

NATIONAL **PAGE 10**



Yangon expands highway bus services for New Year travel

BUSINESS **PAGE 11**



Yangon Port: 62 container vessels scheduled to arrive in Jan 2025

Huge crowds excited by New Year Countdown Concert at Secretariat Yangon

A large number of people are interested in the New Year Countdown concert to be held at the Yangon's Secretariat.

The festival, which is being held as part of the Rangoon Downtown Lifestyle's Shopping Festival, began on 25 December, with more than 100 stalls participating.

"We also have a market fair. There are more than 100 shops, including seafood, companies, cars, electronics and everything. We will have a group of people singing at beer pubs. Their group will start the entertainment at 5 pm. Stars to entertain tomorrow include Rebecca Win, Myo Kyawt Myaing, Nyi Nanda, trending DJ, and Sai Sai Kham Leng. They are to celebrate the countdown. After the countdown, the DJ will play until 1:00 am," said Ko Kaung Htut from Attitude Entertainment Group, the organizer of the concert.



This photo shows the audience cheering on a concert held at the Secretariat.

There are many people interested in the event and preparations are underway to participate in it.

"It is in Yangon's busiest downtown area. There will be many interested people. This year, we can go to a nearby place for New Year," said a resident of Pazundaung Township. — Thit Taw/ZN

2025 New Year Market Fair in **Kalaw** begins 29 Dec

The 2025 New Year Market Fair is currently taking place in Kalaw, Shan State (South), from 29 December to 4 January 2025, according to the 2025 New Year Fair Organizing Com-

mittee.

The event is being held at Maw Myay Oo Park in Kalaw to attract travellers across the country during the New Year holiday.

In entertaining visitors, the fair

features musical performances including well-known singers and DJ groups. It also offers a variety of consumer goods stalls, restaurants, and small playgrounds for children and young people. — ASH/MKKS



This photo reveals the beauty scenes in Kalaw.

NATIONAL

Police and Officials Urged to Prioritize Public Welfare and Safety Without Burdening Citizens

MEMBERS of the Myanmar Police Force and administrative officials must prioritize public welfare while ensuring the safety of the people without imposing burdens.
(Excerpt from the speech delivered by Chairman of the State Administration Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at the meeting hall of the Eastern Command Headquarters on 3 September 2024)



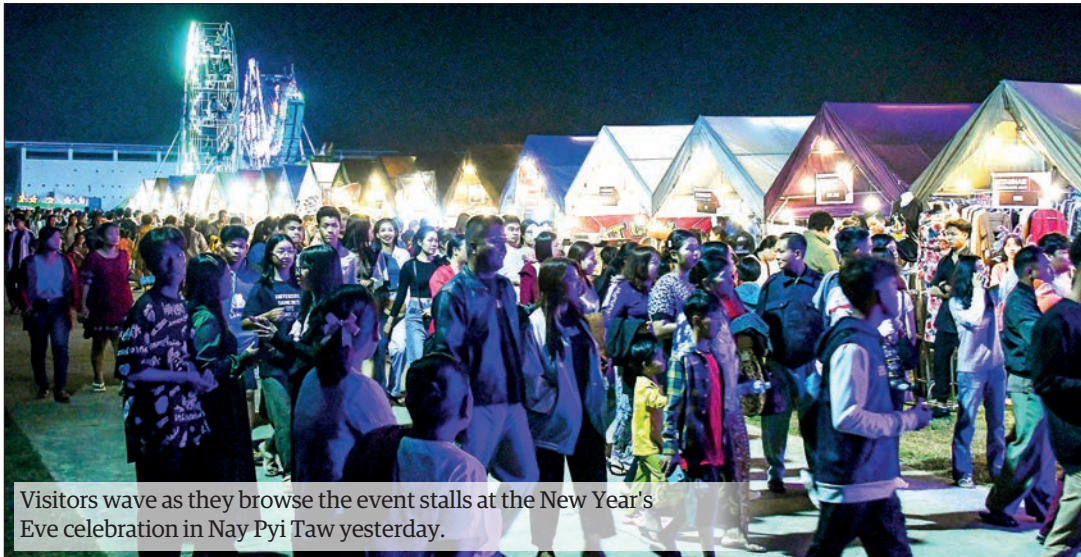
A crowded audience watches the music concert at the New Year's Eve event in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. PHOTO: PHO PYAE SONE

New Year's Eve music concert, Myanmar traditional dance event crowded with visitors

THE New Year's Eve music concert and Myanmar traditional dance 'Thabin Aka Nae Hla Myi Nya' was organized yesterday at Wunna Theikdi Training Grounds 1 and 2 in Nay Pyi Taw to celebrate the New Year.
Officials provided proper security measures to ensure the safety of visitors to the two concerts. The sites are decorated with photo booths for those who like taking photographs

and playgrounds for the children.
Over 50 food, souvenirs, and local product stalls were established, food was sold at fairer prices, and there were dust bins and mobile toilets for the visitors.
Famous singers participated in the concert to the accompaniment of the band, and all sites were crowded with visitors.
After the performance of

'Thabin Aka Nae Hla Myi Nya' by Myanmar theatrical dancer Tin Maung San Min Win, the Copy Show Thai "The Gang Of Popular Copy Show" performed for festivalgoers.
On 31 December, events including the countdown will run from 5 pm to 1 am. Admission is free, and free shuttle bus services will be provided with nine buses for three routes to facilitate transport for festivalgoers. — Lulin Pyo/KTZH



Visitors wave as they browse the event stalls at the New Year's Eve celebration in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

Five National Objectives for 77th Anniversary of Independence Day 2025

1. To address armed conflicts and differing perspectives lawfully, ensuring non-disintegration of the Union, non-disintegration of national solidarity and perpetuation of sovereignty
2. To safeguard the State with unity and strength of all citizens, guided by the spirit of the Union
3. To conduct a free, fair, and credible general election to establish a genuine, disciplined democratic system
4. To promote balanced development across all sectors of the Union through the collective strength of the entire people
5. To collectively advance politics, the economy, defence, national identity, and spirit with perseverance, diligence, and dedication, guided by the motto: "Keep Moving Forward to Achieve Our Goal"



2024 Population and Household Census



- Myanmar's 2024 Population and Household Census was conducted nationwide starting on 1 October 2024.
- Preliminary results are scheduled for publication on 31 December 2024.
- Census data will be available on the Department of Population's website at www.dop.gov.mm.

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, www.moi.gov.mm/km, www.moi.gov.mm/nlm and www.gnlm.com.mm/e-paper.

News and Periodicals
Enterprise



NATIONAL

THE door is open to all ethnic armed groups at all times for the sake of peace in the State. They are always welcomed to resolve the differences, not by military means, but through dialogue. Only when the entire population makes collective endeavours to achieve peace and stability, the rule of law and socioeconomic development, will Myanmar be able to stand tall in the world as a modern and developed country.

(An excerpt from the message sent by Chairman of the State Administration Council, Prime Minister Senior General Thadue Maha Thray Sithu Thadue Thiri Thudhamma Min Aung Hlaing on the occasion to mark the Kayin New Year Day held on 11 January 2024)



Yangon's night beauty. PHOTO BY AUNG KYAW MOE

On behalf of SAC Chairman, SAC Secretary signs condolence book on demise of former Indian PM

ON behalf of the State Administration Council Chairman, State Administration Council Secretary General Aung Lin Dwe, accompanied by officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, arrived at the Embassy of India's Liaison Office, situated at the Park Royal Hotel, Dekkhinathiri Township, Nay Pyi Taw, at noon yesterday to sign the book of condolence for the passing of Dr Manmohan Singh, former Prime Minister of the Republic of India, who passed away on 26 December 2024. First Secretary and Head of the Indian Liaison Office Ms Ritu Yadav, and officials welcomed the Secretary of the State Administration Council.



State Administration Council Secretary General Aung Lin Dwe signs the book of condolence on the passing of the former Prime Minister of the Republic of India yesterday.

Following this, the Secretary of the State Administration Council met Ms Ritu Yadav, First Secretary, Head of the Indian Liaison Office and officials of the Indian Embassy in a cordial meeting. He also conveyed a message of condolence and sympathy from the Chairman of the State Administration Council for the recent passing of the former Prime Minister of the Republic of India and signed the book of condolence.

Dr Manmohan Singh served as the Prime Minister of the Republic of India from 2004 to 2014 and paid a goodwill visit to Myanmar in 2012. — MNA

MoD awards Inter-Ministerial Cup-winning athletes at National Sports Festival

THE Ministry of Defence honoured its athletes who participated in the Fifth National Sports Festival 2024 representing the ministry and grabbed the champion title in different sports competitions yesterday.

At the event, State Administration Council Member Deputy Prime Minister Union Defence Minister General Maung Maung Aye appreciated the athletes for winning champion titles in different sports events and making new records in women's athletics events.

