

2025-26 budget focuses on home affairs, defence, health, and education

A plan has been set to achieve K171,498 billion of GDP with a three per cent economic development rate in the 2025-26 financial year.



State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, who is also the Financial Commission Chairman, presides over the Commission meeting in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

SENIOR General Min Aung Hlaing underscored that it is necessary to manage deficit and GDP ratio in the appropriate amount to ensure stability of the macroeconomy and the State's long-term economic development.

Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, who is also in the capacity of Chairman of the Financial Commission, delivered a speech at the meeting of the Financial Commission at the SAC Chairman's Office in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday afternoon.

At the meeting, the Senior General said that the meeting aims to discuss and approve the budget of the Union and the Union Budget Bill drafted for the 2025-26 financial year. Ministries,

Nay Pyi Taw Council, regions and states have to spend the prioritized expenditure for relevant sectors and regions to implement three economic objectives of the State.

He continued that departments and organizations prioritize spending of the State fund on infrastructural roads and bridges, supply of electricity, transport, export promotion, import substitute, and job creation which can directly contribute to the development of the country.

Concerning implementation against the targets in relevant financial years, the Senior General highlighted that the State managed 71.78 per cent of incomes and 77.06 per cent of spending in 2020-2021 FY, 96.10 per cent of incomes and 84.25 per cent of spending in the six

months from October 2021 to March 2022, 104.96 per cent of incomes and 90.78 per cent of spending in 2022-23 FY, 97.03 per cent of incomes and 89.32 per

cent of spending in 2023-24 FY, and 71.11 per cent of incomes and 59.55 per cent of spending till January of 2024-25 FY.

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Salient points from the speech delivered by the Senior General at the Financial Commission meeting

1. Departments and organizations have to strive to exceed the income target in the financial year.
2. The budget for 2025-26 FY allows stipends for students and allowance for degrees of teachers in the education sector.
3. The budget comprises necessary expenditures for the establishment of more agriculture and veterinary science universities, construction of recreation centres of universities, implementation of solar-powered water pumping projects and enhancement of socioeconomy.
4. The budget will be allocated for the construction of roads and bridges, and electrification projects.

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The Lifeline of Knowledge: The Essential Role of Literary Wisdom in Life

"A Myanmar proverb says one can survive seven days without food but not a single morning without water. Similarly, a lack of literary knowledge leads to a life of misery. Therefore, literary knowledge is essential for a fulfilling life."

(Excerpt from the speech given by Chairman of the State Administration Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at the meeting with senior officer instructors, senior officer lecturers, faculty members, officers and cadets from the Defence Services Technological Academy on 29 May 2024)

Objectives of 80th Anniversary of Armed Forces Day 2025

- To actively participate in serving three main functions of Tatmadaw national defence duty, training duty and public benefit duty upholding Our Three Main National Causes;
- To steadfastly carry out measures for State development and genuine, eternal peace by ending the armed conflicts under the Constitution (2008) and NCA;
- To protect the State and its citizens from dangers and provide sector-wise assistance for the safety and socioeconomic development of the people;
- To provide necessary assistance to hold a free and fair multiparty democratic general election by Tatmadaw for the emergence of a Union based on democratic and federal systems after carrying out measures per the stipulations of the State of Emergency.

Myanmar Gazette

Heads of Service Organizations transferred and confirmed

- The State Administration Council has reassigned and appointed the following individuals as Heads of Service Organizations, shown against each of their names effective from the date they assume their duties.

Name	Appointment
(a) Dr Thet Lwin Rector Pyay University Department of Higher Education Ministry of Education	Director-General Department of Myanmar Examinations Ministry of Education
(b) Dr Khin Maung Zaw Rector Sittway University Department of Higher Education Ministry of Education	Rector Pyay University Department of Higher Education Ministry of Education

- The State Administration Council has confirmed the appointment of U Kaung Zaw Thant, Director-General of the Department of International Affairs and Corruption Prevention under the Anti-Corruption Commission, after the one-year probationary period.

4 special criminal appeal cases passed judgements; 4 special civil appeal cases heard

A special appeal tribunal consisting of Chief Justice of the Union U Tha Htay and Judges of the Supreme Court of the Union: U Khin Maung Gyi, U Thaug Naing, Daw Thin Thin Nwet and Daw Pyone Pyone

Aye was convened yesterday morning at the Supreme Court of the Union and passed judgements for four special criminal appeal cases – Nos 16/2024 (Kayin), 17/2025 (Yangon), 1/2025 (Mandalay) and 2/2025

(Mandalay).

In addition, a total of four special civil appeal cases – Nos 80/2024 (Yangon), 1/2025 (Magway), 2/2025 (Yangon) and 3/2025 (Mon) were heard. — MNA



Putao snow-capped mountains and its scenic surroundings.

November to April: Prime tourist season for Putao

THE best time to travel in Putao, Kachin State, is until the end of April, with a balanced temperature and humidity, allowing both domestic and international tourists to enjoy visits, said Ko Moe Min Thein (Putao) from Trekking in Myanmar.

The best time to visit Putao is from November to the end of April when temperatures are moderate and the weather is ideal for hiking and

mountain biking. It is also a great time to explore the natural beauty and glaciers.

Domestic visitors can go on trips to downtown and outskirts of Putao as well as climbing, and foreigners can make day trips to 11 wards in Putao, Kaungmulon-Namkham-Machanbaw-Mulashidi-Mudon-Sea of Clouds, and nearby small villages, he said.

Foreigners are advised to bring 10 copies of their pass-

ports and visas when visiting inner Putao.

Despite having many natural forests and glaciers, Putao's weather changes quickly, so on cloudy days, ice-capped mountains are not visible, getting much rain from May to September-October with some hot intervals.

Those interested in visiting Putao can contact 09758505966, 09982744101 and 09954223128, he said. — MT/ZN

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)

2025-26 budget focuses on home affairs, defence, ...

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He urged departments and organizations to strive to exceed the income target in the financial year. The allocated funds must be scrutinized and spent efficiently for the State during the set period. Only when they implement the projects directly benefiting the people during the set period will the State have socioeconomic development.

He noted that it is necessary to manage deficit and GDP ratio in the appropriate amount to ensure the stability of the macroeconomy and the State's long-term economic development. A plan has been set to achieve K171,498 billion of GDP with a three per cent economic development rate in the 2025-26 FY.

The Vice-Chairman of the Financial Commission Deputy Prime Minister said that it has been reviewed and planned to

obtain the full receipt of entitled revenues, the implementation of tax rates that align with the current era, the complete collection of allocated funds, the recovery of outstanding debts from previous years, and the acquisition of feasible foreign loans and international aid.

He added that for emergency funds related to natural disaster prevention, rescue, and rehabilitation, as well as the livelihood and administrative affairs of displaced persons, a total of K215 billion has been allocated: K200 billion from the Union budget and K15 billion from regional and state budgets, including Nay Pyi Taw Council.

He recounted that the Financial Commission has reviewed and approved the Union's budget bill for the 2025-2026 financial year, including financial allocations to regions and states.

Based on these estimates, the Union Budget bill has been prepared and submitted for approval.

Secretary of the commission Union Minister U Win Shein reported on the Union budget for 2025-26 FY and the Union Budget Bill for 2025-26 FY.

Union Minister for Legal Affairs and Attorney-General of the Union Dr Thida Oo discussed legal recommendations for the bills whereas Union Auditor-General Dr Khin Naing Oo talked about the findings of the budget and recommendations.

The Nay Pyi Taw Council chairman and chief ministers of regions and states participated in the discussions.

In his response, the Senior General said that budget allocations were raised for home affairs, defence, health and education sectors. The funds must

be spent on relevant sectors benefiting the State and the people. The budget was allocated to enhance the capacity and power of the defence forces similar to the international arena.

The Senior General called for the implementation of generating electricity from solar power. Businesspersons have also to generate electricity as much as possible to meet the demand for electricity in the nation.

In his concluding remarks, the Senior General highlighted that the budget for the 2025-26 FY allows stipends for students and allowance for degrees of teachers in the education sector.

Moreover, he underlined that the budget comprises necessary expenditures for the establishment of more agriculture and veterinary science universities, construction of recreation centres of universities, implemen-

tation of solar-powered water pumping projects and enhancement of the socioeconomy. Moreover, the budget will be allocated for the construction of roads and bridges, and electrification projects.

The Senior General urged ministries and regional and state governments to strive to fully levy revenue under the existing laws.

