

The Global **NEW LIGHT** of MYANMAR

Myanmar, Thailand Deepen Energy and Natural Gas Cooperation

Myanmar and Thailand are taking steps to strengthen disaster preparedness and prevention measures in response to the potential impacts of climate change.

A delegation led by Minister of Energy Mr Akanat Promphan of Thailand paid a courtesy call on President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Min Aung Hlaing at the Presidential Palace Reception Hall yesterday morning.

At the meeting, they discussed further strengthening cooperation in the energy and natural gas sectors, along with bilateral cooperation on disaster preparedness and prevention measures related to climate change.

They also discussed the improvement of friendly ties and cooperation as Myanmar and Thailand are good neighbouring friends, and efforts underway to further cement cooperation between the two countries through the discussions of President U Min Aung Hlaing on his goodwill visit to Thailand.

After the meeting, the President and the Thai Minister of Energy posed for a documentary photo.

Also present at the meeting were Union Ministers U Khin Maung Yi, U Tin Maung Swe and U Ko Ko Lwin, and officials. The Thai Minister of Energy was accompanied by Ambassador of Thailand to Myanmar Mr Tor Saralamba and officials. — MNA/TTA



President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Min Aung Hlaing and Thai Minister of Energy Mr Akanat Promphan exchange handshakes during the latter's courtesy call on the former.

OPINION

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Myanmar LDCR wins 2026 Lion Dance Championship in China

THE LDCR team representing Myanmar emerged as the winners at the 2026 World Chinese Traditional Lion Dance Championship



The Champions, the LDCR team, on the stage after winning the championship.

Lion Dance Championship held in Nanjing, China.

According to reports, the championship took place in Nanjing, China, on 17 October. The Myanmar LDCR team secured first place by scoring the highest total of 9.15 points.

At the 2026 World Chinese Traditional Lion Dance Championship, the Myanmar LDCR team competed against representative teams from China, Hong Kong (China), Australia, Canada, Malaysia, Mexico, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

SEE PAGE 3

Twin Parks model spotlighted at 2026 World Maritime Equipment Conference

MYANMAR'S Ambassador to China U Zaw Win Myint participated in discussions at the 2026 World Maritime Equipment Conference held on



The 2026 World Maritime Equipment Conference held in Fuzhou, Fujian Province, China.

15-18 October in Fuzhou, Fujian Province, China, according to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The "Two Countries, Twin Parks" cooperation model offers good opportunities for enhancing seafood processing capacity, modernizing cold-chain logistics, improving product quality and linking Myanmar's economic zones and ports with Fujian's advanced maritime infrastructure, the ambassador said.

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NATIONAL

United Kingdom's King Charles III Sends Two Books, Sealed Envelope and Diplomatic Pouch to Prisoner Daw Aung San Suu Kyi



The photo shows Daw Aung San Suu Kyi receiving books and other items sent by King Charles III.

OFFICIALS from the Ministry of Home Affairs handed over two books along with one sealed envelope and a sealed diplomatic pouch sent by King Charles III of the United Kingdom to prisoner Daw Aung San Suu Kyi yesterday morning. The books were The Land Gardeners – Soil to Table and SOIL: The World at Our Feet. — MNA/TTA

Seventh Amendment to Pyithu Hluttaw Election Law 2026 Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Law No 6

8th Waxing of Thadingyut 1388 ME
19 October 2026

THE Pyidaungsu Hluttaw hereby enacts this Law.

1. This Law shall be called the Seventh Amendment to the Pyithu Hluttaw Election Law.
2. Subsection (m) shall be added after Subsection (l) of Section 11 of the Pyithu Hluttaw Election Law.
“(l) being adjudicated by the Election Tribunal as disqualified due to the failure to submit election expenses as prescribed.”
3. The following shall be inserted after Section 11 of the Pyithu Hluttaw Election Law as Section 11-a:
“11-a. A person elected as a Hluttaw representative -
(a) If the registration of the political party represented by that person is cancelled under subsection (b) on the ground that the party has violated any of the provisions contained in clauses iv, v, vi, vii and xi of subsection (a) of Section 12 of the Political Parties Registration Law, the election of that person as a Hluttaw representative shall be deemed automatically void.
(b) If the political party represented by that person is dissolved, or if its registration as a political party is cancelled under subsection (b) on the ground that the party has violated any of the provisions contained in clauses i, ii, iii, viii, ix and x of Subsection (a) of Section 12 of the Political Parties Registration Law, or if its registration as a political party is cancelled under subsection (e) of Section 24, the person shall apply to the Commission within 60 days from the date of dissolution of the party or the date on which its registration is cancelled, as applicable, submitting conclusive evidence of membership in another political party, to be permitted to continue serving as a Hluttaw representative of that other party. If no such application is submitted, the election of that person as a Hluttaw representative shall be deemed automatically void.
Exception: If the person wishes to continue serving solely as an independent Hluttaw representative, the person may notify the Commission accordingly within 60 days.”
4. Section 28 of the Pyithu Hluttaw Election Law shall be substituted with the following: -
“28. (a) A person whose name has been submitted for inclusion in the list of candidates for election as a Hluttaw representative shall have the right to withdraw the nomination in accordance with the prescribed procedures.
(b) After the list of candidates for election as Hluttaw representatives has been officially announced, a candidate shall have the right to withdraw from candidacy in accordance with the prescribed procedures.”
5. The introductory paragraph of Section 30-a of the Pyithu Hluttaw Election Law shall be substituted with the following: -
“30-a. The central executive committee members of political parties contesting in the election, candidates for election as Hluttaw representatives, and their election representatives may campaign by the following means, in accordance with the procedures prescribed by the Commission.”
6. In Section 42 of the Pyithu Hluttaw Election Law, the expression “6 am” shall be substituted with “7 am”, and the expression “4 pm” shall be substituted with “5 pm.”
7. In subsection (b) of Section 48 of the Pyithu Hluttaw Election Law, the expression “two days in advance” shall be substituted with “three days in advance”, and the expression “before 4 pm” shall be substituted with “before 9 am.”
8. In subsection (d) of Section 88 of the Pyithu Hluttaw Election Law, the expression “a Hluttaw representative or an election representative” shall be substituted with “a Hluttaw representative, a candidate for election as a Hluttaw representative, or an election representative”.

I hereby sign this law in accordance with the Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar:

Sd/Min Aung Hlaing
President
Republic of the Union of Myanmar

Myanmar Gazette Appointment of Head of Service Organization confirmed

THE President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has confirmed the appointment of Daw Si Si Chein, Director-General of the Audit Department of the Office of the Auditor-General of the Union, after the one-year probationary period.

- ### Objectives of 27th Traditional Myanmar Cultural Performing Arts Competition 2026
- (a) To enhance national prestige, integrity, and preserve the traditional cultural heritage of ethnic people
 - (b) To preserve national characteristics and promote the national spirit, cherishing traditional culture among the younger generation
 - (c) To explore, preserve and promote the sustainable development of traditional Myanmar arts
 - (d) To function as a cultural and artistic institution that contributes to nation-building

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NATIONAL

Vice-President oversees regional development projects in Yangon

VICE-PRESIDENT U Nyo Saw, during his inspection tour of Yangon Region, reviewed plans to carry out development projects at Botahtaung Port, of Yangon Region, yesterday morning. Yangon Region Chief Minister U Aung Naing Thu and the Yangon Mayor presented information about the work projects.

The Vice-President inspected the efforts to improve the appearance and systematic arrangements of residential buildings along the Strand Road in Botahtaung Township.



Vice-President U Nyo Saw is pictured during his inspection tour of development projects in Yangon Region.

The Vice-President also viewed the sites designated for construction of the football ground and the sports ground on Kyansittha Road and the sites on Kanaung Minthagyi Road in Hlinethaya Township

(East).

The Vice-President also inspected the location chosen for construction of the football ground on Pyidaungsu Road in Shwepyitha Township and the land plots designated to expand

the Anawrahta Industrial Zone in Hlinethaya Township (West).

The Yangon Region chief minister and officials conducted a tour of the sites with the Vice-President. — MNA/TTA

HLUTTAW

Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker receives legal professionals

PYITHU Hluttaw Speaker U Khin Yi met advocates, higher-grade pleaders and apprentice lawyers who visited the 18th day of the Third Regular Session of the Third Pyithu Hluttaw at the meeting hall in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday afternoon.

The Speaker welcomed their interest in observing parliamentary proceedings and explained that the legislature, one of the three Pillars of the State, consists of elected people's representatives under Myanmar's bicameral parliamentary system. He highlighted the Hlut-



Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U Khin Yi meets visiting advocates, higher-grade pleaders and apprentice lawyers.

taw's responsibilities for amending, supplementing or repealing outdated laws and enacting new laws when necessary, representing public concerns through questions and motions, and coordinating

with other branches of government. He also stressed the important role of parliamentary committees in reviewing existing laws concerning women, children, older persons, persons with disabilities and

narcotic drugs, and reaffirmed his commitment to building a modern, capable and people-centred legislature.

The attendees expressed satisfaction at seeing how the Hluttaw addressed public concerns and aspirations through questions and discussions. They also noted the progress in transparent and democratic parliamentary proceedings and described the Hluttaw as an important institution that the public should visit and learn about. — MNA/KTZH

HLUTTAW

Delegation led by Pyidaungsu Hluttaw & Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker departs for Belarus

AT the invitation of the Speaker of the Upper House of the Republic of Belarus, Mrs Natalia Kochanova, a delegation led by Pyidaungsu Hluttaw and Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker U Aung Lin Dwe departed for the Republic of Belarus by air from Yangon yesterday morning.