He then added that the development of a nation can be analyzed with its achievements in sports, and urged the athletes to make efforts for the ministry and Tatmadaw, highlighting the motto "promoting sports is akin to defending and safeguarding the nation".

He presented cash prizes to the winners and received the champion cup from the winning team.

The Ministry of Defence participated in six types of sports, and won 14 gold medals, 10 silver medals and 10 bronze medals, totalling 34, and achieved the inter-ministerial champion cup. — MNA/KTZH



State Administration Council Member Deputy Prime Minister Union Defence Minister General Maung Maung Aye addresses the event to honour the ministry's winning athletes yesterday.

NATIONAL

Residents Urged to Prioritize Public Safety Amid Armed Terrorist Threats

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

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

SAC Member attends events marking 87th Kayin National New Year Day

STATE Administration Council Member Mahn Nyein Maung attended the flag-hoisting ceremony marking the 87th Kayin National New Year Day in Myaungmya Township, Ayeyawady Region, yesterday.

The SAC member played the frog drum to inaugurate the event. According to the ceremonial procedures, they hoisted the Kayin national flag and saluted the National Flag of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and the Kayin national flag.

He made a New Year speech, sang the Kayin national song and concluded the event. He also enjoyed the Kayin traditional dance at the event.

The SAC member also attended the opening ceremony of the laterite road connecting to Konetha junction from Pwehngetsan village in Myaungmya township. During the ceremony,



State Administration Council Member Mahn Nyein Maung cuts the ribbon to unveil the 87th Kayin National New Year Day in Myaungmya Township, Ayeyawady Region, yesterday.

ny, he cut the ribbon alongside Ayeyawady Region Chief Minister U Tin Maung Win, Deputy Minister for Cooperatives and

Rural Development U Myint Soe, Regional Security and Border Affairs Minister Colonel Moe Min Naing and local donor

U Myo Win Aung, and observed the newly opened road.

They joined the 87th Kayin National New Year festival. At

the ceremony, the SAC member read out the message sent by SAC Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Thadde Maha Thray Sithu Thadde Thiri Thudhamma Min Aung Hlaing to the ceremony marking the 87th Kayin National New Year festival.

The region's chief minister also made the speech, and religious leaders extended their wishes. Region's Ethnic Affairs Minister U Saw Lin Khel read out the message sent by the Union Minister for Ethnic Affairs, and the chairperson of the regional Kayin Literature and Culture Association briefed the festival.

The SAC member and relevant officials presented awards to the Kayin ethnic people who won prizes at the national level, participated in the singing session and concluded the event.

— MNA/KTZH

Gold Market Rate as of 30 December 2024

THE price of one tical (16.329325 grammes) of gold with density of 19.25 grammes per cubic centimetre and above is K5,280,000, as established by the Mineral (Gold) Reference Price Determination Committee.

COVID-19 report, 30 December 2024

NEW TESTS

2,913

NEW CASE

NIL

CASUALTIES

NIL

Myanmar National Centre for Diseases Control
Department of Public Health

Global NEW LIGHT of MYANMAR

www.gnlm.com.mm



CIRCULATION & DISTRIBUTION

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

ADVERTISING & MARKETING

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

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

Write for us

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

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

Kayin New Year Festival held in Yangon Region

THE Kayin New Year Festival was held at the Union National Races Village in Thakayta Township, Yangon Region, yesterday.

It was attended by Yangon Region Chief Minister U Soe Thein, Yangon Command Commander Maj-Gen Zaw Hein, Deputy Minister for Ethnic Affairs U Zaw Aye Maung, State Administration Council Central Advisory Body Leader and Patron of Yangon Region Kayin Literature and Culture Central Committee U Saw Tun Aung Myint and his wife, Central Advisory Body member U Saw Daniel and his wife, Yangon Region Ethnic Affairs Minister U Saw Jacob Htoo, and invitees.

The Kayin National Flag was first hoisted, and officials



State Administration Council Central Advisory Body Leader U Saw Tun Aung Myint delivers the opening speech at the Kayin New Year celebration in Yangon yesterday.

played the frog drum while Kayin youths blew buffalo horns to launch the ceremony.

The SAC Central Advisory Body Leader then made a New Year speech, and officials made remarks and briefed the festival.

Officials watched Kayin’s traditional dance performances and handed over K15 million for the successful holding of the Kayin New Year Festival.

The festival included traditional competitions and boxing competitions. — MNA/KTZH

2-day illegal trade crackdown confiscates goods worth K929M

UNDER the supervision of the Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee, efforts to combat the illicit trade are continued effectively by the law.

On 27 December, the combined teams impounded 0.252 tonne of illegal teak and 5.249 tonnes of illegal timbers valued at K1.88 million in Pyawbwe and Aungmyaythazan Townships, industrial materials worth K700.72 million without official documents from 13 containers at the Asia World Port Terminal container checkpoint, and two tractor heads with two trailers (estimated value of K175 million) carrying industrial materials, consumer goods and foodstuffs worth K51.17 million without official documents at the Ywathagyi Dry Port. The action was conducted under the Forest Law and Customs procedures.

Similarly, on 29 December, the combined on-duty teams nabbed illegal charcoal weighing 2.88 tonnes, 0.555 tonne of illegal teak, 0.192 tonne of illegal hardwood and 0.929 tonne of other illegal timbers (valued at K751,045) in Bago, Nyaunglebin and Pyay districts.

The action was taken under the Forest Law. The Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee reported 15 arrests on 27 and 29 December, seizing illegal goods worth approximately K929.5 million. — MNA/MKKS



Photos capture confiscated illegal items at Asia World Port Terminal container checkpoint (left¢re) and at the Ywathagyi Dry Port (right).

Allegations of Budalin mass detentions and arson denied



This screenshot reveals false reports.

REPORTS of security forces detaining over 250 innocent people and destroying shelters and motorbikes in Budalin Township, Sagaing Region, have been categorically denied by authorities, who label them as false.

A security official described these allegations, circulated by certain media outlets, as unfounded and fabricated. The official stated that security forces are conducting standard security operations in the region and have not been involved in any acts of arson or destruction of civilian properties.

The official claimed that the actual perpetrators of such violence are terrorists, who allegedly target villages that do not support them. These groups are accused of burning properties, detaining residents, and committing killings.

The circulation of false reports by certain news media is a deliberate attempt to mislead the public, damage the reputation of security forces, and obscure the violent activities of insurgents. According to the official, this misinformation campaign aims to manipulate public perception and divert attention from the actions of terrorist groups. — MNA/MKKS

NATIONAL

Associations release statements on strong objections and condemnations against terror acts of AA terrorists

IN the ongoing armed conflicts within Rakhine State, as Tatmadaw members took measures to contain counterattacks against AA terrorists for considering the safety of local civilians, they were captured by AA terrorists. Video files showing AA terrorists brutally killing Tatmadaw members captured by them were filmed and shared online. Moreover, Tatmadaw members, police members, women, and even children were similarly slaughtered. As their inhumane and terror actions in war crimes of AA terrorists are unacceptable, Young Men's Buddhist Association (Central), Myanmar Inter-faith Dialogue Group (Central), Myanmar Evangelical Christian Alliance, Union of Myanmar Methodist Church (Lower Myanmar), Faith Evangelical Church (Bago), Deliverance Church (Yangon), All -Myanmar Hindu Central Council, All-Myanmar Tamil Hindu Foundation (HQ), Thananta Dhamma Palaka (Hindu) Association, Islamic Religious Affairs Council Myanmar, Myanmar Press Council, Myanmar Writers' Association, Myanmar Motion Pictures Organization, Myanmar Music Association (Central), Myanmar Artists Organization (Central), Myanmar Theatrical Association (Central), Myanmar Comedians' Association, Myanmar Sports Media Federation, and Pinnaygon Yakhine Jaame Mosque released statements, strongly opposing and condemning these inhumane and terror actions. — MNA/TTA

Statement of Myanmar Artists Association (Central)

30 December 2024

THE ongoing conflicts in Rakhine State have raised concerns for the safety of local ethnic civilians. In light of this, Tatmadaw has exercised restraint in its counteroffensive operations. However, it has come to light that AA terrorist brutally executed detained Tatmadaw members, capturing the acts on video and spreading them online. Furthermore, reports have surfaced that Tatmadaw members, members of the police force, women, and children have also been inhumanely and cruelly killed by these terrorists, causing profound distress.

The Myanmar Artists Association (Central) strongly condemns and completely rejects such inhumane acts of terrorism perpetrated by AA terrorists. The association has publicly declared its stance, expressing firm opposition to these atrocities.

Myanmar Artists Association (Central)

Statement of Faith Evangelical Church (Bago)

AA terrorists spread videos on social media containing their brutal perpetration of murdering Tatmadaw members, who de-escalated counterattacks in consideration of the safety of locals during the clashes in Rakhine State.