Also, present at the meeting were Commission Vice-Chairman SAC Vice-Chairman Deputy Prime Minister Vice-Senior General Soe Win, Secretary of the Commission Union Minister for Planning and Finance U Win Shein, Union ministers, the Auditor-General of the Union, deputy ministers, and the chairman of Nay Pyi Taw Council together with chief ministers of regions and states through a videoconferencing. — MNA/TTA

Traditional Kachin Manaw Singing Festival celebrated in Ruili, Yunnan

THE Traditional Kachin Manaw Singing Festival was held on 22 March in the Kachin Cultural Manaw Grounds in Ruili, Yunnan Province, People's Republic of China, according to the Myanmar-China Friendship Association (Central).

The event was organized by the People's Government of Ruili Municipality, Dehong Prefecture, Yunnan Province, and took place at the Kachin Cultural Manaw Grounds in Ruili.

Among the attendees were

Mr Wei Kan, Governor of Dehong Prefecture, along with his delegation, as well as a team led by Vice-Chairman U Khin U (aka) U Shin Phu of the Myanmar-China Friendship Association (Central) and Chairman of the Muse Branch.

During the celebration, attendees joyfully participated in traditional Manaw dances and shared a communal dinner, fostering unity and warmth among the Kachin people in Ruili. —

ASH/KNN



The Manaw Singing Festival in action at the Kachin Cultural Manaw Grounds in Ruili City.

NATIONAL

Government backs growth-friendly economic environment

It is crucial to continue efforts to ensure the long-term sustainability of businesses and to link local production to the global manufacturing network through regional production chains.

SENIOR General Min Aung Hlaing notes regions and states must emphasize security measures systematically to ensure the smooth conduct of a multiparty democratic general election in December.

Chairman of the National Planning Commission Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing delivered a speech at the National Planning Commission meeting at the SAC Chairman's Office in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

In his speech, the Senior General said: The government is continuously providing the necessary support to create a favourable economic environment, encouraging the development of human resources and a well-functioning socio-economic environment, which are crucial for enhancing a country's production capacity. Moreover, the government plans to expand technological education not only in Nay Pyi Taw but also in other regions, allowing individuals to enter the workforce according to their respective fields of expertise.

The government has prioritized the construction of gymnasiums, stadiums facilitated with spectator stands and 400-metre tracks, and swimming pools in all states and regions. Moreover, these developments are being carried out in all district-level cities, including self-administered zones and then to townships.

To preserve the natural environment, monsoon tree planting plans are being initiated to expand forest plantations. The government has incorporated modern technologies in search and rescue operations to mitigate the impacts of climate change. A plan has been set to increase the country's forest coverage from the current 42 per cent to 50 per cent.

All-season road networks were built in rural areas for the improvement of the transport sector. In the 2025-26 financial year, the government will continue the implementation of dams and electricity projects and allow quality strains of crops, fertilizers, machinery and agricultural water for agriculture and livestock sectors.

Moreover, the construction of more staff housing is allowed. And, the funds have been earmarked for providing aid for IDPs and rehabilitation measures.



State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing addresses the National Planning Commission meeting in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

Vice-Chairman of the Commission SAC Vice-Chairman Deputy Prime Minister Vice-Senior General Soe Win said that the National Plan aims to implement initiatives for the development of agriculture and livestock sectors, MSME businesses, export promotion, domestic food security, education, healthcare, transport, electricity, and energy sectors. Moreover, it has been approved to carry out regional reconstruction and development projects.

By the end of the current fiscal year, growth is expected in all sectors except energy, mining, and electricity. According to provisional year-end estimates, the economic growth rate is projected to reach 2.9 per cent compared to the same period last year.

For the upcoming 2025-2026 financial year, GDP growth is estimated at 3 per cent, based on the current implementation status, sectoral plans of union ministries, regional and state production, and budget allocations. The projected nominal GDP value is K171,498.1 billion.

Based on the preliminary population census of 2024, Myanmar's population is estimated at 51.3 million. The projected per capita production and service value is expected to exceed K3.3 million.

Efforts should be made to systematically manage expenditures related to production, service industries, and associated projects; to strive collectively for greater economic growth than the current situation; to efficiently utilize the nation's resources for achieving better progress and outcomes; and to prioritize addressing the fundamental needs of the people.

Vice-Chairman of the Commission Deputy Prime Minister and Union Minister for Planning and Finance U Win Shein reported on drawing the national plan for 2025-26 FY.

Secretary of the Commission Deputy Minister for Planning and Finance Daw Than Than Lin reported the national planning bill for the 2025-26 FY. Union ministers also presented the accomplishment of the national plan in the respective financial year.

In his speech, the Senior General noted that all responsible organizations have to implement measures to ensure security at the regional level to increase investments.

Regarding the GDP, regions and states must work on improving agricultural products, the agricultural sector and

the fisheries sector to boost the country's GDP, to meet the set targets. The implementation of projects must be carried out effectively to ensure success.

In terms of security and legal governance, regions and states must emphasize security measures systematically to ensure the smooth conduct of a multiparty democratic general election in December.

In his concluding remarks, the Senior General pointed out that the State economic promotion fund must be effectively utilized in respective regions without any wastage. Since strong foundations have been laid for the development of MSME businesses, it is crucial to continue efforts to ensure the long-term sustainability of businesses and to link local production to the global manufacturing network through regional production chains.

To reduce foreign currency outflow, he noted that domestic production businesses must improve their capacity to substitute imports, prevent illegal extraction of natural resources, avoid illegal trading, and prevent unlawful cross-border transactions. It is necessary to implement stricter actions, in Nay Pyi Taw, regions, and states, to address these issues. — MNA/TTA

NATIONAL

Tatmadaw members from parade columns take part in full-dress rehearsal

VICE-CHAIRMAN of the State Administration Council Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Soe Win inspected the full-dress rehearsal of the parade columns which will participate in the pa-

rade of the 80th Anniversary of Armed Forces Day which falls on 27 March 2025, at the Nay Pyi Taw Parade Ground yesterday morning.

Tatmadaw members, including female Tatmadaw members from seven parade

columns, marched to the parade ground from Thittat Ground by singing military songs to the accompaniment of the Tatmadaw (Army, Navy and Air) band and the band of Myanmar Police Force.

The Vice-Senior General

accompanying Union Minister for Defence General Maung Maung Aye, Union Minister for Home Affairs Lt-Gen Tun Tun Naung, Chief of the General Staff (Army, Navy and Air) General Kyaw Swa Lin, Commander-in-Chief (Navy) Admiral

Htein Win, Commander-in-Chief (Air) General Tun Aung, Chairman of the Leading Committee for Organizing the Armed Forces Day Chief of Armed Forces Training Lt-Gen Htein Win, senior Tatmadaw officers from the Office of the Commander-in-Chief, Commander of Nay Pyi Taw Command Maj-Gen Soe Min and officials.

The Vice-Senior General inspected the marching of parade columns into the parade ground, seating plans for distinguished guests to the parade, installation of Simultaneous Interpretation System devices for foreign guests, the cavalry company and the rehearsal for taking position of the VIP convoy.

The Vice-Senior General also viewed round flying of aircraft from Tatmadaw (Air) in formations, uniforms of the flag bearer and companies, parade flags, parade small arms and equipment, and parade rehearsal of relevant companies and attended to the needs of officials.

The parade will consist of Tatmadaw members from Tatmadaw (Army, Navy and Air) and Myanmar Police Force, female Tatmadaw members, female special squad members and aircraft from Tatmadaw (Air). — MNA/TTA



SAC Vice-Chairman Defence Services Deputy Commander-in-Chief, Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Soe Win inspects parade columns in yesterday's full-dress rehearsal.

U Zaw Zaw Soe appointed as Myanmar Ambassador to Kingdom of Thailand

THE State Administration Council Chairman, Prime Minister of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has appointed U Zaw Zaw Soe, Ambassador of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the Kingdom of Thailand. — MNA

Gold Market Rate as of 24 March 2025

THE price of one tical (16.329325 grammes) of gold with density of 19.25 grammes per cubic centimetre and above is K5,580,000 as established by the Mineral (Gold) Reference Price Determination Committee.

Rising demand for highway bus tickets ahead of Thingyan

AS many people are preparing to go back home during the Thingyan holiday, highway bus tickets have nearly run out in Yangon.

People who want to return

to their hometowns have booked tickets and now only night bus tickets are left at some bus lines.