The delegation led by the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker was seen off at Yangon International Airport by Speaker of the Yangon Region Hluttaw U Htay Aung, Deputy Speaker U Kyaw Kyaw

Soe, Yangon Region Ministers and officials from the Amyotha Hluttaw Office.

The Speaker is accompanied by Public Accounts Committee and International Relations Committee Chairman U Chit Swe, Construction, Industry, Electricity and Energy Committee Chairman Dr Saw Nay Lin Aung, Myanmar-Belarus Parliamentary Friendship Association Chairman Brig-Gen Than Tun Aung and officials from the Amyotha Hluttaw Office. — MNA/MKKS



Pyidaungsu Hluttaw and Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker U Aung Lin Dwe seen before leaving for Belarus.

Myanmar LDCR wins 2026 Lion Dance Championship ...

FROM PAGE 1

The Myanmar LDCR team is a well-established group that regularly competes in international lion dance tournaments. Earlier this year, they won a

bronze medal at a competition held in Guangxi, China, in September, and placed 5th at the international MGM Cup tournament held in Macau on 10 October. — TWA/ZN



Officials are visiting Ye train station where renovations are underway.

Ye Train Services Set to Resume Soon

RENOVATION works are being done at the Ye train station located in Mon State's Ye Township, Aung Myitta Ward. Train journeys are expected to resume as soon as possible, according to the Myanmar

Railways.

Renovations are being carried out at the station building, railway facilities, and platforms, and the cleaning of the area around the station is still in progress. This

plan is aimed at helping the socioeconomic development of residents and facilitating the freight sector development. Ye-Mawlamyine train schedules are being managed to resume safely as

soon as possible.

In addition, plans are also underway for a new Ye-Dawei railroad project which connects Ye with Taninthayi Region for the transport and tourism sectors. — TWA/ZS

NATIONAL

HLUTTAW

Pyithu Hluttaw Discusses Regional Security, Health Infrastructure, Education Regulations

THE 18th-day meeting of the third regular session of the Third Pyithu Hluttaw was held today in Nay Pyi Taw, attended by Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U Khin Yi, Deputy Speaker U Maung Maung Ohn, and members of parliament. During the session, officials addressed eight parliamentary questions covering transport security, healthcare upgrades, international scholarships, and educational administration.

Deputy Minister for Defence Maj-Gen Aung Myo Thant answered an inquiry regarding the 3.4-mile road section be-



The Third Pyithu Hluttaw's third regular session convenes its 18th-day meeting in Nay Pyi Taw.

tween Yan Myo Aung Village and the Inthabauk Bridge in Kyaukkyi Township. He stated that local

authorities will conduct ground surveys to assess repair and asphalt upgrading costs once

comprehensive security and demining operations are completed, with work to be carried out based

on regional budget allocations.

Deputy Minister for Health Dr Tin Tun responded to three health-care-related questions. Regarding the Monghsat District Hospital, he explained that a proposed expansion from 50 to 100 beds is currently deferred because the hospital's bed occupancy averaged only 36 per cent between 2023 and 2025. Addressing infrastructure in Kalay Township, he confirmed that the reconstruction of the four-storey Kalay District Public Health Department Office and the construction of a stand-

ard rural health centre in Tahan have been incorporated into the 2026-2030 five-year plan, with work scheduled to begin in the 2027-2028 financial year. Regarding Bogale Township, he noted that upgrading the Hayman rural health centre to a station hospital is not feasible at present due to land constraints, steady patient numbers, and manageable travel times to nearby facilities.

Deputy Minister for Education U Win Maung Thein clarified government policies across several academic areas.

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Myanmar, Thailand Discuss Energy Cooperation and New Investments

MYANMAR and Thailand have discussed expanding cooperation in the electricity and energy sectors, including natural gas production, hydropower development and cross-border energy trade.

Union Minister for Electricity and Energy U Ko Ko Lwin met a Thai delegation led by Thailand's Energy Minister Mr Akanat Promphan at the Yadana Hall of the Ministry of Electricity and Energy yesterday morning.

During the meeting, the two sides discussed signing a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to strengthen bilateral cooperation in the electricity and energy sectors. They



Union Minister U Ko Ko Lwin holds a meeting with the Thai delegation led by Thai Energy Minister Mr Akanat Promphan.

also exchanged views on increasing output from natural gas projects jointly operated with Thailand, investing in new projects and making full use of pipelines connecting Myanmar and Thailand.

Other topics included potential Myanmar-Thailand-Russia trilateral co-

operation in energy trade based in the Dawei area, Thai companies' participation in hydropower projects in the Thanlwin and Taninthayi river basins, and investment in electricity transmission and distribution, including cross-border power transmission line projects.

The meeting was attended by the deputy minister, permanent secretary, directors-general and relevant officials from the Ministry of Electricity and Energy, as well as the Thai ambassador to Myanmar and representatives of Thailand's PTT, PTTEP and Electricity Generating Authority of Thailand (EGAT).

Following the meeting, the Thai Energy Minister and delegation, accompanied by Union Minister U Ko Ko Lwin, visited the Maravijaya Buddha Image. Officials briefed them on the construction and installation of the monumental Buddha image. — MNA/ST

U Soe Thet Naung presents Credentials to Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam

U Soe Thet Naung, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to Brunei Darussalam, presented his Credentials to His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanali Bolkhiah Mu'izzaddin

Waddaulah Ibni Al-Marhum Sultan Haji Omar 'Ali Saifuddin Sa'adul Khairi Waddien, the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam on 19 October 2026 at Istana Nurul Iman in Brunei Darussalam. — MoFA



U Soe Thet Naung, Ambassador to Brunei Darussalam, presents his Credentials to the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan.

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CIRCULATION & DISTRIBUTION

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

ADVERTISING & MARKETING

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

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gnlmnews@gmail.com,
newsroom@gnlm.com.mm
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NATIONAL

NSPNC, Political Parties Hold Peace Talks

THE National Solidarity and Peacemaking Negotiation Committee (NSPNC) held discussions in Nay Pyi Taw with representatives of political parties to advance sustainable peace and support the establishment of a democratic federal union. The meeting brought together Union Minister for Defence and NSPNC Chairman Lt-Gen Yar Pyae, Secretary Lt-Gen Min Naing, committee members, and political party leaders, including chairpersons, secretaries, executive committee members, and responsible officials.

Opening the dialogue,



The National Solidarity and Peacemaking Negotiation Committee (NSPNC) and representatives of political parties meet in Nay Pyi Taw.

Lt-Gen Yar Pyae emphasized Myanmar's multi-ethnic identity and reviewed the committee's ongoing outreach to both signatory

and non-signatory ethnic armed organizations under the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement. These negotiations have yielded 43

agreed points to amend the 2008 Constitution, which have been forwarded to the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw. **SEE PAGE 6**

HLUTTAW

Pyithu Hluttaw Discusses Regional ...

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On foreign study opportunities, he reported that the ministry continues to sign memorandums of understanding with foreign universities, noting that 251 scholars were sent abroad between 2021 and 2025, with 69 trainees currently pursuing degrees across nine countries. In response to a query on school naming, he affirmed that private and international schools are not required to adopt Myanmar-only titles, as original names are vital for global linkages and accreditation. He also

outlined the standardized frameworks, seniority benchmarks, and departmental committees governing teacher transfers and promotions nationwide. Finally, he confirmed that verified foreign and private degrees are officially recognized for private school teacher registration, adding that qualified holders remain eligible to apply for state civil service appointments. The assembly concluded its 18th-day meeting and will reconvene for its 19th-day session on 21 October. — News Team/ST

Vaccination campaigns resume in Falam

VACCINATION campaigns, suspended for an extended period due to terrorist attacks in Falam Township, Chin State, have resumed. Yesterday afternoon, additional measles and rubella vaccinations for children and school-based human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccinations were conducted at Falam Town Hall and the Shalwel Hall of the No 1 Basic Education High School.

At the vaccination ceremony, Deputy Minister for Construction Dr Thaung Naing delivered the opening remarks, while Deputy Director-General of the Department of Public Health Dr Kyaw Kan Kaung explained the government's routine immunization programme for children, including those in remote areas such as Chin State, and the importance of additional measles and rubella vaccinations. After the ceremony, officials observed vaccinations for children aged nine months to five years who had returned to their homes. The additional



Deputy Minister Dr Thaung Naing inspects the vaccination campaign in Falam Township, Chin State.

measles and rubella vaccination campaign will run from 19 to 23 October, with 60 children vaccinated on the first day. Meanwhile, 73 schoolgirls aged nine to 11 from basic education post-primary and high schools in Falam received HPV vaccinations under the school-based programme. In the same morning, Deputy Minister Dr Thaung Naing inspected reconstruction work in Falam. They reviewed the renovated Falam District Electrical Engineer's Office, the reconstructed 66KV substation, and repaired staff housing. Of-

ficials were instructed to prepare for electricity distribution once power from the national grid becomes available, maintain office facilities, and properly store salvaged materials for future use. They also inspected the renovated Falam District Supervisory Office of the Department of Progress of Border Areas and National Races, its operations and staff housing. Officials urged staff to maintain cleanliness, improve drainage and provide proper public services in accordance with civil service rules and regulations. — MNA/KTZH

Myanmar attends World Conference on Traditional Medicine 2026 in Beijing

A Myanmar delegation led by Union Minister for Health Dr Soe Win attended the World Conference on Traditional Medicine 2026, held at the China National Convention Centre in Beijing, China, on 17 and 18 October, at the invitation of Mr Lei Haichao, Chairman of China's National Health Commission and Minister of Health.

