

The **Global** **NEW LIGHT** of **MYANMAR**

Bamboo product shipments hit 754 tonnes as export demand surges

MYANMAR exported 754.8 tonnes of bamboo products to foreign countries as of 12 June in the current 2026-2027 financial year, generating US\$0.154 million, according to the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation.

The ministry has been drafting district-level forest management plans to conserve bamboo resources and adhere to sustainable harvesting. Myanmar is home to 21 bamboo genera and approximately 102 bamboo species. According to bamboo resource data, the annual allowable harvest for bamboo is limited to 318.325 million bamboo culms.

SEE PAGE 7



This image captures a Myanmar rural woman weaving bamboo mats.

Vice-President drives support for Yangon disability care, women's skills centres



Vice-President Nan Ni Ni Aye is pictured during her inspection tour of specialized care home and school for children with disabilities, alongside women's vocational and development centres in Yangon.

Vice-President Nan Ni Ni Aye yesterday inspected several social welfare and vocational training institutions in Yangon Region, accompanied by deputy ministers, regional ministers and senior officials. Her itinerary includ-

ed visits to the School for Disabled Children and the Home for Children with Disabilities in Mayangon Township, the Women's Development Centre in Kamayut Township, and both the Women's Vocational Training School and the Domestic Vocational Training School in Bahan

Township. At the School for Disabled Children, officials from the Department of Social Welfare briefed the Vice-President on the history, objectives, staffing, capacity, healthcare services and educational programmes of the school and the children's home. Nan

Ni Ni Aye coordinated with relevant authorities to address operational needs, presented cash donations and toured classrooms, rehabilitation facilities, dormitories, dining halls and the Myitta San Eain Coffee Shop, where children receive vocational training. She also met with the children and urged officials to provide age- and disability-appropriate education, strengthen healthcare and nutrition services, ensure psychological support and safe learning environments, and work closely with parents to promote the children's overall development.

Established on 6 October 1971, the School for Disabled Children currently provides education, care and vocational training for 250 children with disabilities of different age groups.

SEE PAGE 4

Local delicacies take centre stage at Taste of the Golden Land 2026 this July

YANGON Convention Centre will host the Taste of the Golden Land 2026 festival on 25-26 July, offering visitors a unique blend of traditional Myanmar flavours, rich cultural heritage, and nostalgic culinary memories.

This upcoming event will uncover hidden culinary, local delicacies, regional specialities, and cultural heritage, bringing together diverse ethnic cuisines and

old culinary traditions in one accessible location. Visitors will experience a massive culinary showcase of Myanmar's regional cuisines from popular Shan dishes to upper Myanmar's traditional specialities and street food that can be found in lower Myanmar. Furthermore, a wide variety of food & beverage brands will be included as well.

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NATIONAL PAGE 7

Eye care initiative to expand for 1,000 free services in 2026

NATIONAL PAGE 10

Applications open for auxiliary midwifery training course

High fish capture facilitates local consumption

AS Myanmar's fishing season has resumed, fishing vessels from the Yangon Region have been reporting good catches of fish and shrimp, enabling consumers to purchase seafood at more affordable prices, according to Kyimyindine port in Yangon.

The fishing boats started fishing on 15 June and captured a large number of fish and shrimp. On 1 July, they returned to jetties in Yangon, and the fresh saltwater products were distributed to



This photo features freshwater fish arrivals at the Shwe Padauk Fish Market.

the consumers. Although port-level fish arrivals to the ports remain limited.

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NATIONAL

Myanmar Gazette

Appointment of Head of Service Organization confirmed, Head of Service Organization appointed

1.

The President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has confirmed the appointment of Dr Tun Tin as Rector of the University of Community Health (Magway) under the Department of Human Resources for Health, the Ministry of Health, upon the expiry of a one-year probationary period.

2.

The President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has appointed Dr Moe Khaing, Deputy Director-General (Medical Service), Department of Medical Service under the Ministry of Health, as Rector (Senior Medical Superintendent/ Medical Service) of Yangon General Hospital on probation from the date he assumes charge of his duties.

Weather

Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 7 pm Tuesday 14 July 2026)

BAY INFERENCE:

Monsoon is strong over the Andaman Sea and the Bay of Bengal. Weather is partly cloudy to cloudy over the Andaman Sea and the Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL NOON OF 15 July 2026:

Rain or thundershowers will be scattered in Mandalay, Magway and Lower Sagaing Regions and Kayah State, fairly widespread in Nay Pyi Taw and widespread in the remaining Regions and States with likelihood regionally heavy falls in Mon and Rakhine States and isolated heavy falls in Yangon, Bago, Ayeyawady and Taninthayi Regions and Kayin State. The degree of certainty is 100 per cent.

THE CONDITION OF CUMULONIMBUS CLOUD:

The cumulonimbus clouds are developing in Yangon, Mandalay, Upper Sagaing and Taninthayi Regions and Kayin, Mon and Northern Shan States. In the area along the cumulonimbus clouds movement, the weather phenomena such as strong winds accompanied by rain, thunder, lightning and hail may occur and therefore it is recommended to be aware in advance of these phenomena.

STATE OF THE SEA:

Occasional squalls with rough seas will be experienced off and along the Myanmar Coasts. Surface wind speed in squalls may reach 35 miles per hour. Wave height will be about 10-13 feet off and along the Myanmar Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS:

Continuations of strong monsoon.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 15 July 2026:

Isolated rain or thundershowers. The degree of certainty is 100 per cent.

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 15 July 2026:

One or two times rain or thundershowers. The degree of certainty is 100 per cent.

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 15 July 2026:

Isolated rain or thundershowers. The degree of certainty is 100 per cent. — DMH

MoC Union Minister signs condolence book at Qatari Embassy



Union Minister U Tun Ohn signs the condolence book at the Qatari Embassy.

ON behalf of the Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, Union Minister for Commerce U Tun Ohn visited the Embassy of the State of Qatar to Myanmar, located on Inya Myaing Road, Shwedaunggya Ward 1, Bahan Township, Yangon, yesterday afternoon to sign the book

of condolences following the demise of His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, the father of the current Emir of Qatar and the country's former Emir, who passed away on 12 July 2026.

The Union minister met and exchanged greetings with the embassy's Chargé d'Affaires ad interim and officials. Then, on behalf of the Myanmar Government, he expressed his deepest condolences and sympathy over the passing of His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani.

His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani served as the Emir of Qatar from 1995 to 2013. He passed away at the age of 74. — MNA/MKKS

Notice to Electricity Consumers

WHILE the Ministry of Electricity and Energy is striving to increase electricity generation from diverse energy sources, it is also conducting public education and awareness campaigns to encourage the systematic use of electricity. At the same time, measures are being implemented to reduce and eliminate both technical and non-technical power losses (electricity theft).

As part of these efforts to eliminate non-technical power losses, dedicated teams have been formed to detect and take action against the illegal consumption of electricity through fraudulent means.

Furthermore, alongside promoting the transition to a smart meter system, the ministry is also developing a digital platform. The system will enable consumers to read their own meters and pay their electricity bills, while also allowing centralized Control Centres to monitor and inspect the system.

Therefore, electricity consumers who have been illegally using electricity through fraudulent means are urged to contact the relevant authorities no later than 31 July 2026. Those who voluntarily come forward and report their violations within this period will be granted lenient treatment.

Notice is hereby given that if illegal electricity consumption is detected through the Control Centres after the deadline, action will be taken in accordance with the Electricity Law and relevant regulations. Such measures may include the imposition of fines, the temporary suspension or permanent disconnection of electricity service, and the revocation of business licences. Members of the public are also requested to report such activities through the Call Centre telephone numbers listed below.

Contact Information

- Ministry of Electricity and Energy (Nay Pyi Taw): 067 3410072
- Yangon Electricity Supply Corporation (YESC): 1717
- Mandalay Electricity Supply Corporation (MESC): 1616, 02 4039330, 02 4073666, 02 4072618 (Hotline)
- Other Regions and States: 067 3410407, 09 682232600, 09 665432575

Ministry of Electricity and Energy

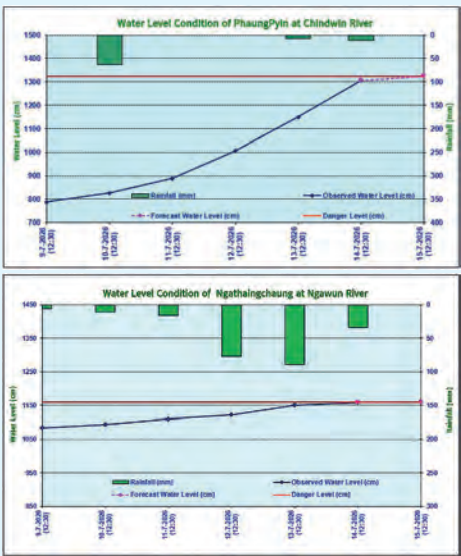
Flood Warning

(Issued at 2 pm MST on 14 July 2026)

ACCORDING to the 12:30 pm MST observation today, the water level of the Chindwin River at Phaungpyin is observed as more than ½ foot below its danger level. It may reach its danger level during the next one day.

According to the 12:30 pm MST observation today, the water level of the Ngawun River at Ngathainggyoung is observed as about one inch below its danger level. It may reach its danger level during the next one day.

It is especially alert to the people who settle near the river banks and low lying areas in Phaungpyin Township and Ngathainggyoung, to take precaution measure and to stay away from the flood-prone areas in time if the water level will rise. — DMH



NATIONAL

Proposals submitted to Pyidaungsu Hluttaw to extend validity of Ordinance 1/2026, join WAICO

The Pyidaungsu Hluttaw continued for the eighth day at its convention hall in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

Regarding the measure to obtain the approval of the Hluttaw for the continued validity for the necessary period of Ordinance 1/2026 of the President's Office, Deputy Minister for Legal Affairs and Deputy Attorney-General Dr Htein Lin Oo said that although the Ordinance 1/2026 will turn 90 days on 21 July 2026, the validity period of the ordinance is required to extend the period to ensure that the townships under the state of emergency need to extend the restoration of administration, community peace and tranquillity and rule of law to the normalcy. The deputy minister, on behalf of the President, submitted a motion to extend the validity period of Ordinance 1/2026 to the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw.