“For now, almost all tickets are sold out since 19 March because people already booked for

Thingyan. We're not sure that we will sell tickets on a daily plan when it closes to Thingyan,” said an official from the bus ticket counter at Aungmyingala Highway Bus Terminal.

Most visitors who made the reservation are going back to Magway, Mandalay and Bago regions.

“I've arranged my trip for around 8 April but it's pretty difficult to buy tickets for the date. I think the number of returnees will be large this year,” said a woman who will go back to her home in Mandalay Region during Thingyan. — Thit Taw/ZS



Travellers are awaiting express buses at Aungmyingala Highway Bus Terminal.

NATIONAL

Peace Talk 2025: From dialogue to a new peaceful nation

THE Peace Talk 2025 in accord with the motto “From Peace Talks to the New Peaceful Nation” took place at the National Solidarity and Peacemaking Centre in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

The peace talk aims to increase the participation and focus of prominent figures, scholars, and experts from various sectors in the peace process. It also seeks to raise public awareness that achieving peace through non-violent means is the only way to ensure long-term stability. Moreover, the peace talk will identify short-term and long-term initiatives that can help reduce internal conflicts as quickly as possible, thereby improving political and economic conditions.

The talk was attended by members of the National Solidarity and Peacemaking Negotiation Committee, retired Tatmadaw officers, representatives from the Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC), representatives from political parties, NCA signatory ethnic armed organizations, stakeholders in the peace process, intellectuals and intelligentsia, media, directors-general from ministries and



The Peace Talk 2025 underway yesterday in Nay Pyi Taw and its participants.

organizations, officials, rectors of universities, representatives of organizations and observers totalling 118.

In his opening address, member of the State Administration Council Union Minister for Border Affairs Chairman of NSPNC Lt-Gen Yar Pyae said that it is necessary to collectively seek solutions to the challenges faced in the key areas of politics, security, peace, and the economy. Efforts should be made

to reduce conflicts, implement both short-term and long-term plans for economic and social development, and build a federal democratic union. The peace talk aims to generate constructive recommendations from the political, security, economic, and national development sectors to use them to further achieve the success of the peace process.

UPWC Vice-Chairman and Union Minister (Retd) U Thein Zaw extended greetings while

Secretary of NSPNC Lt-Gen Min Naing explained the aims of the talks and agenda, raising public awareness that the peace process requires greater involvement and focus from prominent figures, experts, and professionals across various sectors and that achieving peace through non-violent means is the only way to ensure long-term stability as well as the important role of media to disseminate true information in the peace pro-

cess. Speakers then extended greetings.

At the talk, Secretary of NSPNC Lt-Gen Min Naing presided over the political and security sector and Lt-Gen Khin Zaw Oo (Retd) discussed the emergence of a process to reduce conflict and ensure ceasefire. Member of the NSPNC Lt-Gen Win Bo Shein headed the economic and State development sector whereas Deputy Minister (Retd) Daw Lei Lei Thein talked about the important role of economic development in efforts to ensure peace and development. Attendees exchanged views about the talks. Relevant representatives gave suggestions, held discussions and raised questions during the talks and speakers presented clarifications.

Trust and collaboration among peace participants will be strengthened by understanding and acknowledging the perspectives and recommendations of various stakeholders in the peace dialogue. This will help develop peace and national development processes that align with the political landscape emerging beyond 2025. The peace talks will last for three days from 24 to 26 March. — MNA/TTA

ToT programme for electronic voting machines kicks off

AS the Union Election Commission manages the casting votes at the Multiparty Democratic General Election with the use of Myanmar Electronic Voting Machine, a trainer course 1/2025 for using MEVM was opened at an annexe to the UEC office in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

Speaking on the occasion, UEC Chairman U Ko Ko said that to provide training for those who will be supervising the use of voting machines, the Union Election Commission has conducted trainer training programmes on the use of voting machines. In 2024, a total of nine training sessions were held, with attendance of 227 staff members from various regions and states. This cur-

rent training is the first session for 2025, and more sessions will continue to be held. As this is a trainer training programme, the trainees must learn thoroughly and diligently to gain proficiency.

The training course will comprise the ways of installing MEVM, test voting, installation of the machine at the polling booths on election day, counting votes, compilation of the vote list under the rules, and packaging of the MEVM.

The ceremony was attended by UEC members and officials.

Trainees from Magway and Ayeyawady Election Subcommission offices are attending the course till 26 March. — MNA/TTA



UEC Chair U Ko Ko views round the trainer training programme yesterday.

NATIONAL

Festive music delights crowds at Mann Shwesettaw

ARTISTES performed songs and music entertainment for pilgrims at the Buddha Pujaniya festival on the sandbank of Mann Shwesettaw Pagoda in Minbu Township of Magway Region on the evening of 23 March.

Actor Min Sit Aung and singers Zwe Ardan, Ye Tun, Phu Wai Tha, Myat Noe San, Thanda Moe Theint, KB Nay

Myo Lin and DJ John presented Myanmar classical songs and contemporary songs at the Buddha Pujaniya festival on the first night.

Residents and pilgrims happily enjoyed the entertainment. Those artistes will perform entertainment on the night of 24 March for the second night. — Region IPRD/TTA



Music performances in progress at Mann Shwesettaw.

Shwesettaw Sanctuary showcases rare Myanmar star tortoises at pagoda festival



THE Shwesettaw Wildlife Sanctuary in Minbu (Sagu) Township, Minbu District, Magway Region, has announced that visitors can observe the rare Myanmar star tortoise during the Shwesettaw Pagoda Festival.

The Myanmar star tortoise, native to the central tropical region of Myanmar, is a species of spider tortoise.

Shwesettaw Sanctuary keeper feeds Myanmar star tortoises (above), while a flock of tortoises captivates below.

It is bred in Mandalay Yadanabon Park, Lawkananda Sanctuary, Minson Mountain Sanctuary, and Shwesettaw Sanctuary by the Department

of Forest, the Wildlife Conservation Group, and the Turtle Survival Group. The population has grown from 297 in 2014 to 1,778 today. Due to its rarity, the species is bred within a fenced area to protect it from extinction.

Shwesettaw Sanctuary is home to a wide variety of mammals, amphibians, butterflies, fish, and birds. This year, the Shwesettaw Environmental and Wildlife Conservation team has set up cages, allowing festival visitors to observe the star tortoises. — Zeyar Nating (Shwekan Myay)/MKKS



Loon Nya Blue Lake and Yethuma Kyun (Mermaid Island).

Tourism booms in Hpa-an as visitors flock in

INCLUDING residents of Yangon and Mandalay, loads of people from other regions and states have made visits to Hpa-an in Kayin State, according to tour organizers.

Visitors spend two nights, and three days in Hpa-an and among visitors, there are families, friends and newlyweds, according to a resident.

“Visitor arrival at Hpa-an usually elevates in monsoon. Even now, families, friend groups and newly-weds have come for summer vacation. Most visitors are from Yangon, Mandalay and Mawlamyine. The visitor arrival hasn’t stopped,” said a resident.

In Hpa-an, there are many famous tourist destinations such as Kyaukkalat Pagoda, Yathepyan Cave, Kawgun Cave, Donyin Waterfall, Phootakhit Village Pagoda, Naunglone Valley and Sadan Cave.

According to tour organizers, visitor arrival to Kalaw, Inlay, Taunggyi, Bagan-Nyaung-U, Hpa-an, Bago, Yangon and neighbouring Chaungtha and Ngwehsaung beaches is likely to rise during the Thingyan holiday in April.

Hpa-an is a city which is rich in natural sceneries and visitors can explore mountains, paddy fields, lakes and caves. — MT/ZS

OPINION

Value efforts of meteorologists for their early warnings

METEOROLOGY plays a vital role in daily decision-making, helping individuals determine whether to proceed with certain actions based on weather conditions for the best possible outcome. In today's world, it is essential for people to analyze weather forecasts to plan effectively and achieve success.

Thanks to advancements in science, technology, and modern equipment, meteorologists are now able to provide accurate weather forecasts that greatly benefit society. These forecasts allow individuals to adjust their work plans based on anticipated conditions, ensuring they can make informed decisions and avoid potential risks.

In particular, meteorological forecasts are crucial for communities living along coastlines, as these predictions help protect lives and property.

The "Early Warnings for All" initiative has made considerable strides in saving lives, protecting livelihoods, and building community resilience.