At the Government Forum under the title "Advancing Primary Health Care Together: From Commitment to Action", the Union minister highlighted Myanmar's efforts to develop traditional medicine in line with the WHO Global Traditional Medicine Strategy 2025-2034. He also discussed the role of traditional medicine in primary healthcare, quality control of traditional medicines, training traditional medicine practitioners, upgrading traditional medicine hospitals and clinics, and promoting research.



Union Minister Dr Soe Win speaks at the World Conference on Traditional Medicine 2026 in Beijing, China.

At a ministerial roundtable discussion on the sustainable conservation of medicinal plants, the Union minister highlighted the importance of environmental conservation and Myanmar's efforts to establish herbal gardens, including the National Herbal Garden in Nay Pyi Taw, and preserve rare medicinal plants across regions and states. During the conference, the Union minister held separate meetings with Chinese National Health Commission Vice-Minister Mr Zeng Yixin and Indian Ministry

of Ayush Vice-Minister Mr Vaidya Rajesh Kotecha. Discussions focused on strengthening bilateral healthcare cooperation, sharing information on infectious diseases in border areas, training traditional medicine personnel and expanding future co-operation. The Union minister and other international delegates also visited the 1,200-bed Haidian District People's Hospital in Beijing the Hygea Health Innovation Centre. More than 1,500 international delegates and experts attended the conference. — MNA/KTZH

NATIONAL

1.3M+ acres of Pawsan rice planted in Ayeyawady Region

MORE than 1.3 million acres of Pawsan rice, the World's Best Rice, has been planted as monsoon paddy in Ayeyawady Region, according to the Ayeyawady Region Agriculture Department.

Farmers in 20 townships across eight districts of the region mainly grow four varieties: Pawsan Hmway, Pawsan Baykya, Baykya Taungpyan and Pawsan Yin. Lappan Pawsan and Thawkya Pawsan varieties are also cultivated.

"This year, monsoon Pawsan paddy is expected to yield between 65 and 75 baskets per acre. Last year, Pawsan was grown on 750,000 acres, while this year the cultivated area has exceeded 1.3 million acres. It is a great source of pride for the country, relevant departments and farmers that Myanmar's Pawsan rice, described as the country's pearl, has been recognized as the world's best rice. This is a historic milestone for the



A thriving local paddy field in Myanmar. PHOTO: REGIONAL AGRICULTURE DEPT

nation. I also believe that Pawsan rice is creating greater economic opportunities for farmers," said U Thein Aung Than, deputy head of Ayeyawady Region Agriculture Department.

More than 3.7 million acres of monsoon paddy have been planted across the region, comprising high-yield varieties, Pawsan varieties and local varieties. As of 15 October, about 130,000 acres of monsoon Pawsan paddy had been harvested. The department expects summer paddy cultivation

to increase compared with last year as harvesting of monsoon paddy continues. The region usually grows around 1.5 million acres of summer paddy annually.

Although seasonal Pawsan varieties are not usually grown in summer, Yezin Pawsan-1 and Yezin Pawsan-2, developed by the Department of Agricultural Research, were introduced in the region in 2025. While their aroma is less pronounced than that of seasonal Pawsan, efforts are underway to further improve their quality.

Myanmar's Pawsan rice includes varieties such as Shwebo Pawsan, Pawsan Hmway, Pawsan Baykya, Pawsan Gyi, Pawsan Yin, Myaungmya Pawsan, Pyapon Pawsan, Yezin Pawsan-1 and Yezin Pawsan-2.

At the International World Rice Conference 2026, held in Manila, the Philippines, on 9 September, Myanmar's Pawsan Hmway rice won the "World's Best Rice Award 2026" in the rice quality competition. — Nyein Thu (MNA)KTZH

NSPNC, Political Parties Hold Peace Talks

FROM PAGE 5

Lt-Gen Yar Pyae urged political parties to utilize their grassroots networks to foster social cohesion, counter divisive media narratives, and actively assist internally displaced populations. He specifically called for coordinated efforts to address resettlement, security, livelihoods, and transport challenges facing communities in Kayah, Chin, and Pa-O areas.

Representing the political parties, working group leader Dr Aung Myat Oo welcomed their expanded mandate, noting that their involvement had previously centred primarily on constitutional matters rather than direct peace negotiations. He stated that the restructured party bloc is committed to assessing the needs of conflict-affected populations and encour-

aging greater local public participation in the peace process.

The session proceeded with discussions on operationalizing the parties' intermediary role. Delegates addressed plans for gauging public opinion on regional stability, connecting with external stakeholders capable of mediating talks, and formulating trust-building measures between armed organizations and the state. In his concluding remarks for the day, Lt-Gen Min Naing addressed party proposals, focusing on state peace policies, engagement with non-signatory armed groups, regional coordination frameworks, and media outreach strategies.

The meeting concluded its initial session and will resume for a second day of deliberations on 20 October. — MNA/ST

Shwe Kokko scam compounds flattened in wide-ranging crackdown

TREATING the fight against online fraud and online gambling as a matter of national duty, the Government is systematically carrying out the complete demolition of illegal structures in the Shwe Kokko area to prevent them from ever being used again for illicit scam and gambling operations.

As part of these operations targeting the remaining illegal buildings in Shwe Kokko Phase II, heavy machinery has been deployed to dismantle key structures. The demolition of one five-story building has reached 100 per cent completion to date, while



This image reveals part of the demolition in the Shwe Kokko area.

the demolition of another five-story building is currently 30 per cent complete. Out of 63 targeted structures in Shwe Kokko Phase II, authorities have categorized the demolition methods based on building type and surrounding

conditions: 25 buildings are slated for mechanical demolition with heavy machinery, four buildings for controlled implosion, and 34 buildings for manual, floor-by-floor dismantling due to their proximity to residential homes. Thus

far, all four buildings designated for controlled implosion and two buildings designated for mechanical teardown have been fully demolished. The systematic demolition of the remaining 57 buildings will continue moving forward.

Recognizing online fraud and online gambling as serious threats to the global socioeconomic fabric and national security, the Government remains committed to cracking down on these operations in close coordination with neighbouring and regional countries to eradicate them once and for all. — 100/MKKS

Labour Attaché negotiates to secure compensation for injured Myanmar workers



Officials offering words of encouragement to injured Myanmar workers.

FIFTY-EIGHT Myanmar workers were injured when a factory shuttle bus rolled over in ChonBuri Province, Thailand, and they were subsequently sent to Chon Buri Hospital for medical treatment, according to the Office of the Myanmar Labour Attaché in Thailand.

Following the incident, the injured Myanmar workers received medical care and were discharged from the hospital. The Labour

Attaché visited the workers' dormitories, inspected their living conditions, and offered words of encouragement.

Additionally, the Labour Attaché visited the factory to meet with relevant officials and negotiated with management to ensure that the workers injured in the accident receive their full rights and appropriate compensation. — TWA/ZN

NATIONAL

Octane price rises, diesel price slumps

THE Octane price increased a bit to K4,705 per litre for Octane 92 and K4,850 for Octane 95, whereas the diesel price showed a downtick at K4,485 for diesel and K5,440 for premium diesel during the week ending 22 October.

The regulated fuel price caps were set at K4,595 for Octane 92 and K4,770 for Octane 95, K4,580 for diesel and K5,575 for premium diesel for the past two weeks ending 15 October. The price index set by the Mean of Platts Singapore (MOPS), the pricing basis for many refined products in Southeast Asia, influences domestic fuel prices, according to the Su-



The image shows a row of Octane storage tanks.

pervisory Committee on Oil Import, Storage and Distribution of Fuel Oil. The committee governs the market to ensure stable price and secure supply. Under the guidance of the Supervisory Committee, the Petroleum Products Regulatory Department has been

issuing daily reference wholesale prices to ensure price stability for energy consumers. The committee is inspecting the fuel stations to see whether they are overcharging. Authorities are taking action against those retailers at fuel stations under the Pe-

troleum and Petroleum Products Law 2017 if they are found overcharging above the set reference rate. As per the statement, 90 per cent of fuel oil in Myanmar is imported, while the remaining 10 per cent is produced locally. — NN/KK

Twin Parks model spotlighted at 2026 ...

FROM PAGE 1

Myanmar will continue working with China and ASEAN member states to strengthen maritime cooperation in line with the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, he added. Fujian province is a significant area of the Maritime Silk Road, and Fuzhou is an important gateway for maritime-based economic development and regional

connectivity. Myanmar has more than 2,000 kilometres of coastline along the Bay of Bengal and the Andaman Sea, with major potential for developing the blue economy, including sustainable fisheries, aquaculture, maritime transport and logistics. About 150 people attended the conference, including ambassadors and representatives from Chinese embassies. — ASH/KK

YU to offer Dip in Applied Philosophy in Dec



This image captures the facade of the Convocation in Yangon University.

THE Department of Philosophy at the University of Yangon will offer the Postgraduate Diploma in Applied Philosophy (Batch 4) on 1 December as part of the Human Resource Development Programme. Graduates will receive a Postgraduate Diploma in Applied Philosophy (PGDAPhil) certificate. Applicants must hold a bachelor's degree from a recognized university. The course runs for eight months and accepts

50 trainees. Applications will open on 2 November and close on 20 November. Applications will be accepted at Room AA-104 of Amara Hall, University of Yangon. Entrance interviews will be held on 26 November. Classes will run from 7 am to 9 am Monday through Thursday. Individuals can enquire about details at the Department of Philosophy of the University of Yangon via 09 953393010. — NN/KK

PyinOoLwin to lease market stalls at Thumingala Market via Open Tender

THE PyinOoLwin Township Development Committee will lease stalls at the Advanced Thumingala Market through an open tender system, according to the Mandalay Region government. The stalls owned by the Mandalay City Development Committee will be leased at a floor rate of K2,000 per square foot: (a) Room Q-128 and U-1721 on the second floor; (b) Room V-186 on the third floor; and (c) 40 stalls on the fourth floor.