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker U Aung Lin

Dwe announced that any MPs wishing to discuss the motion can list at the director-general of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Office.

Concerning the proposal sent by the President for Myanmar to sign the establishment of the World Artificial Intelligence Cooperation Organization, Deputy Minister for Digital Development and Communications U Min Zeyar Hlaing stated that the fundamental principles mainly state that the World Artificial Intelligence Cooperation Organization will respect and adhere to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, while giving due regard to the sovereignty of its member states and the diversity of their peoples.

He explained that the Council will determine the annual financial contributions of member states. In doing so, it will take into consideration the agreed contribution scale and the contribution ratio used by the Universal Postal Un-

ion, as well as the level of economic development of member states and their capacity to make financial contributions.

He stated that the signing period was set from 1 May to 31 July 2026. Signatory countries will be recognized as the Founding Members of the World Artificial Intelligence Cooperation Organization. The WAICO will be of great benefit to the development of AI technology in Myanmar, as it will promote international cooperation in AI capacity-building and advance AI development strategies.

The deputy minister noted that if Myanmar prioritizes its national interests and national security as the key standards for cooperation, it will be able to achieve positive outcomes in the country's socioeconomic development efforts. By equally sharing the benefits of AI technology development with the international community and participating on an equal footing with



The eighth-day meeting of the second regular session of the Third Pyidaungsu Hluttaw is underway in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

countries around the world in technology markets and the development of the Digital Economy, Myanmar will be able to gain various beneficial opportunities.

He underlined that countries around the world are seriously discussing the rapid advancement of AI technology and its associated challenges in their respective parliaments and are preparing to swiftly implement processes for international cooperation. Therefore, Myanmar should

actively participate in and cooperate with the World Artificial Intelligence Cooperation Organization.

The Speaker announced that the MPs wishing to discuss the proposal can list at the director-general of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Office.

Deputy Minister for Finance and Revenue Daw Than Than Lin submitted a motion to the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw to approve the Union Budget Preparation and Submission Bill (2006) and

the Region or State Budget Preparation and Submission Bill (2006) with discussions and assessment.

The Speaker announced that the Joint Bill Committee will coordinate with the Joint Public Accounts Committee and other departments and organizations over these bills and submit their report to the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw.

The Pyidaungsu Hluttaw will continue for the ninth day on 21 July. — MNA/TTA

Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker addresses capacity-building training for MPs

PYITHU Hluttaw Speaker U Khin Yi addressed the capacity-building training for Hluttaw representatives of the Public Accounts Committee yesterday.

The Speaker emphasized that the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) is a vital Hluttaw standing committee that significantly enhances lawmaker capacity. He urged participants to apply their newly acquired knowledge to strengthen the role and legislative effectiveness of the Hluttaw.

The Speaker said the Public Accounts Committee is one of Hluttaw's most important standing committees, responsible for strengthening public financial management and promoting good gov-



Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U Khin Yi speaks on the opening occasion of the capacity-building training for MPs.

ernance. He stressed that Hluttaw has a fundamental duty to oversee public finances, ensure the efficient use of public funds and prevent waste, noting that the committee's success should be measured by improved government financial management and greater public benefit.

He also mentioned the role of the committee in promoting transparen-

cy, accountability and good governance, value for money, and the fundamental principle of performance audit.

The Speaker urged Public Accounts Committee members to strengthen their understanding of audit reports, budgeting and financial management, saying the committee's recommendations should support national develop-

ment and reform. He added that the training would enhance Hluttaw oversight and financial governance, and protecting public funds is essential to strengthening the Hluttaw, promoting good governance and supporting the country's long-term development.

U Thurein Zaw (Kawkareik Constituency), Chairman of the First Pyithu Hluttaw Public Accounts Committee and former Deputy Minister for National Planning and Finance, delivered a lecture.

Later that morning, the Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker accepted a book donation from retired Taninthayi Region Advocate-General U Ohn Than and presented a certificate of honour in return. — MNA/KTZH

Hluttaw leaders meet MCC peace committee



Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker U Aung Lin Dwe and Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U Khin Yi hold talks with Myanmar Council of Churches peace delegates.

PYIDAUNGsu Hluttaw Speaker U Aung Lin Dwe and Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U Khin Yi met a delegation from the Peace Support Central Committee of the Myanmar Council of Churches after the eighth day of the second regular session of the Third Pyidaungsu Hluttaw.

The delegation, led by Central Committee member Reverend Dr Maurice Lyan Na and Joint Secretary 1 Reverend U Saw Chit Myo, briefed the speakers on religious affairs, the committee's peace initiatives and nationwide prayer activities for peace.

The speakers expressed their appreciation for the committee's efforts, stressing that peace is essential for national development. They also outlined the government's ongoing peace initiatives. Later, committee members presented commemorative gifts to the two speakers. — MNA/KZL

NATIONAL

DIPLOMACY

MoFA Union Minister pays official visit to Thailand

AT the invitation of Mr Sihasak Phuanketkeow, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Thailand, U Tin Maung Swe, Union Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, paid an official visit to Thailand from 13 to 14 July 2026.

During the visit, on the afternoon of 14 July 2026, the Union Minister paid a courtesy call on Mr Anutin Charnvirakul, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Thailand, at the Government House in Bangkok. During the meeting, both sides reaffirmed that Myanmar and Thailand enjoy good neighbourly relations



Union Minister U Tin Maung Swe pays a courtesy call on Thai Prime Minister Mr Anutin Charnvirakul in Bangkok on 14 July 2026.

bound by centuries-old friendship. They exchanged views on enhancing cooperation on matters of mutual interest for the two countries and their peoples, as well as on strengthening cooperation in maintaining peace, stability and secu-

rity along the common border.

On the same day, the Union Minister attended a working luncheon hosted by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thai-

land. During the luncheon, the two sides discussed ways to further strengthen cooperation between the two Ministries of Foreign Affairs, enhance cooperation in promoting peace and stability along the border, combating illicit drugs, reducing transboundary haze pollution, protecting the environment, and facilitating border trade.

Earlier that morning, the Union Minister signed the Condolence Book opened at the Grand Palace in Bangkok on the passing of Her Majesty Queen Sirikit, the Queen Mother and Her Royal Highness Princess Bajrakitiyabha. — MNA

Vice-President drives support for Yangon disability care, ...

FROM PAGE 1

At the Women's Development Centre in Kamayut Township, the Vice-President reviewed vocational training, healthcare services, job placement programmes and the centre's overall operations. She also inspected weaving and tailoring workshops, handicraft sales outlets and dormitories, calling for continued efforts to enhance women's skills and empowerment in line with national policies.

In the afternoon, Vice-President Nan Ni Ni Aye and her entourage visited the Women's Vocational Training School and the Domestic Vocational Training School in Bahan Township. She observed classes in sewing, home management, floral arrangement, plastic basket weaving and baking, as well as a model preschool.

The Vice-President urged officials to revamp training with a focus on practical skills, broaden government and private sector partnerships to drive jobs and entrepreneurship, and align vocational courses with market needs to improve women's livelihoods. — MNA/ST

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw reviews budget law amendments



A coordination meeting on amendments to the Union Budget Preparation and Submission Bill (2026) and the Region or State Budget Preparation and Submission Bill (2026) is underway.

THE Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Committee held a coordination meeting on amendments to the Union Budget Preparation and Submission Bill (2026) and the Region or State Budget Preparation and Submission Bill (2026) submitted by the Union Government.

The meeting was held at Building D of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw and attended by Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Deputy Speaker and Joint Bill Committee Chair Jeng Phan Naw Taung (aka) U Naw Taung, deputy chairpersons, the secretary, the joint secretary, committee members, and officials from relevant ministries and the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Office. — MNA/KZL

Gyobingauk's completed red gravel road construction inspected

THE Department of Rural Development (DRD), under the Ministry of Cooperatives and Rural Development, Gyobingauk Township, Bago Region, conducted a field inspection on 13 July to assess the completion of a red gravel road construction project within MinO Village.

The project was funded by the interest generated from the Emerald Green Village Project, supplemented by the voluntary labour contributions of the local community.

Gyobingauk Township Department of Rural Development Head Daw Thi Thi Aung, along with pro-



Officials and locals are seen alongside the completed red gravel road in Gyobingauk Township.

ject staff and members of the Village Development Committee, reviewed the construction progress. The township head instructed the committee members

and residents on the importance of collectively maintaining the road to ensure its long-term durability.

The village road, which spans 1,330 feet in

length, 12 feet in width, and six inches in thickness, was completed using K12 million in interest funds from the Emerald Green Village Project, alongside community labour. The project was closely supervised by DRD staff and implemented by the villagers themselves, beginning in the second week of June. With the project now fully completed, the improved road infrastructure is facilitating easier transport and access for 316 residents across 116 households, according to Daw Thi Thi Aung. — Nye-in Thu (Rural)

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

NATIONAL

MNHRC Statement on its handling status of complaints and on inspections of prisons, jails, lockups and detention centres from Jan to June 2026

Statement 8/2026

1. In accordance with sub-sections (c), (d), and (e) of Section 22 of the Commission Law, the Myanmar National Human Rights Commission verify complaints and allegations of human rights violations, and conducts inquiries as necessary. Furthermore, as the Commission becomes aware of potential violations, whether through complaints or other information sources, it undertakes on-site inquiries. It also formulates and implements annual operational plans for human rights protection activities, including inspecting prisons, jails, detention centres, and public or private places of confinement pursuant to Sections 43 and 44 of the Commission Law, along with Articles 41, 42, and 43 of its Procedures.

2. From January to June 2026, the Myanmar National Human Rights Commission received 295 complaints (including those from media sources) and held 21 meetings to scrutinize these complaints by the inquiry team in accordance with Article 7 of its Procedures. Of these, after diligent scrutiny, 64 complaints were forwarded to the relevant government ministries and organizations with recommendations for necessary actions. The commission sent advisory responses to 33 complainants and received advisory responses from the Commission; 196 complaints were systematically recorded and closed under Section 37 of the Commission Law. This category comprises cases pending before courts, cases under appeal or revision, cases with final court judgements, complaints that did not meet the required legal criteria, and complaints that have been previously handled. Additionally, two cases were closed at the complainant's own request.
3. Regarding the recommendations made on the 64 referred complaints to the relevant ministries and organizations, the Commission received 38 positive responses concerning the implementation of those recommendations and subsequently notified the respective complainants of the outcomes. Complaints are also being accepted at the Commission's branch offices located in Nay Pyi Taw, Mandalay, Sittway, and Patheingyi.