The Faith Evangelical Church (Bago) issued this statement strongly condemning the inhumane actions of AA terrorists.

Faith Evangelical Church (Bago)

Statement of All-Myanmar Hindu Central Council

IN the ongoing armed conflicts in Rakhine State, AA terrorists brutally killed the captured Tatmadaw members who controlled counterattacks against AA terrorists by considering the life threats to residents. Videos of these killings are being shared on social media, causing a disturbing sense of unease. Hence, the All-Myanmar Hindu Central Council has issued a statement declaring that it completely rejects these actions and strongly opposes them.

All-Myanmar Hindu Central Council

Statement of Young Men's Buddhist Association-YMBA (Central)

- In Rakhine State, during the ongoing clashes, Tatmadaw members who de-escalated counterattacks in consideration of the safety of locals were arrested by AA terrorists and forced to dig holes in the ground. Moreover, AA terrorists recorded video files and spread them online while they made Tatmadaw members stay in these holes to behead and kill them. They also exploded the ships carrying Tatmadaw members, police force members and families and killed the drowning women and children.
- The Young Men's Buddhist Association-YMBA (Central) issued this statement strongly condemning the inhumane actions of AA terrorists.

Young Men's Buddhist Association-YMBA (Central)

Statement of Myanmar Press Council

30 December 2024

- Since 2023, AA terrorists have attacked the villages, security camps and Tatmadaw camps in Rakhine State by using rockets, and small arms and heavy weapons since 2023. Therefore, Rakhine nationals not desiring wars displaced by the conflict are receiving aid from local Myanmar communities.
- Because of the violent attacks, numerous residents, departmental staff, security members and their family members were killed and injured. During the conflicts, security forces protected the peace and tranquility of the State with courage and bravery. However, in some cases, some security members were arrested as they exercised restraint for the safety of local people and were brutally murdered to make inhumane mind warfare.
- The most cruel action is that AA terrorists posted video files showing the murder of POWs (prisoners of war) on social media. Moreover, AA terrorists also cruelly killed women and children, together with Tatmadaw members and police force. Their acts are even more cruel than those of IS, violating the Geneva Convention and constituting blatant war crimes.
- The Myanmar Press Council denounces terrorists who are ruthlessly committing war crimes against the people of Rakhine State, threatening the very existence of the Union of Myanmar. We urge everyone to unite in the fight against AA terrorists until their downfall.

Myanmar Press Council

Statement of Pinnaygone Yakhine Jaame Mosque

30 December 2024

- In the ongoing clashes in Rakhine State, Tatmadaw exercised restraint during its counteroffensive operations, with the local population's safety being a top priority. In contrast, AA terrorists mercilessly killed detained Tatmadaw personnel and circulated the footage online. They also carried out brutal killings of members of Tatmadaw and police, as well as women and children.
- We fully reject and strongly condemn these inhumane acts of violence committed by AA terrorists.

Pinnaygone Yakhine Jaame Mosque

Statement of Myanmar Motion Pictures Organization

30 December 2024

- Myanmar is currently experiencing widespread conflicts due to armed terrorists, forcing local populations to flee their homes and seek refuge in various regions.
- Among these terrorists, the AA terrorist group is the most malicious and ruthless:
 - Captured Tatmadaw members, who were detained for exercising restraint and refraining from returning fire against Rakhine residents, were brutally murdered (video evidence available).
 - Evidence shows that AA terrorists inhumanely killed women and children – the families of Tatmadaw and police members.
- The atrocities mentioned above are blatant violations of the Geneva Convention and constitute war crimes committed with extreme cruelty and brutality.

Therefore, the Myanmar Motion Pictures Organization (MMPO) strongly condemns these heinous acts perpetrated by AA terrorists.

Myanmar Motion Pictures Organization

NATIONAL

Statement of Union of Myanmar Methodist Church (Lower Myanmar)

AA terrorists spread videos on social media containing their brutal perpetration of murdering Tatmadaw members who de-escalated counterattacks in consideration of the safety of locals during the clashes in Rakhine State.

The Union of Myanmar Methodist Church (Lower Myanmar) issued this statement strongly condemning the inhumane actions of AA terrorists.

Union of Myanmar Methodist Church (Lower Myanmar)

Statement of Deliverance Church (Yangon)

30 December 2024

IT is sorrowful to see that AA terrorists killed Tatmadaw members, police members, and their families during the ongoing armed conflicts in Rakhine State. They have also executed Tatmadaw members in a gruesome manner, with these killings being recorded in video files and spread on social media.

Deliverance Church (Yangon) hereby declares that it completely rejects and strongly condemns the actions of AA terrorists, who have no compassion for human beings.

Deliverance Church (Yangon)

Statement of Myanmar Interfaith Dialogue Group (Central)

AA terrorists brutally murdered Tatmadaw members who were arrested in clashes in Rakhine State.

The Myanmar Interfaith Dialogue Group (Central) issued this statement strongly condemning the inhumane actions of AA terrorists.

*Executive Committee
Myanmar Interfaith Dialogue Group (Central)*

Statement of Myanmar Comedians Association (Central)

IN the ongoing clashes in Rakhine State, Tatmadaw has shown restraint in its counteroffensive operations, prioritizing the local population’s safety. In contrast, AA terrorists have brutally killed detained Tatmadaw members and shared the footage online. They have also carried out vicious killings of Tatmadaw and police members, as well as women and children.

The Myanmar Comedians Association (Central) strongly condemns these inhumane acts of violence committed by AA terrorists.

Myanmar Comedians Association (Central)

Statement of Myanmar Evangelical Christian Alliance

AA terrorists brutally murdered Tatmadaw members who de-escalated counterattacks in consideration of the safety of locals in the clashes in Rakhine State.

The Myanmar Evangelical Christian Alliance issued this statement strongly condemning the inhumane actions of AA terrorists.

Myanmar Evangelical Christian Alliance

Statement of Islamic Religious Affairs Council Myanmar

IN the ongoing armed conflicts within Rakhine State, Tatmadaw members took measures to contain counterattacks against AA terrorists for considering the lives of local civilians. During this time, video files showing AA terrorists brutally killing Tatmadaw members captured by them were filmed and shared online. It was also discovered that Tatmadaw members, police members, women, and even children were similarly slaughtered in a gruesome and inhumane manner, which is deeply disturbing.

The Islamic Religious Affairs Council Myanmar hereby announces its firm rejection and strong condemnation of the violent and brutal actions committed by AA terrorists.

Islamic Religious Affairs Council Myanmar

Statement of Myanmar Writers’ Association

30 December 2024

1. The Republic of the Union of Myanmar is home to over 135 ethnic groups who have been peacefully coexisting. However, Myanmar is currently facing various conflicts. It is observed that these conflicts are being instigated by armed terrorists who are trying to provoke wars.
2. During the conflicts in Rakhine State, the Tatmadaw members, who were arrested for exercising restraint in returning fire for safety of Rakhine residents were cruelly murdered by AA terrorists. The terrorists spread those video files online. AA terrorists inhumanly also killed family member women and children, as well as Tatmadaw and police members.
3. The Myanmar Writers’ Association strongly denounces the AA blatant disregard for the Geneva Convention and its attempts to destabilize Myanmar by committing war crimes.

Myanmar Writers’ Association

Statement of Myanmar Theatrical Association (Central)

30 December 2024

IT is sorrowful to hear that AA terrorists brutally killed Tatmadaw members who controlled their counterattacks against AA terrorists by considering the life threats to residents in the armed conflicts in Rakhine State. Videos of these killings are being shared on social media. Moreover, Tatmadaw members, police members, their families, women and children were cruelly killed.

The Myanmar Theatrical Association (Central) strongly rejects and condemns the inhumane and terror acts committed by AA terrorists.

Myanmar Theatrical Association (Central)

Statement of Myanmar Sports Media Federation

IT is with great sadness that we learned that AA terrorists, taking advantage of Tatmadaw having exercised restraint in its counteroffensive operations in the ongoing conflicts in Rakhine State, have brutally killed captured Tatmadaw members. In addition, they captured the acts on video and circulated them online. Not only that, they brutally killed members of Tatmadaw and the police force, women, and children.

The Myanmar Sports Media Federation expresses its strong opposition and condemnation of such inhumane acts of violence committed by AA terrorists.

Myanmar Sports Media Federation

Statement of All-Myanmar Tamil Hindu Foundation (HQ)

1. It is sorrowful to hear that AA terrorists brutally killed Tatmadaw members due to controlling counterattacks against AA terrorists by considering the life threats to residents in the armed conflicts in Rakhine State. Videos of these killings are being shared on social media. Video files of these executions revealed gruesome and merciless acts.
2. The All-Myanmar Tamil Hindu Foundation (HQ) strongly rejects and condemns the violent and brutal actions committed by AA terrorists.