As the impacts of climate change intensify, the need for these initiatives has become even more urgent. With ongoing partnerships and increased support from bilateral and multilateral donors, climate funds, and development banks, efforts to enhance early warning systems are progressing. Regional collaborations and specialized centres are further strengthening these initiatives, aiming to create lasting capacity and ensure a broader impact.

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In Myanmar, meteorological personnel face significant challenges in their work, often at great personal risk, yet they remain dedicated to their mission. These dedicated workers contribute to issuing vital forecasts that help protect citizens from the dangers of natural disasters. As a result, it is important for all Myanmar citizens to celebrate World Meteorological Day and honour the meteorological service personnel across the country for their invaluable contributions. Through effective utilization of meteorological information and heightened awareness, the global populace including people from Myanmar can mitigate the impacts of climate change and different forms of natural disasters based on meteorological forecasts and advance towards a more resilient and sustainable future.

Without these early warnings, people would struggle to anticipate the impact of severe weather events on their businesses and daily activities, which could lead to significant losses.

World Meteorological Day, celebrated on 23 March each year, honours the establishment of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) in 1950. The day highlights the crucial role of the National Meteorological and Hydrological Services in safeguarding society's well-being. Each year, the WMO selects a theme related to current weather, climate, or water-related challenges. The theme for World Meteorological Day 2025 is "Closing the early warning gap together," underscoring the importance of improving early warnings for all.

The "Early Warnings for All" initiative has made considerable strides in saving lives, protecting livelihoods, and building community resilience. As the impacts of climate change intensify, the need for

The Group Discussion Method in Pedagogy

A discussion is a situation in which students or students and a teacher converse to share information, ideas, opinions, or work to resolve a problem. But it is not a situation in which a teacher asks a question, a student or students answer it, and then the teacher asks another question. This question-answer-question format is called recitation, and its main purpose is to quiz students to determine what they know or understand.

However, a discussion can serve several purposes. One purpose is to review and extend what students have learnt to ensure their mastery of a subject. First, students see, hear or read something. Then, they discuss what they have seen and heard. Among other things, they pay attention to terms and concepts that need explanation, the major ideas presented, and the main message. The next purpose is to have students examine their ideas or opinions. After studying something, students could be asked to share their views about its appropriateness. The third purpose is to solve a problem. Herein, students are presented with political, economic or social problems to discuss and resolve. Sometimes the last purpose is to improve students' face-to-face



Effective discussions require careful preparation, active participation, and adherence to guidelines that ensure all students contribute equally while fostering a respectful and supportive environment. PHOTO: CONCEPT ART

or interpersonal communication skills so they become better at being good contributors and active listeners, making a point, handling disagreements and conflicts, overcoming fear of

By Hu Wo (Cuckoo's Song)

speaking in public and so forth.

Discussions can be considered based on such attributes and characteristics as the interaction pattern, the teacher's role, group size and composition, and group arrangement. Interaction during discussion is less formal as well as more conversational. Besides, the conversation can occur not only among students but also between students and teachers. In most likely discussions, everyone should be an active participant. The whole class can engage in a common discussion or it can be divided into small groups that are preferable since these allow more potential for student participation. The composition of a group will also be similar (homogenous) or dissimilar (heterogenous). Participants should be face-to-face. Thus, arranging discussion participants in a circle is most common. On occasions, a panel discussion makes sense. If the interaction is strictly among students, the teacher will have to serve as an observer, recorder and perhaps arbitrator. As a facilitator and moderator, the teacher is to enable students to reflect critically on their experiences, explore different perspectives and

consider how knowledge is then rooted in personal experiences, according to circumstances like the purpose of discussion, the maturity and experience of the students.

Good discussion leaders believe that students want and need to get involved with purposeful talk; they should be asked to review and use information, explore issues and resolve problems; they are capable of thinking and doing for themselves; and they can be helped to develop via discussion. The leaders can control their talk, get students thinking, serve as skilful facilitators, human relation experts, clarifiers or summarizers and excel at teaching communication skills.

When being prepared, good discussions establish the general purpose, set specific learner objectives, consider the readiness of the class and individuals for discussion, decide what role the leader will play, the class grouping, physical arrangements, time allowance and plan the discussion. When being overseen, good discussions get students' attention, ensure that participants understand and see the value in the purpose or goal, relate the goal

and task to previous knowledge and future work, set out the specific questions or statements to be discussed, remind participants of discussion rules, monitor to ensure on-task behaviour, balanced participation and understanding, encourage participants and elevate the level of course. When being closed, the good discussions do so at the most appropriate time rather than at a specific time, summarize progress towards the goal(s), tie new learning to previous knowledge and establish what participants might next want to know or be able to do.

As discussion guidelines for students, all students should have an equal opportunity to contribute. They encourage their classmates to join in. They ensure that everyone contributes by waiting his or her turn and taking part about as much as everyone else. They listen carefully to what others say and feel. Also, they work to understand and whenever possible, to support others' saying and feeling. They like to understand that their knowledge and ideas may not always be right. They stay on target and help others do the same. Finally, they must be gracious and have to avoid attacking or belittling their peers.

Discussions are probably attractive to teachers who have personal needs for construction, play, affiliation and student success or to those who may want

to avoid giving a presentation for the reason that they do not know the subject well enough. The discussions are advantageous for students who have strong needs for acquisition, affiliation, defiance, dominance, exhibition, exposition, play, recognition, sibilance and succorance. They tend to capture and maintain students' interest, help them develop communication and social-psychological strengths or help them learn through rehearsal. But when they are not well conducted, discussions can be purposeless, rambling, confrontational, wasteful of time, inefficient and unpleasant.

So, when on earth should the discussion method be used? Discussion is used when any of its purposes coincide with the goal. Consequently, students are engaged in the discussion when the goal is to review information, examine ideas or opinions, solve problems and improve oral communication skills. When the teacher is more interested in long-term memory, higher-order thinking, motivation, attitude change or moral reasoning, discussion can be used, to best meet students' social and psychological needs. After all, discussion is given to be effective when students have been mostly inactive listeners, when a more relaxed atmosphere is warranted and when it would be beneficial to enhance student-to-student friendships or affiliation.

Infants remember more than you think, new study reveals

By employing innovative techniques to scan infants' brains during memory tasks, the study provides insights into how memories are formed in infancy and why they may become inaccessible over time.

OUR earliest years are a time of rapid learning, yet we typically cannot recall specific experiences from that period—a phenomenon known as infantile amnesia.

A new study published in Science on Thursday challenges assumptions about infant memory, showing that young minds do indeed form memories. The question remains, however, why these memories become difficult to retrieve later in life.

"I've always been fascinated by this mysterious blank spot we have in our personal history," Nick Turk-Browne, professor of psychology at Yale and the study's

senior author, told AFP.

Around the age of one, children become extraordinary learners — acquiring language, walking, recognizing objects, understanding social bonds, and more. "Yet we remember none of those experiences — so there's a sort of mismatch between this incredible plasticity and learning ability that we have," he said.

Sigmund Freud, the founder of psychoanalysis, hypothesized that early memories are repressed, though science has since largely dismissed the idea of an active suppression process. Instead, modern theories focus

on the hippocampus, a part of the brain critical for episodic memory, which is not fully developed in infancy.

Turk-Browne, however, was intrigued by clues from previous behavioral research. Since babies cannot verbally report memories before acquiring language, their tendency to gaze longer at familiar things provides important hints.

Recent rodent studies monitoring brain activity have also shown that engrams — patterns of cells that store memories — form in the infant hippocampus but become inaccessible over time — though they can be artificially

reawakened through a technique that uses light to stimulate neurons.

But until now, pairing observations of infants with brain imaging had been out of reach, as babies are famously uncooperative when it comes to sitting still inside a Functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging (fMRI) machine — the device that tracks blood flow to "see" brain activity.

Psychedelic patterns

To overcome this challenge, Turk-Browne's team used methods his lab has refined over the years — working with families to incorporate pacifiers, blankets,

and stuffed animals; holding babies still with pillows; and using psychedelic background patterns to keep them engaged.

Still, inevitable wiggling led to blurry images that had to be discarded, but the team accounted for this by running hundreds of sessions. In total, 26 infants participated — half under a year old, half over — while their brains were scanned during a memory task adapted from adult studies.

First, they were shown images of faces, scenes, or objects. Later, after viewing other images, they were presented with a previously seen image alongside a new one.

"We quantify how much time they spend looking at the old thing they've seen before, and that's a measure of their memory for that image," said Turk-Browne.

