

# The Global **NEW LIGHT** of MYANMAR

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## OPINION

Raise education research to develop human resources

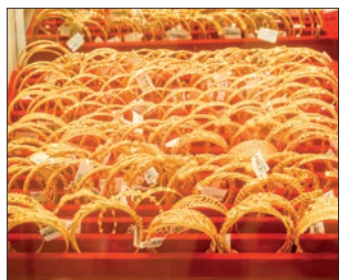
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Boosting exports of high-quality, safe aquatic products

## BUSINESS PAGE 7



Gold reference price shows uptick



State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing views the displays at the meeting with micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprise (MSME) businesspeople in PyinOoLwin yesterday.

## MSMEs utilize domestic raw materials

Power plants are struggling to supply electricity at full capacity due to ongoing terrorist attacks on power plants and towers, resulting in a significant decline in the electricity supply.

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing noted that if these power plants which started in 2005 achieved success, the country would have sufficient electrification.

State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min

Aung Hlaing yesterday morning met micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprise (MSME) businesspeople at the city hall in PyinOoLwin to talk about regional development and promotion of manufacturing domestic products.

SEE PAGE 3

### Salient points from the speech delivered by the Senior General at the meeting with MSME businesspersons in PyinOoLwin

1. The government encouraged the projects of generating electricity from solar energy implemented in the short term due to difficulties in the electric power sector to supply sufficient electricity upon completion of these projects.
2. Power plants find it difficult to supply electricity at full capacity while terrorists destroy power plants and towers, declining the supply of electricity.
3. Farmland owners have to submit proposals for using the farmlands in other forms under laws and regulations by seeking approvals at different levels.
4. Residents have to participate in shaping PyinOoLwin as a flower city, a green city, an education city and a healthy city with the prevalence of peace and prosperity.

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# NATIONAL

## Towards a Prosperous Future: Achieving Harmonious Development in Myanmar's Key Sectors

MYANMAR must achieve harmonious development across the economic, social, educational, and health sectors to become a peaceful, prosperous, modern, and developed nation.

Education is essential for all.

*(Excerpt from the speech given by Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at the meeting to provide guidance to outstanding students for the 2023-2024 academic year on 26 April 2024)*

## Congratulatory messages from foreign heads of state on 77<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Independence Day

**Mr Nadir Larbaoui, Prime Minister of People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, sends Congratulatory Message to Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, State Administration Council Chairman and Prime Minister of Republic of Union of Myanmar**

I am pleased, on the occasion of the celebration of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar of its National Day, to present to you, on behalf of the Algerian Government and in my own name, my warmest congratulations and most sincere wishes for your kind person for abundant health and well-being, as well as further development and prosperity upon Myanmar's friendly people.

I take this opportunity to express to you our aspiration to strengthen the ties of cooperation which exist between Algeria and Myanmar and to push them to broader levels in the service of our two friendly countries' common interest.

**Mr Ahmed Attaf, Minister of Foreign Affairs, National Community Abroad and African Affairs of People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, sends Congratulatory Message to U Than Swe, Deputy Prime Minister and Union Minister for Foreign Affairs of Republic of Union of Myanmar**

I am pleased, on the occasion of the celebration your country of its National Day, to offer you my warmest congratulations and best wishes for abundant health and happiness for you personally as well as further progress and development in your friendly country.

I take this opportunity to reiterate to you my willingness to strengthen the ties of cooperation and friendship which exist between our two countries and to enhance the tradition of dialogue and consultation on regional and international issues which lie at the heart of our common interests.

### Mottos for 78<sup>th</sup> Union Day 2025

1. When all ethnic national brethren stand in unity, hand in hand, the Union will firmly stand.
2. Drifting in one boat, on the same voyage we float; Bound together in communion, the heart of the Union.
3. United in heart and soul, Marching towards the Union's goal.
4. Let's build peace to achieve prosperity.
5. Strong in unity, Ethnic national brethren ensure the nation's strength.

### National Objectives for 78<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Union Day 2025

1. To strive for the perpetual development of the Union through the Union spirit, patriotic values, a sublime state of mind and a genuine nationalist spirit.
2. To encourage collaborative efforts among all ethnic nationals to pursue dialogue for durable peace and to end armed conflicts.
3. To collectively advance cooperation amongst all national people, the government, and Tatmadaw to ensure stability and the rule of law.
4. To enhance collaborative efforts to ensure nationwide stability and tranquillity, enabling the successful conduct of multiparty general elections.
5. To promote balanced development across all regions and states, as well as enhance health, education and job opportunities for ethnic nationals.



### Gold Market Rate as of 11 January 2025

THE price of one tical (16.329325 grammes) of gold with density of 19.25 grammes per cubic centimetre and above is K5,400,000, as established by the Mineral (Gold) Reference Price Determination Committee.



## Residents Urged to Prioritize Public Safety Amid Armed Terrorist Threats

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

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

## MSMEs utilize domestic raw materials

### FROM PAGE 1

In his speech, the Senior General underlined that MSME businesspersons can generate electricity from solar energy on a manageable scale for their manufacturing industries as the government encourages generating electricity from solar energy.

He continued that power plants are difficult to supply electricity at full capacity while terrorists destroy power plants and towers, declining supply of electricity, and adding power plant projects implemented by the State were halted due to various objections.

The Senior General explained that the government encouraged the projects of generating electricity from solar energy implemented a short term due to difficulties in the electric power sector to supply sufficient electricity upon completion of these projects.

He pointed out that the operation of MSME businesses in PyinOoLwin needs to use domestic raw materials which is essential for production as policies have been adopted for MSME products.

The Senior General stressed that farmland owners have to submit proposals for using the farmlands in other forms under laws and regulations by seeking approvals at different levels.

He urged businesspersons to improve the quality of dairy products, wine, coffee and foodstuffs which are trademarks of PyinOoLwin for local consumption and export purposes if these are surplus.

The Senior General highlighted that residents have to participate in shaping PyinOoLwin as a flower city, a green city,



Senior General Min Aung Hlaing observes flower beds at the 17<sup>th</sup> flower festival to mark the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the garden in PyinOoLwin yesterday.

an education city and a healthy city with the prevalence of peace and prosperity.

Local authorities and businesspersons reported on agriculture and livestock farming processes, operation of MSME industries, development of PyinOoLwin, difficulties in operations and subsidies for the coffee industry.

Union ministers and the Mandalay Region Chief Minister discussed plans to coordinate dairy production with relevant ministries, holding the MSMAE product exhibition in Nay Pyi Taw, farmland utilization measures, implementation of the green economy in the city,

18.87 per cent forest coverage of PyinOoLwin and conservation of beauties in the city, fulfilment of the regional government for development of MSME industries.

Also present at the meeting were SAC Joint Secretary General Ye Win Oo, Union Ministers Admiral Moe Aung, U Khin Maung Yi and Dr Charlie Than, senior Tatmadaw officers from the Office of the Commander-in-Chief and officials.

After the meeting, the Senior General and party cordially interestingly viewed round the domestic coffee products and foodstuffs.

At National Kandawgyi Garden, he looked into holding the

17<sup>th</sup> flower festival to mark the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the garden and cordially greeted the visitors.

After inspecting the 100-year-old Ginkgo Biloba tree, the Senior General instructed officials to systematically conserve the tree. The Ginkgo Biloba tree is a famous species in China, Japan and Western countries. Ginkgo trees are covered with yellow leaves in autumn in many provinces of China, and some of them last for thousands of years.

The Senior General and his wife planted a cherry tree to mark the centenary celebration of the garden and fed fish and

geese in the lake after visiting the Kandawgyi Garden.

Chief Executive Officer U Yazar Htwe of the company as well as in-charge of the garden reported on grandly holding the flower festival, efforts for the existence of the garden and plans to build new fences. The Senior General gave guidance on systematically keeping the documentary photos of the 17<sup>th</sup> flower festival and their display at a gallery, greening of the garden and beautification, and proper flow of water at the lake.