All-Myanmar Tamil Hindu Foundation (HQ)

Statement of Myanmar Music Association (Central)

30 December 2024

THE Myanmar Music Association condemns the AA terrorist group’s brutal acts of violence against those captured in the conflicts and their perpetration of war crimes.

Myanmar Music Association (Central)

Statement of Thananta Dhamma Palaka (Hindu) Association

30 December 2024

TATMADAW members who controlled counterattacks against AA terrorists by considering the life threat to residents in the current armed conflicts in Rakhine State were captured by AA terrorists. It is sorrowful to hear that video files of brutally killing these Tatmadaw members were recorded and shared on social media. Moreover, AA terrorists committed terror acts in brutally killing Tatmadaw members, police members, women and children. The Thananta Dhamma Palaka (Hindu) Association strongly rejects and condemns the inhumane and brutal acts of violence committed by AA terrorists.

Thananta Dhamma Palaka (Hindu) Association

Say goodbye happily to Old Year

AS 2024 bids farewell, society’s historical page turns to a new chapter. The New Year waits for all. In keeping with tradition, both globally and locally, the people of Myanmar engage in auspicious activities to joyfully usher in the New Year 2025.

Everyone should reflect on the challenges, struggles, and joyful moments they experienced over the past year. They need to analyze all that they have done, as everybody must strive to survive and achieve their best outcomes. As individuals navigate the demands of daily life, they grow older, and time slips away. Therefore, it is important to take lessons from the past year to amend bad things, weaknesses and inappropriate measures they did to prepare for the New Year ahead.

On the other hand, even without money, power, or fame, individuals can still achieve success in life if they maintain their morality. For example, if they avoid corruption in all forms and perform their duties conscientiously – without abusing authority and by fostering optimism – they can be seen as achieving success. If they serve only their interests or those of their families or the state, they will have wasted valuable time in their lives. Therefore, they should prepare to move forward into the future as they enter the New Year 2025.

As part of human nature, individuals may unintentionally commit wrongdoings throughout the year 2024. Therefore, they need to prepare themselves to avoid making similar mistakes in the coming New Year. They must restrict themselves from encroaching on others in any way, ensuring that all their actions are free from sin. The Lord Buddha taught that human lives are short, and as such, individuals should approach everything with conscientiousness and awareness, guided by knowledge, to avoid malpractices. By doing so, they will be more likely to embrace the advantages and auspiciousness that come with the New Year 2025.

On the other hand, even without money, power, or fame, individuals can still achieve success in life if they maintain their morality. For example, if they avoid corruption in all forms and perform their duties conscientiously – without abusing authority and by fostering optimism – they can be seen as achieving success. If they serve only their interests or those of their families or the state, they will have wasted valuable time in their lives. Therefore, they should prepare to move forward into the future as they enter the New Year 2025.

Two Myanmar and three foreign personages historic visits to Shwedagon Pagoda in 1947 and 1970

I read with interest U Maung Maung Aye’s article on 16 December 2024 of The Global New Light of Myanmar. I think it was sometime in 2017 or perhaps 2018 that I most recently visited the Shwedagon Pagoda. It was a rushed visit since those who attended the 8th batch BA (Law), LLB reunion gathering after the luncheon gave a brief visit and pilgrimage to the pagoda. U Maung Maung Aye in the three hours or so during his visit was able to cover more places than I did about six to seven years ago.

Thakin Soe’s (alleged) escape from detention at the Shwedagon Pagoda in 1947

It reminds me of three events which I have read concerning visits to and ‘escape’ from Shwedagon Pagoda. The first event occurred sometime in late 1946 or early 1947. I searched the archives of Time Magazine (established 1923) and under the title ‘Open the door, Jailer’ dated 17 February 1947, the following excerpts appeared.

“There were many Communists in Burma’s jails, but Rangoon’s police itched to get their fingers on one more. Hefty Thakin Soe had cost them face. Arrested, he slipped out of their grip and fled into Rangoon’s famed Shwedagon Pagoda. Police right behind him had to stop and remove their boots before entering the Buddhist temple. For most of a day, bootless police combed its labyrinth of passages and rest houses and guarded every exit. They paid little heed to a bent and

evidently blind nun who made her way down the main steps. Not until much later did the police learn that the blind Buddhist nun was Communist Thakin Soe.”

Yours truly does not know whether the story depicted in Time reproduced above actually occurred or not. I searched the world wide web and for the record, I reproduced the Time news item from February 1947 – over 77 years ago.

The ‘Red Flag’ Communist Party leader Thakin Soe (1906-6 May 1989) went underground even before the country’s independence. In June 1963 from the jungles, he came to Rangoon to participate in the ‘peace parley’ offered by the Revolutionary Council. I recall seeing on the front page of the newspaper a photo of Thakin Soe holding the photo of Soviet leader Stalin (18 December 1878-5 March 1953). During the peace talks, he was in Rangoon, for perhaps a few months between June to November 1963. I am pretty sure during that time Thakin Soe visited the Shwedagon Pagoda. If what Time magazine reported in February 1947 that Soe escaped from the Shwedagon Pagoda disguised as an old blind nun was true then Thakin Soe could very well visit the pagoda again to commemorate his escape (or escapades)!

General Ne Win’s visit to Shwedagon Pagoda in October 1970

U/General Ne Win, in October 1970 about 3 ½ years before he became the first president of the Socialist Republic of the Un-



This photo showcases Shwedagon Pagoda in August 2024. PHOTO: HTUN HTUN VIA GNLM

ion of Burma, then Chairman of the Revolutionary Council and Prime Minister of the Revolutionary government of the Union of Burma General Ne Win visited the Shwedagon Pagoda. Though this writer does not recall the exact date of General Ne Win’s visit I recall that it was sometime in October 1970 and it was in the front pages of all the Burmese and English language newspapers.

A hearsay and therefore may or may not be an apocryphal story that I have heard is that during his visit to Shwedagon in 1970 General Ne Win apparently commented to the effect that his most recent visit to the Shwedagon Pagoda was in 1946, twenty-four years earlier! IF that story is true then General Ne Win must have been at the precincts of

the pagoda a few months before (though of course not the same day!) as Thakin Soe’s escape from detention from the precincts of Shwedagon in early 1947!

Sayagyi Tekkatho Maung Maung Gyi’s article Naing Ngan Daw Myet Hnar (The Face of the State)

From the mid-1960s to perhaps the mid-1970s the Myanmar Sar textbook for all first year University students are a collection of essays with the title *Tekkatho Myanmar Sagapyay Kawk Hnoke* Chet (Selected Prose for University students). One of the essays written by the late Professor of Myanmar Sar Tekkatho Maung Maung Gyi was titled ‘The Face of the State’. One of the successors to the chair of Myanmar

Sar which Professor U Maung Maung Gyi held at University of Yangon is Maung Khin (Danubyu) (born 2 January 1942). In a paper written in English under the title ‘Post-colonial literature in Myanmar’ by Maung Khin Min which I found on the world wide web a one sentence reference was made to Tekkatho Maung Maung Gyi’s essay. It says: ‘Tekkatho Maung Maung Gyi glorifies the Shwedagon Pagoda as the face of the State’. (Perhaps a better expression would be ‘Tekkatho Maung Maung Gyi wrote about the glories and splendours of the Shwedagon Pagoda’).

I cannot retrieve Tekkatho Maung Maung Gyi’s essay probably written in the early 1960s so I can only partially recall what Sayagyi wrote.

By Dr Myint Zan

Tekkatho Maung Maung Gyi wrote how during one of his evening walks he saw the resplendent Shwedagon Pagoda and wrote about his sense of piety and devotion and about the glory of the golden Shwedagon. One wonders whether or not there is a full translation into English of Naing Ngan Daw Myet Hnar essay.

Apollo 12 astronauts visit to the Shwedagon Pagoda

On 17 March 1970 the Apollo 12 astronauts (the second successful mission to the moon) Pete Conrad (2 June 1930-8 July 1999), Alan L Bean (15 March 1932-26 May 2018) Richard F Gordon (5 October 1929-6 November 2017), visited Rangoon for a day. They visited the Shwedagon Pagoda and the Martyr’s mausoleum during their brief visit. A you tube video on line stated that the astronauts gave an impromptu talk at the foot of the Shwedagon Pagoda for about 45 minutes. Again, an apocryphal (but may be also true) story goes that one of the astronauts spoke about the feeling of awe he felt walking on the precincts of Shwedagon was akin to the feeling of awe of walking on the Moon four months earlier in November 1969!

U Maung Maung Aye wrote in his article that during his visit to the Shwedagon he obtained ‘historical and archaeological knowledge’. This brief piece fills in historical tidbits about visits to the Shwedagon pagoda by fairly important Myanmar and foreign personages.