A view of the Thumingala Market in PyinOoLwin.

Tender application forms will be sold by 28 October, from 9 am to 3 pm at the PyinOoLwin Township Development Committee. The dead-

line for submitting tenders is 3 pm on 29 October, and the open tender will be held at 10 am on 30 October. Applications for the open tender at Thumingala Market must be submitted to the PyinOoLwin Township Development Committee Office in accordance with regulations. Individuals can enquire in person or dial 09 444038771 or 092-216426. — NN/KK

SME Development Bank to hold 30th AGM in Jan 2027

THE Small and Medium Enterprises Development Bank will hold its 30th annual general meeting for the financial year 2025-26 in January 2027, in accordance with the bank's charter and records, the bank has notified shareholders. Candidates standing for election as directors

must submit their proposal lists to the Central Bank of Myanmar before the general meeting. Under Paragraph 84 of the SME Development Bank's charter, only shareholders holding 1,000 shares or more are eligible to stand for vacant director positions. Of the 1,000-share requirement,

a candidate must hold at least 100 shares in their own name and is entitled to supplement this with shares held by family members or shares entrusted to them by those who trust them, to meet the representation requirement. Holders of 100 or more personal shares

who wish to stand as directors must submit their share certificates (1,000 shares) or representative authorization letters by 4 pm on 23 October to the SME Development Bank at 298, corner of Anawrahta Road and Wahdan Road, Ward 2, Lanmadaw Township, Yangon.

Individuals standing for election as director must meet the qualifications set out in, Clauses (1) through (8) of Section 76 (b) in Chapter X of the Financial Institutions Law. They must bring their citizenship scrutiny card, one passport-size photo and original docu-

ments proving share ownership. The schedule for the annual general meeting will be announced separately in state-run newspapers. Interested individuals can contact the Head of Compliance via 09 799867006, the bank stated. — NN/KK

OPINION

Promoting national economy through agriculture, livestock and industries

Every country in the world is striving to achieve national development through various means, and Myanmar is also giving priority to its own development. The key to national economic development lies in the balanced integration of the agricultural, livestock breeding and industrial sectors, which will contribute to the socioeconomic development of the people.

Of Myanmar’s population of more than 51 million, 70 per cent of the people live in rural areas and are primarily engaged in agriculture and livestock breeding. Nationwide, more than 33 million acres of land are under cultivation, including 15 million acres of paddy, 1.9 million acres of maize, 2.7 million acres of various pulses and beans, and four million acres of sesame. Similarly, if livestock breeding activities associated with agriculture are carried out effectively and in a balanced manner, the incomes of approximately 50 per

cent of the population engaged in agriculture and livestock breeding will increase, thereby improving their socioeconomic well-being.

For Myanmar, the agricultural sector plays a fundamental role in ensuring food security, improving people’s socioeconomic well-being, promoting rural development, and advancing national economic growth. As the agricultural sector develops, value-added production, industry and service sectors will also expand, creating more employment opportunities, increasing public incomes and contributing to higher GDP. Therefore, promoting the agricultural sector is an important step towards national economic growth and poverty reduction.

As Myanmar is an agricultural country, the State is working to increase national production by linking agricultural produce to value-added products and connecting MSMEs with domestic consumption and export markets throughout the entire value chain. In line with the motto, “Let us encourage production for prosperity of the Nation”, guidance is also being provided to ensure that agriculture-based production enterprises achieve their targets by cultivating and producing agricultural products and supplying them to meet market demand in neighbouring and regional countries.

“Let us encourage production for prosperity of the Nation”, guidance is also being provided to ensure that agriculture-based production enterprises achieve their targets by cultivating and producing agricultural products and supplying them to meet market demand in neighbouring and regional countries.

To promote the national economy and substitute imports with domestically produced goods, collective efforts must be made to develop value-added businesses and agro-based industries that rely on agriculture and livestock breeding, thereby contributing to national economic growth and development.

As such, under the leadership of the Government, relevant officials, agricultural and livestock producers, and industrial entrepreneurs must work together in a concerted effort to promote agriculture- and livestock-based industries, increase the production of goods, and substitute imports with domestically produced products, thereby contributing to national economic growth and development.

Building Myanmar’s Humanitarian–Development–Peace Nexus

By Zaw Oo

The 11th anniversary of Myanmar’s Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) brought together some 200 stakeholders from the government, parliaments, ethnic armed organizations and civil society to explore new pathways to peace. Their testimonies conveyed one clear message: peace is urgent. Myanmar’s conflicts have reached a hurting stalemate, but it is ordinary people – not necessarily the armed actors – who bear the highest costs.

When grievances give way to resource rivalry

Myanmar’s conflict has become increasingly fragmented, with armed groups competing for territory, resources and control over populations. Some movements that emerged from genuine grievances have failed to unite under a common political vision. Instead, rivalries over resource-rich territories, checkpoints, taxation and illicit trade flows have increasingly shaped the conflict economy.

US\$10 billion in purchases of rare earths, tin ore, antimony, jade, precious stones and other minerals from Myanmar, while their own books have zero record. Where resource wealth escapes public accounts and local development, competition for resource rents can become a powerful driver of conflict.

The consequences are visible in communities that have borne the brunt of violence. Government statistics suggest that the economies of Chin and Kayah States have suffered severe contractions over the past five years, while satellite-based nighttime-light data provide independent confirmation of economic decline. Yet other parts of Myanmar offer a contrasting lesson.

Mon State and Kayin communities in Ayeyawady Region have demonstrated considerable resilience in maintaining peace despite historical grievances and longstanding ethnic political movements. Mon State has emerged as one of Myanmar’s

to sustain livelihoods can make the difference between resource wealth becoming a peace dividend or a source of prolonged conflict. **Connecting Big P and small p peace**

The discussions at the anniversary meeting produced several ideas for a renewed peace-building pathway. Recognizing the difficulty of bringing all fragmented armed actors into a single process, participants explored an NCA-Plus mechanism with multiple entry points to encourage dialogue and convergence toward the NCA process. They also discussed better models of federal arrangements that could accommodate the diverse needs and autonomous aspirations of Myanmar’s multi-ethnic states. Perhaps most importantly, the meeting highlighted a new approach: Humanitarian–Development–Peace Nexus (HDPN).

While leaders of armed organizations must pursue “Big P” – formal negotiations, ceasefires and political settlements, civic

“Ultimately, however, the legitimacy and durability of peace will depend on whether Myanmar’s people experience its benefits in their daily lives. That is the promise of a Myanmar-owned, Myanmar-led Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus.”

bridge that gap. **First, humanitarian access and genuine localization**

The immediate priority is to support communities emerging from conflict, especially where IDPs are returning home. After years of insecurity and restrictions, many grassroots organizations have lost staff, resources and operational capacity. Yet they often possess the local knowledge and relationships needed to reach vulnerable populations.

These organizations need both resources and the confidence of relevant local authorities and armed actors to deliver assistance safely and impartially. Authorities should expedite registration procedures for qualified local NGOs while ensuring that legitimate humanitarian work is not obstructed by administrative barriers. International donors should move beyond safe partnership with UN agencies as intermediaries and outsource implementation, and instead promote genuine localization by investing in local leadership, ownership and institutional capacity.

Second, build peace through agricultural development

Agriculture offers a practical bridge between humanitarian relief, development and peace. The sector supports rural livelihoods for a large share of Myanmar’s population and remains a major source of employment. Despite

years of conflict and economic disruption, several agricultural value chains have demonstrated remarkable resilience. Myanmar’s corn exports have expanded three-fold, driven in part by demand from neighbouring Thailand. Bean and pulse exports have also generated significant export revenue surpassing the \$2 billion benchmark for the first time, including from the central Dry Zone, where conflict has intensified in the same period.

These value chains cross ethnic, territorial and administrative boundaries. Farmers, traders, transporters, processors and buyers from different ethnic groups and regions must coordinate to maintain market access and profitability. Such cooperation creates practical incentives to reduce disruptions, resolve disputes and preserve commercial relationships across conflict lines. Agricultural value chains can therefore become more than engines of rural income: they can serve as platforms for peacebuilding.

Third, mobilize regional cooperation for peace dividends

Representatives from three neighbouring governments at the meeting reaffirmed their willingness to support Myanmar’s return to peace and stability. Neighbouring countries have already helped facilitate dialogue, hosted ceasefire discussions and provided

humanitarian assistance to displaced populations. Their role could extend further: Regional connectivity and infrastructure investments may offer substantial long-term benefits, but their promise will be realized only if peace is fully restored.

Meanwhile, Myanmar’s neighbours could support a practical HDPN agenda in three ways. First, they could help facilitate neutral, needs-based humanitarian access, working with development partners and international agencies where appropriate. Second, they could support joint needs assessments and recovery planning for conflict-affected border regions, combining cross-border expertise on long-term connectivity agenda with international technical assistance for short-term stabilization measures. Third, they could deepen agricultural cooperation that improves market access, strengthens value chains and creates employment for rural youth while offering a long-term guarantee for shared growth in Myanmar.

Regional economic engagement must also recognize that opaque resource extraction and unaccountable trade can perpetuate conflict. As the buyers hold the market power, transparent and responsible sourcing of resource extraction can leverage peacebuilding in Myanmar. Myanmar’s HDPN should not be another externally designed framework but a Myanmar-owned and Myanmar-led process mobilizing local organizations, key stakeholders and development partners working towards a shared objective. Myanmar’s neighbours can help accelerate that pathway, and the international community can contribute resources and expertise. Ultimately, however, the legitimacy and durability of peace will depend on whether Myanmar’s people experience its benefits in their daily lives. That is the promise of a Myanmar-owned, Myanmar-led Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus.