The company CEO presented a gift to mark the centennial celebration of the garden to the Senior General. — MNA/TTA



# NATIONAL

## SAC Chair PM Senior General Min Aung Hlaing enquires about health of Mahavijitayon Monastery's Presiding Patron Sayadaw

State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and wife Daw Kyu Kyu Hla paid homage and looked into the health conditions of Presiding Patron Sayadaw of the Mahavijitayon Pariyatti Monastery in Chanayethazan Township, Mandalay, State Ovada Cariya Abhidhaja Maha Rattha Guru Abhidhaja Maha Saddhammajotika Bhaddanta Vicarinda Bhivamsa, 97 years old, vasa 77, receiving medical treatment at the Defence Services Hospital in PyinOoLwin yesterday morning.

The Senior General and his wife enquired regarding the health conditions of Sayadaw. He then asked medical officials about arrangements for providing medical treatment for Sayadaw and urged them to fulfil the need in a timely manner.

The Senior General and his wife offered alms donations, medicines, nutritious bird's nests and cash to Sayadaw.

— MNA/KTZH



SAC Chairman PM Senior General Min Aung Hlaing offers alms donations and medicines to Sayadaw Bhaddanta Vicarinda Bhivamsa receiving medical treatment at the Defence Services Hospital in PyinOoLwin yesterday.

## Naypyitaw State Polytechnic University holds basic innovation competition



Union Minister for Science and Technology Dr Myo Thein Kyaw observes the innovative projects presented by students from universities, government technological institutes and government technical high schools.

YOUNG students participated in the domestic-level basic innovation competition yesterday morning at Naypyitaw State Polytechnic University in Pobbathiri Township. The event aimed to select participants for the Fifth ASEAN-India Grassroots Innovation Forum's Innovation Project Competition.

The event commenced with opening remarks from the director-general of the Department of Advanced Science and Technology under the Ministry of Science and Technology. Following this, the pro-rector of

Naypyitaw State Polytechnic University provided an overview of the competition.

Union Minister for Science and Technology Dr Myo Thein Kyaw and officials observed the innovative projects presented by students from universities, government technological institutes and government technical high schools.

Students submitted 54 projects for the competition: 48 from nine universities, four from three government industrial science schools and two other projects from two govern-

ment technical high schools. After preliminary screening, 21 projects were selected for the competition – 16 from eight universities, four from three GTI and one from a government technical high school.

From these 21 projects, five teams were selected to represent Myanmar in the Fifth ASEAN-India Grassroots Innovation Forum. The event concluded with closing remarks from the director-general of the Department of Technical, Vocational Education and Training. — MNA/KZL

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



# NATIONAL

## Campaign on developing libraries, raising reading habits held in Kachin State

A ceremony to launch the “Developing Libraries and Raising Reading Habits in Kachin State” campaign jointly initiated by the Ministry of Information, Ministry of Education and Kachin State government marking 77<sup>th</sup> Kachin State Day was organized at the convocation hall of Myitkyina University yesterday.

It was attended by State Administration Council Member Deputy Prime Minister and Union Minister at Prime Minister Office Admiral Tin Aung San, SAC Member Daw Dwe Bu, Union Ministers Lt-Gen Tun Tun Naung, U Maung Maung Ohn, U Min Naung, U Hla Moe, U Nyan Tun, Jeng Phang Naw Taung, state chief minister U Khet Htein Nan and relevant officials.

Speaking at the event, the Admiral highlighted the chances for the youths to see the social, cultural, law and technological related subjects through



State Administration Council Member Deputy Prime Minister and Union Minister Admiral Tin Aung San attends the 2025 Rice Security Festival at Rawang National Park in Dottan Ward, PutaO, yesterday.

the organizing of developing libraries and raising reading habit campaigns, as benefits of reading books and journals such as gaining knowledge of world affairs, economy, international relations, technology and nat-

ural environment.

Then, Myanmar Libraries Development Cooperation Committee Chairman Union Information Minister and state chief minister made remarks.

The Admiral donated K2

million, in books and publications for the Myitkyina University library and basic education schools' libraries.

The Admiral and party also observed the booths displayed in the convocation hall, basic

education level painting, colourings, storytelling, impromptu talk competitions and other fun activities. They awarded the winners.

The Admiral and party proceeded to PutaO by flight to attend the 2025 Rice Security Festival at Rawang National Park in Dottan Ward, PutaO.

After the ceremonial procedures, they participated in the Mandaw dance together with Rawang ethnic tribes - Rawang, Lisu, Taing Khamti and Jinghpaw cultural groups and departmental officials.

They also checked the solar-powered rice mill of “Sun” Agriculture and General Cooperative Ltd in Lon Sut ward of PutaO running with the State Economic Promotion Fund, winter crop plantations of a local, and paving of PutaO-Nam Shal Kawt-Lal Mal War Gyi-Man Say- Man Say Khum inter-district road connecting 27 village tracks in PutaO. — MNA/KTZH

## Cancer radiotherapy conference highlights innovations

THE opening ceremony of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Myanmar Radiation Oncology Conference was held yesterday morning at the Wyndham Grand Hotel in Yangon.

The Union Minister for Health Professor Dr Thet Khaing Win stated that the conference, themed “State-of-the-Art Hypofractionated Radiotherapy: Beyond Feasibility and Compliance,” will facilitate the exchange of knowledge on innovative advancements in cancer radiotherapy among professionals from Myanmar, the Russian Federation, Indonesia, Thailand, and the United Kingdom. This platform will enhance the expertise of Myanmar’s specialists, oncologists, and postgraduate medical students, contributing to improved patient-centred cancer treatment.

Following the opening remarks, Professor Dr Khin Cho Win, Chairperson of the Myanmar Cancer Radiotherapy Professionals Association; Professor Dr Moe Hlaing, Head of the Radiotherapy Department at Yangon General Hospital; and Professor Soehartati A. Gondhowiardjo from Cipto Mangunkusumo Hospital, Indonesia, delivered welcome speeches.

The Union minister, the regional minister for Social Affairs, Professor Dr Khin Cho Win, and Professor Dr Moe Hlaing inaugurated the conference by cutting the ceremonial ribbon and touring the academic poster exhibition.

The hybrid-format conference runs from 11 to



The 2<sup>nd</sup> Myanmar Radiation Oncology Conference in progress yesterday at the Wyndham Grand Hotel in Yangon.

12 January and brings together cancer radiotherapy professionals from Myanmar and international delegates to share insights and experiences.

Currently, Myanmar operates 14 linear accelerators (LA) machines in public hospitals and seven in private hospitals, totaling 21 units. Public hospitals have three cobalt radiotherapy machines and five brachytherapy machines, as well as four in private hospitals. Healthcare workers strive to reduce patient wait times by offering continuous services on weekdays, weekends, and nights. — MNA/KZL

## Belarusian Foreign Minister's delegation leaves Myanmar



Belarusian Foreign Minister Mr Maxim Ryzhenkov and his delegation are seen off at the Yangon International Airport.

THE Belarusian delegation led by Mr Maxim Ryzhenkov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Belarus, left Yangon by flight, yesterday.

Yangon Region Chief Minister U Soe Thein, regional ministers and officials and representatives from the Yangon-based Belarusian Honourary Consulate saw off the delegation at the airport. — MNA



# NATIONAL

## Weekly Roundup

5 January

### Independence Day dinner hosted

State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Thadoe Maha Thray Sithu Thadoe Thiri Thudhamma Min Aung Hlaing and his wife Daw Kyu Kyu Hla hosted a dinner in honour of the 77<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Independence Day at the SAC Chairman Office in Nay Pyi Taw.

### Honourary titles conferred

State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Thadoe Maha Thray Sithu Thadoe Thiri Thudhamma Min Aung Hlaing conferred honorary titles to mark the 77<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Independence Day to relevant recipients at SAC Chairman Office in Nay Pyi Taw.

### Gallantry medals and titles conferred

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing presented gallantry medals to Tatmadaw members who served assigned duties without any complaints for the sake of the State and the people with sacrifices at Zeyathiri Beikman in Nay Pyi Taw.

8 January

### Ambassador-designate of Iran presents his Credentials to Senior General Min Aung Hlaing

Ambassador-designate of the Islamic Republic of Iran to Myanmar Dr Nassereddin Heidari presented his Credentials to State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at the Credentials Hall of the SAC Chairman Office in Nay Pyi Taw.

### Power plants to use LNG

Efforts are being made to allocate available electricity efficiently and smoothly to users by categorizing it into groups based on time usage in the supply of electricity, said Admiral Tin Aung San at the Electric Power and Energy Development Commission's meeting 1/2025 at the SAC Office in Nay Pyi Taw.