Welcome... Welcome ... O ... New Year

By Maung Swe Ngae

- ♦ At midnight when the bells chime Comes around the New Year time Sirens sound, and people flock together Everyone will shout, ‘Happy New Year!’
- ♦ Looking back at the old year May see memories sweet or bitter Some were joyous, others were sad But the New Year comes as expected.
- ♦ Sweet and joyous memories of the past Give us a fresh impetus To do better in the New Year A look ahead with hope in future.
- ♦ Sad and bitter memories forgotten May serve us well with lessons To learn to avoid recurrence To show no sign of repentance.
- ♦ With sober reflection and deep contemplation, We may make a New Year’s Resolution Vowing to abhor past mistakes Hope for progress to be made.
- ♦ A new year brings hope to all What we need is within call With renewed resolve and fresh vigour Tackle the tasks with our endeavour.
- ♦ Things all round will become better In the days of the future Saying goodbye to the old year in mind Welcome the New Year with immense joy.
- ♦ It’s a time to look ahead To consolidate the large gains best Try to turn a new leaf And make a fresh start indeed.
- ♦ Wishing you all a ‘Happy New Year!’ It’s a good augury for the future!



Warmly Welcome to New Year 2025

By Dr Than Lwin Tun

AS the clock passes midnight on 31 December, we offer farewell to 2024 and open our arms to embrace the New Year 2025. This transition is more than just a change in the calendar; it is a moment of reflection, hope, and celebration. The New Year offers us a clean slate, a chance to realign our goals, rekindle our dreams, and move forward with renewed determination.

Welcoming a new year is a

universal tradition, celebrated in countless ways across the globe. From amazing fireworks displays to intimate family gatherings, the world unites in joy, gratitude, and optimism. The arrival of 2025 serves as a reminder that time is both precious and fleeting, urging us to cherish every moment and make the most of what lies ahead.

The New Year is also a time to reflect on the past. It allows us to pause and review the success-

es and challenges of the previous year. Every achievement, no matter how small, is evidence of our resilience and effort. Meanwhile, setbacks provide lessons that guide us toward better decisions and greater strength. In this spirit of contemplation, we enter 2025 not only with hope but also with wisdom gained from our experiences.

What makes 2025 particularly special is the promise of new be-

ginnings. It is a chance to set fresh goals and aspirations, whether they involve personal growth, professional advancement, or nurturing relationships. As we write our resolutions and envision the year ahead, we are filled with a sense of purpose and determination. The start of a new year inspires us to dream big, step out of our comfort zones, and pursue the changes we have long desired.

Furthermore, the New Year

brings with it the joy of connection. Families, friends, and communities come together to celebrate the occasion, sharing laughter, love, and goodwill. This sense of unity and togetherness is at the heart of the New Year’s spirit, reminding us that we are never alone in our journey. The words we strengthen during this time give us the courage and motivation to face the challenges of the year ahead.

As we warmly welcome 2025, let us do so with gratitude for the opportunities it brings. Let us focus on spreading kindness, fostering positivity, and making meaningful contributions to our world. Together, we can make this year a remarkable one, filled with moments of joy, progress, and fulfillment.

Bright and Beautiful 2025! May it be a year of good opportunities and lasting happiness for all.



NATIONAL

Yangon 2025 Countdown: Music, entertainment, and fireworks celebration



This photo shows the Yangon 2024 Countdown Festival being held on 31 December 2023.

THE Yangon 2025 countdown festival will occur at People’s Square in Dagon Township, Yangon Region, on 31 December 2024, from noon to midnight, as announced by the

Yangon Region government. The event will feature performances by renowned film actors, singers, DJs, and dance groups, alongside rising stars. Attendees can also

enjoy night market stalls and a charity feast provided for festivalgoers. An official explained, “This annual festival will showcase music from famous and new-generation performers. Two music bands will entertain the audience, one performing from 12 noon to 6 pm and the other from 6 pm to midnight. The Yangon Region government will issue orders to ensure smooth arrangements for people attending the event. Bus services will be provided for those coming from distant areas within the region, and security measures are in place to ensure a safe and enjoyable experience.” The festival will culminate in a countdown to the New Year, followed by a vibrant fireworks display to welcome 2025. — ASH/TKO

Myanmar film ‘Pyin Salat Moe’ completes production

THE Myanmar film ‘Pyin Salat Moe’ has completed production, according to Academy-winning actor, singer, and song composer Sai Sai Kham Leng, who also produced and starred in the film. The movie is an adaptation of a popular novel by renowned author Lun Htar (Say Tekkatho) and is directed by Academy Mee Pwar for Frenzo Production, Sai Sai Kham Leng’s production company. “I am pleased to share that the filming of ‘Pyin Salat Moe’, a heartwarming love story, is now complete. This collaborative project involved director U Mee Pwar, Frenzo Production, actress Poe Mamhe Thar, DP Ko Phyo Kyaw, and myself. Filming commenced on 27 November and concluded on 26 December. It has been my most challenging project to date, as I took on dual roles. We will do our utmost to release the film as

soon as possible,” said Sai Sai Kham Leng. Previously, Frenzo Production’s ‘Padauk Ka Tae Gita’, also directed by Mee Pwar, won the Best Film Award, Best Actor Award, and Best Director Award for 2020. – ASH/TRKM



This photo showcases a poster for the ‘Pyin Salat Moe’ film.

National Literary Award winner, writer Min Chan Mon passes away



NATIONAL Literary Award winner, writer Min Chan Mon (U Thein Soe) passed away on 28 December at North Okkalapa Hospital in Yangon, according to his family. He won Sarpay Beikman Youth Literary award in 1990 with Ywatthit Thabyay youth’s short stories, Sarpay Beikman selected poem award in 1992 with Aryonkyo Alin Hnget Myar, and National Literary Award in 2018 with essay collection Honey Drops on the Leaf. He was 80 years old at

Yangon expands highway bus services for New Year travel

THE Yangon Region Private Transport Supervision Committee (Highways Department) has announced the expansion of bus routes to accommodate travellers from Yangon Region to other regions and states during the New Year holidays. The committee confirmed that the number of highway bus services is being increased based on passenger demand and route requirements. An official explained, “We adjust the number of buses according to passenger volume on each route. For popular destinations like Mandalay, Nay Pyi Taw, and Taunggyi, which already have a high frequency of buses, additional buses are deployed to meet demand. These extra buses are drawn from routes with less traffic.” Currently, over 300 bus routes are operational, served by nearly 800 vehicles daily, transporting more than 10,000 passengers. During the New Year period, the fleet size is being



This photo shows express buses at the highway bus stand.

expanded to address the surge in travellers. The Aung Mingalar Highway Bus Terminal accommodates 2,054 large vehicles from Yangon-based highway bus lines, while the Dagon Ayeya Highway Bus Terminal handles 796 large vehicles, bringing the total to over 2,800 vehicles available for long-distance travel. — ASH/TMT

Yangon Port: 62 container vessels scheduled to arrive in Jan 2025

A total of 62 container vessels are scheduled to enter the Yangon Port in January 2025, the Myanmar Port Authority announced.

Thirteen container vessels by SITC Shipping Line, nine by Cosco Shipping Line, six each by Maersk A/S Line and Samudera Shipping Line, five each by CMA CGM Line and MSC Line, four by Ocean Salute Shipping Line, three each by BLPL Shipping Line, Evergreen Line, Ti2 Container Line and ONE Line, and two by RCL Line are slated to call in the Yangon Port in April.

Myanmar Port Authority has arranged maritime trade channels to handle increasing imports to meet domestic demand, bolster exports, and improve port capacity for significant ship arrivals. Myanmar Port Authority notified that it will inform exporters and importers of ship arrival schedules promptly.

Myanmar Port Authority stated that 49 vessels in January, 53 in February, 55 in March, 50 in April, 52 in May, 50 each in June, July and August, 55 in September, 52 in October, 57 in November and 60 in December 2024 arrived at Yangon Port.

Yangon Port handled 629 container vessels in 2023. Thanks to the draft extension, the international ocean liners can access the inner port for now, ac-



An overseas container vessel docks at Yangon Port for loading and unloading.

cording to the Myanmar Port Authority's statement on 22 June 2022.

After the new navigation channel (Kings Bank Channel) accessing the inner Yangon River had been found, the draft extension work was accelerated. After that, the port can now handle larger ships. The container vessel MV SITC Zhaoming (185.99 metres LOA, 35.25 metres Beam, 29,232 GRT and 2,698 TEU) of Hong Kong-based SITC Shipping Line docked at Asia World Port Terminal for the first time on 22 June,

which is the largest ship that AWPT Port handled.

From May 2021, the arrival of the ships at terminals in Yangon has increased again. Three new container vessels by Maersk Line Myanmar (SeaLand Maersk) started to run to fulfil the seaborne trade requirements in 2021. Earlier, the larger ships had draft problems preventing sailing on the Yangon River. With the draft being extended up to 10 meters, the larger ocean liners can enter the Thilawa Port. — NN/KK

Myanmar businesspeople invited to participate in WTTT Expo

WORLD of Travel, World of Trade & Taste EXPO (WTTT EXPO), which will take place in the US and Canada, welcomes the participation of Myanmar businesspeople, according to the Myanmar Trade Promotion Organization.