4. In line with Section 43 of the Commission Law, the Myanmar National Human Rights Commission (MNHRC) inspects to ensure that persons imprisoned, detained or confined are treated humanely and in accordance with international and national human rights laws. From January to June 2026, the Commission inspected two central prisons, one jail, four labour camps, seven police lock-ups, two court detention centres, three youth training schools, and three homes for the aged. During these visits, the Commission issued 77 recommendations regarding prisons and labour camps, 44 regarding homes for the aged and training schools, and seven regarding police lock-ups and court detention centres to the related ministries. During the inspections of prisons, labour camps, and lockups, a total of 98 prisoners and detainees who wished to present their cases individually and freely were met and interviewed in private, and their statements were duly recorded.

5. An individual may lodge a complaint with the Myanmar National Human Rights Commission on their own, on behalf of another person, or on behalf of a group of persons concerning any alleged violation of the fundamental rights and legal rights of citizens provided in the Constitution, the human rights contained in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), violations of the rights of persons with disabilities, child rights, women's rights, as well as human rights contained in international human rights conventions to which the State is a party. To lodge complaints, a written complaint addressed to the Chairman, Myanmar National Human Rights Commission, may be sent in person or by mail to No 27, 6 1/2 Mile, Pyay Road, Hline Township, Yangon, or to the Commission's branch offices in Nay Pyi Taw, Mandalay, Sittway, and Patheingyi. Complaints may also be lodged by fax to Fax 01 8654678 or by email to info@mnhrc.org.mm. Additionally, these updates are being announced monthly in State-owned newspapers and are also featured on the Commission's website.
6. After verifying the complaints, the Commission will conduct its enquiries under the Commission Law and its procedures, and coordinate with the relevant ministries and organizations to facilitate appropriate resolutions, except for cases currently pending before a court under appeal or revision, already finally adjudicated.

7. Through the review of complaints and close collaboration with relevant government bodies, the Commission has been able to provide remedies for various human rights violations and related grievances. Therefore, the public is hereby informed that individuals who experience or encounter human rights violations may seek assistance by submitting their complaints to the Commission.
- Myanmar National Human Rights Commission

IPRCC Group eyes Myanmar for Phase II Poverty Alleviation Project



The IPRCC delegation is seen during their initial accessment tour of the poverty alleviation project Phase II.

THE Department of Rural Development under the Ministry of Cooperatives and Rural Development and the International Poverty Reduction Centre in China (IPRCC) under the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs of the People's Republic of China are jointly conducting the initial assessment for the East-Asia Poverty Reduction Cooperation Project in Myanmar (Phase II). A delegation led by IPRCC Director Mr

Tong Lang is carrying out preliminary assessments in Myanmar to prepare for the implementation of the project. On the afternoon of 11 July, the delegation met officials from the Ayeyawady Region Department of Rural Development at the Zalun Township Rural Development Department office and held detailed discussions on the arrangements for conducting the initial assessment. On 13 July, the delega-

tion visited Anyasu Village in Zalun Township, Ayeyawady Region, which has been selected as a target area for the project. They met residents to discuss the village's actual needs in improving living standards, promoting socioeconomic development, education, healthcare and environmental conservation. The delegation also conducted field inspections and reviewed the findings from the visit. The delegation will continue conducting initial assessments in selected villages for project implementation in Nay Pyi Taw and hold further discussions and consultations with relevant officials on the findings throughout the assessment process. — MNA/KTZH

DIPLOMACY

MSWRR Union Minister receives UNOCHA Myanmar Head



The UNOCHA Head calls on Union Minister Dr Soe Win.

UNION Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr Soe Win received Mr Justin Brady, Head of Office for the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) and his delegation yesterday afternoon. Both sides exchanged views on the implementation of the Letter of Agreement (LoA) signed between the Disaster Manage-

ment Department of the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement and UNOCHA, the humanitarian assistance carried out by the Ministry, and cooperation with the Rehabilitation Department under the Ministry regarding mine action plans. The meeting was attended by the directors-general, the deputy permanent secretary, relevant officials and representatives from the UNOCHA office. — MNA/MKKS

NATIONAL

Local delicacies take centre stage at Taste of the Golden Land 2026 this July

FROM PAGE 1

Additionally, the event will offer fun activity programs, hangout spots and photoshoot places to make memories for the visitors beyond authentic cuisines

and local products.

Those who want to discover authentic food and those who enjoy new cuisines and flavours are invited to participate in this event. — NN/KK

Tatkon's Mya Sein Yaung village project loans disbursed

THE Department of Rural Development, under the Ministry of Cooperatives and Rural Development, held a ceremony to disburse revolving funds under the Mya Sein Yaung Village Project in Kyatthongkhin Village, Tatkon Township, yesterday.

Tatkon Township Department of Rural Development Head Daw Zin Lin Htet first explained that the revolving funds were provided under the Mya Sein Yaung Village Project with the objectives of helping increase household incomes, expanding small-scale agricultural and livestock businesses, and supporting village development activities through the growing revolving fund. Officials then explained project

activities, interest rates, repayment periods and rules and regulations to be followed, and handed K91.3 million in revolving funds to members of the project implementation groups.

Kyatthongkhin Village is utilizing K91.3 million from the Mya Sein Yaung Village Project to implement family income-generating activities. Under the supervision of the township head, members of the project implementation groups disbursed revolving loans at a concessional interest rate directly to a total of 307 members from the village, including K71.6 million to 214 people engaged in agricultural activities and K19.7 million to 93 in livestock breeding. — Karan (Rural)



An Emerald Green village project fund disbursement ceremony is in progress in Tatkon Township.

Committee on Myanmar-Thailand Transboundary Haze Pollution Prevention holds 2nd Coord Meeting



The second coordination meeting of the Committee on Myanmar-Thailand Transboundary Haze Pollution Prevention is underway, presided over by Deputy Defence Minister Maj-Gen Aung Myo Thant.

DEPUTY Minister for Defence Maj-Gen Aung Myo Thant, who is also Chairman of the Committee on

Myanmar-Thailand Transboundary Haze Pollution Prevention, presided over the second coordination meeting of the committee in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. During the meeting, the participants reviewed the strengths and weaknesses of measures implemented to prevent transboundary haze pollution during the 2026 dry season and discussed future action plans.

The ministries concerned discussed preparations to reduce haze during the 2027 dry season

because, according to the Department of Meteorology and Hydrology, moderate El Niño conditions began in July 2026 and could intensify into a strong El Niño event by the end of the year. As this may lead to higher temperatures and an increased risk of forest fires. The fire hotspots declined from 50,512 cases during the first six months of the baseline year, 2024, to 44,931 cases during the same period in 2026, representing a reduction of 5,581 hotspots, or 11 per cent. — MNA/KTZH

Falam schools inspected

DEPUTY Minister for Construction U Myo Myint, together with members of the Chin State Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Committee, inspected the reopening of basic education schools and school health programmes in Falam Township.

At the No 3 Basic Education Post-Primary School, Falam, the deputy minister met with the principal and teachers, coordinated necessary sup-

port, and observed health check-ups conducted by the School Health Department under the Public Health Department, including eye examinations, dental check-ups and personal health screenings for students.

He also visited Basic Education Post-Primary School No 1, where he met with local elders, the principal, and teachers, addressed their needs, and observed students in class. Support allowanc-



Deputy Minister U Myo Myint and officials inspect the school reopening in Falam, Chin State.

es were made to teachers and students.

A total of 282 basic education schools are currently operating across Tiddim, Tonzang, and Falam townships, where

1,247 teachers are educating 20,314 students. This includes Falam Township alone, which has 113 operational schools staffed by 284 teachers for 3,440 students. — MNA/KZL

RTAD rolls out online licence renewals, digital payments this Friday

THE Road Transport Administration Department (RTAD), under the Ministry of Transport and Communications, will introduce online driving licence renewal and digital payment services from 17 July 2026.

The new system will allow holders of Class B, C, D and E driving licences to renew their licences online within 90 days be-

fore their expiry date. Users will also be able to pay service fees electronically through the digital payment system.

The service will initially be available through the RTAD head office, the Nay Pyi Taw office, the East, West, South and North District Offices in Yangon Region, and the North and South District Offices in Mandalay Region. Applicants can

access the service by downloading the MM Driver Licence E-Payment mobile application from the Google Play Store to a smartphone or tablet.

Further details are available on the RTAD's official websites, www.rtad.gov.mm and myanmartad.com, and on the Ministry of Transport and Communications website, www.mot.gov.mm. — TWA/KZL



A sample of the new background design for Myanmar driver's licences.

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NATIONAL

Nyaunglebin's VRFP launched, committee formed

THE Department of Rural Development, under the Ministry of Cooperatives and Rural Development conducted an introductory briefing on the Village Revolving Fund Project (VRFP) to be implemented and formed a project committee in Tawpathi Model Village, Nyaunglebin Township, yesterday.

Nyaunglebin Township Department of Rural Development Head Daw Mi Mi Aung met village elders and villagers in Tawpathi Model Village and explained the objectives, processes and expected benefits of the Village Revolving Fund Project (VRFP).

Project staff then explained the rules and regulations to be followed in selecting and forming the Village Revolving Fund Project Committee, as well as



The launch and committee formation ceremony for the village development project is in progress yesterday in Nyaunglebin Township.

the tasks to be carried out by the village. The villagers who attended the meeting selected and formed a seven-member Village Revolving Fund Project Committee in line with the majority's wishes to effectively lead and implement village development activities.

In Tawpathi Model Village, selected project activities will be implemented by

the villagers themselves to expand small-scale agriculture, livestock breeding and small businesses using K30 million in revolving funds from the Village Revolving Fund Project (VRFP) and contributions from locals, with technical assistance and close supervision from officials of the Department of Rural Development. — Maung Khaing (Rural)

Heilongjiang General Chamber of Commerce and Zheng Yang College representatives visit CTD



This photo shows representatives from the Heilongjiang General Chamber of Commerce and Zheng Yang College during their visit to the CTD (Yangon).