10 January

### Message sent to 77<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Kachin State Day ceremony

All stakeholders must set aside political, ethnic, and religious biases in peace talks, said Senior General Min Aung Hlaing in his message sent to the 77<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Kachin State Day ceremony.

### Belarusian FM calls on Senior General Min Aung Hlaing

Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing received Mr Maxim Ryzhenkov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Belarus, at the Credentials Hall of the Office of SAC Chairman in Nay Pyi Taw.

### Intl Applied Education Research Conf begins

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing underlined that technology transfer programmes can help industries adopt these innovations while knowledge-sharing initiatives disseminate research findings to relevant organizations, accelerating national development within a short time at the opening of the International Conference on Applied Research in Education (2025) at the MICC-2 in Nay Pyi Taw.

11 January

### Electricity generation approved in Meiktila

Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing urged MSME businesspersons to generate electricity from solar power on a manageable scale in operating their industries in Meiktila.

### C-in-C meets Tatmadaw members, families

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing urged the people, the government, and Tatmadaw to defend against terrorist acts at separate meetings with Tatmadaw members and families of Meiktila and Mandalay stations of Central Command. — GNLM/TTA

## Boosting exports of high-quality, safe aquatic products



Deputy Minister Dr Aung Gyi observes the process line of fishery products cold storage in Yangon.

DEPUTY Minister for Agriculture, Livestock, and Irrigation Dr Aung Gyi inspected Two Rivers Co Ltd in Insein Township, Yangon Region, on 10 January, where he observed the processing and packaging of fish and shrimp for export to Saudi Arabia according to market demand. Officials from the company explained that

high-quality fish and shrimp are being processed and frozen for export to Saudi Arabia, China, Dubai, the UAE, Vietnam, Oman, and Qatar. The aquatic products are also exported to Saudi Arabia, China, Korea, Malaysia, and India via MSL Industries Co Ltd, using advanced freezing technology from Denmark.

Next, the Deputy Minister visited the Livestock Breeding and Veterinary Department in Insein Township, where he met with students and provided them with nutritional supplements. The Deputy Minister encouraged them to gain practical experience in animal infectious diseases and the prevention and control of zoonotic diseases. Following this, the Deputy Minister visited the cold storage plants of Mega Marine Frozen Seafood Co Ltd, Hlaing Htate Khaung Cold Store & Processing Plant, and Shwe Myinn Co Ltd in the Hlinethaya Industrial Zone.

The Deputy Minister discussed and instructed them to implement the Best Aquaculture Practices (BAP) system to ensure the quality and safety of the products and to train employees who understand the BAP system to integrate it into the production process effectively. — MNA/MKKS

## 9 arrested for selling fake IDs and official documents



Offenders are seen alongside evidence objects making fake national ID cards, labour registration cards, ward and police recommendation letters.

POLICE arrested nine offenders involved in making fake citizenship scrutiny cards, labour cards, wards and police recommendation letters in January.

The very first suspect Ma May Thu Khine was arrested in Taunggyi Township on 8 January.

Another suspect, Phyu Thwe Htwe was arrested in Hlinethaya (East) Township in Yangon on 8 January night, while Han Zaw Myint (aka) Pyaung Lay in Hlinethaya (East) Township on 9 January, Zin Lin (aka) Lin Lin in Hlinethaya (West) Township, Myint Myat Kyi (aka) Wa Toke, Sandar Oo, Soe Min Oo (aka) Gadone at their houses in Hlinethaya Township respectively, and

San Maw Lwin at Moe Thauk Pan copy shop.

According to the confession of Soe Min Oo (aka) Gatone, Moe Moe, sister of suspect Pyay Thein Htike (still at large) was arrested in Htantabin Township.

The nine suspects confessed that Kalar Gyi (aka) Jimmy Thaug (still at large) and Pyay Thein Htike (still at large) created the fake citizenship scrutiny cards, labour cards, ward and police recommendation letters for them, and they communicated Tet Pu (still at large) to sell these cards at K30,000 per card.

These nine offenders were taken action under the law, and further investigations are ongoing. — MNA/KTZH



# NATIONAL

## Gold reference price shows uptick

ACCORDING to the Mineral (Gold) Reference Price Determination Committee, pure gold reference prices rebounded slightly within two weeks.

The committee set the pure gold reference prices at K5.4 million per tical (16.329325 grammes) with 19.25 grammes of the density of gold on 1 January, up from K5.2 million per tical on 1 January. The figures show an increase of K120,000 per tical within two weeks.

The committee was formed on 25 October 2024 to issue gold reference prices under existing laws, rules and regulations to stabilize gold prices. The deputy minister for Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation played a key role as chair of the committee, and the deputy governor of the Central Bank of Myanmar acted as deputy chair.

The objectives behind the committee are setting daily reference gold prices through online virtual meetings with the presence of three-quarters of the committee members, influenced by those factors; CBM's exchange rate, Myanmar's gold measurement as per some appraisal methods issued by the Ministry of Finance and Revenue in 1967 for gold price stability, spot gold price, prices of neighbouring countries, forex exchange rates and domestic gold market outlook.

The committee considers and analyzes the gold price submitted by the gold reference price evaluating task force comprising gold traders.

Then, the committee links with the Ministry of Information to announce the daily gold reference prices. It amends prices upon real-time information of



Gold ornaments are displayed for sale at one gold outlet in Yangon.

spot gold prices, forms working groups where necessary, stops gold market manipulation attempts, and coordinates with the Monitoring and Steering Committee on Gold and Currency Market and Federation of Myanmar Gold Entrepreneurs,

Yangon Region Gold Entrepreneurs Association, Mandalay Region Gold Entrepreneurs Association, relevant gold institutions and experts.

The Mineral (Gold) Reference Price Determination Committee has issued daily gold ref-

erence prices for a tical of pure gold (16.329325 grammes) with 19.25 grammes of the density of gold starting from 6 December through MRTV, MWD, website of the MoNREC (www.mining.gov.mm) and Facebook page of YGEA. — NN/KK

## CBM sells over 714,000 yuan on 10 Jan

THE Central Bank of Myanmar (CBM) sold over 714,000 yuan on 10 January 2025.

It injected \$2.2 million on 9 January, \$256,000 on 8 January again after sales of over \$2.15 million on 7 January, \$25 million and 2.8 million baht on 6 January, 510,000 yuan on 3 January, \$25 million, over 670,000 yuan and 2.45 million baht on 2 January into the financial market.

Therefore, CBM injected over \$54 million, 1.3 million yuan and 5.3 million baht within ten days.

CBM pumped \$144 million, 321 million baht and over 12 million yuan in December 2024, over \$59 million, over 280 million baht and 8.78 million yuan in November and over \$91 million,

over 610 million baht and 9.8 million yuan in October into the financial market.

CBM aims to curb the instability in the foreign exchange market and the currency devaluation. According to CBM's notification on 15 March, it has been collaborating with law enforcement agencies to combat and prosecute those who attempt to manipulate the currency market under the existing laws. CBM allowed authorized dealers (private banks) to operate online foreign exchange trading freely as per the market rate depending on supply and demand, starting from 5 December 2023. — NN/KK



The Central Bank of Myanmar (CBM) in Nay Pyi Taw.

## UMFCCI tackles rice export challenges

THE Union of Myanmar Federation of Chamber and Commerce (UMFCCI) held a meeting on 9 January and highlighted challenges to bolster rice exports and coordinated matters to enhance the rice sector, with the participation of the Myanmar Rice Federation's president, vice-president, general secretary, central executives and work executives.

The current situation of rice trade, review of plans, analysis of the international and domestic markets, Myanmar Rice Federation's organization structure and procedures for 2025-2027, ongoing activities of the federation, challenges faced in rice export promotion and enticing warehouse operators to register on MyRO online registry platform were addressed.

Myanmar's rice and broken rice exports swelled to over 2.03 million tonnes in the past nine months of the current financial year 2024-2025

beginning 1 April, with an estimated value of \$948 million, statistics of Myanmar Rice Federation (MRF) showed.

The export volumes are 111,862 tonnes worth \$55 million in April, 71,279.5 tonnes worth \$36 million in May, 162,325.75 tonnes worth \$84 million in June, 165,444 tonnes worth \$81 million in July, 207,369 tonnes worth \$97 million in August, over 219,560 tonnes worth \$104 million in September, 424,784.27 tonnes of rice worth \$189 million in October, over 334,530 tonnes worth \$156 million in November and 337,490 tonnes worth \$145 million in December respectively.