The WTTT Expo will be held at Metro Convention Centre, Toronto, Canada on 29-31 May 2025 and at Broward County Convention Centre in Florida State, the US on 20-24 October 2025.

The WTTT Expo will provide a platform to bridge with investors, tourism companies, and traders from North America, Latin America and the Caribbean and to showcase Myanmar products and explore business opportunities.

WTTT Expo will create a programme to effectuate the development of economics and to cooperate with respective government delegates, industrial leaders and businesspeople.

Myanmar business entities can open an industry workshop and pavilion at the WTTT Expo which will help promote trade and investment, the tourism industry and cultural exchange. Moreover, it will help establish relations with exhibitors from other countries.

Organizers must invite visitors and guests to join the workshop and expo while organizing the Myanmar pavilion and workshop events.

Exhibition space will be provided for the Myanmar Embassy yet installation of the pavilion and workshop must bear themselves. The exhibition (five feet by ten feet) booth costs \$1,150 without tax for two days with a table and two chairs, and \$250 without tax for access to the virtual marketplace and business conferences.

Individuals can register Myanmar businesspeople through www.worldoftravel.tv and the Myanmar Trade Promotion Organization at 067 408622 and email event.td.myantrade@gmail.com. — NN/KK

MoNREC warns: gem trading licence obligatory

THE Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation notified gold shop owners of seeking gem trading licence within three months of the notification from 18 November 2024 to 17 February 2025 and failing to obtain licence will be subject to legal actions.

The Mineral (Gold) Reference Price Determination Committee issues daily gold reference prices for a tical of pure gold (16.329325 grammes) with 19.25 grammes of the density of gold starting from 6 December through MRTV, MWD, website of the MoNREC (www.mining.gov.mm) and Facebook page of YGEA.

The ministry stated that those who run gold transaction service businesses must comply with rules and regulations in accordance with notification 055/2024 released on 25 October 2024. Those entities will face actions under Section 5 of Essential Supplies and Services Law if they fail to obtain a licence within the set timeframe and execute gold transactions without following reference prices. The committee set pure gold at K5.38 million per tical (16.329325 grammes) with 19.25 grammes/ Cubic Centimetre of the density of gold on 12 December. — NN/KK

Myawady, Tachilek border to practise MACCS online payment system from 1 Jan 2025

MYANMAR Automated Cargo Clearance System (MACCS) Online Payment System will be introduced at Myawady and Tachilek checkpoints starting from 1 January 2025, according to Announcement 006/2024 of the MACCS division of the Customs Department.

The Customs Department initiated the MACCS online payment system through mobile banking and internet banking on 23 May 2023 at Thilawa Special Economic Zone and Yangon areas by joining hands with AYA Bank, KBZ Bank and CB Bank regarding the payment of Customs duty.

The taxpayer can utilize m-banking or i-banking platforms to make direct payments for import and export declaration and can cash in their deposit accounts of MACCS for deposit addition-only procedures.

If individuals have any difficulties in using the MACCS online payment system, they can contact the Help Desk Section at 01 379429, AYA Bank at 01 2317777, KBZ Bank at 09 951018555, KBZ Pay Call Centre and CB Bank at 01 2317770, as stated by the Customs Department. — NN/KK

Cambodia's exports to RCEP members up 14.4% in first 11 months of 2024

CAMBODIA exported US\$8.25 billion worth of products to the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) members in the first 11 months of 2024, up 14.4 per cent from \$7.21 billion over the same period last year, said a Ministry of Commerce's report on Monday.

The RCEP market accounted for 33.9 per cent of the kingdom's total export volume of \$24.34 billion during the January-November period this year, the report said.

Cambodia's top five export destinations under the regional mega-trade deal are Vietnam, China, Japan, Thailand, and Australia, the report said.

The RCEP comprises 15 Asia-Pacific countries including 10 ASEAN member states — Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam, and their five trading partners, namely China, Japan, South Korea, Australia and New Zealand.

Cambodian Ministry of Commerce's Secretary of State and Spokesperson Penn Sovicheat said the RCEP, took effect in 2022, is a catalyst for long-term export growth and a magnet to attract more foreign direct investment to the kingdom.

"With preferential tariffs provided under the RCEP agreement, Cambodia's exports to other RCEP members will continue to rise in coming years, undoubtedly," he told Xinhua. — Xinhua



An aerial drone photo taken on 11 September 2024 shows a container terminal at the Sihanoukville Autonomous Port (PAS) in Sihanoukville, Cambodia. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

Greece to face higher costs if it rejects Russian gas – Russian Ambassador

GREECE should be prepared to pay more if it rejects Russian gas for political reasons, Russian Ambassador to Greece Andrey Maslov said in an interview with Sputnik.

The United States has set Europe the task of abandoning Russian energy resources by 2027. For this purpose, in particular, an LNG terminal was built in Alexandroupoli and put into operation three months ago.

"The Greek government constantly publicly emphasizes the task of abandoning Russian gas. I cannot judge how possible this is. Athens tried to replace Russian supplies with more expensive LNG from other countries, but this resulted in an explosive rise in fuel prices. Greek citizens were forced to pay exorbitant bills for gas and electricity," Maslov said.

Theoretically, Greece's refusal of Russian energy resources is possible, but "common sense" may prevail, the diplomat believes.

"As for the refusal of our energy resources



An employee looks at Kazachya gas compressor station, facility of Gazprom's TurkStream gas pipeline, in Krasnodar region, Russia. **PHOTO: SPUTNIK**

by 2027, then theoretically everything is possible. The question is, however, why, and whether the Greek side will be ready to pay so much more for the sake of some political considerations. Politics is politics, but in some cases, elementary common sense may prevail," the Russian ambassador concluded. — SPUTNIK

NEWS In BRIEF

Vietnam's pangasius exports likely to hit US\$2 bln in 2024

VIETNAM'S pangasius exports in 2024 are on track to reach the US\$2 billion target set at the beginning of the year, Vietnam News cited the Association of Seafood Exporters and Producers on Monday.

This highlighted the appeal, competitiveness and potential of Vietnamese catfish in the global market, said the association.

By the end of November, the exports reached \$1.8 billion, marking a 10 per cent year-on-year increase.

The Chinese mainland and Hong Kong remained the largest export markets for Vietnamese catfish.

According to the association, the sector continues to face challenges, particularly the increasing competition from other white-fleshed fish.

Vietnamese businesses must adopt more diverse and proactive strategies to maintain and expand their market share in the global market, according to the association. — Xinhua

Qatar receives over 5 mln visitors in 2024

QATAR Tourism, the regulatory body of the tourism sector, announced on Sunday that the country welcomed over five million visitors in 2024, marking a 25 per cent increase in international arrivals compared to 2023.

"Surpassing five million visitors is a landmark accomplishment for Qatar, bringing us closer to realizing our vision of positioning the country as one of the world's fastest-growing, family-friendly premier destinations," head of Qatar Tourism Saad Bin Ali Al Kharji said.

Al Kharji highlighted that the sales of 10 million room nights in 2024 reflect the success of Qatar's tourism strategy.

He noted that Qatar aims to nearly triple visitor numbers, double in-destination spending, and increase tourism's contribution to GDP to 10-12 per cent. — Xinhua

Türkiye aims to lower budget deficit to 3% in 2025 to combat inflation

TÜRKIYE plans to reduce its budget deficit from approximately five per cent to around three per cent by 2025 as part of its strategy to combat inflation, Finance Minister Mehmet Simsek announced on Monday.

"In 2025, we aim to reduce the budget deficit from around five per cent to around three per cent, so the disinflationary effect of the reduction in the budget deficit will be seen very clearly," Simsek told reporters after the economy coordination meeting in southeastern Sanliurfa city.

Citing the Central Bank's year-end inflation forecast of 44-45 per cent, Simsek noted that inflation has been declining compared to the 2022 and 2023 figures, which were around 64 per cent and 65 per cent, respectively.

"We are resolute in our commitment to reduce inflation," the minister said, adding that inflation will continue to decrease in 2025.

On Thursday, Türkiye's central bank cut its key interest rate by 250 basis points to 47.5 per cent, the first time since February last year after indications of easing consumer inflation. — Xinhua

New year nerves hit Asian stocks

ASIA stocks mostly fell Monday in jittery holiday trade ahead of a potentially tumultuous 2025 when Donald Trump returns to the White House. With volumes thin, US and European equity futures were also pointing lower after losses on Friday that put paid to Wall Street's usual holiday period "Santa Claus rally". Tech stocks had led the way, with Elon Musk's electric car giant Tesla shedding around five per cent lower and AI chipmaker Nvidia off around two per cent. Weighing on sentiment were worries about slower-than-hoped US interest rate cuts and possible higher import tariffs once Trump is inaugurated on 20 January.