ACCORDING to the Centre for Tourism Development (CTD) in Yangon, representatives from the Heilongjiang General Chamber of Commerce in Yangon and Zheng Yang College visited the centre for a study tour.

During the visit, the delegation noted that Heilongjiang Province, located in the northeastern part of China with Harbin as its capital, is widely known as the "Land of Ice and Snow" because of its long winters and freezing climate. They also highlighted that the annual Harbin Ice and Snow Festival is a world-renowned event attracting large numbers of tourists, including visitors from Myanmar each year.

To ensure a seamless travel experience for Myanmar visitors, the delegation proposed organizing refresher training courses for Chinese-speaking tour guides from Myanmar. They further discussed providing employment opportunities for participants who complete the training to serve as tour guides for future travel programmes to the Harbin Ice and Snow Festival in China.

Zheng Yang College and the Heilongjiang General Chamber of Commerce are collaborating to offer training courses in automotive repair, tour guiding, Chinese language, design and tailoring, and sewing machine repair. Upon completion of these courses, they assist participants in securing employment opportunities and arranging overseas scholarships, according to the report.

To explore cooperation on this initiative with the CTD under the Ministry of Hotels, Tourism and Culture, representatives met with officials from the CTD (Yangon), led by the Yangon Region Head of the Directorate of Hotels and Tourism. The study visit to the CTD (Yangon) was led by Mr Wu Ming Yuan of the Heilongjiang General Chamber of Commerce of China and Mrs Xu Jing, Principal of Zheng Yang College. — ASH/TH

U Min Thein appointed as Ambassador of Myanmar to State of Kuwait

THE President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has appointed U Min Thein, Ambassador of Myanmar to the Republic of Austria and Permanent Representative of Myanmar

to the United Nations and International Organizations in Vienna, as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the State of Kuwait. — MNA

Eye care initiative to expand for 1,000 free services in 2026

DR Than Min Htut, Medical Superintendent of Pyinmana Sangha Hospital, announced that they are expanding eye surgery services to the Myitnge Railway Hospital, in addition to the existing Pyinmana Sangha Hospital and Myaungmya Hospital, to perform 1,000 eye surgeries in 2026 using donor contributions.

Dr Than Min Htut shared via his social media page that this initiative has already exceeded 500 patients and they began eye services at the Myitnge Railway Hospital, the third facility, on 28 June.

At that hospital, eye examinations and surgeries are conducted every

weekend. Outpatients are examined every Sunday, and the surgeries for those patients are performed the following Saturday. As of 5 July, they have examined 181 outpatients, successfully performing surgeries on 31 patients with cataracts.

Therefore, eye patients in the vicinity of Mandalay and Sagaing

who wish to register for treatment can contact Dr Zaw Nan Wai, Medical Superintendent of Myitnge Railway Hospital at 09 979202929. Those who wish to donate to the eye care initiative can contribute at a rate of K200,000 per eye by contacting Dr Than Min Htut via KPay at 09 788202602. — MT/ZN



Patients receiving treatment during the eye surgery programme led by Dr Than Min Htut.

Bamboo product shipments hit 754 tonnes as export demand surges

FROM PAGE 1

The average annual production was 120.543 million bamboo culms during 10 years from 2015-2016 FY to 2025-2026 FY. Cutting techniques are systematically supervised to ensure sustainable, long-term production. The Ministry of Commerce has been facilitating exports of bamboo products. Bamboo exports were registered at over 2,650 tonnes of bamboo (worth \$0.677

million) in the 2025-2026 FY," said an official from the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation.

Furthermore, the ministry has allowed private companies to establish industrial raw material bamboo plantations within forest reserve areas since the 2006-2007 FY. A total of 4,815.5 acres of private industrial raw material bamboo plantations have been permitted as of

June 2026.

Bamboo and bamboo products have been exported to India, Pakistan, Singapore, Italy, China and other foreign markets. A total of over 95.58 million bamboo products, including bamboo splits, poles, mats, incense sticks, and bamboo charcoal, were exported from 2021-2022 FY to May 2026-2027 FY, generating revenue of over \$2.456 million. — ASH/KK

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

From cotton cultivation towards textile industry

IT is necessary to conduct systematic research on domestic requirements and foreign markets in carrying out cotton-related production activities. Just as there are many cotton-growing countries in the world, there are also many countries that import cotton. Since neighbouring and regional countries also have demand for cotton, exporting high-quality long-staple cotton varieties can generate foreign exchange earnings and contribute to the enhancement of the national economy for Myanmar.

The key factor for the development of the national economy is production. Therefore, efforts must be made to promote manu-

facturing industries based on cotton cultivation and production. Just as cotton cultivation practices and cultivated acreage need to be accurate and properly managed, statistical data and records must also be accurate. Cotton grows well in Mandalay, Magway, Sagaing, and Bago Regions, and it is necessary to maintain stable cotton cultivation acreage and ensure good yields.

In Myanmar, during the 2021-2022 cotton cultivation season, the national average yield was 436 viss per acre from more than 330,000 cultivated acres. One viss equals to 1.63293 kilogrammes. In 2025-2026, cotton cultivation covered more than 540,000 acres, with an average yield of 499.2 viss per acre. When calculated in comparison with Myanmar's domestic cotton requirements, it is found that cotton production exceeds the country's demand by a significant amount.

According to the current global market price, cotton is priced between US\$1,800 and US\$1,900 per tonne. If Myanmar can achieve the target yield of 700 viss per acre set for cotton cultivation, the revenue

from selling the surplus cotton produced could generate approximately an additional US\$500 million. Therefore, to increase the country's cotton production, it is necessary to implement collective efforts through a cooperative system. The State will provide assistance to improve cotton ginning mills, spinning mills, and looms.

To ensure the availability of high-quality cotton varieties, research and production activities are being carried out domestically, while cotton varieties are also being ordered and imported from abroad. It is necessary to achieve full production of domestically developed cotton varieties and to continuously conduct research, evaluation, and analysis to maintain stable and high quality. The State will provide investment loans to support the upgrading of weaving mills engaged in textile production in respective regions and states.

Since cotton cultivation is a beneficial sector for the nation, the relevant ministries are required to emphasize the implementation of measures in accordance with the guidance of the President of the Republic. Cotton farmers are also encouraged to make efforts to achieve the target yield per acre.

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RECENT days, news has emerged regarding the opening of Chinese culinary training courses in Myanmar. These programmes, taught directly by professional chefs from China, are undoubtedly highly beneficial initiatives. Human resource development and the enhancement of service quality are essential components for the long-term development of the tourism industry, and the organization of such training programmes should therefore be welcomed.

For Myanmar, the Chinese market remains one of the most promising tourism source markets. Along with Thailand, China has consistently occupied the top positions among international tourist arrivals to Myanmar. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, Chinese tourists visited Myanmar in large numbers. Consequently, providing Chinese culinary training for local hospitality personnel is a logical and necessary step in attracting more Chinese visitors. Chinese tourists, even when travelling abroad, generally prefer to enjoy their traditional cuisine prepared according to authentic regional tastes. Such culinary experiences significantly enhance visitor satisfaction and often encourage repeat visitation.

Moreover, Chinese cuisine is also highly popular among local Myanmar consumers. Therefore, having Chinese chefs personally provide culinary training in Myanmar represents an exceptionally valuable initiative.

Chinese Culinary Training in Myanmar: A Contribution to Food Tourism Rather than Gastronomy Tourism

By Si Thu Kyaw

Appreciation should be extended to both domestic organizations that have taken the lead in implementing these programmes and the international organizations that have supported them.

Interestingly, reports concerning these training courses have also highlighted their potential contribution to the development of Gastronomy Tourism, even suggesting that they constitute an element of Gastronomy Tourism. This raises an important academic question regarding the distinction between Food Tourism and Gastronomy Tourism.

The tourism industry encompasses numerous forms and categories of tourism. Since tourism activities emerge from diverse human needs and motivations, tourism typologies have similarly evolved into various forms. Food, being one of the most fundamental components of travel, has naturally given rise to tourism forms centred on culinary experiences. The most commonly used term is Food Tourism. In more academic discourse, however, the

term Gastronomy Tourism has become increasingly popular.

Consequently, it is necessary to examine whether Chinese culinary training programmes should be associated with Food Tourism or Gastronomy Tourism. Many tourism practitioners have questioned whether these two concepts are identical. Some writers use the terms interchangeably, while others increasingly prefer the more sophisticated and academic term "Gastronomy Tourism", perhaps assuming that "Food Tourism" is too simplistic.

For this reason, the frequent use of the term Gastronomy Tourism in relation to Chinese culinary training programmes deserves closer scrutiny. While the objectives of these training programmes are commendable, portraying them as direct components of Gastronomy Tourism may lead to conceptual misunderstandings.

Food Tourism and Gastronomy Tourism are indeed closely related and often appear deceptively similar. Both are forms of tourism centred on food; how-

ever, their underlying concepts differ considerably. Similar to the distinction between Agrotourism and Agritourism, Food Tourism and Gastronomy Tourism may appear synonymous but are, in fact, conceptually distinct.

Food Tourism primarily

“the Chinese culinary training programmes currently being implemented in Myanmar constitute a highly valuable initiative for tourism and hospitality development.”

refers to the consumption of food and beverages at a destination. Tourists travel to taste local dishes and enjoy culinary experiences. In essence, Food Tourism may be defined as the consumption of the food and bev-

erage offerings of a particular destination. Its primary focus is consumption.

While tourists participating in Food Tourism may gain some understanding of the historical and cultural background of the cuisine, their engagement generally does not extend beyond

restaurants, street food, and local specialties, emphasizing taste, uniqueness, and prices, thereby encouraging others to visit those destinations to experience the food themselves. Their principal objective is to promote culinary consumption.

Gastronomy Tourism, however, extends far beyond mere consumption. It involves a deeper appreciation of food preparation methods, culinary presentation, historical origins, cultural traditions, and the preservation of gastronomic heritage. A key distinguishing feature of Gastronomy Tourism is the inclusion of cooking classes.

Cooking classes constitute an important component of Gastronomy Tourism because they enable visitors to learn how to prepare unique local dishes actively and to gain a deeper understanding of the cultural significance behind them. Nevertheless, it is important to note that such cooking classes are designed primarily for tourists themselves as experiential learning activities, rather than for hospitality service providers

such as hotel chefs or restaurant personnel.