Myanmar exported over two million tonnes of rice by sea and 30,000 tonnes at border posts during the April-December period.

The federation aims to achieve 2.5 million tonnes of rice exports in the 2024-2025 financial year (April-March). — NN/KK



# OPINION

# BOOKRACK POEM

## Raise education research to develop human resources

**E**DUCATION imparts the wisdom to discern truth from falsehood, right from wrong, and cause from effect. With this wisdom, every citizen can contribute to building a strong and capable workforce that advances national welfare. Regarding this foundation, every citizen can contribute to a capable workforce that drives national welfare.

Education is the foundation of national progress, making it essential to cultivate a generation of knowledgeable, skilled, and ethical individuals who drive innovation and strengthen productive sectors. The true value of education lies in acquiring knowledge and mastering its effective application. The 'Knowledge Age' emphasizes not just understanding but integrating knowledge with practical use to contribute meaningfully to society. Through this process, education becomes a tool for uplifting humanity and enriching society.

Currently, the International Conference on Applied Research in Education (2025) is being held in Myanmar under the theme, "Navigating the Future: Education, Science, and Technology for Brighter and More Prosperous Societies."

The seamless integration of education, science, and technology with research and innovation creates a transformative force that drives societal progress and prosperity.

The conference unveils new knowledge, discoveries, and innovations while affirming established concepts, addressing current challenges, and enhancing academic understanding. Research plays a crucial role in driving innovation and development. It enables the introduction of new technologies to Micro-, Small-, and Medium-sized Enterprises, facilitating their expansion into new markets. Additionally, research and development (R&D) strengthens Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) by cultivating a skilled workforce with advanced competencies. This event aims to create opportunities for R&D collaborations, promoting partnerships that fuel progress and innovation.

Expanding research is vital for fostering innovation and creating new products. Technology transfer programmes enable industries to adopt these advancements, while knowledge-sharing initiatives spread research findings, boosting national development quickly. Simultaneously, safeguarding intellectual property (IP) rights is essential. Researchers and innovators must be protected through strong IP laws and ethical practices.

This year's conference includes keynote speeches from distinguished scholars and over 100 research paper presentations across five fields: Teacher Education, Arts and Science, Marine and Earth Sciences, MSMEs and TVET, and Natural Language Processing (NLP) and AI Technology.

Everyone needs to exchange knowledge, insights, and innovative ideas while collaborating on impactful research projects. Enhancing teaching resources requires sharing materials, pedagogical approaches, and offering online courses. Academicians and researchers must also promote evidence-based research, particularly among young researchers, to cultivate a dynamic research culture through conferences. ■



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Author - Multiple authors  
Publishing House - The Lantern House  
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Price - K8,000

## The Art of Reading

ALTHOUGH I am not particularly short, I often feel small when compared to others. As a teenager, my height did not reach the level I desired, so I began swimming and doing pull-ups. These efforts did not significantly increase my height. When my father learned about it, he gave me advice on how to be taller than others by the height of one head. I curiously asked him what his method was. I said, 'Okay, Dad, what is it? I will do it.' He smiled and said, 'My son, you should read a lot. If you do, you will be taller than others by the height of one head.' I replied, 'No... Father,' thinking he was joking.

However, I continued reading out of habit and with my father's encouragement. Over the years, I developed better

thinking skills and gained more knowledge than those who do not read, just as my father had said. Eventually, I came to understand my father's words, 'higher than others by the height of one head'.

A new book titled 'The Art of Reading' has been released, featuring the experiences and guidance on the benefits of reading by great authors such as Ludu U Hla, Khin Myo Chit, Mya Than Tint, Htet Myat, Maung Thar Cho, Jue, Than Myint Aung, Hnin Wai Nyein, Tin Nyunt, Saung Phyu, A Yoe, Khin Thandar, Moe Kyaw Zin, and Lin Khant.

This book serves as a roadmap for answering various questions, such as: Why do people read? What motivates people to read? What fulfilment does reading bring, and what potential losses may it entail?

Below are some excerpts from the works of the featured authors.

"Nowadays, we distance ourselves from books. Telephones have become our constant companions, and we spend most of our daily lives staring at screens. It is essential that we read books and surround ourselves with them, even as we navigate the Facebook culture of social media. Reading is vital for our valuable brains, our thoughtfulness, mental control, and the true meaning of our lives." (Ju Kyaw Thar Cho)

"I urge the youth to read, as they risk becoming masters of none if their wisdom and hearts become mere modern tools among modern conveniences." (Maung Thar Cho)

"As human beings, it is encouraged to cultivate reading

habits from a young age. There are sayings such as 'books are the best friends of humans' and 'wisdom is found in literature'. Elders and teachers have guided the youth since their early years, instilling the belief that they can become intellectuals through reading.

"The literature they should read is fine literature, and they should avoid poisonous literature. It is important to know the taste when reading. If we want to know the taste of food, we have to eat various kinds of food; by doing so, we can learn all the tastes. Reading is similar; the taste of literature can be known if various types of literature are read. This way, we can distinguish between good and poisonous literature.

"Therefore, the elderly, who understand the taste of literature, should guide the young ones with their soft reading skills. Suitable books for students should be placed in school libraries." (Khin Myo Chit)

Good books offer valuable insights and experiences from great experts, providing knowledge that can serve as stepping stones for personal development. Moreover, reading good books can create an atmosphere that makes readers feel as if they are meeting intellectuals in person. By reading this book, you are sure to reignite your passion and enthusiasm for reading. ■



Book Title - Myanmar Myatpwint's Customary Literature  
Writer - Zeya  
Publishing House - Seikku Cho Cho  
Publication Date - November 2024 (Revised and Republished)  
Price - K13,000

## Myanmar Myatpwint's Customary Literature

THIS week's pick is a recreation of Sayagyi Zeya, in which Myanmar Myatpwint's customary literature, biography, autobiography and cultural themes genres are portrayed.

That book is a classic reprint featuring a collection of Sayagyi's articles published in Sapadetha (Belles Lettres), Shumawa and Myawady magazines between 1945 and 1957. Those works are still so captivating to draw readers' attention.

The book depicts the most significant figures in Myanmar's history such as Crown Prince Kanaung, Yaw Mingyi U Pho Hlaing, Kinwun Mingyi U Kaung, Sitkegyi U Shwe Naw and awe-inspiring customs and traditions of rural villages.

The milestone of this book is the establishment of a library named "Myanmar Myatpwint" in his hometown, Zigon.

Preparations are ongoing to hold an event marking the 10th Anniversary of the library and the 125-year birthday of the well-known writer Zigonian Wunna Kyaw Htin Thiri Pyanchi Sayagyi Zeya (U Yaw). Moreover, it is so satisfying that Dr Ye Zaw 9 (Zigon) organized a literary event celebrating Sayagyi Zeya's 125<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Htein Win Sarpay, its publishing house, neither intend to inspire the readers to attain Nibbana nor a political or business leader. Yet, he would like to motivate individuals from the upper or lower class to

preserve Myanmar's cultural heritage and reflect the values and authenticity of ethnicity with a shared common and unique culture.

The writer pointed out the bizarre and insidious creep of doubt although it might seem normal.

The devastating power of doubt was vividly witnessed in the misfortune event of Minkaung Anawrahta and King Myaydu despite Minkaung Anawrahta's loyalty to King Myaydu's father (King Alaungpaya).

The first chapter of the book includes the following stories: Responsibility and Accountability of the Newspaper, Writers Read, Don't They?, Art of Translation, The Mightier

Pen and Mohinga (tragic mishap event), Bribery Scheme at South of the Moat, The Pen is Mightier than the Sword, Making Money with Your Pen, Power Behind the Throne, Role of Literature in Liberation, Literary Criticism, Fiction and Lexical Error and Legal Issues.

Chapter II features Literature and Me, Beauty of Fiction, Inside a Beautiful Mind, My Love for Literature, Do You Love Me, Indeed?, Fortune of Youth, Between Human and Being Human, My First Love (two books), Five Hundred Thousand Worth of Book, a Good Five-Cent Dictionary, Be it Good or Bad, and Great Literary Work.