By comparing brain activity during successful memory formation versus forgotten images, the researchers confirmed that the hippocampus is active in memory encoding from a young age.

This was true for 11 of 13 infants over a year old but not for those under one. They also found that babies who performed best on memory tasks showed greater hippocampal activity.

SOURCE: AFP



Researchers explored how infants, despite their remarkable learning abilities, do not recall early experiences due to the underdevelopment of the hippocampus, which is crucial for episodic memory. ILLUSTRATION: CONCEPT ART

NATIONAL

30 Filipinos, 23 Laotians repatriated for telecom fraud; 230 foreigners under investigation

THE government of Myanmar has been thoroughly investigating individuals involved in online scams and online gambling. In particular, Myanmar is continuously cooperating with China and Thailand through a trilateral cooperation.

As part of this effort, 30 Filipinos and 23 Lao nationals, who were involved in these illegal activities in the Maethawtaly area in the Kayin State, were detained. Following humanitarian considerations and friendship between nations, and following the legal procedures, these individuals were transferred to their respective countries via the Myanmar-Thailand Friendship Bridge II. In addition, 230 foreign nationals have been further investigated and apprehended.

Colonel Min Thu Kyaw, Minister for Security and Border Affairs of the Kayin State government, and other responsible officials first conducted an inspection yesterday morning regarding the provisions for foreign nationals who are to be trans-



Myanmar Immigration officials processing the deportation of foreign nationals.

ferred back to their respective countries. This includes matters related to their accommodation, food, health, and security. The officials reviewed the arrangements in place and instructed the relevant department authorities to address any requirements.

Subsequently, a repatriation ceremony was held and it was attended by Colonel Min Thu Kyaw and other responsible officials,

including Mr Peter John V Dela Fuente, Third Secretary of the Philippines Embassy (Yangon), Mr Heuangchalern Phommason, Third Secretary of the Lao Embassy, and officials from the Immigration Department of Tak Province, Thailand. Myanmar officials handed over the relevant documentation for the repatriation process to the respective officials from the countries con-

cerned. Similarly, today, 230 foreign nationals who had entered through illegal routes into the Maethawtaly area in Myawady were further investigated, discovered, and detained. The relevant authorities are currently collecting personal information, records, and other necessary documentation to facilitate their swift repatriation to their respec-

tive countries, with the cooperation of the relevant departments.

From 30 January to 24 March 2025, a total of 8,432 foreign nationals who had entered Myanmar illegally were identified, investigated, and detained. Of these, 5,200 individuals were systematically repatriated to their respective countries through Thailand, as per legal procedures. The remaining 3,232 foreign nationals are now ready to be transferred to their respective countries, and they are being carefully and securely managed.

The government is actively working to identify and arrest individuals involved in online scam operations, as well as foreign nationals who are pulling the strings behind the scenes. In addition, efforts are being made to take firm and decisive action. Furthermore, the government is actively collaborating to swiftly repatriate foreign nationals who have suffered hardship or been victims of human trafficking to their respective countries. — MNA/MKKS

Three-day illegal trade crackdown seizes goods worth K2,095M

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

On 21 and 22 March, the combined teams impounded a kind of illegal medicine worth K1,291,500 in Chanayethazan Township, illegal teaks weighing 7.349 tonnes, hardwood weighing 6.433 tonnes and other timbers 22.243 tonnes worth K29,950,320 from two vehicles (approximately K38 million) in Amarapura, Patheingyi, PyinOoLwin and Thazi Townships, two vehicles with two trailers (approximately K202 million) carrying two kinds of industrial materials valued at K59,018,600 in Paleik and a Higer bus (estimated value of K60 million) carrying 11 kinds of industrial materials and six kinds of foodstuffs worth K25,002,500 without official documents on Yangon-Mandalay expressway.

The action was taken under the National Drug Law, the Forest Law and Customs procedures.

Similarly, on 22 March, the combined on-duty teams seized illegal teak weighing 0.968 tonne, hardwood weighing 1.108 tonnes and other timbers weighing 1.267 tonnes valued at K946,874 in Bago and Thayawady districts, two unregistered vehicles worth K11.5 million in Dagon Myothit (South) and Insein Townships, 21 kinds of consumer goods, six kinds of industrial materials and two kinds of foodstuffs worth K91.65 million without official documents from nine passengers at the Yangon International Airport and industrial materials worth K137,062,800 without official documents from a container at the Myanmar Industrial Port. The action was taken under the Forest Law, the Export-Import Law and Customs procedures.

On 23 March, the com-

combined teams confiscated 30 vehicles (estimated value of K780 million) carrying 49 kinds of industrial materials and 26 kinds of consumer goods valued at K547.632 million in Hpan Township, an unregistered Nissan X-Trail worth K20 million at the Yadanabon bridge combined checkpoint in Sagaing Township, three kinds of smuggled consumer goods that were piled up worth K45.2 million in Kawthoung Township and two kinds of consumer goods worth K46 million without official documents from a warehouse in Kawthoung Township. The action was conducted under the Export-Import Law and Customs procedures.

The Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee reported 93 arrests on 21, 22 and 23 March, seizing illegal goods worth approximately K2,095 million. — MNA/MKKS

Counter-argument to false information

Security official debunks Magway arrest rumours spread by subversive media

ON 21 March, security forces entered Moephyu and Moekwe villages in Yaylekyun area of Yesakyo Township, Magway Region. Reports from certain media outlets claimed that over 50 residents, including elderly people and children, were arrested. However, these reports were found to be false and spread by subversive media sources.

An official responsible for security in the area clarified that, upon investigation, the claims were inaccurate. While security forces carried out necessary measures to ensure territorial security that day, no peaceful locals were arrested. It is, in fact, PDF terrorists who have been involved in violent acts such as the arbitrary arrest and killing of local people, government employees, and monks who do not support them, as well as the forced recruitment of civilians.

Malicious news outlets spreading the false information attempted to cover up terrorists' violent actions, in a bid to distort public perception and mislead people regarding the role of security forces. — MNA/MKKS



This screenshot discloses misinformation.

NATIONAL

Pre-Spring & Pre-Thingyan Market Fair in Mandalay to feature star performances



This image displays advertisements for the Pre-Spring & Pre-Thingyan Market Fair.

ACTRESS Wai Lar Yi has announced that she and Kaung Myat San will perform at the upcoming Pre-Spring and Pre-Thingyan Market Fair, which will be held at Jinlong Myanmar Machine Mart-Mandalay in Pyigyidagun Township, Mandalay Region.

Organized by Kyin Lone Myanmar Machine Mart-Mandalay, the fair will take place over three days, from 4 to 6 April, and promises to be a lively and bustling event.

“Mandalay’s Pre-Spring and Pre-Thingyan Market Fair is just around the corner! Kaung Myat San and I will be performing on 5 April to entertain our Mandalay fans. We’re excited to meet everyone, so come along, shop, and enjoy the music!” said Wai Lar Yi.

The event will feature over 60 stalls, offering a variety of goods, including food and beverages, electronics, cosmetics, clothing, and machinery exhibitions. Additionally, there will be hands-on equipment demonstrations, job search programmes for young people, and entertainment performances by various artistes. — ASH/MKKS

Young artistes to host Pre-Water Festival celebration in Judson

YOUNG singers Hlwan Paing and G Fatt will host a Pre-Water Festival in Judson at Judson Entertainment Bar in Mingala Taungnyunt Township, Yangon Region, according to singer Hlwan Paing.

The concert will take place on 29 and 30 March at Judson’s Indoor & Outdoor Area and will be held in the festive spirit of Thingyan, Myanmar’s traditional water festival.

“The event will run for two days. On Day 1, G Fatt will perform, while on Day 2, I will be there for the entire day. The venue will be fully equipped with a water system, allowing attendees to immerse themselves in the full Thingyan experience. This Pre-Thingyan Day Event will recreate the festive atmosphere of the actual water festival, so we invite everyone to come, enjoy the water play,



This image depicts an advert for singers Hlwan Paing and G Fatt’s Pre-Water Festival in the Judson music concert.

and listen to music,” said Hlwan Paing. The Pre-Water Festival in Judson will feature performances by Hlwan Paing and G Fatt, supported by the Judson Band, alongside DJs and renowned dancers. — ASH/MKKS

Myanmar golden bananas thrive in Monywa market despite shortage



This image displays Myanmar golden bananas seen at the Monywa market.

MYANMAR golden bananas (Shwe bananas in the Myanmar Language) are selling well despite the shortage, according to the banana retail market in Monywa township.

