

The Global **NEW LIGHT** of MYANMAR



Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and his wife Daw Kyu Kyu Hla attend the Chinese New Year celebration in the Year of Snake for 2025 held at the National Indoor Stadium I in Thuwunna of Yangon yesterday.

Myanmar seeks to build trustworthy and friendly ties with neighbouring China

Myanmar requests China's continued cooperation in its peace processes and efforts towards national development.

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing expressed his aspiration to further strengthen the China-Myanmar relationship and deepen the bond of friendship between the peoples of both nations.

A ceremony to organize the Chinese New Year

celebration in the Year of Snake for 2025 took place at the National Indoor Stadium I in Thuwunna in Yangon yesterday afternoon, attended by Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and his wife Daw Kyu Kyu Hla.

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Salient points from the speech delivered by the Senior General at the Chinese New Year festival

1. Myanmar expressed gratitude to China for its unwavering stance and support.
2. Myanmar aims to enhance the momentum of ongoing projects with China and continue to establish itself as a trustworthy and friendly neighbouring country to China.
3. Myanmar expresses its gratitude to the Chinese government and all Chinese citizens for their continued support of its independence and sovereignty and values China's assistance in promoting stability and peace.

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NATIONAL

Nation's Development Relies on Contributions from Intellectuals and Experts

IN line with the saying, "The strength of the nation lies within," the country's development efforts depend on the contributions of intellectuals and experts in the arts and sciences.

(Excerpt from the speech given by Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at the ceremony of presenting awards to outstanding students who passed the matriculation examination 2024 with distinctions in all subjects on 22 July 2024)



National Objectives for 78th 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.

Mottos for 78th 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.

Maritime Advisory Notice

1. PTTEP International Limited, in collaboration with the Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise for oil and gas exploration and operations, will conduct Geotechnical Site Investigation Survey (GTD) activities within the sites of Zawtika Project in offshore block M-9 and the Yadana Project in offshore blocks M-5 and M-6. These activities will be carried out using the survey vessel Geo Mariner (Call Sign: XVCH7) from 27 February 2025 to 30 April 2025.
2. The coordinates of the locations where the Geotechnical Site Investigation Survey (GTD) will be conducted are as follows: -

Well locations in offshore blocks M-5 and M-6 (Yadana)

Point	Latitude	Longitude
M5-Exp C1	15°07' 45.2615" N	94°10' 10.5131" E
M5-Exp C2	15°02' 50.3772" N	94°06' 0.4221" E
M6-Exp CA	15°22' 58.0671" N	95°13' 59.3578" E
M6-Exp CF	15°17' 6.1839" N	95°09' 29.2190" E
Yadana-Infill WP2	15°09' 08.887" N	94°46' 50.887" E
Badamya-Infill WP4	15°09' 38.119" N	94°43' 02.108" E
Appraisal-C1	15°09' 23.5281" N	94°09' 48.4001" E
Appraisal-C2	15°03' 33.7316" N	94°05' 35.7351" E

(B) Wellhead platform location in offshore block M-9 (Zawtika)

Point	Latitude	Longitude
WPH Zawtika-41	14° 27' 18.58712" N	95° 34' 56.27678" E

3. A Notice to Mariners has been issued for the Geotechnical Site Investigation Survey (GTD) operations at Offshore Block M-9 (Zawtika) and Offshore Blocks M-5 and M-6 (Yadana). These operations, carried out by the survey vessel Geo Mariner (Call Sign: XVCH7) will occur from 27 February 2025 to 30 April 2025. The notice restricts the passage of large and small vessels, cargo barges, fishing boats, and mechanized vessels and prohibits anchoring, fishing and the setting of fishing gear within a 4-kilometre radius of the survey sites to prevent any interference with the ongoing work.

EARTHQUAKE NEWS

(Issued at 14:00 hour MST)

A slight earthquake of magnitude 3.6 Richter Scale with its epicentre inside Myanmar (about 16 miles east of Yenangyoung), latitude 20.42 °N, longitude 95.12 °E, depth 20 kilometres, about 55 miles south-southeast of NyaungU seismological observatory was recorded at 13 hours 41 minutes 24 seconds MST on 25 January 2025. — DMH

Gold Market Rate as of 25 January 2025

THE price of one tical (16.329325 grammes) of gold with density of 19.25 grammes per cubic centimetre and above is K5,450,000, as established by the Mineral (Gold) Reference Price Determination Committee.