Chapter III allows readers to explore arts, culture, education, and empathy, highlighting four universities catering to different social classes, including Oxford University, which has held the top spot for many years. Chapter IV advocates for orphans and covers topics such as the beauty of poetry, how to be a good writer, art and Tabauing Minlwin, Literary Art, Seinda Kyawthu and Nawaday, and the Taku Myanmar New Year month. ■

**သာဓု**

**Well done!**  
By Chit Ko Pe

ဥပုသ်တည့်ဖြူ သီလရာ သာဓု။  
Observing the Sabbath, precepts are kept. Well done for a noble act!

ဘာဝနာဖြူ တရားရှု သာဓု။  
Practising meditation, the mind is reflected. Well done for a noble act!

မျှဝေပေးမှု ဒါနဖြူ သာဓု။  
Sharing merits, all are blessed. Well done for a noble act!

သာဓု သာဓု သာဓု။  
Well done! Bravo! Perfect!

**You Are Always in My Mind**  
By Mya Thae (Research)

- Your eyes are sparkling shine.
- You stared at me with loving eyes.
- When I studied my lessons, you served me coffee to fine.
- You wiped my tears when I cried.
- You taught me to perform work on time.
- When I was in hospital, you did not sleep for a while.
- When I was depressed, you comforted me with a smile.
- When I am bored, you tell me a humorous story to joy.
- Oh! May May, you are always in my mind.

(In Honour of Full Moon Day of Pyatho Mothers' Day)

**ငိုစုန်းကြူး နဲ့ ဖယောင်းတိုင်**

**Fire Flies and a Candle**  
By Tun Wai Myint, Translated by Myint Zan

မှောင်မှောင်နက်နက်၊ လမ်းမီးပျက် အိမ်မီးတွေလည်းပျက်။  
dark and black dark and black no lights on the street no lights inside houses, also

လမ်းမီး အိမ်မီး ပျက်ချင်ပျက် ငိုစုန်းကြူးတွေ တလက်လက် ဖယောင်းတိုင်လေး တလက်လက် မီးမီး စာတွေကျက်။ ။  
regardless of no lights have been in the streets no lights inside houses the 'lights' from the fireflies (at night) glitters the little candle also shimmers light: little daughter (with the help of a candlelight) is studying her lessons

ထွန်းဝေမြင့်

Translator's note: This poem in the vernacular appeared in February 2005 in Satime Thit ('New Style') magazine.



# NATIONAL Entertainment

**Daw Than Nwe Aye** (wife of U Kyaw Hein) MA MEE MEE (AKA) DAW THAN NWE AYE, wife of U Kyaw Hein and family as well as Sai Sai Kham Leng donated K10 million to the Myanmar Motion Pictures Organization on 10 January. They did not fix the fees for using the video and sound of U Kyaw Hein in the song of Sai Sai Kham Leng. Ma Mee Mee noted, "I'm certain today's youth haven't heard the song U Kyaw sang when he was



young. However, the lyrics are suitable for them, and Sai Sai's words are equally perfect." She also expressed her hope that the lyrics would resonate with the feelings of all mankind.

**J Nyi Nyi**

PUBLIC criticism has risen due to the comment of a judge of a singing contest regarding the shoe of a contestant. Vocalist J Nyi Nyi said, "I have been an official singer for 40 years. I



don't wear brand shoes when I go to the shows. I sing just wearing a rubber flip-flop. When my fans see the rubber flip-flop, they know it's me."



**Than Nyunt**

(Cinematographer) ACADEMY Award-winning cinematographer U Than Nyunt is currently receiving medical treatment. Officials from the Myanmar Motion Pictures Organization visited him at the hospital, offering comfort and providing financial assistance. Sai Sai Kham Leng donated K1 million, while director Mee Pwar contributed K100,000. U Than Nyunt, who has been in the movie industry



for 40 years, has won Academy Awards for films such as 'Myit Toe Ei Maya', 'Bagan Hma Tha Tae La', 'Nyamintha', 'Pan Pyo Thu Doe Alinka', 'Maunt Mupai Shin', and 'Kyo Than'. He is now 73 years old.

**Sai Sai Kham Leng**

Vocalist Sai Sai Kham Leng released a new song by recreating the song of late actor U Kyaw Hein's 'Lutha Athae Hnalon Nae Kyanaw'. Sai Sai talked about the permission he sought from composer Sayagyi Ponnaka before his death. He also asked for a nod from Aunty Mee, wife and a family member of U Kyaw Hein. Khin Khin Kha provided special assistance regarding the video and sound of U Kyaw Hein. He created without affecting the original song and pledged that all is his responsibility if and when for some possible misunderstandings and offences in his creation.

# CELEBRITY BRIEF



**Pyae Pyo Sein Lwin**

PYAE PYO SEIN LWIN, the son of vocalist Sein Lwin from the Play Boy band, is currently performing on stage. He recently posted a short video featuring an image and sound of his father, U Sein Lwin, on his social network. In his post, he wrote, "There is only one video of my father. I wasn't born when the song 'Moe Paw Hma Nay Chin Tal' was released. It was used in the movie 'Ma Mone Lay Nae Ngapali'. I am happy that people still remember my father's songs more than 40 years after his death." – Htun Htun/KTZH



**Kaung Kaung**

SINGER KAUNG KAUNG, who received immense applause from fans of the Melody World singing competition, visited a park in Chiang Mai, Thailand, with his wife. The couple had the honour of meeting Thai Princess Sirindhorn and were privileged to receive awards from her.

## Media briefing for 'Ghost Hotel' film held in Yangon

A media briefing for the movie 'Ghost Hotel' was organized at M3 Food Centre in Yangon on 9 January.

The film will be produced by Triple Six & Double Win Film Production, and the story was created by director Maung Myo Min (Yindwin Phyt), with a script by Moe Set Wyne and Thura Thet War. It will be made by director singer Moe Moe.

"I have no special character for this movie. Moe Moe begins his director life and so we support him. U Myo and I have that story since many years ago like before the outbreak of COVID-19. We make preparations and implement our plan. The characters of the movie are cute. They are different from one another. All are endearing based on a plot," said Academy Kyaw Kyaw Bo.

The cast is composed of Academy Kyaw Kyaw Bo, Min Bhone Myat, Sitt Naing, Academy May Myint Mo, Wai Lar Yi, and other supporting actors. — ASH/KTZH



Artistes gather for a group photo at the press briefing.



## Nicolas Maduro sworn in as Venezuelan president for 3<sup>rd</sup> term

*The proposed reform would aim to update the principles of the Constitution based on the new economy and society, and to defend the country from technological threats.*

NICOLAS Maduro on Friday was sworn in as Venezuelan president for a third term.

Taking the oath before National Assembly President Jorge Rodriguez and on the Constitution, Maduro pledged to ensure “peace, prosperity, equality and the new democracy” in Venezuela. “I swear it on history, I swear it on my life, and I will fulfill it,” said Maduro, who then received the presidential sash and the Order of the Liberators, symbols of presidential authority in Venezuela.

In his post-oath speech, Maduro called for a broad dialogue

process in the country “to advance together toward a major constitutional reform that will further democratize Venezuela”.

The reform, he said, aims to update “the principles of the Constitution based on the new economy and society”, and “to defend the country from new technological threats”. “Today, I will sign the decree to create a broad national commission for drafting the constitutional reform project, aiming for a process of democratization and defining Venezuela’s new society and economy,” Maduro said. — Xinhua



Nicolas Maduro is sworn in as Venezuelan president for a third term in Caracas, Venezuela, 10 January 2025. PHOTO: XINHUA

### BRIEF: WORLD

#### Afghanistan implements 13 projects to restore historic sites

AFGHAN authorities have implemented 13 projects in six provinces to preserve the rich historical sites and cultural facilities in the war-torn country, Khubaib Ghufuran, spokesperson for the Ministry of Information and Culture, said Saturday.