"With US (bond) yields climbing and liquidity essentially non-existent, there's always the potential for outsized moves," said Stephen Innes at SPI Asset Management. — AFP



Pedestrians walk past an electronic board showing the closing numbers on the Tokyo Stock Exchange, along a street in central Tokyo on 30 December 2024. **PHOTO: AFP**

Indonesia speeds up efforts to achieve food self-sufficiency

INDONESIA has set plans to enhance both extensification and intensification programmes in the agricultural sector to accelerate the country's attainment of food self-sufficiency, according to ministers on Monday.

The Ministry of Agriculture on Monday held a coordinating meeting attended by Agriculture Minister Andi Amran Sulaiman, Public Works Minister Dody Hanggodo, and Deputy Chief of the Indonesian Military Army Staff Lieutenant-General Tandyo Budi Revita.

Following the meeting, Dody said that an additional 2.08 million hectares of land had been identified for plant cultivation.

Furthermore, Andi said that the government would construct irrigation infrastructures for two million hectares of land. "The development



A rice farmer works in the paddy fields in the Kerobokan district of Indonesia's resort island of Bali on 19 December 2024. **PHOTO: AFP**

of tertiary, primary, and secondary irrigation systems will cover two million hectares," Andi explained at a press conference.

He mentioned that the focus for building and normalizing irrigation infrastructures would be on Java Island, where most of the country's food pro-

duction occurs. "Between 50 and 60 per cent of our production happens on Java Island," he said, noting that the military would also be involved in supporting the irrigation efforts.

In addition to irrigation, he also noted that preparations have been

made across Indonesia to ensure the supply of seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, and agricultural tools and machinery.

Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto has set a goal for the country to achieve food self-sufficiency within four years of taking office. — Xinhua

Direct shipping route linking east China port with Europe opens

A cargo ship loaded with over 1,700 TEU containers of lithium batteries and e-commerce goods set sail on Monday from east China's Ningbo port for Wilhelmshaven in Germany,

marking the opening of a "China-Europe express" shipping route.

The Ningbo-Wilhelmshaven direct route will reduce transport time to 26 days,

saving 12 days compared to the same route with multiple stops, according to Sun Xuejun, chairman of Zhejiang Seaport Logistics Group Co Ltd.

Upon arrival in Wilhelms-

haven, goods can be distributed and transported to Northern Europe and the Baltic Sea coastal areas through waterborne shipping, to Western Europe, including France and

Belgium, by land, and even further to Central and Eastern Europe, such as Hungary, the Czech Republic, and Poland, within 30 days. — Xinhua

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V SINAR BUKITTINGGI VOY.NO. (035N)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V SINAR BUKITTINGGI VOY.NO. (035N)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **31-12-2024** 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 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claim's Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.

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

Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S SAMUDERA SHIPPING LINES

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V METHI BHUM VOY.NO. (445N)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V METHI BHUM VOY.NO. (445N)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **31-12-2024** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **AWPT** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S REGIONAL CONTAINER LINES

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V DL OLIVE VOY.NO. (105354)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V DL OLIVE VOY.NO. (105354)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **1-1-2025** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MITT-5** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: **2301928**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S CHUN AN INTERNATIONAL LOGISTICS CO LTD

ROLLING UPDATES

WORLD

Climate change brought extreme weather, heat in 2024: UN



Debris lies in the river next to destroyed houses in Chiva, in the region of Valencia, eastern Spain, in the aftermath of catastrophic deadly floods on 19 November 2024. **PHOTO: AFP**

CLIMATE change sparked a trail of extreme weather and record heat in 2024, the United Nations said on Monday, urging the world to pull back from the “road to ruin”.

The outgoing year is set to be the warmest ever recorded,

the UN’s weather and climate agency said, capping a decade of unprecedented heat.

Meanwhile emissions of

greenhouse gases grew to new record highs, locking in more heat for the future, the World Meteorological Organization said.

“Climate change plays out before our eyes on an almost daily basis in the form of increased occurrence and impact of extreme weather events,” WMO secretary general Celeste Saulo said.

“This year we saw record-breaking rainfall and flooding events and terrible loss of life in so many countries, causing heartbreak to communities on every continent.

“Tropical cyclones caused a terrible human and economic toll, most recently in the French overseas department of Mayotte in the Indian Ocean.

“Intense heat scorched dozens of countries, with temperatures topping 50 degrees Celsius (122 degrees Fahrenheit) on a number of occasions. Wildfires

wreaked devastation.”

‘Climate breakdown’

The 2015 Paris climate accords aimed to limit global warming to well below two degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels — and to 1.5C if possible.

In November, the WMO said the January-September mean surface air temperature was 1.54C above the pre-industrial average measured between 1850 and 1900. That puts 2024 comfortably on course to surpass the record set in 2023.

Last year temperatures were 1.45C hotter than before the industrial revolution, when humanity started burning large amounts of fossil fuels.

The WMO is set to publish the consolidated global temperature figure for 2024 in January, with its full State of the Global Climate 2024 report to follow in March. — AFP

NEWS IN BRIEF

South Korea inspects B737-800 fleet after worst plane crash

Former US President Jimmy Carter dies at 100

JIMMY Carter, who served as the 39th president of the United States from 1977 to 1981, died on Sunday at the age of 100, the Carter Centre confirmed.

“Our founder, former US President Jimmy Carter, passed away this afternoon in Plains, Georgia,” the centre announced on social media X, formerly known as Twitter. During Carter’s presidency, in December 1978, China and the United States issued the Joint Communiqué on the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations between the People’s Republic of China and the United States of America. On 1 January 1979, the two countries officially established diplomatic relations. — Xinhua

3 killed, 7 injured in hotel fire in Thailand

THREE people were killed and seven others injured as a fire broke out at a hotel in the Thai capital Bangkok, the local fire department said on Monday. The fire broke out at a six-storey hotel near Bangkok’s popular backpacker area of Khao San Road, at about 9:21 pm local time (1421 GMT) on Sunday.

The fire started from a room on the fifth floor, resulting in the immediate death of a foreign woman. Two foreign men later died from their injuries at hospitals. Among the seven injured, there were two Thai men and five foreigners, as reported by the local fire department. — Xinhua

Natural disasters leave 514 dead, missing in Vietnam in 2024

NATURAL disasters in Vietnam in 2024 left 514 dead or missing and 2,207 others injured, said Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development Nguyen Hoang Hiep.

The number of fatalities was 3.04 times higher than in 2023 and 2.44 times more than the average number of the 2014-2023 period, local media reported Monday.

Among the victims, 345 were killed or went missing in Typhoon Yagi, the strongest storm in the South China Sea in the past 30 years. — Xinhua



Firefighters and recovery teams work at the scene where a Jeju Air Boeing 737-800 series aircraft crashed and burst into flames at Muan International Airport in Muan, some 288 kilometres southwest of Seoul on 30 December 2024. **PHOTO: AFP**

SOUTH Korea ordered Monday a “comprehensive inspection” of all Boeing 737-800 aircraft operated by the country’s carriers, after a Jeju Air plane crash-landed and burst into flames, killing 179 people on board.

US air safety officials and staff from the beleaguered aircraft maker Boeing were arriving to join investigators probing the worst air disaster on South Korean soil, which officials initially blamed on a collision with birds.

The plane was carrying 181 people from Thailand to South Korea when it made a mayday call and belly-landing before crashing into a barrier and bursting into flames.

Everyone aboard Jeju Air Flight 2216 was killed, save two flight attendants pulled from the wreckage. South Korea began seven days of mourning, with flags flying at half-mast and the acting president flying to the crash site in southwestern Muan for a memorial. Acting President Choi Sang-mok,

who has only been in office since Friday, said the government was making “every effort” to identify victims and support bereaved families. Choi, an unelected bureaucrat who became acting president after his two predecessors were impeached, said a “thorough investigation into the cause of the accident” would be conducted. He also said South Korea would conduct “an urgent safety inspection of the overall aircraft operation system” to prevent future aviation disasters.

South Korea has a solid air safety record and both black boxes from Flight 2216 — the flight data recorder and the cockpit voice recorder — have been found.

Officials have so far identified 146 victims using DNA analysis or fingerprint collection, said deputy minister for civil aviation, Joo Jong-wan. “As for the comprehensive inspection, maintenance records of key systems such as engines and landing gear will be thoroughly reviewed for 101 aircraft operated by six airlines using the same model as the accident aircraft,” he said. — AFP

SPORTS

Myanmar National League's remaining matches to resume in Jan 2025

THE remaining matches of the Myanmar National League will be resumed on 10 January.