NATIONAL

Residents Urged to Prioritize Public Safety Amid Armed Terrorist Threats

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

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



Chairman of the State Administration Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing hears the reports during his inspection tour at the implementation of the Thilawa integrated farm of the Myanmar Economic Corporation in Kyauktan Township yesterday.

Chairman of the State Administration Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, accompanied by Commander-in-Chief (Navy) Admiral Htein Win, Commander-in-Chief (Air) General Tun Aung, union-level dignitaries, the Yangon Region Chief Minister, senior Tatmadaw officers from the Office of the Commander-in-Chief, the Vice-Chairman 1 of the Myanmar War Veterans Organization, the commander of Yangon Command and officials, inspected 'Myanmar Thagaung' advanced war veteran housing (Laydauntkan) in Dagon Myothit (South) Township and Thilawa Integrated farm implementation process in Yangon Region yesterday morning.

The Senior General heard reports by Yangon Command Commander Maj-Gen Zaw Hein and Director of Military Engineers Maj-Gen Zaw Naing Oo on the construction of the housings and settlement of war veterans, plans to build a pre-primary school and a basic education middle school, completion of the sports grounds and playgrounds, and supply of electricity. The Chief Minister reported on the brief history of housing construction and land utilization.

After hearing the reports, the Senior General said that such housing must contribute to development of the Yangon City. A solar power generation project must be implemented for the housings. As the

War veteran housing (Laydauntkan) accommodates war veterans at over 4,000 apartments

Agriculture and livestock farms must be encouraged to ensure the food security of the more than seven million population in Yangon Region.

housing has accommodated war veterans at more than 4,000 apartments, it become a small town.

The Senior General viewed round the housings, gave guidance to officials to beautify the housings and manage systematic drainage process and greeted families.

At the Shopping Complex at the corner of Bayintnaung Road and No 7 Highway near the war veterans housing (Laydauntkan), MWVO Vice-Chairman 1 Lt-Gen Ye Aung (Retd) reported on facts about the project, and efforts being made to timely completion of the project.

With regard to his instructions, the Senior General said that the housing project aims to enhance the living standard of people from the housing and create job opportunities for them. It is necessary to

manage solar power generation for the housings. Roads in the town and drainage systems must be proper.

The Senior General then inspected the implementation of the Thilawa integrated farm of Myanmar Economic Corporation between the Yangon River and Hmawun Creek in Kyauktan Township.

MEC Chairman General Nyo Saw, Myanmar Economic Holding Public Co Ltd Chairman Lt-Gen Hsan Oo and officials reported to the Senior General on work progress of Shwepyi integrated farming zone, Thilawa integrated farming zone, 26th-mile integrated farming zone, Shwemayin fish farm in Twantay Township, Ngwe Pinle livestock and fishery industry and Ngwe Pinle cattle farm, sale of meat, fish and egg to the market at fair prices, functionality

of the cold storage (Hlinethaya), plans to breed dairy cows, beef cows, layers and goats at Sunye Lake breeding zone and a plan to establish a feedstuff factory.

In giving guidance, the Senior General said that it needs to encourage agriculture and livestock farms to ensure the food security of the more than seven million population in Yangon Region. It is necessary to operate livestock zones and camps as well as village-wise manageable livestock farms with the arrangement of a proper feedstuff supply. Likewise, the Senior General underlined that only when basic foodstuffs are produced will the high prices of commodities be reduced. Moreover, he noted that it is necessary to take the best examples of successful agriculture and livestock farms from other countries to apply them to their farms.

The Senior General viewed the display of fish from the Thilawa integrated farming zone and eggs and dairy products from agriculture and livestock farms.

The Senior General also inspected the Thilawa integrated farming zone in a motorcade. — MNA/TTA

NATIONAL



State Administration Council Chairman Defence Services Commander-in-Chief Senior General Min Aung Hlaing delivers a speech at a meeting with Tatmadaw members and their families at the Thanlyin Station, Yangon Command, Yangon Region, yesterday.

Tatmadaw members encouraged to value their military life

Chairman of the State Administration Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, highlighted that, among Myanmar's current population of about 52 million – 47 per cent male and 53 per cent female – only a small number have joined the military to perform the noble duties of national defence and security, making it essential for military personnel to take pride in their service, an honour not easily achieved by the general public.