“The Ministry of Information and Culture has undertaken 13 projects for the preservation and restoration of historical monuments in six provinces, including Kabul, Ghor, Herat, Kandahar, Bamyan, and Ghazni in the year 1403 of the solar calendar,” local media Tolonews quoted Ghufuran as saying. Over the past two years, international visitors primarily travelled to Herat, Bamyan, Kandahar, Nuristan, and Ghazni provinces. — Xinhua

#### Black box of S Korea's crashed passenger jet fails to work for last 4 minutes

THE black box of a passenger jet that crashed in South Korea's southwestern airport late last month failed to work for the last four minutes, the transport ministry said Saturday. The result of analyzing the ill-fated airplane's flight data recorder (FDR) and cockpit voice recorder (CVR) by the US National Transport Safety Board showed that data storage in both the FDR and the CVR stopped about four minutes before its crash into a localizer, according to the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport. The ministry's aviation railway accident investigation committee planned to identify the cause of the data not being stored.

The localizer refers to a part of the instrument landing system providing aircraft with runway centerline guidance. — Xinhua

## Iran TV shows missile base after paramilitary march against ‘threats’

IRANIAN state TV on Friday showed the commander of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps touring an underground missile base used in an attack against Israel, hours after fighters marched through Tehran.

The footage of the missile base at an undisclosed location “in the mountains” and the parade by paramilitary Basij volunteers come after the weakening of Iran's allies Hezbollah in Lebanon and Hamas in the Gaza Strip, during wars with Israel.

They also come days before US President-elect Donald Trump is due to take office. During his first term, he oversaw the killing of Revolutionary Guards commander Qasem Soleimani in a drone strike in Iraq, and reinstated sanctions on Tehran after pulling out from a landmark nuclear deal.

State TV showed Guards

chief Hossein Salami visiting the missile base, which the report said has “dozens” of different types of missiles and was used during Iran's second ever direct attack on regional foe Israel late last year.

The Iranian missile attack on Israel in October was in stated retaliation for the killing of Tehran-aligned militant

leaders in the region, along with a general in Iran's Revolutionary Guards.

On Friday, thousands of Basij fighters, which are linked to the Revolutionary Guards, paraded with heavy weapons and vehicles through the streets of Tehran, showing their readiness to face “threats”. — AFP



Members of Iranian paramilitary forces (Basij) march next to a Iranian long range Sejil missile, during an anti-Israeli rally to show their solidarity with the Palestinian people, in Tehran. PHOTO: AFP



# ECONOMY WORLD



The climate tech conference, UAE Climate Tech, took place on 10 and 11 May 2023 in Abu Dhabi. It was a significant event focused on decarbonization technologies and climate action. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

## UAE's tech industry set to achieve record growth in 2025

*There's been a significant expansion in digital innovation and the adoption of cutting-edge technologies.*

THE UAE's technology industry is set to achieve record growth in 2025, driven by significant expansion in digital innovation and the adoption of cutting-edge technologies. This growth further solidifies the UAE's stature as a global hub for innovation and an international beacon for tech companies.

The UAE has strengthened its position on the global map as an innovation-driven

environment and an exceptional destination for the expansion of both global and emerging tech companies. This has been made possible through its sustainable investments in digital infrastructure development and the establishment of supportive regulations and policies that create a favourable climate for innovation and growth.

International reports predict that the tech sector

will continue to grow in areas such as artificial intelligence (AI), cloud computing, and emerging technologies like blockchain and the Internet of Things. A recent report by Statista, a German online platform that specialises in data gathering and visualisation, forecasts that revenues from the technology services market in the UAE will increase by approximately US\$3.8 billion in 2025. — ANI

## Norwegian gas production hits record high in 2024

NORWAY'S gas production, which has become crucial to replace Russian supplies to Europe, hit a record high last year, the Norwegian Offshore Directorate said on Thursday.

In 2024, the Scandinavian country produced 124 billion cubic metres of gas, almost all of which was exported to Europe, beating the previous record of 122.8 billion cubic metres from

2022.

Norwegian gas production hit a record high in 2024 primarily due to increased demand from Europe following the end of Russian gas supplies through Ukraine

The conflict in Ukraine has led to a sharp decline in Russian gas deliveries to Europe, with Norway overtaking Russia as the continent's main supplier.

"The high production in 2024 was caused by high regularity on the fields and increased capacity following upgrades in 2023," the directorate said in its annual report.

Gas accounts for more than half of Norway's hydrocarbon production, which is expected to remain at a high level before declining at the end of the 2020s, the report said. — AFP

### BRIEF: ECON

#### Canada unemployment ticks down but Trump threats cloud outlook

CANADA'S unemployment rate ticked down in December, the national statistics agency said Friday, ending 2024 with signs of strength as the country readies for potential economic upheaval triggered by incoming US president Donald Trump.

Statistics Canada said the December unemployment rate was 6.7 per cent, down from 6.8 per cent in November.

November's figure was the highest since January 2017, excluding 2020 and 2021, when pandemic lockdowns dramatically impacted the number of people working.

The economy added some 91,000 jobs in December, most of them full-time, led by gains in the education sector, Statistics Canada said. — AFP

#### Ethiopia opens stock exchange in drive for investors

ETHIOPIAN Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed rang a Wall Street-style bell to officially launch the country's first stock exchange in 50 years on Friday, part of efforts to liberalize the struggling economy.

The first company to be listed on the exchange was the state-owned Ethio Telecom, but an official said they were aiming to eventually include 90 firms and four million investors, without setting a timeline.

"It is a new beginning," Abiy said at the launch. "I want to call upon Ethiopians to take risks."

Since taking power in 2018, Abiy has been a vocal supporter of opening up the heavily state-controlled economy to competition and foreign investment. — AFP

#### Sri Lanka tourism income soars over 53% in 2024

Sri Lanka earned approximately US\$3.17 billion from tourism in 2024, latest statistics from the Central Bank of Sri Lanka (CBSL) shows. This is a 53.2 per cent increase compared to tourism earnings from 2023, which was about \$2.07 billion, the data showed.

CBSL data showed that over two million tourists visited Sri Lanka in 2024, up 38.1 per cent compared to 2023.

The Sri Lankan government is targeting \$5 billion in tourism revenue in 2025 by attracting 3 million tourists, tourism officials recently said. — Xinhua



High regularity on the fields and increased capacity following upgrades in 2023 contributed to this achievement. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**



# Record number of Japan ramen eateries went bankrupt in 2024

*Japanese ramen noodles are typically served with a combination of meat and vegetable toppings, along with broth.*

A record number of ramen noodle eatery operators in Japan went out of business in 2024, according to a research firm, as the food's reputation for affordability limits room to raise prices amid soaring ingredient and utility costs.

Also hit by climbing personnel expenses due to labour shortages, insolvencies among ramen business operators resulting in liabilities of at least 10 million yen (\$63,000) in 2024 jumped over 30 per cent to 72, up from 53 in 2023, Teikoku Databank Ltd. said. Japanese ramen soup noodles typically combine

meat and vegetable toppings with broth. Despite rising costs, the average price of a bowl of ramen is still under 700 yen, according to Teikoku Databank. A popular lunchtime staple or late-night guilty pleasure, ramen has also found fans overseas. But with 2024 ingredient costs as of October up by an average of over 10 per cent from 2022, businesses face having to bring prices closer to 1,000 yen. Though low compared with many dining options, crossing that line is seen as a blow to ramen's everyman image that could drive away diners. — Kyodo



File photo taken in Sano, Tochigi Prefecture, in October 2023, shows a bowl of ramen noodles. **PHOTO: KYODO**

## Norway's travel fair sees growing interest in China travel

NORWAY'S largest travel fair TravelXpo opened on Friday, with "Hello, China!" booth drawing many visitors.

The booth, featuring distinctive Chinese cultural elements, showcases China tourism facilitation policies and measures to local visitors.

Anniken Arntsberg, a girl from Nordland, a county located in the northern part of the country, told Xinhua that she will go to China soon and she came here to gather some last-minute tips.

"China is a country that I've always dreamed of visiting. When I heard about the visa-free policy for Norway, my friends and I immediately added China to our travel wish list," she said.

"The visa-free policy has greatly increased Norwegian tourists' interest in China," said Zhang Liming, an exhibitor specializing in arranging trips for Norwegian travellers to China.

Since November last year, a notable rise in group tours and inquiries about travel to China has been witnessed, Zhang said. — Xinhua

## Macy's confirms closure of 66 stores

ESTABLISHED US department store Macy's Inc has announced the closure of 66 underperforming stores as part of a broader restructuring plan to shutter approximately 150 stores over a period of three years.