Therefore, while Food Tourism emphasizes consumption, Gastronomy Tourism places greater emphasis on learning, cultural understanding, and immersive experiences. The educational component in Gastronomy Tourism is directed towards tourists as participants in cultural experiences rather than towards industry personnel receiving professional training.

In Myanmar's current context, the Chinese culinary training programmes being conducted in major tourist destinations are not cooking classes intended for tourists. Instead, they are professional training programmes designed to equip local service providers with the skills necessary to prepare authentic Chinese cuisine and to cater more effectively to Chinese visitors.

Therefore, from a conceptual and academic standpoint, these initiatives should not be directly categorized as components of Gastronomy Tourism. Instead, they represent

strategic interventions aimed at strengthening Myanmar's tourism services and enhancing its attractiveness to Chinese tourists. By enabling visitors to enjoy authentic Chinese cuisine without travelling to China itself, these programmes primarily contribute to the development and promotion of Food Tourism.

Accordingly, it would be conceptually inaccurate to classify these Chinese culinary training initiatives as components of Gastronomy Tourism. Their principal purpose is to enable Chinese tourists to enjoy authentic Chinese cuisine while travelling abroad and to strengthen Myanmar's capacity to attract and satisfy Chinese visitors.

In conclusion, the Chinese culinary training programmes currently being implemented in Myanmar constitute a highly valuable initiative for tourism and hospitality development. They contribute significantly to human resource development, service quality improvement, and destination competitiveness. However, in tourism academic terminology, these programmes should be more accurately regarded as efforts that strengthen Food Tourism rather than direct manifestations of Gastronomy Tourism. Recognizing this distinction will help ensure a more precise understanding of emerging tourism concepts and support the systematic development of tourism studies and practices in Myanmar.

The Simple Pleasures of Waking up Early

MANY people, especially adolescents, do not like to wake up early in the morning, whereas some early birds, which means the rich or the aged, usually get up with the sun. In fact, sleep is undeniably the most fundamental human biological need for the simple reason that we tend to spend one-third of our lives sleeping. As Samuel Taylor Coleridge once stated, sleep is a gentle thing, even beloved from pole to pole in the world. Thus, it is no wonder that most people, from infants to young adults, enjoy sleeping for a long time. By bioclock, an adult person normally needs from seven to eight hours of sleep per day. As some-

one grows older, it is natural that their sleep time apparently becomes less than average, specifically to four hours of sleep. Whatever is said, the 'early to bed and early to rise' habit is best for everybody, particularly waking up before the sun peeps out from the east.

Of course, waking up before the sun goes up appears to show someone's industrious spirit to

a certain extent, especially that of rural folks. People who rise up early in the morning often think themselves to be better off in the future than those who do not, actually. But to think it again, not getting up late in the morning enables people to get more chances of preparing daily routines and regular jobs to finish them off very quickly in the daytime. Also, as the saying

goes, a bird that gets up early can eat well. After enough sleep, everyone feels like their inner energy has grown, as well as under the illusion that they will get more than 24 hours in a day.

As we all know, it is mostly still dark, calm, peaceful and quiet in the early morning to the extent that who it is, whether we are brothers or sisters, cannot be seen clearly. Thanks

to the stability and tranquillity of that early morning, it is the best time that we can say our prayers and then practise meditation or mindfulness very well. On the other side, students will be able to study their school subjects with all their strength after adequate sleep at night. Although the early morning is getting dim, the moonlight that has not yet gone is shimmering

in the dark sky. Due to the moonlight, the morning sky is kind of beautiful, shining in black and white. Morning persons, who are almost always active in the morning, are given to motivating night persons and lazy people who still have a sound sleep in the early silent morning.

I have heard that Ernest Miller Hemingway, a world-famous American novelist, had

never got up late in the morning since he came of age. This is because he would like to enjoy the beauty of the early morning; it is getting brighter and brighter from being dark to some extent as the sun emerges from the horizon in the east. At this moment, the sun is half shining reddish-orange in colour on the east mountain ranges. Because of its brightness, the morning sky seems to have the mixed colours of violet, dark blue, and black. Sometimes, the early sunlight looks like the face of a beloved for loving couples and even the very first hope of all people who wish to start a day with no hurry or without any difficulty. And only the morn-

ing sunshine is warm and light to the degree that anybody can see the sun well with the naked eye. In the presence of the early sun's rays, flowers are sort of beautiful; old-age plants are still young like the life of a teenager; the sweet voices of nightingales and cocks are heard in harmony. After all, waking up early in the morning has the simple pleasures not only in a city but also in the country that cannot be precisely counted in number. To be certain, if we wake up early after sleeping deeply, we will feel intrapersonal peace or inner stillness and natural serenity in the morning. So, let us wake up early in the morning from this day onwards.

By Hu Wo
(Cuckoo's Song)

NATIONAL

Mya Sein Yaung project funds disbursed in Sinbaungwe



A fund disbursement ceremony is underway in Sinbaungwe Township.

THE Department of Rural Development (DRD), under the Ministry of Cooperatives and Rural Development held a ceremony yesterday in Kutingyi Village, Sinbaungwe Township, to disburse revolving funds for the Mya Sein Yaung (Emerald Green) project. The project aims to

enable rural residents to engage in small-scale agriculture, livestock farming, and trading businesses.

Daw Ei Ei Mon Acting Head of the Sinbaungwe Township Department of Rural Development explained the objectives and benefits of the Mya Sein Yaung project, the rules and regulations outlined in the project manual, interest rates, loan terms, and the guidelines to be followed during loan disbursement. She then handed over the revolving fund of K60.50 million to the village's Mya

Sein Yaung project committee members.

Subsequently, under the close supervision of the staff from the Township Department of Rural Development, the village project committee members disbursed the total amount of K60.50 million to 115 members, providing the funds directly on the same day at low interest rates. The breakdown includes agriculture: K55.20 million for 106 people; livestock: K1.80 million for four people; and trading: and K3.50 million for five people. — Nyein Thu (Rural)

New cherry YPS card to be launched on 14 July

WITH the theme of cherry blossoms, new YPS cards will be launched on 14 July for a limited edition, according to the Yangon Payment Service (YPS).

New cards, which are suitable for giving as presents as well as for own use, will be available at all eight YPS counters as from 14 July.

The use of the YPS card has been widespread among bus commuters, and the YPS card price is K9,000 per one, according to passengers.

For details about the use of the YPS card, in-



This image displays an advert promoting a new YPS card.

quiries can be requested to the YPS Facebook page messenger or the Call Centre Phone Number: (Hotline) 09 772666699 from Monday to Friday between 8 am and 6 pm. — MT/ZS

Applications open for auxiliary midwifery training course

FOR a six-month auxiliary midwifery training course for the 2026-27 financial year, applications have been accepted, said Kyaikto Township Public Health Department.

This training course doesn't involve long-distance travel, and it is located in the township; trainees need to serve within their own community after the course.

Eligible candidates must be those who love their community and



Hands-on auxiliary midwifery course.

are passionate about providing healthcare. Applicants must have completed or be still studying at least basic education

(KG+8). must be women between the ages of 18 and 30 (up to 50 if necessary), be in good health, be able to attend the full

duration, and have a clean criminal record.

"This training course will help you to be an educated and self-confident woman; specifically, you will be an auxiliary midwife who is dependable in maternal and childcare in your community," it said.

Interested women can inquire at the township public health department or nearby rural health offices and register in time. — MT/ZS

Tachilek's Mya Sein Yaung village project loans disbursed

THE Department of Rural Development, under the Ministry of Cooperatives and Rural Development held a ceremony to disburse revolving funds under the Mya Sein Yaung Village Project in Tarkyant Village, Tachilek Township, yesterday.

Tachilek Township Department of Rural Development Head Daw Le Le Thin and project staff first explained that the revolving funds were provided under the Mya Sein Yaung Village Project with the objectives of creating employment opportunities and increasing family incomes for rural residents, as well as implementing village development activities with the increased

revolving funds. Officials then explained project activities, interest rates, loan periods and rules and regulations to be followed. K30 million in revolving funds was handed over to members of the Mya Sein Yaung Village Project implementation group in Tarkyant Village.

Tarkyant Village is implementing systematic farming activities using K30 million from the Mya Sein Yaung Village Project. Under the supervision of the head of the township department, members of the Mya Sein Yaung Village Project implementation group disbursed the fifth round of revolving loans to a total of 30 members. — Sein Lwin (Rural)



An MSY fund disbursement ceremony is in progress in Tachilek Township.

Announcement on Road Closure on Martyrs' Day

1. The commemoration of the 79th Martyrs' Day will take place at the Martyrs' Mausoleum in Bahan Township, Yangon. From 4 am until the event concludes, the following roads will be closed on 19 July 2026: West Shwegondine Road from old Yedashe Road, Shwegondine Road from the Dhammazedi-Shwegondine intersection, Martyrs' Road from West Shwegondine to U Htaung Bo Road, and U Wisara Road from U Wizara Roundabout to the U Wisara-Dhammazedi intersection.
2. Natmauk Road will be temporarily closed from the Wingaba intersection and from the Pho Sein intersection. Bogyoke Museum Road will be closed from the Ngahtetgyi Pagoda intersection and from

- the Saw Maha intersection. Bo Cho Road will be closed from the Shwe Kyat Yat intersection from 5 am to 6 pm on 19 July 2026.
3. During the flag-hoisting ceremony at the Secretariat from 5 am to 6 pm on 19 July, the following roads will be closed: Theinbyu Road from Bogyoke Junction to Merchant Road intersection, Anawrahta Road from Bo Myat Tun Junction, Maha Bandoola Road from Pansodan Junction, Bo Aung Kyaw Road from Merchant Junction.
4. The public is advised to use alternative roads during the off-road diversion during the commemoration event.

Yangon Region Government

NATIONAL

73 illegal buildings demolished in Shwe Kokko online scam crackdown

A 12-storey illegal building used for online scam and gambling activities in the Shwe Kokko area of Myawady Township, Kayin State, has been systematically demolished, bringing the total number of demolished illegal buildings to 73.

Authorities have been conducting joint operations to demolish illegal buildings and destroy equipment used in online scams and gambling activities in the Shwe Kokko and KK Park areas. Of the 77 targeted buildings in Shwe Kokko, 57 have been demolished using machinery, while 20 have been destroyed through controlled demolition.