Zaw Oo is a development economist. The views expressed are the author’s own. This article draws on discussions and feedback received at the conference marking the 11th anniversary of Myanmar’s Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA), held in Nay Pyi Taw.

ARTICLE

Reading Confidence

By Hu Wo (Cuckoo’s Song)

Reading is an easy task, is it not? Of course, the question is quite difficult to answer. This is because although thinking reading is not difficult, many people find the task of reading not as easy as most expect when they really do it. In fact, the reason why reading is not a difficult task is that the books, which they are reading are nearly equal to or below their level of literacy. That is also why we cannot surely say that reading is as easy as falling off a log. However, we teachers can build or boost our students’ reading confidence to a certain extent in some way or another. Here is how.

We should let students predict the first part of the subject matter that we will read very soon. Before reading, we have to ask students some questions. What will students predict the topic to be from the title or picture? Can they guess what might happen next? Do they try to brainstorm vocabulary they expect to see? In this way, prediction gives students a purpose for reading and reduces anxiety.

Secondly, students should be allowed to focus on the general meaning only. Actually, they do not need to understand every single word in the reading text. To understand all words or expressions in a passage is absolutely hard or even totally impossible for young students except their teachers. Hence, the teachers need to encourage the students to continue reading even when they find an unfamiliar word in a paragraph, use the context to infer its meaning and read for the main idea prior to looking at the details. To be certain, confident readers tolerate ambiguity.

Lastly, students should have a chance of celebrating

what they understand from reading. Instead of asking the question “Do you understand?” or “What didn’t you understand?”, teachers should do the following. What did the student learn from reading? What surprised them? Can they summarize the text in one sentence? Highlighting success will build confidence and motivate learners to read more.

In my teaching experience, it is better if teachers do not use the translation method in reading lessons as much as possible. Truly, the direct method is much better than the translation method in reading instruction. Students may misunderstand the meaning of words, expressions or usage from the translation method of reading. Sincerely, this does not mean at all that the translation method is no use to students or teachers through the process of reading. There are also some situations in which students will learn the meaning of a word better only if it is explained merely through the translation method by the teacher. Thus, before the task of reading, we teachers ought to make students read the text in advance without any translation, if possible. But if they wish, they can look up words in the dictionary for reading. And both teachers and students are required to read that text together with the help of the discussion method. While reading, we should all have well understood the literal meanings and connotations of vocabulary expressions and usages, as well as the main theme of a passage. Whatever method is applied, there must be anything left after reading. If not so, such reading will be in vain for certain, and it can consume too much time and energy of an instructor in the end.

SCI/TECH WORLD

From smart sensors to AI robots, technology transforming China's elderly care

A mobile phone alert warns a community worker that no door activity has been detected at an elderly resident's home for more than 24 hours. Another alert reports that a smoke detector has been triggered.

The notifications come from smart devices installed in the homes of over 600 elderly people living alone, mostly aged 80 or above, in Luyang District of Hefei, the capital of Anhui Province in east China. The devices, including door sensors and smoke detectors, help community workers identify potential emergencies and respond more quickly.

The smart early-warning system is part of a government-funded elderly care programme launched in 2025, according to Zhao Fei, director of the Luyang district office of the committee on ageing.



Staff members monitor data at a big data centre for elderly care in Luyang District of Hefei, east China's Anhui Province, 14 October 2026. PHOTO: XINHUA

When an alert is triggered, a three-tier response mechanism involving family members, community workers and community officials is activated to ensure each warning receives appropriate follow-up, Zhao said.

"The combination of smart early warnings and human intervention builds a safety net for elderly people living alone at home," Zhao said.

Around a dozen alerts are generated and handled each day. "It would

be nearly impossible to identify such risks through human inspections alone," Zhao said.

The initiative is part of broader efforts to harness intelligent technologies and high-tech products to improve elderly care as China faces a rapidly growing elderly population.

Official data shows that China's population aged 60 and above exceeded 323 million by the end of 2025, accounting for about 23 per cent of the national

total population.

In addition to smart devices such as millimetre-wave fall detectors, the Shulu Community Service Centre in Hefei high-tech zone has introduced a robot to assess the mental health of elderly people, said Liu Li, head of the centre's social affairs department.

Equipped with cameras and powered by large AI models, the robot analyzes facial expressions, eye features and subtle body movements, conducts noninvasive screening, and by combining these observations with physiological signals generates a report on a person's mental state.

China's rapid advances in artificial intelligence (AI) and advanced manufacturing are encouraging technology companies to develop products for the expanding elderly care market. — Xinhua

China's satellite internet links Arctic, Antarctica, Qinghai-Tibet Plateau for first time

CHINA'S 16th Arctic Ocean expedition team said Monday that its polar icebreaker Jidi had completed a pre-operational application test of domestically developed satellite internet along Arctic shipping routes.

The voyage marked the first successful verification of networked communications across the Arctic, Antarctica and the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau, also known as the "Third Pole" of Earth, closing the last communications coverage gap in the world, the expedition team said.

Organized by China's Ministry of Natural Resources, the expedition

set off on 3 July. The Jidi, meaning "polar region" in Chinese, is one of the expedition's four research vessels.

According to the expedition team, voice and video were clear and smooth during a video link connecting the icebreaker in the Arctic, Qinling Station in Antarctica, the Lhasa River test station in the Xizang Autonomous Region and a ministry bureau based in the eastern coastal city of Qingdao.

The link enabled global low-latency, high-bandwidth communications through the Chinese satellite internet, verifying its stability under harsh con-



Members of China's 16th Arctic Ocean scientific expedition team work on the ice surface of the Arctic Ocean on 9 August 2026. PHOTO: XINHUA

ditions such as extreme low temperatures, severe sandstorms, and ice fog.

The voyage also marked the first use of domestic satellite internet for polar medical support. The Arctic Ocean

expedition team said the Jidi held high-definition ship-to-shore video consultations with hospitals and experts in Qingdao, enabling timely medical assessment for its members. — Xinhua

NEWS IN BRIEF

Australian study finds fruit intake may ease teen mental health risks

EATING an extra serving of fruit each day was associated with a lower risk of depression and anxiety symptoms in teenagers, while higher consumption of sugar-sweetened drinks was linked to an increased risk, an Australian study shows.

Researchers followed 6,537 adolescents from 71 secondary schools across the states of New South Wales, Queensland and Western Australia over four years, beginning when participants were about 12.5 years old on average, according to a statement released Monday by Australia's University of Sydney.

The study found that one additional daily serving of fruit was associated with a 13 per cent lower risk of depression symptoms and a seven per cent lower risk of anxiety symptoms. Average daily fruit consumption ranged from two to 2.5 servings during the study period. — Xinhua

UN biodiversity conference begins formal sessions in Armenia

THE opening plenary of the 17th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (COP17) was held here on Monday.

The international community has made some progress in implementing the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, but the pace and scale of action remains insufficient to achieve its targets, Astrid Schomaker, executive secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity, said at the plenary.

Schomaker said the conference should advance global biodiversity governance through "accountability, alignment and acceleration". All parties should strengthen the alignment between national actions and global targets, broaden the participation of Indigenous peoples and local communities, women, youth, businesses and financial institutions, and translate international commitments into action, she said.

Armenian Environment Minister Hambardzum Matevosyan was elected COP17 president for a two-year term at the plenary. — Xinhua

Nearly half of reef-building corals face extinction risk: study

ABOUT 44 per cent of reef-building coral species face an increased risk of extinction, with climate change-related heat stress as the main driver of population declines, new research finds.

Researchers from organizations including the Australian Institute of Marine Science and the University of Queensland reassessed the status of 774 reef-building coral species on the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List, updating a 2008 assessment, according to a summary of the study published recently on the Australian Science Media Centre website.

Of the species assessed, 340 had a higher relative risk of extinction, including 33 critically endangered, 251 endangered and 56 vulnerable species. Heat stress over the next 30 years was the most important driver of risk for 93 per cent of the species considered at high risk, according to the study published in Nature. — Xinhua

Japan eyes resuming visas for foreign medical, nursing caterers

THE Japanese government on Monday proposed resuming, from next April, applications under a special visa programme for foreign workers providing catering services to medical and nursing care facilities.

The government will consider separating catering services for medical and nursing care facilities from the restaurant-services category and incorporating them into the food-processing category.

Japan's immigration authorities have suspended the issuance of certificates of eligibility to applicants for the Type I Specified Skilled Worker visa in the restaurant industry since April, as the number of visa holders was



A government panel on foreign workers holds a meeting at the Justice Ministry in Tokyo on 19 October 2026. PHOTO: KYODO

on course to surpass the quota of 50,000 by March 2029.

According to the Immigration Services Agency, a survey conducted by the health ministry in August found that all surveyed

companies providing catering services to medical and nursing care facilities faced labour shortages, raising concerns about nutritional care at hospitals and elder care facilities, especially in rural regions.

The government sets quotas for individual sectors under the Type I visa program, but does not impose a cap on Type II visas intended for those with higher-level technical skills. — Kyodo

Young S Koreans enjoy more leisure time amid narrowing gender gap in housework, childcare

YOUNG South Koreans enjoyed more personal leisure time amid a narrowing gender gap in housework and childcare, a statistics ministry report showed Monday.

According to the Ministry of Data and Statistics, a comprehensive analysis of time-use

patterns among young adults aged 25 to 39 between 2014 and 2024 revealed significant shifts depending on marital and parental status.

In 2024, a typical day for a young South Korean consisted of 11 hours and 25 minutes for essential activities such as sleep-

ing and eating, eight hours and 22 minutes for mandatory duties including work, housework and childcare, and four hours and 13 minutes for leisure.

