came despite Türkiye controlling 65 per cent of possession and registering 32 shots to Paraguay's seven at San Francisco Bay Area Stadium. "The team showed heart and soul, but it didn't go our way," the Italian told a post-match news conference. "I'm disappointed for the

Turkish people, who had high expectations, and for the federation and the players because they left everything out there on the pitch. Destiny wasn't on our side." The defeat followed a 2-0 loss to Australia in Türkiye's opening Group D match, another contest in which the European side dominated possession and goal attempts.

Montella refused to criticize his players, saying he could not fault their commitment. — Xinhua

## USA down Australia to reach World Cup knockout rounds, Brazil swat Haiti



Alex Freeman of the United States celebrates after heading the World Cup co-hosts into a 2-0 lead in a victory over Australia.

THE United States marched into the last 32 of the World Cup on Friday with a 2-0 victory over Australia as Brazil re-

discovered their scoring touch to eliminate Haiti.

A day after Mexico sealed their place in the knockout rounds, the

USA emulated their fellow World Cup co-hosts with a clinical Group D win over Australia in Seattle.

A Cameron Burgess own goal in the 11<sup>th</sup> minute and a headed effort from Alex Freeman two minutes before half-time sealed a comfortable win for Mauricio Pochettino's side, who have advanced to the second phase of the tournament with a game to spare.

After an unconvincing build-up to the World Cup, the Americans have made a dream start to the

tournament with Friday's victory following a stylish 4-1 demolition of Paraguay in their opening game last week.

A day of celebration for the co-hosts got even better later Friday after Paraguay's 1-0 victory over Türkiye confirmed that the US would clinch top spot in Group D, ensuring a theoretically easier draw in the last 32.

"It was a fantastic game again, very good first half," Pochettino said. "I think we dominated the game against a very tough team. — AFP

## Egypt uncovers 2,500-year-old temple remains in Bahariya Oasis

EGYPT announced on Friday a major archaeological discovery at the Al-Qasr Al-Qadim (Old Palace) Temple in Bahariya Oasis in the country's Western Desert, which uncovers significant architectural elements dating back around 2,500 years to the 26<sup>th</sup> Dynasty (664-525 BC). The Egyptian Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities said in a statement that the Egyptian archaeological mission from the Supreme Council of Antiquities (SCA) uncovered the remains of a sandstone room, inscribed stone blocks bearing the names and titles of King Psamtik I, and various artifacts. The findings provide new evidence of the site's historical and religious significance, confirming its role as a key administrative center across successive eras, SCA Secretary-General Hisham Elleithy noted.



The primary construction of the temple ruins dates back to the Late Period (26<sup>th</sup> Dynasty: 664-525 BC). **PHOTO: MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND ANTIQUITIES**

Mohamed Abdel-Badie, head of the Egyptian Antiquities Sector at the SCA, said that the mission also revealed the temple's main hypostyle hall with 16 sandstone columns, adjacent rooms and shrines, and hieroglyphic texts bearing the names of deities such as Amun-Ra, Amunet, and Khonsu. Construction of the hall began under King Psamtik I and was completed under Kings Wahibre (Apries) and Ahmose II (Amasis), Abdel-Badie said. — Xinhua

## Parthenon facade restored to early 1,800s pomp

GREECE'S culture ministry on Thursday said it had finished a lengthy restoration of the western facade of the Parthenon in Athens, re-creating the world-famous monument's early 1800s look. The 2,500-year-old temple honouring the goddess Athena, which sits on a hill overlooking the Greek capital, is visited by more than four million people each year.

"Today, we look upon the west pediment of the Parthenon as we have not seen it for two centuries," Culture Minister Lina Mendoni said in a statement.

"For the first time in about 220 years, the west side of the Parthenon is presented by the ministry of culture in its fullest possible form... the sight is truly overwhelming." — AFP

## Swedish schools turn back to paper amid worries over digital impact

*Sweden replaces classroom screens with textbooks to fix dropping children's concentration.*

Sweden, once seen as a global leader in bringing laptops and tablets into classrooms, is now investing heavily in printed textbooks amid growing concerns that extensive screen use may be hurting children's learning and concentration.

At Bandhagen school in Stockholm, fourth-grade students read aloud from printed materials after spending part of the lesson reading books of their choice — a scene that reflects Sweden's broader shift back towards paper-based learning.

"When I read on devices, I usually get a headache," said Emilia, who is



Children read from printed booklets in a classroom in Stockholm on 19 March 2026. **PHOTO: KYODO**

in her teens. "I can concentrate better when I read physical books."

Sweden rapidly expanded the use of digital devices in schools around 2010, but debate intensi-

fied after results from the OECD's Programme for International Student Assessment showed sharp declines in reading and mathematics scores between 2018 and 2022.

A government-commissioned review by neuroscientists and paediatric experts concluded that heavy reliance on digital devices could impair attention and concentration and that printed materials may be more effective for learning.

In response, Sweden changed course in 2023, encouraging paper-based instruction for younger students and setting aside 658 million to 755 million kronor (\$70 million to \$80 million) annually through 2025 for textbooks and other printed teaching materials in pre-schools as well as compulsory schools, which covers elementary through junior high schools for Japan. — Kyodo

## Japan perfume industry taps vending machines, consultations to win buyers

THE Japanese perfume industry is seeking to win new customers through personalized fragrance consultations and vending machines, while beverage companies have also entered the market with their own scents.

Nose Shop Inc, which offers a wide range of rare perfumes from around the world, opened a salon in Tokyo in January, offering private, by-appointment fragrance consultations aimed at helping customers move beyond preconceived notions about scents.

Six unlabeled fragrances are initially selected based on prior research into the customer, who is then asked to describe their impressions of each one. Additional fragrances are introduced over the course of the hour, with their brands revealed at the end.

"What one likes may change depending on how the scents are combined. It's a great opportunity to become more familiar with it," said staff member Risa Azuma. A session can be booked for 4,400 yen (\$30).

Amulette Inc, a Tokyo-based company that provides perfume information, has introduced vending machines from Spain, each offering five fragrances. Users can pay a few hundred yen, depending on the brand, to sample them.

"We want to share the best parts of unknown brands and create welcoming spaces for people who may be reluctant about going to specialized shops," said Amulette CEO Kanta Osada. The dispensers are located at the Lucua Osaka shopping centre in western Japan. The company hopes



Nose Shop staff member Risa Azuma stands next to bottles of perfume in Tokyo on 13 April 2026. **PHOTO: KYODO**

to install more than 30 machines across Japan within the year. Major beverage company Ito En Ltd has also entered the perfume market with "Crazy Jasmine", a fragrance inspired by its jasmine tea. Four fragrances were selected from about 200 candidates to create the perfume line, priced between 6,820 yen

and 8,800 yen.

Yoko Mukaida, who was responsible for designing the company's jasmine tea drink and proposed the venture, said, "Tea is also enjoyed for its aroma, so there is an affinity between the two. I hope the scent of the flowers also creates an opportunity to try the tea." — Kyodo