According to reports, 73 illegal buildings have been demolished, and the remaining four will be demolished in due course. — MNA/MKKS



This image shows the map displaying the update of demolition of scam hubs in Shwe Kokko.

Yangon to clear tracks for safety of new DEMU train operations

THE Yangon Region Government has announced that, with the launch of new DEMU (Diesel Electric Multiple Unit) trains on the Yangon-Pyay railway line, measures are being taken to close illegal level crossings and remove squats within the railway right-of-way to ensure the safety of those living along the tracks and those using the crossings.

A meeting regarding this matter was attended by Dr Myo Thaw, Yangon Region's minister for Electricity, Energy, Industry, and Transport, as well as department heads, officials, and invitees.

At the meeting, Minister Dr Myo Thaw stated, "As trains will soon be operating at higher speeds, illegal crossings and squats within the railway zone pose a major safety risk. Therefore, these will be systematically closed and cleared. Crossings that absolutely cannot be closed will be equipped with gate systems." He added that once squats are cleared, Myanma Railways must immediately proceed with fencing and installing warning signs.

Furthermore, the minister urged relevant district administrative committees to urgently draft and submit plans for the closure of these crossings. Additionally, he instructed the relevant committees to collaborate on conducting field inspections within the Right of Way along the railway section and to report back with their findings. — TWA/ZN



A view of an unauthorized level-crossing cut across the railway tracks.

Over 390,000 Gambling Scam SIMs Blocked

THE Posts and Telecommunications Department is systematically monitoring and taking action to prevent gambling-related promotional and invitation SMS messages sent through the networks of licensed mobile operators.

According to a statement of the department, an SMS is classified as abnormal if the same message is sent from a single phone number to 60 recipients within one hour or to 1,000 recipients within 24 hours. Such messages are immediately blocked through the operators' SMS firewall systems using an automatic blocking mechanism.

As a result of these enforcement measures, a total of 390,978 phone numbers suspected of sending gambling-related SMS messages had been permanently blocked as of 30 June 2026.

The department also urged the public to report phone numbers sending gambling-related SMS messages by emailing complaint@ptd.gov.mm. — TWA/MKKS



Suspects involved in online gambling operations are arrested along with seized evidence.

9 tremors recorded across Myanmar within 10 days

ACCORDING to a statement from the Department of Meteorology and Hydrology (DMH), nine earthquakes have been recorded across Myanmar during the 10 days from 3 to 12 July.

They occurred in the Bago, Mandalay, Sagaing, Ayeyawady, and Yangon regions, as well as in eastern Shan State.

According to the DMH statement, the recorded tremors include: 12 July — 3.8 magnitude in Bago (about 28 miles southwest of Kyaukpyu); 12 July — 4.0 magnitude in Mandalay (about 11 miles north of Singu); 11 July — 3.6 mag-

nitude in NyaungU (about 18 miles west-southwest of Pale); 10 July — 4.3 magnitude in Tamu (about 17 miles east of Mawlaik); 9 July — 3.5 magnitude in Kanbalu (about 10 miles west-northwest of Kani); 5 July — 3.5 magnitude in Pathein (about 9 miles northeast of Bogale); 4 July — 3.0 magnitude in Haka (about 16 miles west-northwest of Kani); 4 July — 3.5 magnitude in Kaba-Aye (about 3 miles south-southeast of Htantabin); 3 July — 3.8 magnitude in Kengtung (about 7 miles south-southeast of Mongla). — MT/ZN

Action taken against power theft

THE Ministry of Electricity and Energy is making efforts to increase electricity supply to the public while implementing measures to eliminate electricity theft through fraudulent methods.

Following inspections conducted by special teams to detect illegal power use, a total of 340 cases involving the unlawful consumption of more than 7.7 million units of electricity were identified during the 100-day plan. Compensation and fines amounting to more than K6,745 million were recovered for losses incurred by the State.

Legal action has been effectively taken against meter owners and business operators involved in these offences under the Electricity Law, and the responsible officials found to have participated in the violations have also been taken to court.

The Ministry of Electricity and Energy works hard to reduce electricity losses by monitoring through control centres, conducting field inspections upon detecting suspicious cases, and taking effective action based on accurate reports submitted by the public. The ministry stated that as more cases of power theft are uncovered, more electricity will be distributed to the public, and urged the public to continue cooperating in efforts to prevent illegal power use. — MNA/KTZH

Bay of Bengal Condition

Issued at 4 pm MST on 14 July 2026

ACCORDING to the observations at 3:30 pm MST today, a low pressure area may form over the North Bay of Bengal & adjoining West Bangladesh coasts during next 24 hours. — DMH

NATIONAL

MFVP seeks Commerce Ministry's help to import value-added machinery

MYANMAR Fruit, Flower and Vegetable Producers and Exporters Association (MFVP), during the recent coordination meeting, called upon the Ministry of Commerce to assist in seeking the import permit for machinery required to boost the production of value-added



products and support domestic production.

The coordination meeting on Enhancing Myanmar's Export Sector was held at the Ministry of Commerce on Strand Road, Yangon, on 11 July, led by the Union minister.

The president of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry and officials, along with leaders from export-related business associations, presented and discussed sector-by-sector issues. MFVP Chair U Kyaw Thu focused discussions on the key requirements for strengthening Myanmar's fruit and vegetable exports to international markets. He requested the Ministry to assist in allowing the import of machinery such as drying machines, sorting machines, and packing machines to facilitate domestic production of value-added products when the topic of technology, machinery and investment needs was raised.

Regarding export potential and market changes, exports of watermelon, muskmelon, mango,

and tissue-culture banana had declined due to geopolitical conditions. Exports of processed fruits such as Konjac, Cardamom and cashew nuts exceeded targets. Furthermore, exports of avocado grew from 8,180 tonnes (approximately US\$4.5 million) last season to nearly 12,000 tonnes (approximately \$6 million) in the 2025-2026 season. The GACC contract draft to have legitimate export to China is currently under review, he stated.

He also requested the Ministry's assistance in securing permission to export avocados to Thailand, not only through border trade but also via normal trade routes. Next, he stressed ongoing challenges in delivering the perishable fresh produce via border checkpoints. Shifting from the Muse route to the Mongla route has increased transport costs. Input shortages have also affected fruit quality. He also reported on reforming new cooperatives designated for fruit exports.

In response to the aforementioned requests, the Union minister for Commerce confirmed that avocado export to Thailand via both normal trade and border routes has been negotiated. He also stated that the ministry would review and permit the import of drying and sorting machines and would also provide support for the reorganization of growers' cooperatives.

The MFVP stated that it will continue to work together with relevant ministries and affiliated associations to increasingly export Myanmar's fruits and vegetables to global markets. — NN/KK

Myanmar Tourism Federation to host Myanmar Travel Fair 2027

THE Myanmar Tourism Federation will hold the Myanmar Travel Fair 2027 next year, with a view to helping international tourists realize a true understanding of Myanmar's actual situation and reviving the tourism sector.

It will be organized under the guidance of the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism, in collaboration with affiliated associations, said the Myanmar Tourism Federation chairperson.

The National Tourism Development Central Committee Meeting 1/2026 was held at the Jade Hall of the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism in Nay Pyi Taw on 9 July, with the presence of private sector tourism experts, the President of the Myanmar Tourism



The first National Tourism Development Central Committee meeting is underway in Nay Pyi Taw on 9 July 2026.

Federation, and chairs of relevant associations.

Vice-President Nan Ni Ni Aye, Chair of the central committee, emphasized the need to revive Myanmar's tourism industry like other countries and to mirror a successful global model by establishing strong Destination Management Organizations (DMOs) during the meeting.

She also empha-

sized the importance of developing practical, actionable plans tailored to each region and state by promoting Myanmar's unique culture, natural scenic beauty, and historical heritage.

The Vice-President also addressed facilitating travel for tourists by easing visa procedures, ensuring safe travel, expanding flight routes, and simplifying insurance pur-

chase processes through public-private collaboration. She encouraged private entrepreneurs to create a regionally competitive destination and to exert concerted efforts to increase international awareness of Myanmar's true situation.

The president of the Myanmar Tourism Federation submitted a request for the establishment of the Tourism Board of Myanmar (TBM), which is a public-private partnership body to ensure effective collaboration in tourism promotion. He also stated that the federation, together with its affiliated associations, will work to practically implement the central committee's directives and meeting resolutions for national tourism development. — NN/KK

High fish capture facilitates local consumption

FROM PAGE 1

"Today marks the sixth batch of fishing vessels arriving at the port. Many boats are taking shelter near islands because of stormy conditions at sea. Some vessels took the risk of returning early to prevent their catch from spoiling. At the beginning of the fishing season, fish prices were high, but as catches increased and more fish and shrimp entered the market, prices declined. We are pleased that consumers can now buy seafood more easily. However, catches of large fish remain low, so exports are still limited," said Daw Tin Nwe, a marine products trader at Kyimyindine port.

As it is the bottom trawling fishing season,

certain fish species, including small-sized ones, are captured most, and the port receives over 70 types of fish.

The Yangon saltwater market experienced particularly strong trading during the first three days after fresh catches began arriving. As fish arrivals increased beyond consumer demand, prices of saltwater products fell. During last year's reopening of the fishing season, diesel shortages limited fishing activities, keeping saltwater product prices high. This year, improved diesel availability has enabled more vessels to operate, and better catches have contributed to lower saltwater product prices.

"The fishing season was suspended for three



Fish workers are seen bustling with arrivals of fish.

months, from April to June, but it resumed on 15 June due to the livelihood difficulties faced by fishermen. Weather conditions at sea remain unstable, and the fish being caught are still relatively small. Of about 1,000 fishing vessels in Yangon Region, only around 300 have been able to go out because of storm conditions," said U Tun Tin,

Deputy Director of the Fishing Vessel Monitoring, Control and Surveillance Department (Yangon).

Fishing vessels are currently operating in the waters of Taninthayi and Ayeyawady using three main fishing methods: fishing ground, trawl fishing and gill-net fishing. — Thitsa (MNA)/KTZH

Japan fails to expand bluefin tuna fishing quotas after Mexican opposition

AN international conference in southwestern Japan on the sustainable management of Pacific bluefin tuna failed to agree on expanding the catch quota after Mexico unexpectedly opposed the move, Japan's Fisheries Agency said Tuesday.