He said so in a meeting with Tatmadaw members and their families of the Thanlyin Station, Yangon Command, Yangon Region, yesterday. He encouraged Tatmadaw members should cherish and value their military life, having joined the Tatmadaw with the desire to

fulfil their national defence and security responsibilities without external encouragement, take pride in those carrying out noble duties for the country and people, and fulfil the duties assigned to them.

The Senior General was accompanied by Commander-in-Chief (Navy) Admiral Htein Win, Commander-in-Chief (Air) General Tun Aung, senior Tatmadaw officers from the Office of the Commander-in-Chief and the commander of Yangon Command.

In his speech, he explained the political changes in the country, the changes in the governance systems over the years, the military's efforts to implement the multi-party democracy desired by the people, the voter fraud that occurred in the 2020 multiparty democratic general election, the failure to address

this fraud, the attempts to seize power by force that led to the declaration of a state of emergency, the military's responsibility to carry out state duties under the 2008 Constitution, and the security forces' efforts to contain the ongoing violence in the country.

He continued by saying that the main responsibility of the Tatmadaw is to carry out the task of national defence and that regardless of the unit or location they serve in, military personnel must serve with military awareness and knowledge, as well as security awareness and knowledge, and that the military skills taught by training schools must be effectively applied in the practical field.

In order to apply the skills taught in such a way, they must constantly practice, maintain good health and strength ap-

propriate for their age, carry out their duties courageously when it comes to national defence, have a strong will and desire to do so, and use the weapons and equipment they each handle with expertise, the Senior General said.

He then detailed carrying out national defence and security responsibilities, stating that each individual must train to be strong and resilient, with performing daily duties correctly being a form of training. It is also necessary to supervise and ensure that daily, weekly, and monthly fitness exercises are regularly performed by individuals and groups. Regarding training, per the policy of "study, practise, and follow", one must constantly study to stay abreast of ever-changing military techniques, consistently practice to become more proficient in

the military skills learned, and always follow and apply the established rules, regulations, and orders.

He said regardless of the field of work, if one does not study, they will be left behind. Therefore, it is important to constantly study and strive to develop both oneself and the organization. In terms of training, a good soldier must live and practice in order to improve the quality of both themselves and their organization. Regarding administrative matters, there must be a balanced administration model and the ability to successfully lead projects by understanding the nature of people.

The Senior General stressed that the backbone of the military is discipline, which encourages doing what is right and forbids doing what is wrong. If each soldier has strong discipline and solid administrative support, their morale will improve; therefore, it is essential to adhere to the principles of unity and fairness in administration.

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Myanmar seeks to build trustworthy and friendly ties with neighbouring China

FROM PAGE 1

The Senior General and his wife were warmly welcomed by Chinese Ambassador to Myanmar Ms Ma Jia and distinguished guests.

Union Ministers U Tin Oo Lwin, U Min Naung and U Tun Ohn, Yangon Region Chief Minister U Soe Thein, the minister-counsellors of the Chinese Embassy, the patron of Myanmar-China Buddhist and Cultural Exchange Association, officials from the Interfaith Dialogue Group, the chair of Myanmar-China Chamber of Commerce, the chair of Yunnan Social Welfare Association and chairs of other Chinese association cut the ribbon to open the ceremony.

The troupe of eight lions paid respect to the Senior General and his wife and the Chinese Ambassador with towels to mark the Chinese New Year.

The Senior General and the Chinese Ambassador pressed the button to launch the New Year festival.

A Shaolin monk extended the New Year greetings to strengthen China-Myanmar friendly ties. The Senior General, his wife and attendees enjoyed the Shaolin Kung Fu demonstration.

The Senior General and his wife offered Buddha images and a flower basket to the Shaolin monks who returned gifts.

The Senior General, his wife and the Chinese Ambassador posed for documentary photos together with attendees.

The Senior General and his wife presented cash awards to the entertainment troupes.

They visited the Chinese traditional cultural booths from Chinatown and Chinese traditional food booths.

At the dinner to mark the Year of Snake, the Senior General and his wife, and the Chinese Ambassador painted the traditional Chinese lion statue. Then, the traditional Chinese lion dance troupe performed dances.

Speaking on the occasion, the Senior General said that it is understood that the snake sym-



State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and his wife Daw Kyu Kyu Hla offer Buddha images to Shaolin monks at yesterday's Chinese New Year celebration.

bolizes wisdom, strategic transformation, renewal, growth, and deep insight. It is believed that these qualities will enable greater progress and transformation, fulfilling the aspirations of the Chinese people.