Both California and New York would have nine Macy's stores to cease to operation with another seven to be closed in

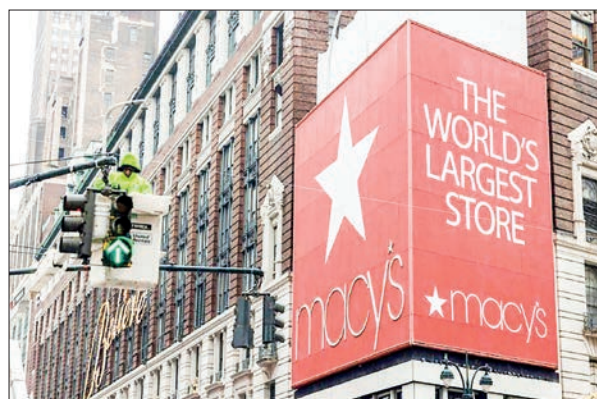
Florida, according to Macy's announcement on Thursday.

This strategy was initially outlined in February 2024. Of the planned closures, 50 stores would cease operations by the end of 2024, with the remaining 100 slated to close gradually through 2026.

As a renowned and long-established retailer in the country, Macy's

cutbacks reflect changes in the retail market. Some of Macy's department stores catering to the middle class are difficult to sustain with the economic pressures the middle class faces.

Also, several fast-emerging online shopping platforms are putting pressure on traditional offline department stores. "Closing any store is never easy, but as part of our Bold New Chapter strategy, we are closing underproductive Macy's stores to allow us to focus our resources and prioritize investments in our go-forward stores, where customers are already responding positively to better product offerings and elevated service," said Tony Spring, chairman and chief executive officer of Macy's, Inc. — Xinhua



Of the planned closures, 50 stores would cease operations by the end of 2024, with the remaining 100 slated to close gradually through 2026.

**PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

## Ubisoft shares sink after 'Assassin's Creed' delay

SHARES in troubled French video game giant Ubisoft sank on Friday after the company said it was exploring its options following another delay in its "Assassin's Creed" franchise.

The company's stock price was down almost eight percent at 11.39 euros (\$11.7) in morning trading on the Paris stock exchange after falling by around 10 per cent at the opening bell.

Ubisoft said after markets closed on Thurs-

day that it was postponing the release of "Assassin's Creed Shadows" by another month to 20 March.

It was originally due to come out in November during the key Christmas shopping season.

The same statement also announced disappointing sales of "Star Wars Outlaws" during the winter holiday season. Ubisoft said the company was "actively exploring" its options. — AFP

### Pesticide Trade Name Change Advertising

The following pesticide is distributed by MT INTERNATIONAL CO., LTD and here we would like to pesticide trade name change advertising. Anyone who would like to object or inquiry about new trade name contact within 14 days to Joint-Secretary, Pesticide Registration Board, Plant Protection Division, Bayint Naung Road, West Gyogone, Insein Township, Yangon.

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# WEEKLY WORLD NEWS DIGEST

11 January

## China launches energy-efficient carbon fibre metro train

*Energy consumption is reduced by seven per cent cutting annual carbon dioxide emissions by 130 tonnes.*

A CARBON fiber metro train, dubbed CET-ROVO 1.0, began passenger service on Friday in the port city of Qingdao in east China's Shandong Province.

This metro train features a carbon fiber composite body and frame, which reduces the weight of the car body and bogie frame by 25 per cent and 50 per cent, respectively, making the total vehicle weight 11 per cent lighter compared with conventional trains.

Liu Jinzhu, chief designer of the train with CRRC Qingdao Sifang Co, Ltd, said the energy consumption of each train can be reduced by seven per cent during operation, leading to an annual drop of about 130 tonnes in carbon dioxide emissions.

Notably, the use of carbon fiber materials also reinforces the vehicle's body, boosts its impact resistance and extends the durability of its structure. — Xinhua



The total vehicle weight is 11 per cent lighter than conventional trains. PHOTO: CCTV

10 January

## WTO upheld EU restrictions on Indonesia's palm oil biofuels

WORLD Trade Organization experts on Friday largely upheld European Union restrictions on use of palm oil in biofuels following a complaint by Indonesia.

Indonesia, the world's leading producer of palm oil, in 2019 requested an expert panel review of the EU restrictions.

The dispute panel has "found largely in favour of the European Union", a Geneva-based trade official told AFP.

"However, the panel found certain deficiencies in how the challenged measures had been prepared, published and administered," the official added. The EU Renewable Energy Directive (RED II) restricts crop-based biofuels, phasing out palm oil-based biofuels by 2030, citing sustainability concerns. Malaysia contested this at the WTO. Indonesia and Malaysia are major global palm oil producers. — AFP

9 January

## Biden to praise 'stronger' America in last foreign policy speech

OUTGOING US president Joe Biden will give a swansong foreign policy speech next week claiming America is far stronger than when Donald Trump left office, a senior US official said.

Biden's address at the State Department on Monday, one week before he leaves the White House, is expected to highlight his efforts to boost the NATO alliance and to support Ukraine against

Russia's invasion.

President Biden will emphasize strengthening US alliances in the Asia-Pacific and combating climate change. A senior official noted the restoration of damaged alliances during his tenure. Biden will also highlight support for Israel amidst attacks, but won't mention Gaza peace progress. He plans a farewell address before 20 January. — AFP

8 January

## Quake rescuers race against time in cold

JUST 30 minutes after the 6.8-magnitude earthquake struck Dingri County in southwest China's Xizang Autonomous Region, Dondrup Tsering, a local Tibetan police officer, sprang into action.

Alongside his colleagues, he searched through rubble to rescue survivors.

"We dug through ruined homes with our hands to pull out the buried," he said, his face covered in dust and blood, speaking to Xinhua in Gurum, one of the hardest-hit villages.

The earthquake, which hit around 9 am has left 126 dead and 188 injured by midnight. The epicenter was located in Tsogo Township, and rescuers are working tirelessly in 27 affected villages within a 20-kilometre radius.

Despite the challenges, including sub-zero temperatures and the mountainous terrain, more rescuers have arrived. With flashlights and sniffer dogs, they continue their round-the-clock efforts. — Xinhua

7 January

## Trudeau to resign after Liberal Party leadership vote

CANADIAN Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced he will resign once a new leader is chosen for the Liberal Party. The leadership vote will conclude on March 9 2025, with the new leader revealed that day.

Trudeau, who has led for nearly a decade, cited growing internal pressure as his reason for stepping down before national elections, expected by October.

He will remain as interim prime

minister until his successor is selected. Liberal Party president Sachit Mehra emphasized that the process would help prepare the party for the 2025 election, encouraging members to engage in thoughtful debate and shape the future of the party.

Trudeau's support within the ruling Liberal party began crumbling in 2024 due to intensifying public criticism focused on the rising cost of living. — AFP

6 January

## Louisiana reports first US bird flu death

LOUISIANA health authorities on Monday reported the first human death in the United States linked to bird flu, while noting the patient had underlying medical conditions and that general risks to the public remained "low".

The patient, aged over 65, had been hospitalized in the southern state since at least mid-December. It said the patient

had "contracted H5N1 after exposure to a combination of a non-commercial backyard flock and wild birds", but had detected no further H5N1 infections nor evidence of person-to-person transmission in the state.

The news comes just days after the federal government awarded an additional \$306 million to bolster H5N1 surveillance programmes and research. — AFP

5 January

## Italian PM makes surprise visit to Mar-a-Lago

ITALIAN Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni made a surprise visit to Florida on 4 January to meet Donald Trump, aiming to strengthen ties with the president-elect ahead of his inauguration on 20 January.

Members of Trump's Mar-a-Lago resort welcomed Meloni with applause after an introduction by the president-elect.

"This is very exciting. I'm here with

a fantastic woman, the prime minister of Italy," Trump told the Mar-a-Lago crowd, according to a media pool report.

Meloni is seen as a potentially strong partner for Trump given her conservative credentials and the stability of the right-wing coalition she has led in Italy since late 2022. — AFP



# SPORTS

## Thet Naing's late brace secures draw for Maha against Yangon

THET Naing's late goals secured a dramatic 2-2 draw for Maha United against Yangon United on the second day of Fixture 15 of the 2024-2025 Myanmar National League held on 11 January at the Thuwunna Youth Training Centre.