During the conference that began last Wednesday in Nagasaki, the Japanese government had hoped to agree on transitioning to new regulations that would automatically set quotas based on tuna stocks and increase the catch limit for fish weighing over 30 kilograms. Negotiations will continue. "We were unable to reach an agreement because of the unreasonable actions of one country and we are feeling outraged," said Takumi Fukuda, councillor of the Fisheries Agency.

A bigger catch quota would have made bluefin

tuna, currently considered a luxury fish, more affordable for consumers.

If the participating members of the conference had agreed on a new rule, it would have been officially adopted at the annual meeting of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission beginning at the end of November and could have been applied as soon as 2027. The combined catch quotas currently stand at 11,869 tonnes for larger fish and 5,125 tonnes for smaller fish, of which Japan's quotas are 8,421 tonnes and 4,407 tonnes, respectively.

With the bluefin tuna population steadily recovering, Japan has been hoping to expand its quota. But the countries were also unable to reach an agreement last year as the United States emphasized the need to conserve the resource. — Kyodo

50,000 more job cuts could be needed to narrow cost gap, says Volkswagen CEO

VOLKSWAGEN CEO Oliver Blume said the carmaker could need to cut around 50,000 more jobs worldwide under a theoretical scenario in which labour costs remain unchanged, as Europe's largest automaker seeks to narrow its cost gap with rivals, according to German newspaper Handelsblatt on Monday.

"A theoretical calculation, assuming no change in labour costs, would result in around 50,000 job cuts worldwide," Handels-



A general view at the Zwickau Volkswagen Plant on 9 July 2026 at the Zwickau, eastern Germany. **PHOTO: AFP**

blatt quoted Blume as saying. He stressed that the figure was based on cost

comparisons rather than a final decision, adding that the company was assessing

all brands, subsidiaries and regions to determine what adjustments were necessary and feasible.

Volkswagen has been under pressure from weak demand in Europe, rising tariff-related costs and the costly transition to electric vehicles, all of which have weighed on earnings. Blume said the company's administrative and infrastructure costs remained about 20 per cent higher than those of comparable rivals. — Xinhua

Malaysia's Petronas inks LNG supply deal with Japan's Shizuoka Gas

MALAYSIA'S state-owned oil and gas company Petrol- ium Nasional Berhad (Pe- tron) has signed a seven-year liquefied natural gas (LNG) supply agree-

ment with Japan's Shizuoka Gas Co Ltd, strengthening their partnership on long-term energy security.

Petronas said in a statement on Monday

that its subsidiary, Petronas LNG Ltd (PLL), will supply about 0.84 million metric tonnes of LNG to Shizuoka Gas under the agreement, starting

in 2032.

The deal builds on Petronas' diversified global LNG portfolio and aims to provide greater supply flexibility and reliability to support Shizuoka Gas' energy needs amid evolving market conditions. — Xinhua

New Zealand's Fonterra lowers milk-price outlook on softer dairy prices

New Zealand's Fonterra Co-operative Group on Monday lowered its forecast 2026/27 farmgate milk price, citing weaker global dairy prices and stronger-than-expected supply. The dairy exporter revised its forecast to 9.25 NZ dollars (about US\$5.33) per kilogramme of milk solids (kgMS), with a range of 8 to 10.5 NZ dollars per kgMS, according to a Fonterra statement. The update compares with an opening forecast of 9.75 NZ dollars per kgMS announced in May, which carried a wider range of 8 to 11 NZ dollars to reflect the potential for volatility and varied outcomes throughout the season, the statement said. — Xinhua

SoftBank's CEO Son says 1 bln AI-powered humanoids to be created by 2040

SOFTBANK Group Corp Chairman and CEO Masayoshi Son said Tuesday that 1 billion humanoid robots equipped with artificial intelligence will be created by 2040 to make a "fundamental" change in the work environment.

"The age of humans being the highest life form will end," Son said at an annual corporate conference, with 100 trillion AI agents, which function autonomously without human instructions, expected to work by that year.

Son said AI agents will be able to replicate themselves and ena-

ble other AI agents to evolve and generate even more agents, marking a transition from a human-centred society to an agent-centred one.

"It will be necessary for people to evolve alongside (AI agents)

rather than rejecting them," he said.

The CEO said AI-related industries will account for about 20 per cent of the global gross domestic product by 2040 or seven quadrillion yen (\$43 trillion). — Kyodo



SoftBank Group Corp Chairman and CEO Masayoshi Son speaks at an event in Tokyo on 14 July 2026. **PHOTO: KYODO**

MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY HOLIDAY NOTICE

AS the wharves, warehouses and chellan Offices of Yangon Port will be closed on the 19th July 2026 (Martyr's Day) & 29th July 2026 (Full-moon Day of Waso), Loading, Unloading and delivery for Goods will be received on Payment as Holiday Fees.

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE M.V NORDLEOPARD VOY.NO. (626W)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V NORDLEOPARD VOY.NO. (626W)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **15-7-2026** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MIP/MITT** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanmar Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S MAERSK A/S

ROLLING UPDATES

WORLD

China activates emergency response for rainstorm-hit Liaoning



A man walks on a flooded road amid rain in Shenyang, northeast China's Liaoning Province, on 13 July 2026. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

CHINA'S national commission for disaster prevention, reduction and relief on Tuesday activated a Level-IV national disaster relief emergency response for northeast China's Liaoning Province, which was hit by rainstorms and flooding.

A working team has been dispatched to the disaster-hit areas to assess the situation and assist local authorities in ensuring the basic needs of affected residents, the commission said. China has a four-tier

emergency response system, with level I being the most severe.

As the northward-moving Typhoon Bavi brought extreme downpours to Liaoning, the rain is expected to persist from Monday noon through Tuesday daytime, with extreme downpours in certain areas, according to the provincial meteorological observatory. By 4 pm on Monday, more than 260,000 people had been relocated to safe places in the province. — Xinhua

2 tankers attacked in Strait of Hormuz

THE United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations (UKMTO) said on Tuesday that two oil tankers were attacked while transiting the southern route of the Strait of Hormuz. In two separate warning notices, the UKMTO said the incidents involved two tankers that were struck by missiles while sailing outbound through the southern route of the Strait of Hormuz. The notices were largely identical except for the vessels' reference numbers.

Both incidents occurred about 13 nautical miles southeast of Limah, Oman, according to the

UKMTO. Following a recent US-Iran memorandum of understanding, two shipping routes have been established in the Strait of Hormuz: a northern route controlled by Iran and a southern route near Omani waters, where the US military provides navigational assistance.

ADNOC Logistics & Services, the shipping arm of Abu Dhabi National Oil Company, said on Tuesday that one seafarer was killed and several others were injured after two crude oil tankers operated by the company were struck by projectiles while transiting the Strait of Hormuz. — Xinhua

Turn off addictive features on social media for children, say EU lawmakers

THERE should be a "youth mode" for children on social media platforms in which addictive features and targeted advertising are turned off, EU lawmakers demanded on Tuesday.

The calls are growing louder for the European Union to ensure that social media platforms and others are designed to be safe before children use them.

An expert report on Monday also recommended a "safety-by-design" approach in which

platforms protect minors from possible harms posed by the apps.

"The responsibility for the safety of children and adolescents must first and foremost lie with those who design and manage digital platforms," EU lawmaker Sandro Ruotolo said in a statement.

The addictive features that the EU has concerns over include infinite scroll, autoplay, push notifications and highly personalized recommender systems.

The parliament's



European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen addresses the audience following a press conference on the handover of the final report of the Special Panel on child safety online in Brussels on 13 July 2026. **PHOTO: AFP**

culture committee also called for an "EU code of conduct" to regulate in-

fluencers and a common definition of "influencer marketing". — AFP

Fire ravages historic forest outside Paris

HUNDREDS of French firefighters aided by water bombers on Tuesday battled wildfires that have ravaged a hugely popular forest outside Paris as another scorching heat-wave keeps the capital in its grip.

The sprawling Fontainebleau forest some 60 kilometres (40 miles) southeast of the capital, is a former royal hunting ground now hugely popular with hikers and a magnet for climbers who come from around the world to tackle its famous boulders.

The fires that erupt-

ed Sunday have now scorched some 2,050 hectares (5,000 acres) — an area roughly three times the size of Gibraltar, firefighters said on Tuesday.

With some 850 firefighters battling the flames with the help of specialized Canadair aircraft, authorities are hoping to control the flames during the day, said Paul-Edouard Laurain, spokesman for the regional firefighters.

"With the help of the Canadair aircraft, in particular, that should be a goal we hope is achievable," Laurain said. — AFP



A firefighter operates during a fire in the Fontainebleau Forest, in Noisy-sur-Ecole, in the Paris' Ile-de-France region on 14 July 2026. **PHOTO: AFP**

EU, Britain, Spain sign Gibraltar agreement

THE European Union (EU), Britain and Spain on Tuesday signed an agreement on Gibraltar's future status in Brussels, removing routine checks at the land border between Gibraltar and Spain.

The agreement was signed by European Commissioner for Trade and Economic Security Maros Sefcovic, British Minister of State for Europe Stephen Doughty, Gibraltar Chief Minister Fabian Picardo and Span-

ish Foreign Minister Jose Manuel Albares Bueno.

It will remove routine border checks between Gibraltar and Spain and bring Gibraltar closer to the EU through alignment with Schengen rules and customs arrangements.

According to the agreement, it will significantly facilitate the movement of goods and workers between Gibraltar and Spain, boosting economic links between Gibraltar and the EU. — Xinhua

SPORTS

YR traditional Lethwei clubs and Lethwei federation donate cash for electricity

TRADITIONAL Myanmar Lethwei Federation under the Sports and Physical Education Department, organized a donation ceremony for electricity for Yangon Region Traditional Lethwei clubs and the Lethwei Federation at the Theinbyu Lethwei Stadium in Mingala Taungnyunt Township, Yangon.

Traditional Myanmar Lethwei Federation President Dr Tin Aung Lwin first delivered a speech. Following, Founder U Min Wai Hin of Nine Lethwei Club, as well as co-founder of Lethwei Fighting



The handover ceremony for donations is in progress in Yangon.