Their prices are also rising due to increased consumption.

“Shwe bananas are not easy to transport, so we only sell them in Monywa. In the Monywa market, Shwe bananas have become a rare commodity, and consumers like them. Now, sales are increasing, the price is good, and the taste is unique. Everyone who has eaten

loves them. Some people in Monywa don’t know the name of Shwe bananas which are mostly grown in Ayeyawady Region, Kalaw, Taunggyi in Shan State, and other cold regions,” said Ko Win Myint Htoo, a Shwe banana grower in Monywa. Golden bananas require more care and labour than other varieties, so there are very few farmers in Monywa. However, this year’s yield is good in terms of income, he said.

“There are very few people who grow Shwe bananas in Monywa because they require a lot of care while other varieties require just regular watering, ploughing, and weeding. This year’s yield is not bad in terms of income. We sell one plant for about K35,000. In a balanced plant, there are four, five or six hands,” he explained. — Thit Taw/ZN



Rice sacks designated for exports are seen loading onto the ship.

MRF targets 300,000-tonne parboiled rice export in FY2025-26

MYANMAR Rice Federation (MRF) targets to export 300,000 tonnes of Myanmar parboiled rice in the financial year 2025-2026.

MRF will endeavour to upgrade 30 parboiled processing machines across the country to convey 300,000 tonnes to foreign markets. MRF will coordinate sup-

ply chain stakeholders to achieve this.

Myanmar’s parboiled rice will be primarily delivered to the Russian Federation, while fertilizer and pesticide will be imported, according to a Memorandum of Understanding between Myanmar and Russia.

Myanmar exported about two million tonnes of rice and broken rice to foreign countries in the 2024-2025 FY. The country aims to bag US\$1 billion. Myanmar mainly places rice in European markets. Furthermore, premium-quality rice is also exported to China, Indonesia and the Philippines. — ASH/KK

NATIONAL BUSINESS

Myanmar delegates set to join 2nd Hunan RCEP Economic & Trade Expo

THE 2nd Hunan (Huaihua) RCEP Economic and Trade Expo which will be held at China (Huaihua) International Exhibition Centre on 8-11 May 2025 welcomes the participation of Myanmar businesspeople, according to the Myanmar Trade Promotion Organization. This trade expo is jointly organized by

the Department of Commerce of Hunan Province and Huaihua Municipal government. The theme of the trade expo is "Share Opportunities to Deliver the Future", Embassies, consulate general and businesses from countries of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership in Asia including 10 members of

ASEAN, Australia, China, Japan, South Korea and New Zealand will showcase their products and services. It will also strengthen business and trade cooperation between Myanmar and China. Myanmar business people will be provided with a 108-square-metre expo booth for free. Furthermore, the expo organizing com-

mittee will cover a three-night stay and transport. The exhibitor registration form must be submitted by 31 March 2025.

Interested business people can enquire about details and register through the Myanmar Trade Promotion Organization at 067408622 or email event.td.myanmartrade@gmail.com. — NN/KK



Export rice bags are organized at the warehouse.

MRF, exporters, millers to procure 15M paddy baskets, 400K rice sacks by May

ACCORDING to MRF's announcement 2/2025, Myanmar Rice Federation, export companies and member mills will buy 15 million baskets of paddy and 400,000 Aemahta rice sacks in April and May, according to MRF's announcement 2/2025 released on 22 March.

Weak foreign and domestic demand slashed rice prices and raised concerns of Aemahta summer paddy farmers.

Therefore, those who have

difficulty selling paddy and rice can contact MRF at 01 2301128~29 and 01 218266~68.

Additionally, a work coordination meeting on the promotion of parboiled rice production and export was held on 22 March, highlighting upgrading 30 parboiling machines, providing necessary assistance to boost production and targeting 300,000 tonnes of parboiled rice export in the 2025-2026 financial year.

Afterwards, MRF hosted a work coord meeting on solar energy installation on 22 March and discussed powering rice mills with solar energy (41.5 megawatts) together with 11 solar companies which MRF signed with. Furthermore, they emphasize how to attract investments from solar companies for the generation of power, and how to get access to irrigation water for crops.

— NN/KK

YGN palm oil wholesale reference rate sets K6,855

THE wholesale reference rate of palm oil set for the Yangon market dipped to K6,855 per viss for a week ending 30 March from K6,875 last week (17-23 March), according to the Supervisory Committee on Edible Oil Import and Distribution.

The Supervisory Committee on Edible Oil Import and Distribution under the Ministry of Commerce has been closely observing the FOB prices in Malaysia and Indonesia, adding transport costs, tariffs and banking services to decide the wholesale market reference rate for edible oil weekly.

Despite the reference price, the market price is way too high.

The committee notified that any person who is involved in price gouging and oil storage to attempt market manipulation will face legal action under the

Essential Goods and Services Law.

The department is working together with the Myanmar Oil Dealers' Association and the cooking oil importing companies to offer affordable rates of imported palm oil for consumers.

The complaints for overcharging can be lodged over hotline 1535 of the call centre of the Consumers Affairs Department or sent to the Facebook page of the department and the region and state departments concerned.

The domestic consumption of palm oil is estimated at one million tonnes per year. The local palm oil production is just about 400,000 tonnes. About 700,000 tonnes of palm oil are yearly imported through Malaysia and Indonesia to meet domestic demands. — NN/KK



Cooking oil bottles are arranged for distribution.

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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.

ADB, Shriram Finance sign deal to boost MSME, EV financing in India

THE Asian Development Bank (ADB) Monday said it has struck a deal with an Indian non-banking financial firm to help Indian companies acquire loans and fund the manufacture of electric vehicles (EVs).

The deal includes a loan agreement for US\$150 million signed between the ADB and Shriram Finance Limited to boost access to funds for micro, small, and

medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) in India with a focus on business loans and for financial support for building EVs and low-emission commercial vehicles for business purposes.

The ADB said the transaction is part of a 306 million-dollar financing package led by the ADB as the mandated lead arranger and bookrunner.

“This project under-

scores the ADB’s commitment to supporting financial inclusion and sustainable development in India while addressing the significant financing gap faced by MSMEs,” said ADB Country Director for India Mio Oka.

“By partnering with Shriram Finance Limited, we will empower MSMEs, particularly women entrepreneurs, and accelerate

the transition to electric mobility, which is crucial for reducing air pollution and achieving India’s climate goals,” Oka said.

Shriram Finance Limited is the flagship company of the Shriram Group and is one of India’s largest non-banking financial companies specializing in commercial vehicle financing and MSME lending.

“We value the ADB’s



File photo taken on 16 September 2008 shows the logo of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) at its headquarters in Manila, capital of the Philippines. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

support and funding, which will enable us to expand our financing to underserved MSMEs and promote the adoption of

electric vehicles,” said Shriram Finance Limited Executive Vice-Chairman Umesh Revankar. — Xinhua

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V UNI-ACTIVE VOY.NO. (0344-793N)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V UNI-ACTIVE VOY.NO. (0344-793N)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **25-3-2025** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **AWPT** where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

**Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority**

Agent For:
M/S EVERGREEN MARINE (ASIA) PTE., LTD.

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V ASPEN TRADER VOY.NO. (001)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V ASPEN TRADER VOY.NO. (001)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **26-3-2025** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **IBTT** 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 BEN LINE AGENCIES (S’PORE) PTE LTD

Global economic uncertainty weighs on Philippine balance of payments outlook: central bank

THE Philippine central bank on Monday said the country’s balance of payments (BOP) position is projected to be weaker in 2025-2026, due to slower global trade and subdued investor confidence linked to increased uncertainty in global trade policy and geopolitical developments.

“The outlook nevertheless reflects a sustained expansion in the domestic economy, supported by easing inflation and less restrictive monetary policy,” the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) said in a press release.

Global economic growth is expected to remain soft in 2025 and 2026, as economies contend with US trade policy changes and responses from trad-

ing partners, the BSP said.

Global growth prospects are expected to be further dampened by some factors, including “prolonged geopolitical tensions in conflict zones” and “commodity price volatility,” said the BSP. Meanwhile, it said domestic growth prospects provide a cushion against global headwinds.