Due to centuries-old relations and a long-standing shared border, China and Myanmar have been able to establish strong ties, including kinship-based relationships, strategic cooperative partnerships, and efforts to build a community with shared future benefits. Moving forward, the Senior General expressed his aspiration to further strengthen the China-Myanmar relationship and deepen the bond of friendship between the peoples of both nations.

Regarding Myanmar, it was expressed that due to the implementation of Myanmar-China economic corridor projects, Myanmar attaches importance to collaboration with China for peaceful development and mutual benefits. Myanmar aims to enhance the momentum of ongoing projects with China and continue to establish itself as a trustworthy and friendly neigh-

bouring country to China.

In November of last year, the Senior General recounted that he visited the People's Republic of China at the invitation of the Chinese government. During the trip, he attended the Mekong Summit and related meetings and held separate discussions with the Chinese Premier and other leaders from ASEAN countries who participated in the event. During discussions, the Chinese Premier reaffirmed the matters previously confirmed during the Chinese Foreign Minister's visit to Myanmar. These include China's full support for Myanmar's internal peace and stability, endorsement of Myanmar's efforts following the five-point roadmap of the State Administration Council, and assistance concerning the elections. Moreover, discussions emphasized enhancing multifaceted cooperation between the two countries, strengthening China-Myanmar relations, and fostering greater political trust.

It was also highlighted that China's confirmations and assistance reflect its status as a steadfast friend of Myanmar.

Myanmar expressed gratitude to China for its unwavering stance and support.

China firmly supports Myanmar's independence and sovereignty and values its assistance in promoting stability and peace. Myanmar expresses its gratitude to the Chinese government and all Chinese citizens for their continued support. Moreover, Myanmar requests China's continued cooperation in its peace processes and efforts toward national development.

Diplomatic relations between Myanmar and China will have reached a milestone of 75 years on 8 June this year. China and Myanmar have supported each other in various matters since the establishment of their diplomatic ties.

Both domestic and international groups do not welcome the friendly and close relations between the two nations and they employ various methods to instigate Myanmar and China. Therefore, the authorities and citizens of both countries must remain vigilant and committed to safeguarding their mutual ties.

In light of this, the people

of Myanmar, Chinese-Myanmar associations within Myanmar, Chinese descendants in Myanmar, and Chinese citizens working in Myanmar should collaborate with a sense of patriotism and mutual harmony, living together in unity.

Then, the Senior General and his wife and the Chinese Ambassador to Myanmar exchanged commemorative gifts to mark the 2025 Snake Year of the Chinese New Year.

Afterwards, the Chinese Ambassador to Myanmar delivered New Year greetings, stating that the Chinese New Year is the most significant festival for the Chinese people and expressing great joy in welcoming the Year of the Snake. Chinese individuals have actively integrated into the larger family of Myanmar, which is home to various ethnic groups, and have become important contributors and participants in Myanmar's economic and social development, as well as in fostering China-Myanmar friendship. Throughout this year, both nations have maintained positive progress in mutual exchanges and collaborations in various sectors, including culture, tourism, and religious affairs. This year marks the 75th anniversary of diplomatic relations between China and Myanmar. With the attention and guidance of the leaders of both countries, the comprehensive and strategic partnership between the two nations has yielded fruitful results, fostering new developments and creating numerous opportunities for the development of both peoples.

It is believed that in the coming year, by joining hands, they can continue contributing to the construction of a shared future and a harmonious community for China and Myanmar. Together, they will build a beautiful future for both nations, ensuring mutual development, prosperity, and peace. With this in mind, best wishes are extended for continued growth, harmony, and lasting peace between the two countries.

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NATIONAL

Tatmadaw members encouraged to value their military life

FROM PAGE 4

Regarding welfare, he explained that governance and welfare are closely related, and good governance can foster welfare. When governance and welfare are strong, morale will naturally improve. Tatmadaw has provided soldiers of all ranks with rights and benefits appropriate to their position. It must ensure that those entitled to these benefits receive them fully and correctly, while also strictly monitoring welfare provisions. Additionally, the Tatmadaw must address the personal difficulties and crises of its soldiers to the best of its ability.

He urged soldiers to manage their consumption of food, drink, and entertainment for their well-being, maintain a balance between income and expenses, and avoid wasting resources. The Tatmadaw has supported both military-owned and privately-owned agricultural and livestock businesses, focusing on providing affordable food for soldiers and their families. By successfully running these businesses and selling surplus products at favourable rates, they aim to improve the welfare of both military personnel and the

local community.