The tournament has been suspended its matches since the last week of November due to the Myanmar National Team's ASEAN Cup tournament. It will be held again after over a month of suspension. The remaining matches will take place between 10 January and 1 March. The Shan United accumulated 40 points in 14 games, securing the top position on the table. They were

followed by Yangon United FC with 34 points. The Hanthawady United, Dagon Star United and ISPE FC got 33, 29 and 23 points, respectively. Maha United and Yadanabon FC stand with 19 points each.

Dagon Port FC secures 12 points. Thitsa Arman FC and Ayeyawady United stand with 11 points each. Myawady FC and Rakhine United teams stand with four points and three points, respectively.

Shan United is in excellent form to defend their champion-

ship, but Yangon United and Hanthawady United are putting pressure on the leader. If Shan United wins again this season, they will set numerous new records.

So Shan United are giving it their all. The champion has extended the record unbeaten run to 70 games since the 2020 season. To defend their title, Shan United needs to defeat Yangon United, Hanthawady United and Dagon Star United in the remaining games. — Ko Nyi Lay/KZL



Shan United and Yangon United compete during the first round of the Myanmar National League. PHOTO: THAW GYI

Defending champion Dimitrov eases into Brisbane second round



Grigor Dimitrov of Bulgaria hits a return during his men's singles match against Yannick Hanfmann of Germany at the Brisbane International tennis tournament in Brisbane on 30 December 2024. PHOTO: AFP

DEFENDING champion Grigor Dimitrov eased into round two of the Brisbane International with a hard-fought win over qualifier Yannick Hanfmann on Monday, but Holger Rune crashed to defeat.

Bulgaria's second seed Dimitrov has a great track record in the city, winning the title twice, as well as making the final in 2013.

His 7-6 (7/5), 6-3 victory over Germany's Hanfmann was his 24th in Brisbane, more than any other player.

Yet he has flown under the radar this year due to the presence of former world number one Novak Djokovic and the comeback of mercurial Australian Nick Kyrgios after an 18-month injury

lay-off.

Djokovic and Kyrgios teamed up for an unlikely doubles appearance and won their first round clash 6-4, 6-7 (4/7), 10/8 over Austria's Alexander Erler and German Andreas Mies.

The two men rarely play doubles and got together for this tournament, although Djokovic hinted earlier Sunday they may pair up for next year's Grand Slams.

They won the first set against the doubles specialists Erler and Mies with one break of Mies' serve, but lost a close second set before clinching the win with a match tiebreak. "Nick said the other day that it should be a pleasure to play with him and it is," a smiling Djokovic said. — AFP

Ioka's New Year's Eve bout cancelled as flu hits Martinez

KAZUTO Ioka's New Year's Eve title rematch against WBA super flyweight champion Fernando Martinez has been cancelled after the Argentine developed influenza, Ioka's Shisei gym said Monday.

The South American boxer requested the cancellation just before the weigh-in the same day. He is expected to retain his world title as the fight was called off due to the illness.

"It's the first time that my match has been cancelled like this," the 35-year-old Ioka, who

has won world titles in four weight classes, told a press conference in Tokyo.

"It's difficult to accept. I have no choice but to look forward." The two sides will try to reschedule their bout for the spring.

Martinez scrapped a public training session last Thursday and was unable to attend a signing ceremony on Sunday because of the illness.

In July, Martinez defeated Ioka by unanimous decision in their WBA-IBF unification match in Tokyo. — Kyodo

Mohamed Salah: Still far away from new Liverpool contract

LIVERPOOL forward Mohamed Salah says he is focused on helping his team win the Premier League title, but admits he is still "far away" from signing a new contract.

The Egyptian scored his 20th goal of the season and helped set up Cody Gakpo for the second goal in Liverpool's 5-0 win away to West Ham on Sunday to lift them eight points clear at the top of the table.

However, with his contract due to expire at the end of June, he has not still agree to a new contract and when asked about his future in a post-game TV interview, he



admitted he and the club were still far away from that.

"I don't want to put anything in the media...The only thing on my mind is I want Liverpool to win the league and I want to be part of that."

"I will do my best for the team to win the trophy. There are a few other teams catching up with us and we need to stay focused and humble and go again," commented Salah.

The forward isn't the only Liverpool player who will be able to leave for free at the end of the campaign with defenders Virgil van Dijk and Trent Alexander-Arnold also out of contract, with Alexander-Arnold being linked with a possible move to Real Madrid. — Xinhua

Liverpool's Mohamed Salah celebrates after scoring his side's second equalizing goal during the English Premier League football match between Arsenal and Liverpool in London, Britain, on 27 October 2024. PHOTO: XINHUA



China’s Xinjiang completes world’s longest expressway tunnel through challenging mountains

THE Tianshan Shengli Tunnel, the world’s longest expressway tunnel, completed tunnelling Monday morning, paving the way for the opening of a new shortcut linking southern and northern parts of China’s Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region.

The 22.13-kilometre tunnel will reduce the time it takes to drive across the middle section of the Tianshan Mountains from several hours to about 20 minutes once operational.

It is a key project of the Urumqi-Yuli Expressway, which runs from the regional capital of Urumqi in northern Xinjiang to Yuli County in southern Xinjiang. The expressway is expected to be fully completed and open to traffic in 2025. The driving time between the two locations will be reduced from about seven hours to just over three hours.

Qadir Abliz, a truck driver from Urumqi who makes regular trips between the north and south of the Tianshan Mountains, said the winding mountain roads would often freeze in the winter, and many trucks carrying



A drone photo taken on 30 December 2024 shows the exit of the Tianshan Shengli Tunnel in Hejing County of Mongolian Autonomous Prefecture of Bayingolin, northwest China’s Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

coal, agricultural produce and livestock products would be stranded on the way across.

“There will be no need to worry about such situations anymore when the tunnel opens next year,” he said.

The construction of the tunnel began in April 2020 and has faced challenges such as extreme cold, high altitudes, high ground stress, strong seismic activity and strict environmental requirements, according to Mao Jinbo, an engineer on the project.

The Tianshan Mountains are known as a “geological museum”, featuring numerous fault zones, 16 of which the tunnel passes through. Its No 2 ventilation shaft reaches a depth of 706 metres — taller than China’s highest building, the Shanghai Tower.

To address the immense challenges, the builders broke down the construction into smaller, more manageable segments, allowing for faster excavation. As a result, the original construction time was shortened by more than 25 per cent.

To minimize the environmental impact on the Tianshan No 1 Glacier and snow leopard habitats, on-site facilities were established to contain wastewater and fully utilize gravel, helping the project meet key environmental protection goals. — Xinhua

Inflation, pensions, and housing top Germans’ concerns ahead of elections – Survey



German flag of the building of Reichstag in Berlin. **PHOTO: SPUTNIK**

GERMANS named inflation, pensions and affordable housing as the most pressing issues for the new federal government, which will be formed after the February elections to the lower house of parliament, the Bundestag, according to a survey conducted by the INSA institute for the Bild newspaper.

According to 56 per cent of Germans, the most important problem that the new government must deal with is inflation.

In December of this year, it reached 2.2 per cent. As the publication notes, inflation is not growing now as quickly as it did, for example, in 2022, but the population is still concerned about rising prices. More than half of those surveyed (54 per cent) are worried about the future of their pensions: while the Social Democrats, to which current Chancellor Olaf Scholz belongs, are calling for a pension of 48 per cent of wages to be established by law, the opposition and most popular CDU/CSU bloc is against such a step.

Housing is in third place on the list of problems that the new government must solve, 51 per cent of those surveyed want the new authorities to build more affordable housing, the demand for which, especially in large cities, is huge. — SPUTNIK

Iran urges “more serious” interaction with Oman for regional peace

IRANIAN President Masoud Pezeshkian here on Monday called for “more serious” interaction with Oman to promote peace and security in West Asia and among all Muslim states, according to a statement released by Pezeshkian’s office.

In a meeting with visiting Omani Foreign Minister Sayyid Badr bin Hamad bin Hamood Al Busaidi, Pezeshkian said his administration’s foreign policy is based on expanding relations and enhancing cooperation with all Muslim, neighbouring and friendly states, stressing that Oman has an “outstanding” place for Iran among those countries.

Calling Iran-Oman relations “age-old, cordial and friendly”, Pezeshkian said Iran attaches great importance to the continuation and further promotion of bilateral constructive ties.

It is not acceptable and favourable at all that countries in the West Asia region and Muslim states have differences with each other, and that Israel uses the situation to deal blows to them, he said.

The Omani official said the two countries have formed, expanded and strengthened “deep-rooted and historical relations” based on mutual trust and goodwill.

Oman is very interested in and insistent on expanding relations with Iran, he noted.

According to Iran’s official news agency IRNA, Badr, who arrived in Tehran earlier in the day, also discussed bilateral ties and regional issues of common interests with Iran’s parliament speaker and foreign minister. — Xinhua