Compared to 10 years ago, essential and leisure time increased by 16 minutes and 21 minutes each, while mandatory duty time

decreased by 37 minutes.

The lifestyle diverged once they had children. Married young adults with children spent an average of four hours and 15 minutes on housework and childcare, far more than their unmarried peers who just spent 52 minutes. — Xinhua

"Street Fighter" tops North American box office in opening weekend

PARAMOUNT Pictures' "Street Fighter" took the top spot at the North American box office with an estimated US\$31 million during its opening weekend, data from measurement firm Rentrak showed on Sunday.

Internationally, the film, based on Capcom's iconic Street Fighter video game franchise, earned an additional \$20.1 million across 65 markets, bringing its worldwide box office total to \$51.1 million.

Directed by Kitao Sakurai and starring Noah Centineo, Andrew Koji and Callina Liang, the film follows Chun-Li, a mysterious martial artist who recruits estranged street fighters Ryu and Ken Masters to

compete in the World Warrior Tournament.

The film has received an approval rating of 41 per cent based on 100 reviews to date on review-aggregation website Rotten Tomatoes. It earned a "B-" on an "A+" to "F" scale from audiences polled by market research firm CinemaScore.

Another newcomer, A24's documentary "You Can See Everything", which explores the story of convicted fraudster Elizabeth Holmes, opened in second place with \$15 million.

Rounding out the top three, Universal's horror film "Other Mommy" took in \$8.35 million in its second weekend for a North American cume of \$44.85 million. — Xinhua



Alfredo Lomeli attends the "Street Fighter" World Warrior Miami Screening with Noah Centineo at CMX Cinemas Dolphin 19 on 14 October 2026 in Miami, Florida. PHOTO: ROMAIN MAURICE/GETTY IMAGES FOR PARAMOUNT PICTURES/AFP

Australia to ban celebrities, sports stars from gambling ads from 2027

AUSTRALIA'S media regulator on Monday published initial industry guidance on new rules banning celebrities, professional athletes and social media influencers from appearing in gambling advertisements from 1 January 2027.

The Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) said the ban would apply across all platforms, including television, radio, news websites, online games and social media.

Under the new rules, gambling advertisements must not feature "notable people", including current or former professional athletes, celebrities, social media influencers and other prominent individuals. — Xinhua

Japan drafts guidelines favouring mix of paper, digital textbooks

JAPAN'S education ministry has drafted guidelines making a hybrid of paper and digital textbooks standard from the 2030 academic year, with digital content playing a supplemental role, sources familiar with the matter said Monday.

While digital textbooks will become formal teaching materials in that year, the draft bars fully digital textbooks for pupils in fourth grade or below and calls for a smaller proportion of digital content in hybrid

textbooks than for older groups. The ministry will present the draft to an expert panel on Thursday.

From fifth grade onward, fully digital textbooks would be limited to certain subjects, including English and practical subjects such as music and art.

Textbooks will not include artificial intelligence features for the time being.

The emphasis on paper comes as some experts have raised con-

cerns about the impact of digital textbooks on students' health and learning. The ministry will assess them and review the policy as needed.

Paper is currently the only official textbook format, while digital versions are treated as "alternative teaching materials." Existing digital textbooks reproduce the content of already screened paper textbooks and include text-to-speech functionality. — Kyodo

ECONOMY
WORLD

Russia, Iran expand trade
as North-South Transport
Corridor opens new Eurasian
routes - PM Mishustin

RUSSIA is prioritizing expanding trade and economic cooperation with Iran, and trade between the two countries is growing despite geopolitical challenges and illegal sanctions, Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin said on Monday.

The Russian prime minister arrived in Tajikistan on Monday to participate in a meeting of the Council of Heads of Government of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). Mishustin met with Iranian First Vice President Mohammad Reza Aref in Dushanbe.

The International North-South Transport



A view at the Milad Tower in Tehran. PHOTO: SPUTNIK

Corridor is actively developing and will facilitate the formation of new production and logistics chains in Eurasia, Mushustin said.

Russia provided large-scale humanitarian aid to Tehran after Iran got subjected to armed aggression, the prime minister said.

Mishustin also asked Aref to convey Russian President Vladimir Putin's greetings to Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian. — SPUTNIK

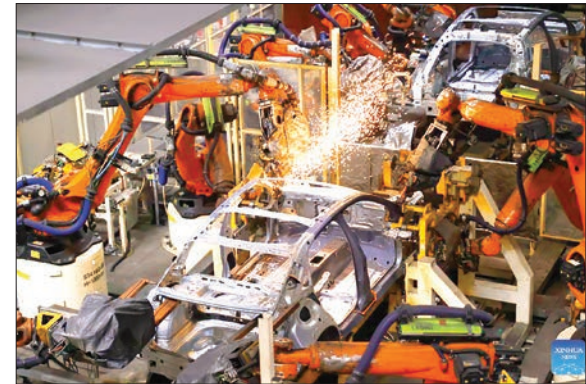
Thailand eyes
forced sales
in foreign
property
crackdown

THAILAND'S government said on Monday it could force the sale of up to 2,300 plots of land worth more than \$400 million as part of a crackdown on property held unlawfully by foreigners.

Prime Minister Anutin Charnvirakul called in a speech for tougher action against the use of Thai proxies to circumvent a ban on non-Thais owning land.

The government has identified 2,360 plots worth 14.01 billion baht (\$417 million) owned through 1,397 proxies, Department of Lands Director Somchai Leelanai said. — AFP

China's GDP expands 4.5%
year on year in Q3



Robots operate at a welding workshop of FAW-Volkswagen's east China base in Jimo District of Qingdao, east China's Shandong Province, 19 October 2026. PHOTO: XINHUA

CHINA'S gross domestic product (GDP) grew 4.5 per cent year on year in the third quarter (Q3) of 2026, data from the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) showed Monday.

The growth rate was higher than the second quarter's reading

of 4.3 per cent, the data showed. The country's economy expanded 4.6 per cent year on year in the first three quarters.

The world's second-largest economy generated about 107.11 trillion yuan (about US\$15.94 trillion) in output during

the January-September period, according to the NBS.

"The national economy forged ahead against pressure and continued to shift towards innovation-driven, high-quality development, with growing positive changes in major indicators," the NBS said in a statement.

Noting the GDP growth of 4.6 per cent in the first three quarters is in line with the country's annual growth target, NBS deputy head Mao Shengyong told a media conference that the economy added 5.7 trillion yuan in output during the period, the largest increase for the same period in the past five years. — Xinhua

Japan to seek
fair competitive
environment for EVs in
EU: govt spokesman

JAPAN will seek "fair competitive conditions" for electric vehicles in the European Union market, after France and Germany's agreement to exclude Japanese-made EVs from a preferential treatment scheme, its top government spokesman said Monday.

Chief Cabinet Secretary Minoru Kihara told a press conference that Tokyo will "continue to closely monitor related developments" and "take appropriate measures", while noting that the preferential treatment scheme itself is still "under discus-

sion by EU members".

"To ensure that Japanese companies will not be disadvantaged, we have conveyed our concerns to the EU and urged it to take appropriate action as Japanese products should be treated on an equal footing with those made in the EU," Kihara said.

The French and German governments announced Friday in a joint statement that vehicles manufactured in Japan should not be eligible for the proposed incentive framework in legislation under consideration by the EU. — Kyodo

Malaysia's Q3 trade
surges 44.7%

MALAYSIA'S total trade surged 44.7 per cent year on year in the third quarter of 2026, driven by strong growth in exports and imports, official data showed on Monday. Exports rose 46 per cent year on year, while imports increased 43.3 per cent, the Department of Statistics Malaysia said in a statement.

The trade surplus amounted to 84.3 billion ringgit (about US\$20.65 billion), an increase of 65.1 per cent. For the January-September period, total trade

expanded 30.1 per cent to 2.9 trillion ringgit from 2.2 trillion ringgit a year earlier, supported by a 34-per cent increase in exports and 25.7-per cent growth in imports. The trade surplus more than doubled, rising 115.7 per cent to 232.4 billion ringgit in the period.

In September, total trade surged 53.7 per cent year on year to 396.5 billion ringgit. Exports rose 54.5 per cent to 215.1 billion ringgit, while imports increased 52.7 per cent to 181.4 billion ringgit. — Xinhua



An angler fishes as a cargo ship is docked at Malaysia's North Klang port in Port Klang on the outskirts of Kuala Lumpur on 6 April 2026. PHOTO: AFP

S Korea’s auto exports fall 5.5% in Sept

SOUTH Korea’s automotive exports fell last month, weighed down by weak demand from Asia and the Middle East, industry ministry data showed Monday.

The outbound car shipment dipped 5.5 per cent from a year earlier to US\$6.05 billion in September, according to the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Resources.

Shipments to core markets expanded, with North America rising 9.2 per cent to \$3.07 billion and the European Union (EU) gaining 15.3 per cent to \$1.11 billion.

They were dragged down by a 60 per cent plunge in Asia to \$329 million and a 7.1 per cent reduction in the Middle East to \$354 million.

Despite the overall downturn, eco-friendly vehicles showed relative resilience, with their exports growing 5.9 per cent to \$2.89 billion.

The eco-friendly vehicles included electric vehicles, fuel cell electric vehicles, hybrid electric vehicles, and plug-in hybrid electric vehicles.

— Xinhua

30% of large Japan firms experienced data leaks or possible leaks: survey

DATA leaks or suspected leaks, including those caused by cyberattacks or human error, have impacted 30.2 per cent of large Japanese companies at some point in the past, a research firm’s survey showed Monday.