He emphasized the interconnectedness of military development activities like training, administration, welfare, and morale, stressing that it is each soldier's responsibility to foster good morale, with leaders ensuring it is properly nurtured. Good morale can be supported through activities like sports competitions and addressing soldiers' needs. He also highlighted the importance of reading and studying literature to improve individual quality, apply knowledge practically, and share it with others, while urging continued study and warning that illiteracy can hinder progress in life.

Afterwards, the State Administration Council Chairman Defence Services Commander-in-Chief presented food items and sports equipment to the officers, soldiers, and families of the military base, which were received by the officials. After the meeting, the Chairman of the State Administration Council and his team cordially greeted Tatmadaw members of various ranks and their families who had attended the meeting. — MNA/TH

Myanmar seeks to build trustworthy and friendly ...

FROM PAGE 5

Afterwards, the Senior General and his wife joined attendees of the ceremony to partake in a dinner reception held in honour of the Chinese New Year.

During the dinner, entertainment was provided by a special cultural and literary performance group from China, including martial arts demonstrations by Shaolin monks. Under the Directorate of Public Relations and Psychological Warfare, the Myawady Entertainment Troupe and artists showcased dances, musical performances, and songs promoting Sino-Myanmar friendship. Chinese cultural troupes presented traditional Chinese songs and music performances, while external artists entertained with various songs. During the performances, a speech was delivered celebrating Myanmar's traditional New Year water festival (Thingyan), which was the first to be inscribed on UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage list. In recognition of this honour, the Myawady Band performed the Thingyan song "Khit Lay Khit" (Four Eras).

The Senior General, his wife and the Chinese Ambassador presented flower baskets to the Chinese traditional dance troupes from China, the Myawady Entertainment Troupe and artistes.

All participants and artistes sang the theme song "Let all flowers blossom". After the ceremony, the Senior General and his wife cordially greeted the attendees. — MNA/TTA

Loikaw University reopening, regional development inspected

THE Kayah State government is leveraging up to repair the buildings of Loikaw University that were damaged by the terrorist attacks to reopen as soon as possible since 22 January. State Chief Minister U Zaw Myo Tin, accompanied by Tatmadaw members, members of the State government office and departmental officials visited Loikaw University yesterday morning to inspect the cleaning and improvement work carried out on the University campus and the upgrading of the asphalt concrete pavement on the Loikaw-Lawpita Road.

The Kayah State chief minister and other officials first looked over the cleaning and repair works of Loikaw University to reopen. Loikaw University's head engineer briefed the update on the operations. The state's chief minister urged all parties

to use caution when performing the duties to worker safety and to work together methodically to expedite any necessary repairs.

He also visited the Loikaw-Lawpita Road (3.5 kilometres long, 18 feet wide) upgrade project from asphalt to asphalt-concrete (AC) and inspected the 100 per cent completion of the Loikaw-Lawpita Road Well Graded Layer (8 inches), 3.5 kilometres long, 20 feet wide road project and the progress sites of asphalt concrete (AC) road paving, hard shoulder paving and roadside drainage excavation. The Deputy Director of the State Road Department explained in detail the completion of the work and the ongoing work. The Kayah State chief minister directed that the work site be safe, meet the specified standards, ensure good drainage, and allow people to



This photo shows office staff cleaning Loikaw University in Loikaw, Kayah State, yesterday.

travel normally during the road construction work and that the road be used after the completion of the work, traffic accidents, The officials were instructed to systematically monitor and coordinate the necessary measures

to ensure road safety.

The Loikaw-Lawpita asphalt concrete road (3.5 kilometres long) is being built with the State government's funds for the 2024-2025 financial year. If the road is completed, the people

of Ma Htaw Khu village tract, Lawpita village tract in Lawpita Town and the residents of Baluchaung Hydropower Plant (Lawpita) will be able to travel faster and smoother than before. — State IPRD/MKKS

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News and Periodicals Enterprise



MoC's institute to train export operation startups in Feb

THE Trade Training Institute, the Trade Department under the Ministry of Commerce will offer intensive training on how to start an export business from 9 am to 4 pm on 24-28 February.