“Domestic expansion driven by private consumption, investments, including government infrastructure spending, as well as continued progress on legislative reforms to improve the business environment should encourage foreign investments and positively impact the external sector outlook in the near to medium term,” the BSP said. — Xinhua

PESTICIDES DISTRIBUTOR CHANGING

We, **Jiangxi Zhengbang Crop Protection Co.,Ltd**, would like to change the Distributor of the following products, from **Myanmar Shwe Thein Trading Co.,Ltd** to **Gold & Super Co.,Ltd**. If any object or enquiry, please contact to Pesticide Registration Board, Plant Protection Division, Department of Agriculture, Yangon, from here to next (2) weeks.

No	Trade Name	Active Ingredient Name	Registration Type	Registration Number
1.	ZB-Academay	Emamectin Benzoate 5.7% EW	Provisional	P2023-6159
2.	ZB-Defeat 30 SC	Chlorfenapyr 18%+Indoxacarb 12% SC	Provisional	P2024-5303
3.	ZB-Combined Strength 70% WG	Cymoxanil 20%+Dimethomorph 50% WG	Provisional	P2022-4795

Gold & Super Co.,Ltd
Tel: 09-799664665

Changing Trade Name For Registered Pesticide

The Pesticide manufactured by **Shanghai E-Tong Chemical Co.,Ltd** and distributed by **Northern Aung Power Agro Chemical Co.,Ltd** is changing trade Name as follow.

No.	Previous Name	New Name	Registration No.
1	Yonta Victory	NAP AD	P2022-5761
2	E-T Fate 75 SP	NAP Acephate	F2019-2082

Any Objection regarding to this changing can notify at Myanmar Pesticide Registration Board within (14) days.
Northern Aung Power Agro Chemical Co.,Ltd.
No.CA-316, Cherry 1st, FMI City, Hlaing Tharyar Township, Yangon Division, Myanmar.

PESTICIDES DISTRIBUTOR CHANGING

We, **Ruili Cheng Shan Import and Export Trade Co.,Ltd**, would like to change the Distributor of the following products, from **Northern Aung Power Agro Chemical Co.,Ltd** to **Gold & Super Co.,Ltd**. If any object or enquiry, please contact to Pesticide Registration Board, Plant Protection Division, Department of Agriculture, Yangon, from here to next (2) weeks.

No	Trade Name	Active Ingredient Name	Registration Type	Registration Number
1.	Poe Swam Thar	Chlorfenapyr 2% + Emamectin Benzoate 5% WDG	Provisional Registration	P2024-6476

Gold & Super Co.,Ltd
Tel: 09-799664665

ROLLING UPDATES

WORLD

Brazil's Lula to build trade ties on Japan state visit



Brazil's President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva speaks during the launch of a programme to facilitate access to bank loans for workers at the Planalto Palace in Brasilia on 12 March 2025. **PHOTO: AFP**

BRAZIL'S president starts a four-day state visit to Japan on Monday, accompanied by a 100-strong business delegation as US tariffs push the countries

to nurture trade ties elsewhere. Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva and Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba are also expected to discuss the joint development of

biofuels ahead of November's COP30 UN climate summit in the Brazilian Amazon.

In talks on Wednesday, the leaders will reportedly restate

their commitment to free trade following US President Donald Trump's levies on steel and other imports.

"Everyone who was talking about free trade is now practising protectionism," Lula, 79, said ahead of his departure.

"I think this protectionism is absurd," he told Japanese media.

Brazil is the second-largest exporter of steel to the United States after Canada, shipping four million tonnes of the metal in 2024.

Lula and Ishiba will likely agree to regular leaders' visits and to establishing strategic dialogue on security and other matters, Japanese media reported.

The pair may also affirm the importance of the rules-based international order, a phrase often used to make a veiled dig at Chinese foreign policy. — AFP

Serbia will not join NATO or CSTO - Deputy Prime Minister Vulin

SERBIA will not become a member of NATO or the CSTO, it must ensure its own security, although this is difficult, Serbian Deputy Prime Minister Aleksandar Vulin told Sputnik.

"Serbia strictly adheres to the policy of military neutrality. This means that we will not expand our participation in any military bloc. And we will try to maintain the best relations with everyone, first of all — with the countries in our neighbourhood. So Serbia will not become a member of NATO, will not be a member of the CSTO," Vulin said.

He admitted that for a country the size of Serbia, this is the hardest path.

Currently, the parliament of Serbia is an observer in the CSTO Parliamentary Assembly. — SPUTNIK

Japan rice prices hit new record as govt releases stockpiles



Bags containing Japanese government's emergency rice reserves are brought to a rice mill in Saitama Prefecture on 18 March 2025. The government started releasing rice from its stockpile the same day amid soaring prices. **PHOTO: KYODO**

RICE prices in Japan have continued to rise, hitting a new record at an average 4,172 yen (\$28) per five kilograms, the government said Monday with the first batch of its released stockpiles soon to hit store shelves.

The average price of rice sold at supermarkets across the country between 10 and 16 March more than doubled from a year earlier and rose for the 11th consecutive week to its highest since data collection began in

March 2022. The expected price-lowering effect of the stockpile release has yet to appear.

The government said in mid-February that it will release up to 210,000 tonnes of its stockpiled rice to ensure smooth distribution of the Japanese staple amid soaring prices.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries auctioned about 142,000 tonnes of the stockpiles between 10 and 12 March, and the National Federation of Agricultural Cooperative Associations purchased 94 per cent of the amount. The first batch could hit shelves by the end of the month.

Experts say if the release of stockpiles does not lower prices, the government may need to release more than the initially planned 210,000 tonnes.

The spike in prices followed a poor harvest in the summer of 2023 due to high temperatures that reduced the amount of rice available for distribution the following year. A sharp rise in foreign tourists has also driven up rice consumption at restaurants. — Kyodo

Ukraine continues to attack Russian energy infrastructure

KYIV carried out a UAV attack on the Kropotkinskaya oil plumping station of Caspian Pipeline Consortium (CPC) in Russia's Kuban overnight, the Russian Defence Ministry said on Monday.

"On 25 March 2025, at 23:00 GMT Kyiv carried out UAV attack on Kropotkinskaya oil pumping station of Caspian Pipeline Consortium in the Krasnodar Region," the ministry said in a statement.

The Russian air defence systems

intercepted Ukrainian UAV seven kilometres (4.3 miles) from CPC facility in Kuban, fragments fell near the Kavkazskaya railway station, the ministry said.

"By this, contrary to (Ukrainian President Volodymyr) Zelensky's claims, the Kyiv regime continues to plan, prepare and carry out operations on critical energy infrastructure, including international, on territory of Russia," the ministry added. — SPUTNIK



A 9K35 Strela-10 (Arrow) air defence system used by Russian servicemen of the 27th Motor Rifle Brigade, 1st Guards Tank Army of the West group of forces, is seen at a position amid Russia's military operation in Ukraine, at an unknown location, in Russia. **PHOTO: SPUTNIK**

SPORTS

Myanmar-Afghanistan host press conference ahead of Asian Cup qualifier



Head Coach U Myo Hlaing Win of the Myanmar National Football Team. PHOTO: MF

A press conference before the match between the Myanmar National Football Team and the Afghanistan Team as the first group match of the third-round

qualifier of the 2027 Asian Cup took place at the press conference room of the Thuwunna Youth Training Centre yesterday.

Head Coach of Myanmar Team U Myo Hlaing Win revealed: “The match against the Afghanistan team is important because it is the opening match. Playing at home is also an advantage for us. We have studied and prepared well to play against the Afghanistan team.”

Wing attacker Thiha Zaw said, “This match is very important. We have studied the Afghanistan team’s skills and power. Since we have home support, it gives us an advantage. I also invite the fans to come and cheer us on.”

Afghanistan national team coach Usmon Toshev commented, “It will be a difficult match for both sides. The Myanmar team is good. We have selected players from Europe, America, and domestically for our team.”

The match between Myanmar and Afghanistan teams will take place at the Youth Training Centre at 5 pm on 25 March. — Ko Nyi Lay/TTA

Myanmar Women clinch gold in Sepak Takraw Doubles at 2025 ISTAF World Cup

THE Myanmar Women’s National Team won the gold medal in the women’s doubles regu of Sepak Takraw event at the 2025 ISTAF World Cup, held at the Patliputra Indoor Stadium in Bihar, India, according to the Myanmar Sepak Takraw Federation.

The 2025 ISTAF World Cup is taking place from 20 to 25 March, and Myanmar’s women’s team secured the gold medal in the women’s doubles regu event final by defeating India.