Including possible but unconfirmed incidents, the online survey by Teikoku Databank Ltd showed that large firms were impacted at a higher rate than small and medium-sized companies. Overall, 16.2 per cent of firms in the survey said they have experienced data leaks or possible leaks.



Photo taken on 17 October 2026 in Tokyo shows smartphone screens with notifications regarding unauthorized access from businesses. PHOTO: KYODO

According to the survey, 5.5 per cent of firms reported leaks or possible leaks in the past year. On the other hand, 14.8 per cent of companies said they “do not know” if they

cited human error as the cause, such as sending emails to the wrong recipient.

In another incident, a company said, “We received an email believing it was from someone representing another company. Believing it to be urgent, we sent them information without confirming over the phone.”

Some small and medium-sized companies reported difficulty in implementing adequate measures against leaks due to financial and staffing constraints.

— Kyodo

New Zealand annual imports from South-East Asia up 15%

NEW Zealand’s imports from the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) rose 15 per cent to 16 billion NZ dollars (about US\$9.06 billion) in the year to September, driven largely by higher fuel imports, official data showed on Monday.

The total was up 2.1 billion NZ dollars from the previous year, accounting for almost a fifth of New Zealand’s total imports of 92 billion NZ dollars in the year to September, according to the national statistics agency Stats NZ.

New Zealand imports mostly refined fuels, including petrol, diesel and jet fuel. Fuel imports from ASEAN rose 30 per cent year on year to 5.5 billion NZ dollars during the period, with Singapore contributing four billion NZ dollars and Malaysia 1.3 billion NZ dollars, Stats NZ said.

“Fuel imports from ASEAN contributed 42 per cent of the total value of New Zealand fuel imports in the year ended September 2026,” Stats

NZ international accounts spokesperson Shanna Dilworth said in a statement.

The rising value of fuel imports over the period was predominantly driven by higher prices, the agency said.

Imports of mechanical machinery and equipment from ASEAN, including computers, jet engines, turbines and air-conditioners, rose 33 per cent to 1.3 billion NZ dollars, while electrical machinery and equipment imports, including phones, transformers and insulation materials, grew 17 per cent to 1.5 billion NZ dollars, statistics showed. — Xinhua

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V ISEACO GENESIS VOY.NO. (295W)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V ISEACO GENESIS VOY.NO. (295W)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **20-10-2026** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **AWPT** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S NEW GOLDEN SEA LINES

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V BAL XIAMEN VOY.NO. (109W)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V BAL XIAMEN VOY.NO. (109W)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **20-10-2026** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **AWPT** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S NEW GOLDEN SEA LINES

Specific Procurement Notice

Request for Bids

Goods

(Two-Envelope Bidding Process)

Country: Myanmar

Name of Project: Solar Power Project for Quake-Hit Rural Areas

Contract Title: Supply, Installation and Maintenance of Solar PV Systems for Households

RFB Reference No.: ICB S&I-QIP

1. The Government of Myanmar has received financing from the Government of the Republic of India toward the cost of the Solar Power Project for Quake-Hit Rural Areas, and intends to apply part of the proceeds toward payments under the contract for Supply, Installation and Maintenance of Solar PV System for Households. This contract will be jointly financed by the Communities Contribution of Myanmar.

2. The Department of Rural Development, Ministry of Cooperatives and Rural Development now invites sealed Bids from eligible Bidders for supply, installation and maintenance of solar PV Systems for households in the following Regions:
Lot 1- Solar PV Packages in Shan South

3. Interested eligible Bidders may obtain further information from the address below and inspect the bidding document during office hours **10.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m.** at the address given below.

4. A complete set of bidding documents in English may be purchased by interested eligible bidders upon the submission of a written application to the address below and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee of MMK 11,000. The Bidding Documents will be issued through hand deliver.

5. Bids must be delivered to the address below on or before **November 3, 2026 (10.00 a.m.) Myanmar time**. Electronic Bidding will not be permitted. Late Bids will be rejected. The outer Bid envelopes marked “ORIGINAL BID”, and the inner envelopes marked “TECHNICAL PART” will be opened at the address below on **November 3, 2026 (10.00 a.m.) Myanmar time**. All envelopes marked “SECOND ENVELOPE: FINANCIAL PART” shall remain unopened and will be held in safe custody of the Purchaser until the second public opening.

6. The address referred to above is :
Ministry of Cooperatives and Rural Development,
Department of Rural Development,
Office No. 36 (B), Pandita Street, Oattara Thiri Township, Naypyitaw,
Country: Myanmar
Tel : +95 673 418634, +95 673 418633
ksaung@gmail.com, myomyonpd@gmail.com, drdnepe.solar@gmail.com

ROLLING UPDATES

WORLD

Cambodia landmine, ERW casualties fall to 32 during Jan-Sept period

CAMBODIA'S landmine and unexploded ordnance casualties dropped by six per cent during the first nine months of 2026, official data showed on Monday.

According to Lang Kosal, spokesperson for the Cambodian Mine Action and Victim Assistance Authority (CMAA), the kingdom recorded 32 casualties from January to September, down from 34 during the same period last year.

"Seven people were killed, 17 injured, and eight suffered amputations due to landmine and explosive



A deminer searches for mines and unexploded ordnance at a minefield in Siem Reap province, Cambodia, 16 January 2024. **PHOTO: XINHUA/FILE**

remnants of war (ERW) explosions so far this year," he told Xinhua.

The victims included 22 men, six boys, two

women, and two girls, he added.

Cambodia remains one of the world's most heavily mined nations, a

legacy of three decades of armed conflict that ended in 1998. An estimated four to six million landmines and unexploded munitions were left behind.

CMAA data shows that between 1979 and September 2026, these explosives claimed 19,852 lives and left 45,305 people injured or amputated.

To tackle the ongoing threat, Cambodia launched a new National Mine Action Policy last month, pushing its target to eliminate all identified landmines, cluster bombs, and ERWs by 2035. — Xinhua

Indonesia identifies 97 firms suspected of involvement in forest, land fires

INDONESIAN authorities have identified 97 companies suspected of involvement in forest and land fires across Sumatra and Kalimantan islands, Coordinating Minister for Political and Security Affairs Dudung Abdurachman said Monday.

Dudung said the companies were identified based on reports received by regional and national police units, urging investigators to thoroughly investigate those responsible for the fires.

As of 13 October, police had named nine com-

panies and 223 individuals as suspects in separate forest and land fire cases, said Pipit Subiyanto, a senior official with the National Police's special crimes unit.

The corporate cases were linked to 98 police reports, while the individual cases involved 273 reports, Pipit said.

He warned that offenders could face prison sentences of 10 to 12 years, stressing that burning land should not be used as a cheap and easy method of land clearing. — Xinhua



This aerial view shows firefighters battling peatland fires in Sintang, West Kalimantan, on 5 September 2026. **PHOTO: AFP**

Zelensky, US envoys discuss peace process

UKRAINIAN President Volodymyr Zelensky said Sunday that he had a conversation with US President Donald Trump's representatives, Steve Witkoff and Jared Kush-

ner, to discuss the next steps in diplomatic efforts to end the Ukraine crisis.

The talks focused on the results of a recent meeting between the

Ukrainian and US negotiating teams in Florida, Zelensky said.

He added that representatives from both countries remain in constant communication and

are preparing the next steps in diplomacy.

"Ukraine remains ready to work constructively, honestly, and towards a real result," Zelensky said. — Xinhua

At least two dead as floods hit eastern Spain

AT least two people have died after heavy rain triggered flooding in eastern Spain, authorities said Monday, as rescuers worked to evacuate stranded residents and officials urged people in the Valencia region to stay indoors.

Videos released by Valencia's regional meteorological agency showed streets turned into torrents, sweeping away vehicles in several towns in the provinces of Valencia and Alicante.

"Road travel is impossible, you must stay at home," Juan Carlos

Valderrama, the Valencia region's emergency chief, said on Monday morning, warning that intense and persistent rainfall was causing severe flooding.



A fire service vehicle is seen on a bridge over the swollen Girona River following torrential downpours in Els Poblets, eastern Spain, on 19 October 2026. **PHOTO: AFP**

One person died in Sagunto, local authorities said overnight from Sunday to Monday, while firefighters in neighbouring Catalonia reported the

death of a woman who fell into a stream.

Emergency services and soldiers from Spain's military emergency response unit were working early on Monday to evacuate people whose homes had flooded, including residents who had taken refuge on rooftops.

"Rescue operations are continuing in areas that are difficult to access. People are urged to avoid all travel," Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez said on X, describing the situation in the Valencia region as "very difficult". — AFP

French PM urges targeted curfews after violent weekend protests

FRENCH Prime Minister Sebastien Lecornu said Monday that partial curfews would be introduced in some areas starting Monday evening following incidents of looting during weekend protests.

At a news conference, Lecornu said he had asked French prefects to implement "a number of partial curfews as early as this evening", describing the disorder as "very localized in urban

centres".

Lecornu said a state of emergency would be declared "if necessary", but added that curfews "appear to be more appropriate".

"There is no question of allowing the looting to become established," he said, adding that the Interior Ministry would release a detailed map of the areas concerned during Monday afternoon. — Xinhua

SPORTS

Jordan's Qarada wins 1st Aichi-Nagoya Asian Para Games gold, Nishizaki 5th

JORDAN'S Omar Qarada became the first gold medallist of the Aichi-Nagoya Asian Para Games on Monday as he won the para powerlifting men's 49-kilogramme final, while Japan's Tetsuo Nishizaki finished fifth.

Para powerlifting features athletes with lower-limb disabilities competing to lift maximum weight in the bench press.