The institute is located at No 228/240, corner of Kanna Street and Shwebontha Street. Maximum number of trainees is 50. Trainees can register at the Institute, presenting an application form, three licensed photos, a bachelor's degree certificate, a matriculation pass certificate, a citizenship scrutiny card and other documents.

Individuals can enquire about details through the contact number of the institute 01 8250871. — NN/KK

Myeik's seasonal Marian plums in high demand from Thailand

MYEIK'S seasonal Marian plums are being sold well after orders from Thailand, according to the market sources.

Recently, these fruits have become abundant in Myeik Township, and small-sized fruits are selling well.

"Marian plums only appear at this time. They disappear after their season for a short time. Not like mangoes and rambutans. Sales are good because they are in season. There are a lot of orders from Thailand, and in Myeik, there are plenty. The current sale is good. The price of small ones is good," said a Marian farm owner Ma Myat Lei Lei Phyu in Myeik.

Currently, there are many orders by not only Myanmar people in Thailand but also Thai people as they use it in restaurants.



This image depicts Myeik's seasonal Marian plums.

"It is convenient as my customers deliver to Thailand. We did not remove stalks. If removed, the fruits will get dark and do not look good. In addition

to the Myanmar from Thailand, Thais also use them in restaurants, so there are many orders from Thailand," she said. — Thit Taw/ZN

CBM pumps US\$20M into financial market on 24 Jan

THE Central Bank of Myanmar (CBM) sold US\$20 million on 24 January.

CBM injected 800,000 yuan on 21 January, 1.91 million baht on 20 January, \$150,000 and 1.14 million yuan on 17 January, one million baht on 16 January, over \$25.35 million and 369,000 yuan on 15 January and over \$1,600 and 556,000 baht on 14 January into the financial market.

CBM announced on 13 January to sell \$25 million to fuel oil importers soon after selling 600,000 yuan on that day.

CBM injected \$3.9 million on 11 January, 714,000 yuan on 10 January, \$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 joining with law enforcement agencies to combat and prosecute those who attempt to manipulate the currency market under the existing



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

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



Greenbacks at the exchange counter.

Customs Dept sets dollar-kyat rate at K3,592 for Customs tariffs

THE Customs Department announced weekly foreign exchange rates to be exercised in levying Customs tariffs and a US dollar is set to be exchanged at K3,592.2 for the week (26 January-1 February). The exchange rates for Customs duty from 19 to 25 January are K3,590.5 against a US dollar, K103.85 against a baht and K490.055 for a yuan, the Customs Department announced.

This week's exchange rates for Customs duty are set at K3,592.2 against a US dollar, K103.56 against a baht and K489.948 for a yuan, the Customs Department stated. This Notification 90/2024 of the Ministry of Planning and Finance stated that the Customs Department will amend the weekly exchange rate as per the online trading rate, instead of the rate based on the reference rate

of the CBM, while collecting customs tariffs starting from 1 January 2025. Moreover, the weekly exchange rate based on the online trading rate will be posted on the website and Facebook page of the Myanmar Customs Department weekly, the notification revealed.

The Central Bank of Myanmar's reference exchange rate is K2,100 against the US dollar. — NN/KK

OPINION

Walking to enhance lifespan over time

NOW is the winter season in Myanmar, and although snow does not fall, the cool weather creates a pleasant atmosphere. This makes it an ideal time for people to travel, whether on short or long trips and to engage in physical activities such as sports training under fine weather conditions. Among these activities, walking stands out as the easiest and most accessible form of exercise, requiring no expense. It significantly contributes to health and fitness for people of all ages, promoting longevity and well-being.

Many people are focusing on improving their health and often recommend walking more than 5,000 steps per day. According to an international survey, walking 6,000 steps daily can reduce the risk of depression by nine per cent. Increasing the count to 7,000 steps can lower the risk by 31 per cent, while 7,500 steps may decrease it by 43 per cent. Walking 10,000 steps per day is suggested for optimal mental health.

Walking improves blood circulation throughout the body. Additionally, it engages both internal and external organs, enhancing their functionality in daily activities. People who walk regularly, following health guidelines, can enjoy the benefits of physical and mental well-being. Furthermore, walking daily strengthens the body, promoting a youthful appearance over time. Regular walkers often do not require supplements or medications to maintain their physical health.