Both the Myanmar men’s and women’s national teams are competing in multiple Sepak Takraw events, including Men’s Doubles, Men’s Quadrant, Women’s Doubles, Women’s Quadrant, and Mixed Quadrant. In these events, Myanmar’s women’s team won gold in the women’s doubles, while the men’s team claimed silver in the men’s doubles and bronze in the men’s quadrant. — Arkar Lin/MKKS

Juventus sacks head coach Motta, Tudor steps in

JUVENTUS fired head coach Thiago Motta on Sunday after a string of poor performances, replacing him with former player Igor Tudor.

Former Italy international Motta joined Juventus from Bologna last summer and led the team to a strong start to the season. However, Juventus struggled with inconsistency and was eliminated early from both the Champions League and Coppa Italia.

After consecutive heavy defeats to Atalanta and Fiorentina, in which the

team conceded seven goals and failed to score, Juventus dropped to fifth in the Serie A standings, putting its Champions League qualification hopes at risk. The club decided to part ways with Motta as a result.

“The club would like to thank Thiago Motta and all of his staff for their professionalism and for the work they have carried out in recent months with passion and dedication. The club wishes them the best of luck for the future,” Juventus said in a statement.

Tudor, a Croatian who spent several years at Juventus as a player, moved into coaching after retirement, with stints at Udinese, Lazio and other clubs. He previously served as an assistant coach for Juventus under Andrea Pirlo during the 2020-21 season.

The 46-year-old has reportedly signed a contract through the end of the season. According to multiple Italian outlets, the deal could be extended if Juventus qualifies for the Champions League. — Xinhua



The Myanmar Women’s National Team.

Drama as Spain, France, Germany, Portugal reach Nations League semis

THERE was tension until the very end of Sunday night’s four UEFA Nations League quarterfinals.

Only Germany qualified in 90 minutes after a thrilling 3-3 draw at home to Italy, while Portugal needed extra time against Denmark, Spain endured a tense penalty shootout against the Netherlands after drawing 4-4 on aggregate, and France also snuck through 5-4 on penalties against Croatia after fighting back in Paris.

Mikel Oyarzabal drilled Spain ahead from the penalty spot in the eighth minute after he had been brought down from behind, and he had the ball in the net just three minutes later, only for his effort to be ruled out for offside.

Spain was clearly on top and only a

brilliant save from Bart Verbruggen denied Nico Williams what looked like a certain goal.

The Netherlands gained more control of the ball as the half progressed, but failed to trouble Unai Simon in the Spain goal.

Memphis Depay, playing his 100th game for the Netherlands, levelled from the penalty spot in the 54th minute after going down easily as he and Robin Le Normand challenged for a cross, before picking himself up and firing high into the net.

Williams’ pace set up Oyarzabal for Spain’s second goal, with the striker nodding home after Verbruggen had blocked his original shot.

It was 2-2 on the night when Ian Maat-

sen drilled home from 10 metres after an excellent pass from Xavi Simons to force extra time.

Lamine Yamal scored Spain’s third with a brilliant left-foot finish after a raking pass from young defender Dean Huijsen, but Simons levelled for a third time for the Netherlands after another penalty.

That took the tie into a shoot-out, with Pedri netting the decisive spot-kick for Spain after Simon had saved from Donyell Malen.

Michael Olise got France back into their tie against Croatia after a 2-0 first leg defeat with a 52nd-minute free kick, and after the home side had pushed hard all game, Ousmane Dembele levelled the tie with 10 minutes left.

Les Bleus looked for the win in extra time, with Croatia looking happier to wait for penalties, but it was France who qualified with Dayot Upamecano scoring the decisive kick in a shootout that needed 14 attempts to be decided.

Germany quickly built on its 2-1 first leg win in Italy on Thursday to book its place in the final four, as it blitzed Italy with three goals in the last 15 minutes of the first half.

Joshua Kimmich opened the scoring in the 30th minute after Tim Kleindienst was bundled over, and then turned provider for Jamal Musiala to double the lead on 36 minutes, and for Kleindienst to add a third in the last minute of the half. — Xinhua



AI empowers China's agriculture to harvest smarter future



A worker checks the growth condition of seedlings at a seedling greenhouse in Kaiyang County of Guiyang, southwest China's Guizhou Province, 23 May 2023. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

INSIDE a smart greenhouse in Chengdu, the capital of southwest China's Sichuan Province, two robots, swiftly zipping through ridges between fields, were taking patrol training. With their high-definition cameras, these robots can snap real-time shots of crops' growth and send

images straight to the cloud.

"After integrating with the DeepSeek large model, our team trained the robots through tens of thousands of images to improve their pest identification accuracy, which has exceeded 80 per cent," said Wu Yuanqing, the robots' developer.

Once the accuracy is improved, these robots can help farmers increase their decision-making precision in planting and efficiency of agricultural production, Wu added.

The rise of AI-powered agriculture in China highlights the government's continued efforts

to modernize its agricultural sector to accelerate rural revitalization, which profoundly impacts the lives of over 460 million people in rural areas.

The Chinese government has introduced multiple policies to promote smart agriculture development for years. In this document for 2025, Chinese policymakers have, for the first time, identified the development of "new quality productive forces in agriculture" as a top priority.

The document underscores the need to increase support for smart agriculture and calls for expanding the use of technologies such as AI, big data and low-altitude systems in agricultural production.

Maoming, a well-known lychee-growing city in south China's Guangdong Province, is a premium example of how age-old practices meet with cutting-edge technologies to create a smarter, more efficient, precision-driven local industry.

In February, the city completed deploying the DeepSeek model into its local AI assistant platform, integrating more than

five million data points, including a lychee disease prevention database and detailed local meteorological records.

So far, 69 sets of 5G-powered Internet of Things sensors have been installed across 20 lychee-growing towns in Maoming, according to Xu Hong, an official with Maoming's agricultural and rural affairs bureau. These facilities monitor everything from soil moisture to air temperature, generating real-time insights that allow farmers to anticipate and mitigate risks before adverse weather takes a toll.

Farmers in Maoming also dived into learning and applying AI technologies in lychee cultivation. Zhang Xianfeng, a local farmer, has recently turned to an AI-powered assistant for guidance as persistent wet and chilly weather threatened Zhang's lychee. Within seconds, the system provided a tailored management plan for her.

"In the past, we relied entirely on experience to determine the flowering period of crops. Fertilizers were applied by instinct, and we often reacted too late to disease outbreaks," Zhang said. "Now, solutions provided by AI help us tackle these challenges immediately and accurately." — Xinhua

US, Russia start fresh talks in Saudi Arabia

US and Russian delegations began a new round of talks in Saudi Arabia on Monday, eyeing a Ukraine settlement and Black Sea ceasefire deal before securing a broader agreement.

The talks follow a meeting between the United States and Ukraine in Saudi Arabia on Sunday. Last week, Trump held phone talks with Russian President Vladimir Putin and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky on Tuesday and Wednesday, respectively.

The US delegation is led by Andrew Peek, a senior director at the White House National Security Council, and Michael Anton, a senior official from the State Department, according to local media Al Arabiya News.

Russia is represented by Grigory Karasin, chair of the Federation Council's Foreign Affairs Committee and a former diplomat, along with Sergei Beseda, an adviser to the director of the Federal Security Service, it said. — Xinhua

Greenland PM denounces US 'foreign interference' ahead of visit

GREENLAND'S prime minister, Mute Egede, accused Washington on Monday of interfering in its political affairs by sending a US delegation to the Danish territory, which is coveted by US President Donald Trump.

Egede said US National Security Adviser Mike Waltz would visit Greenland this week, along with Usha Vance, the wife of US Vice-President JD Vance.

Usha Vance was to attend a dogsled race with her son.

Greenlandic media reports said the delegation also included US Energy Secretary Chris Wright, a former mining executive.

They showed images of two US Hercules planes on the tarmac at Nuuk airport as part of an advance security team despatched to the vast Arctic island.

Speaking to Greenlandic daily Sermitiaq, Egede said the "only purpose of the visit was a demonstration of power, and the signal should not be misunderstood".

Since returning to power in January, Trump has insisted he wants the United States to take over Greenland for what he says are national security



This photo taken on 19 March 2025 shows the scenery of Nuuk, capital of Greenland, an autonomous territory of Denmark. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

purposes.

He has refused to rule out the use of force to achieve that aim.

Greenland — which is seeking to emancipate itself from Copenhagen — and Denmark itself have both repeatedly rebuffed Trump, insisting that only Greenlanders can decide their future. — AFP