Back-to-back Paralympic champion Qarada pressed 176 kilogrammes on his second attempt to clinch the title in Nagoya, ahead of



Jordan's Omar Qarada wins gold in the powerlifting men's 49-kilogramme event at the Aichi-Nagoya Asian Para Games in Nagoya on 19 October 2026. PHOTO: KYODO

Vietnam's Le Van Cong in second place and China's Chen Liuxun in third.

"I feel so wonderful about this...but there are more medals to come for me," Qarada said.

"I will celebrate with my family and friends and wife...But my focus now is on Los Angeles 2028 (Paralympic Games). That is my next goal." Meanwhile, Japan's Nishizaki, who has been recovering from a left shoulder injury, thanked the home crowd for their support after lifting 133 kilogrammes. — Kyodo

Barcelona loses Garcia, Kounde to injuries ahead of PSG clash

FC Barcelona confirmed Sunday that defenders Eric Garcia and Jules Kounde will miss Tuesday's Champions League match against Paris Saint-Germain with injuries, with Garcia also ruled out of next weekend's

match against Real Madrid. Garcia faces up to four weeks on the sidelines with a thigh injury, while Kounde's availability for Sunday's meeting with Real Madrid remains uncertain because of an ankle sprain.

"Eric Garcia has sustained a muscle injury to the rectus femoris in his right thigh. The recovery period is expected to be between three and four weeks," Barcelona said on its official website. — Xinhua

No Vinicius no problem as Real Madrid beats Sevilla



Real Madrid's Kylian Mbappe (R) scores during the La Liga football match between Real Madrid and Sevilla FC at Santiago Bernabeu stadium, in Madrid, Spain, on 18 October 2026. PHOTO: XINHUA

REAL Madrid beat Sevilla 4-1 at home on Sunday to stay within six points of FC Barcelona ahead of next week's first Clasico of the season.

Arda Guler opened the scoring with an unstoppable first-time finish in the 30th minute. Kylian Mbappe doubled the lead shortly afterward and converted a penalty in the 63rd minute to make it 3-0.

Manu Bueno pulled one back for Sevilla in the 80th minute, before Yan Di-

omande wrapped up the win with a late strike eight minutes from time. Vinicius Jr missed the match as he began a four-game suspension.

In Sunday's other matches, Celta Vigo won 2-1 at home to Deportivo Alaves, with all three goals coming in the second half.

Ferran Jutgla opened the scoring in the 53rd minute with a first-time finish from Javi Rodriguez's assist, and Rodriguez doubled the lead himself in the

71st minute. Hugo Novoa pulled one back for Alaves with an individual effort late in the game. Jagoba Arrasate's second spell as Osasuna coach got off to a winning start with a 2-0 home victory over Racing Santander. Ante Budimir converted a ninth-minute penalty to give Osasuna the lead, and Asier Osambela sealed the victory in the 88th minute against a side that enjoyed more possession but created few clear chances. — Xinhua

6-time Paralympian swimmer Suzuki wins gold at home Asian Para Games

SIX-TIME Paralympian swimmer Takayuki Suzuki was relieved after winning gold in the men's 50-metre freestyle S4 final at the home Aichi-Nagoya Asian Para Games on Monday.

Meanwhile, 14-year-old debutant Ryuga Yamada was satisfied after setting a personal best despite finishing seventh in the men's 200-metre individual medley SM6 final.

Suzuki and Yamada competed in classes for athletes with physical impairments. In Para swimming, a lower class number generally indicates a more severe degree of

activity limitation.

The 39-year-old Suzuki clocked 38.17 seconds to win in Nagoya, ahead of South Korea's Jo Gi Seong in second and Myanmar's Nyi Nyi Lin Htet in third.

"My time in the heats was pretty good, and I was hoping to improve on it in the final. I'm glad that I was able to improve my time," Suzuki said.

Suzuki, who has won three Paralympic gold medals, said the home race offered a blend of a familiar atmosphere and the tension of international competition.

"It almost feels like

a domestic meet," Suzuki said, adding that the presence of overseas rivals reminded him that "it is an international competition."

A native of Shizuoka Prefecture, neighbouring Aichi, Suzuki was born with congenital deficiencies in both his arms and legs. He took up swimming at the age of six and began competing at 15.

The swimmer made his Paralympic debut at the 2004 Athens Games while in his third year of high school. He has since been a leading figure in Japanese Para swimming. — Kyodo



Japanese swimmer Takayuki Suzuki wins gold in the men's 50-metre freestyle S4 event at the Aichi-Nagoya Asian Para Games in Nagoya on 19 October 2026. PHOTO: KYODO

Arsenal claims sixth win of the season as Brighton puts five past Crystal Palace

ARSENAL won 1-0 away to Nottingham Forest on Sunday to remain three points behind Manchester City in the Premier League title race.

Noni Madueke scored a deflected winner in the 80th minute of a game that was high on effort but low on quality. Arsenal enjoyed more than 70 per cent of possession but struggled to create clear chances, relying too often on long passes.

Madueke's goal arrived after he was allowed to drive at the home defence before shooting. His effort took a slight

deflection and went past Nottingham Forest goalkeeper Matz Sels. It was Arsenal's only shot on target.

The result leaves Mikel Arteta's side on 18 points from a possible 21, three points behind Manchester City.

Leeds United and Manchester United drew 1-1 in a fiery encounter at Elland Road. Bryan Mbeumo opened the scoring for the visitors before Dominic Calvert-Lewin levelled in the 51st minute, controlling a corner delivery and firing home. — Xinhua



WORLD

WFP cuts food aid to 500,000 people in Gaza amid funding shortages

THE United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) announced on Monday that funding shortages had forced it to cut food assistance to around 500,000 people in the Gaza Strip, reducing its monthly beneficiaries from 1.6 million to 1.1 million.

In a press statement, the agency warned that recent improvements in food security remained fragile as winter approaches and declining humanitarian

funding threatens to reverse the gains.

Starting this month, the WFP has halved food rations, with families receiving one food parcel instead of two, along with smaller quantities of wheat flour, according to the statement. The agency has also reduced daily hot meal distributions from 250,000 to 150,000 and cut the value of cash assistance provided to 75,000 families. — Xinhua

GCC, Russia working on new economic, investment projects - Secretary-General



Secretary-General of the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Persian Gulf Jassem Mohamed al-Budaiwi attends a meeting of foreign ministers of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states in Moscow, Russia. **PHOTO: SPUTNIK**

THE Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and Russia are working on a number of new economic and investment proposals aimed at further expanding cooperation, GCC Secretary-General Jassem Al-Budaiwi said on Sunday. "There are a number of economic and investment proposals which, we hope, will contribute to expanding economic cooperation between the Gulf Cooperation Council and the Russian Federation," Al-Budaiwi said at the ninth joint ministerial meeting of the Russia-GCC Strategic

Dialogue in Bahrain's capital, Manama.

Specialized technical groups of the two sides continue consultations on the implementation of the joint action plan for 2023-2028 and the identification of priority areas that will allow achieving tangible results, Al-Budaiwi said.

The cooperation programme includes political dialogue, trade and investment, energy, environment, healthcare, culture, sports, education and science, the secretary-general added. — SPUTNIK

IMF official warns of exacerbated food insecurity in sub-Saharan Africa

SUB-SAHARAN African economies will likely suffer from exacerbated food insecurity if new shocks continue to drive up food prices, an International Monetary Fund (IMF) official has said.

"If you look to grain prices over the past six, seven months, they have increased significantly because of the fertilizers," Zeine Zeidane, director of the IMF's African Department, told Xinhua in a recent interview, noting that there is always "a lag effect" with fertilizers.

"You may not be able to plant in the next season, or plant with limited fertilizers. If you have limited access to fertilizers, you would expect that the yield that you have from agriculture will fall, and that will affect prices,"



A woman works at an urban agricultural demonstration centre in Addis Ababa, the capital of Ethiopia, on 29 August 2025. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

Zeidane said.

The US-Iran conflict and disruptions linked to the Strait of Hormuz drove up fertilizer prices considerably this year, but that's just one factor affecting food insecurity prospects in sub-Saha-

ran Africa, he said, noting that the other factor is the attack on grain shipments from Ukraine and Russia in the Black Sea, due to the ongoing Ukraine crisis.

"If new shocks happen, we'll also have prob-

ably low agricultural production in many places in the world, including in Africa," Zeidane said.

El Nino, in particular, could significantly affect agricultural output and push up food inflation, he said. — Xinhua

Kenya's Ebola cases rise to 8 as hospital attendant tests positive

KENYA'S health authorities have confirmed an eighth Ebola case after a 49-year-old patient attendant tested positive.

Patrick Amoth, director-general for health in the Ministry of Health, confirmed the patient attendant is in isolation, adding that existing patients are showing positive recovery.

Amoth added that 38 people were tested on Sunday, with one coming positive for the Bundibugyo strain of Ebola.

The eighth case is a 49-year-old man who developed fever, headache

and muscle pain, Amoth said during an interview with Kenya's Citizen TV.

The health official

said the patient had been isolated as health officials prepared to begin treatment. — Xinhua



Travellers wash their hands at a handwashing station as Kenyan Ministry of Health officials check their temperature at the Busia One Stop Border Post (OSBP) on the Kenya-Uganda border as health authorities step up Ebola screening measures, in Busia on 12 October 2026. **PHOTO: AFP**

China, Russia prepare for meeting between heads of govt

CHINESE Vice-Premier He Lifeng co-chaired the 30th session of the committee for regular meetings between the Chinese and Russian heads of government, together with Russian Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Chernyshenko, on Monday via video link.

China is willing to work with Russia to implement the important common understandings between the two heads of state and prepare for the 31st regular meeting between Chinese and Russian heads of government, He said. — Xinhua