Physical exercises, including walking, can help reduce the risk of several dangerous diseases. Walking can alleviate hypertension, lower cholesterol, reduce depression, and ease mental stress, all while decreasing the likelihood of chronic conditions such as heart attacks, strokes, type-2 diabetes, and more. In particular, walking aids in burning calories and controlling body weight. It is also an effective way to regulate blood pressure and improve cardiovascular health. This is why people need to recognize the benefits of daily walking and incorporate it into their routines to enhance their overall health and longevity over time.

According to a press release by the World Health Organization, deaths from non-communicable diseases have been steadily increasing each year. These diseases are largely linked to unhealthy lifestyles, contributing to conditions such as heart disease, hypertension, and diabetes. Together, these three diseases silently claim the lives of 41 million people globally each year. Of these, 17 million people die before reaching the age of 70. Contributing factors include smoking, lack of physical activity, excessive drinking, poor dietary choices, and exposure to air pollution.

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Book Title - Memoirs by Pablo Neruda
 Translator - Maung Win Shein
 Publishing House - Zawgyi Pho Win
 Publication Date - December 2024 (1st Edition)
 Price - K18,000

Memoirs by Pablo Neruda

MAUNG Win Shein's translation of the memoirs by Nobel Prize-winning poet Pablo Neruda has captivated readers and literary critics alike. Little is known about Maung Win Shein himself, adding an air of mystery to his remarkable work. The translated manuscript was discovered in the reading room of Sayagyi Mya Than Tint, where it was met with high praise from esteemed artists. This translation is a testament to Maung Win Shein's skill and dedication to bringing Neruda's profound reflections to a broader audience.

Pablo Neruda, the original author, lived in Yangan as Chile's consul, where he fell in love with a Myanmar girl. His tenure as

consul ended due to his political activism and his identity as a poet for the people. Neruda's life took a tragic turn as he died under mysterious circumstances, living as a fugitive.

In this book, the author poetically presents his life, literature, and historical lessons. Readers will encounter a blend of famous and lesser-known authors, poets, and notable figures from Latin America and around the world, including Lawrence, Octavio Paz, Paul Eluard, Nancy Cunard, Castro, Che Guevara, Arensberg, Picasso, Stalin, and Mao Zedong.

"Perhaps I didn't live just in myself, perhaps I lived the lives of others... My life is a life put to-

gether from all those lives: the lives of the poet," wrote Neruda, reflecting on his poem. He also wrote, "What the memoir writer remembers is not the same thing as the poet remembers."

Similarly, readers can explore his opinions, such as "Socialism's intentions are the best, but we poets are the same everywhere," and "Many of the things I remember have blurred as I recalled them; they have crumbled to dust, like irreparably shattered glass."

The book is infused with poetic expressions like, "The street became my religion," and "We loved each other as if we knew that this unique meeting was given to us only once in life."

Additionally, Sayagyi Maung Tha Noe has translated some parts of this book, adding to its depth and beauty.

"Memoirs" by Pablo Neruda is divided into 12 chapters, each covering a significant part of his life. These chapters provide insights into his evolution as a poet, diplomat, politician, and fugitive. He faced betrayals, dishonest actions, and unfaithful behaviours during World War II and the South American Revolution, intertwining these experiences with his love and life. These traumas transformed into his poetry.

Neruda, known for his romantic and life poems, also penned revolutionary and civil-themed poems during the war. His poems resonated deeply with civilians, who recited them. Remarkably, someone who intended to kill Neruda decided against it after reciting his poems.

Neruda fled from his homeland of Chile. During the Cold War, he planned to participate in the presidential race alongside Allende but eventually withdrew. However, he was later appointed as consul to Paris and went on to win a Nobel Prize. Neruda passed away after writing his memoirs for nine consecutive days.

The book cover is painted by Mote Thone and designed by Bachi Lin Wunna.



Book Title - Penning: Exploring Literary Creativity
 Writer - Maung Tha Cho
 Publishing House - A Lynn Thit
 Publication Date - November 2024 (1st Edition)
 Price - K20,000

Penning: Exploring Literary Creativity

THIS week's recommendation is a popular biography and autobiography published by A Lynn Thit Publishing.

The book pairs previously published works by Maung Tha Cho, 'The Glimpse of the Universe' and 'Contemporary Penning'. Additionally, it includes a literary critic's perspective on the craft of well-known writers, providing readers with a comprehensive look at literary creativity.

The book features literary nonfiction on various writers, showcasing their depth of creativity from the author's perspective. While the author does not

delve into the nuances of each character, he presents his own stance clearly and thoughtfully.