Yangon United aiming to challenge league leaders Shan United missed their valuable opportunity to gain points as they settled for a draw. Maha United, on the other hand, earned a crucial point thanks to substitute forward Thet Naing who scored two late goals to cancel out Yangon United's lead.

Both teams fielded their strongest line-ups and engaged in aggressive attacks from the kickoff. Despite their efforts, the first half ended goalless. Yangon United broke the deadlock in 57 minutes through Wai Lin Aung and extended their lead in 69 minutes with a goal from Kaung Sithu. In response, Maha United intensified its offence by making tactical substitutions. Thet Naing turned the game around by scoring in 83 and 90+1 minutes, securing a vital point for his team. Wai Lin Aung of Yangon United was named Man of the Match for his performance. Following this result, Yangon United has 35 points from 15 matches, while Maha United has 20 points from the same number of games.

In other Fixture 15 matches held on 10 January, Rakhine United defeated Myawady FC 2-1 and Dagon Star United triumphed over Dagon Port FC with a convincing 3-0 victory. The third day of Fixture 15 continues today with Shan United facing Hanthawady United at Taunggyi Stadium and Yadanabon FC taking on Hanthawady United at the Thuwunna Youth Training Centre. — Ko Nyi Lay/KZL

## Moyes returns as Everton coach

**D**AVID Moyes was named new Everton head coach on Saturday, rejoining the side he left almost 12 years ago to join Manchester United.

The 61-year-old Scot has agreed a two-and-a-half-year contract to replace Sean Dyche, who was sacked on Thursday with Everton 16<sup>th</sup> in the Premier League and in danger of relegation.

It means Moyes goes back to a club that he had managed for 11 seasons before moving to Old Trafford.

"I enjoyed 11 wonderful and successful years at Everton and didn't hesitate when I was offered the opportunity to rejoin this great club," said Moyes on the Everton website.



David Moyes returned for a second spell in charge of Everton on Saturday. **PHOTO: AFP**

He also made an appeal for unity as Everton looks to improve on its record of just three wins from 19 Premier League matches.

"We need Goodison [Park, Everton's home ground] and all Evertonians to play their part in getting behind the players in this important season so we can move into our fabulous new stadium as a Premier League

team," he commented.

Moyes left Everton in the summer of 2013 with the difficult job of replacing Sir Alex Ferguson at Manchester United, but was sacked in April the following year.

Moyes then spent a year in Spain with Real Sociedad, before a difficult spell at Sunderland, which saw the north-east outfit relegated. — Xinhua

## Auger-Aliassime and Keys take out Adelaide titles ahead of Melbourne



Madison Keys holds the winner's trophy after her victory against American compatriot Jessica Pegula at the Adelaide International final. **PHOTO: AFP**

FELIX Auger-Aliassime and Madison Keys completed the perfect preparation for the Australian Open Saturday when they claimed top honours at the Adelaide International.

Keys upset top seed and world number seven Jessica Pegula to win the event for a second

time in a major confidence-boost ahead of the opening Grand Slam of the year.

The world number 20 duplicated her 2022 trophy at Memorial Drive by defeating her American compatriot 6-3, 4-6, 6-1 for a ninth WTA crown.

Canada's Auger-Aliassime

fired down 10 aces to beat American Sebastian Korda 6-3, 3-6, 6-1 in the men's final, earning his sixth career trophy.

He is on a five-match win streak which began last week with his victory over world number four Taylor Fritz at the United Cup. — AFP

## Leverkusen overpowers Dortmund in Bundesliga five-goal thriller

SECOND-PLACED Bayer Leverkusen closed the gap on leader Bayern Munich after defeating Borussia Dortmund 3-2 in the 16<sup>th</sup> round of the Bundesliga on Friday.

The Werkselt needed just one minute to break the deadlock when Dortmund failed to clear the ball out of the area, allowing Robert Andrich to set up Nathan Tella, who fired into the top left-hand corner from the edge of the box.

Leverkusen doubled its lead seven minutes later when Piero Hincapie's square pass to the far post found Patrik Schick, who slotted home from close range.

Dortmund pulled one back in the 12<sup>th</sup> minute when Andrich's failed clearance allowed Jamie Gittens to chip the ball over the onrushing Leverkusen goalkeeper Lukas

Hradecky.

The defending champion restored its two-goal lead in the 19<sup>th</sup> minute when Schick met Jeremie Frimpong's cut-back to score from close range.

Leverkusen had a golden opportunity to extend its lead after the restart, but Schick couldn't beat Dortmund goalkeeper Gregor Kobel from inside the area on the hour mark.

Leverkusen's wastefulness was punished in the 79<sup>th</sup> minute when the VAR awarded Dortmund a penalty, and Serhou Guirassy stepped up and sent Hradecky the wrong way.

Leverkusen held firm afterwards and with the win, moves within a point of Bayern. Dortmund remains sixth after suffering its fifth defeat of the season. — Xinhua





Ray-Ban Meta, developed by Meta, leads the market with photo/video capture, music playback, and object recognition features. **PHOTO: YOURSTORY/META**

*Smart glasses now include live translation, GPS, and cameras, moving beyond early bulky designs.*

Sweden says Christmas tree needles safe to eat – after Belgian warning

*Swedish officials clarified that young, wild Christmas tree needles are safe to eat in limited quantities.*

## Smart glasses enter new era with sleeker designs, lower prices

Producers of connected eyewear are rapidly innovating with more discreet models to compete in the fast-growing, highly competitive market. Smart glasses now incorporate functions like live translation, GPS, and cameras, moving beyond the bulky designs of early models like Google Glass and Epson's Moverio.

At the Consumer Electronics Show

(CES) in Las Vegas, experts noted the rise of smart eyewear paired with smartphone apps, with designs increasingly resembling traditional glasses. The Ray-Ban Meta, developed by Meta, is a market leader, offering features like photo/video capture, music playback, and object recognition. However, augmented reality (AR) capabilities are still limited and may raise the price significantly.

Price is a critical factor, especially with Chinese manufacturers entering the market. While Google Glass initially retailed for \$1,500, today's smart glasses are closer to the cost of premium regular eyewear. Ray-Ban's Meta starts at \$300, while Vue offers basic models for \$200. AR-focused companies like XReal are also advancing the technology, though AR adoption remains slow. — AFP

A day after Belgium warned against eating Christmas trees, Swedish officials said that the needles can be safely used to make butter and other products — as long as the trees are young and wild.

Belgium's federal food safety agency (Afsca) issued a public health warning Tuesday against eating pine tree needles after the environmentally-minded city

## South Koreans post record length of generative AI usage time in December: Data

SOUTH KOREANS used major generative artificial intelligence (AI) services for the longest amount of time last month, data showed.

According to the Yonhap News Agency, South Korean smartphone users spent a combined 900 million minutes on ChatGPT, A, WRTN, Perplexity, Microsoft Copilot and Claude in December, according to data compiled by mobile market research firm WiseappURetailUGoods.

The tally was the highest ever and over eightfold of the corresponding figure of 110 million minutes posted a year earlier. Last month, OpenAI's ChatGPT was the most used generative AI service in the country, with 6.82 million users.

A, SK Telecom Co's AI assistant service, ranked No 2 with 2.45 million users, followed by WRTN with 2.32 million, Perplexity 590,000, Microsoft Copilot 310,000 and Claude 120,000.

WRTN is an AI aggregator developed by South Korean AI startup Wrtn Technologies, Perplexity is a global AI search engine, and Claude is an AI assistant created by US AI firm Anthropic. — ANI

*South Koreans spent 900 million minutes on generative AI services in December, an eightfold increase from 110 million minutes a year earlier.*



SK Telecom's AI assistant, A., ranked second with 2.45 million users. **PHOTO: PEXELS**



Sweden's food safety agency says eating Christmas tree needles can be safe. **PHOTO: AFP**

of Ghent posted tips for recycling the conifers into dinner table items. Ghent had cited what it said were ancient Scandinavian customs of using dried needles to flavour butter. Sweden's Food Safety Agency said it agreed with their Belgian counterparts that commercially bought Christmas trees "are not considered food because they may have been treated with plant protection products not authorized for edible crops".

But Anneli Widenfalk, toxicologist at the Swedish agency, told AFP in an email that the Swedish custom of collecting and using needles from young saplings is safe — if in limited quantities.

"This is usually done in May to June, when they are small and tender, and the tree has probably not been treated with chemicals," she said. — AFP