Championship, donated K13 million each to the 26 traditional Lethwei clubs in Yangon Region and K13.865 million for electricity at the Traditional Myanmar Lethwei Federa-

tion. The president of the Traditional Myanmar Lethwei Federation and the officials of the Lethwei clubs accepted and presented certificates of appreciation. — Bala/MKKS

Jose Mourinho back at Real Madrid with a “mission”

JOSE Mourinho returned to Real Madrid’s Valdebebas training centre on Monday to begin pre-season training after taking charge of the club’s first team for a second spell.

With many of Real Madrid’s first-team players, such as Jude Bellingham and Kylian Mbappe, still at the World Cup, Mourinho will not be able to train with the full squad for some time. However, he told Real Madrid TV that work had begun long before Monday’s opening session.

“It’s not like I arrived here today and everything starts now. We’ve been working hard for a long

time with the club’s structure at different levels,” he explained.

Mourinho returns to the club 13 years after leaving in June 2013 and said he was delighted to be back.

“This feels like a mis-

sion. It’s not about worrying about myself or whether I’ll win a lot or a little. I’m here to help everyone become better: players, staff, and to create a culture of work, responsibility, ambition, and responsibility.” — Xinhua



A mural by Italian urban artist Salvatore Benintende aka “TV BOY” depicting Portuguese coach Jose Mourinho is seen in front of the Santiago Bernabeu stadium in Madrid on 21 May 2026. PHOTO: AFP

Messi meets England at last with World Cup final place on the line



A poster showing Argentina’s Lionel Messi and Diego Maradona is seen before the Group J match between Argentina and Austria at the 2026 FIFA World Cup at Dallas Stadium, the United States, 22 June 2026. PHOTO: XINHUA

LIONEL Messi has done just about everything possible in a glorious career, but the 39-year-old Argentinian great has never taken on England — he will finally get the chance in Wednesday’s World Cup semifinal.

Messi won his 200th cap for the Albiceleste in the group-stage victory against Algeria and dreams of leading his country to the final

once again.

The diminutive playmaker is surely in the final days of a remarkable international career which began when he was a fresh-faced 18-year-old in 2005. Having broken into the Barcelona team late the previous year, Messi had just starred for Argentina as they won the Under-20 World Cup in the Netherlands.

He was handed his Argentina bow by Jose Pékerman in a friendly against Hungary in Budapest that August, replacing Lisandro Lopez in the 64th minute and joining Hernan Crespo up front. Ninety seconds later he was sent off for what the referee saw as an elbow. It was quite the ignominious way for his Argentina career to begin.

“An 18-year-old kid who is making his debut for the national team and has so much hope — he can’t be punished like that. The referee needed to be more understanding,” said Crespo. — AFP

World Cup final ball, halftime show outfits to be auctioned

A sale of World Cup memorabilia, including a ball used in the final and outfits worn by performers at the halftime show, was announced Tuesday by New York auction house Christie’s.

The week-long online auction begins on 22 July and raises funds for the FIFA Global Citizen Education Fund, an initiative working to generate \$100 million for children worldwide during the World Cup.

Top items include a pop singer Shakira in her music video for Dai Dai, the official song of the 2026 soccer tournament.



A FIFA Club World Cup Final Ball visual is displayed against the Manhattan skyline by 1500 drones in a FIFA drone show ahead of the Club World Cup Final on 11 July 2025 in Liberty State Park, New Jersey. PHOTO: AFP

show — an 11-minute musical extravaganza also featuring Madonna, Justin Bieber and BTS — will also be auctioned.

Several soccer balls will go on sale including one from the 19 July final at the MetLife Stadium in New Jersey and another from the opening match in Mexico last month.

A 2022 Argentina jersey signed by star player Lionel Messi is being auctioned too, as well as a US jersey signed by the United States’ men’s team. — AFP

Oslo erupts in celebration as Norway returns from historic World Cup

TENS of thousands of fans gathered outside Norway’s Royal Palace on Monday to welcome the national team players who returned home from their historic run to the World Cup quarterfinals.

An estimated 90,000 supporters filled the palace square, giving the team a rousing welcome despite their 2-1 extra-time defeat to England in Miami on Saturday. The result marked Norway’s best-ever performance at a FIFA World Cup. As the squad appeared on stage, players and fans joined together in the now-iconic “Viking Row” celebration that became a symbol of Norway’s memorable tournament. — Xinhua

FC Barcelona signs wing-back Caicedo from LDU Quito

FC Barcelona has signed Ecuadorian left-back Josue Caicedo from LDU Quito.

The 18-year-old defender arrives on an initial loan deal that will become a permanent transfer for a fee of around 2.5 million euros (US\$2.9 million) if he makes a set number of first-team appearances, with LDU Quito entitled to 20 per cent of any future sale.

A tall and powerful defender, Caicedo began his career as a winger and already has first-team experience with LDU Quito.

He will begin next season with Barcelona’s B team but is also expected to train with the first team. — Xinhua



Thailand declares full readiness to host 2026 IMF, World Bank annual meetings

THAILAND'S Ministry of Finance and the Bank of Thailand said on Tuesday that the country is fully prepared to host the upcoming 2026 Annual Meetings of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank Group.

As one of the world's largest economic gatherings, over 15,000 delegates, including policymakers, economists, government officials, business leaders, and journalists from worldwide, are expected to attend the conference set for 12 to 18 October in Bangkok.

Thai Deputy Prime Minister and Finance

Minister Ekniti Nitithanprapas said preparations have been organized under three subcommittees overseeing substantive content, protocol and operations, and security, with IMF and World Bank delegations conducting a final on-site readiness review earlier this month.

Speaking at a press conference, Ekniti emphasized that the event brings tangible benefits to the Southeast Asian country, including an economic boost, a stronger international image and credibility, and greater visibility for local communities on the world stage. — Xinhua

Togo launches nationwide campaign to distribute mosquito nets against malaria

TOGO on Tuesday launched a nationwide campaign to distribute free insecticide-treated mosquito nets to strengthen malaria prevention, as the disease remains one of the country's leading public health challenges.

A total of 5,658,350 insecticide-treated mosquito nets will be distributed to households nationwide. Ahead of the campaign,

health workers carried out a door-to-door census between late May and early June to identify beneficiaries and issue collection coupons to them.

In Togo's tropical climate, which provides favourable conditions for mosquito breeding, the regular distribution of mosquito nets remains a key measure to reduce malaria transmission. — Xinhua

Netanyahu warns Iran of "much more powerful" response if it attacks Israel

ISRAELI Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Tuesday warned that any Iranian attacks on Israel would be met with a response "much more powerful" than previous attacks, according to a statement from his office.

Speaking at the Negev Conference in the southern city of Dimona, Netanyahu said that Israel is prepared for any scenario.

"I say to the leaders of Iran, do not count on there being silence if you attack us, do not count on there being a rebroadcast, which was powerful enough. It will be a different rerun, much more powerful," he warned. — Xinhua

WHO says DRC Ebola outbreak fastest-growing with most new cases from unknown transmission chains

THE World Health Organization (WHO) warned on Tuesday that the Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) is the fastest-growing ever recorded, with the majority of new infections now coming from unknown chains of transmission.

Speaking to reporters after returning from the epicentre in Ituri Province, Chikwe Ihekweazu, executive director of WHO's Health Emergencies Programme, said that as of 11 July, nearly 2,000 confirmed cases and more than 700 deaths had been reported across five provinces. This makes the current outbreak the third-largest in history.

"We've seen the fastest growth in a single month since the outbreak started and of all the Ebola outbreaks that we have managed," Ihekweazu said.

He added that over the past few days, single-day infection numbers



Medical workers carry out disinfection work at an Ebola treatment centre in Bunia, the capital of Ituri Province in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, 6 July 2026. PHOTO: XINHUA

have hit record highs, with more than 80 cases confirmed in a 24-hour period.

One of the most alarming findings, according to the WHO official, is that many of the newly reported deaths occurred in communities, meaning patients never reached a health facility or received care.

Despite improvements in diagnostics and

high contact-tracing rates, Ihekweazu warned that "80 per cent of new cases are outside our contact lists and so are coming to us from unknown chains of transmission." WHO modelling suggests the true scale could be "at least two to four times" the number of reported cases.

The outbreak was declared just two months

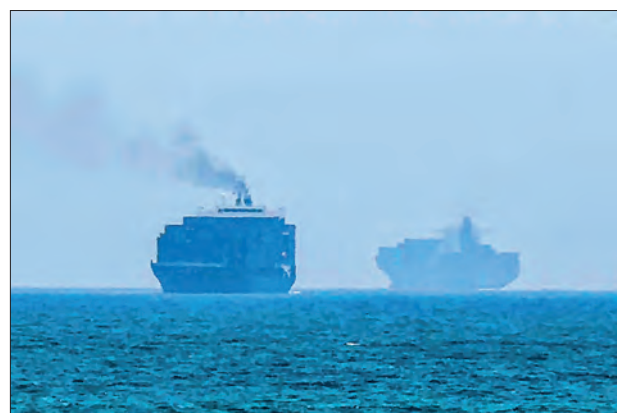
ago. While up to 95 per cent of new cases still originate in Ituri, the virus has recently spread to two additional provinces, Haut-Uele and Tshopo.

To tackle the crisis, WHO outlined a dual strategy: intensifying response efforts in the epicentre while mapping travel routes and identifying high-risk areas for potential new cases. — Xinhua

US strikes Iran, vows to reimpose naval blockade

THE United States launched a fresh wave of strikes on Iran on Tuesday after President Donald Trump vowed to reimpose a naval blockade, prompting Tehran to respond with strikes on targets in countries around the region.

Trump said a negotiated deal was still possible, but fighting surged to a scale unseen since an April ceasefire. Iran hit two ships in the Strait of Hormuz, killing a crew



This frame grab taken from AFPTV video footage on 12 July 2026 shows cargo ships anchoring near the Strait of Hormuz off the eastern coast of the United Arab Emirates at Khor Fakkan. PHOTO: AFP

member, according to the United Arab Emirates.

A Norwegian tanker was also hit by an explosion caused by an unidentified device off the Omani coast early Tuesday, the crisis response company MTI Network said.

The US military said it had hit targets across Iran including in the port cities of Bushehr and Bandar Abbas to "degrade Iran's ability to attack commercial shipping". — AFP