Through his articles, the author provides a realistic perspective on the extraordinary personalities of well-known writers, including Saya Mya Than Tint, Saya Min Thu Wunn, Saya Dagon Taya, Saya Nanda Thein Zan, Saya Linyon Maung Maung, Saya Nat Nwe, Saya Aung Thin, Saya Tekatho Min Maw, Saya Zaw Zaw Aung, Saya Maung Tha Noe, San Tun (Mandalay University), Nyunt Kyuu, Tekatho Phone Naing, Saya Paragu, Kyi Aung Zaw (Pynmana), Maung Chaw Nwe, Maung Yan Paing,

Maung Aung Pwint, Min Thike Mon, Zaung Htet, Nay Seint, Maung D, Shwe Soe Han, Pe Myint, Ko Tar, Kyuu Hnit, Nay Win Myint, Juu, APK, Than Myint Aung, U Tun Lwin, and San San Nwe (Thayawady). His insights focus on the essence of these writers' creativity, presenting his clear and thoughtful stance.

Among them, he shared some anecdotes about Saya Min Thit, famous for his quatrains and novels, including 'Apyo Shoke Htway Bogyoke Zay' and 'London Moe Khar Yay'. He is reputed as 'Artist Min Thit' for his literary prowess. In response to a literary critic who insulted

poetry, he wrote the novel 'Berlin Dream (1988)'. He used the definite article 'The' in front of his name as 'The Min Thit' to emphasize his unwavering confidence in his writing. He also vehemently rejected Existentialism theory at a literary event.

Saw Daywaw made a sarcastic remark at a restaurant about Ko Min Thit's four-line poem used to advertise a tuition:

"Once treatment for real,
 If thou accept,
 Doth as usual,
 Keep it Up."

Influenced by alcohol, Ko Min Thit exploded with anger and confronted him, saying, "You were knee-high to a grasshopper when I started in this field. That is disrespectful to satire. You are just green to this industry. I toured around the Southeast Asian region. Are we clear?" He then took K10 from Maung Tha Cho and went home. The writer describes this incident as a piece of the story about Saya Min Thit.

The book 'Penning' contains messages, life breakthroughs, autobiographical elements, and perspectives the writer aims to convey through his creative works.

(continued from last week's issue)

Virtue

By Chit Ko Pe

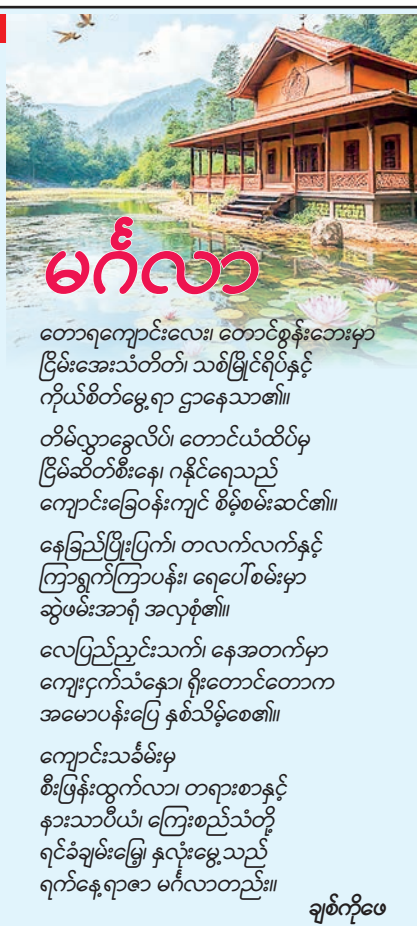
Surrounding with a shady forest, the village's monastery is located, at the edge of a mountain track. It's a venue to get body and mind relaxed.

Streaming from the top of the mount encircled with layers of the clouds, a runnel turns into a cool lough, next to the monastery's layout.

There is a catchy sight for the viewers, so as not to miss and blink further. It's an array of lotus leaves and flowers, with a sunny glint on the water.

The birds from the woods chirp and regale, and a cosy breeze dawdles and sways, as the sun rises on a pleasant day. It gets rid of tiredness, further away.

Sermons emanating from Dhamma Hall, and sounds ringing from the bell's maw, are sweetly absorbed and admired by all. It's a day of virtue, all in all!



မင်္ဂလာ

တောရကျောင်းလေး၊ တောင်စွန်းဘေးမှာ
 ငြိမ်းအေးသံတိတ်၊ သစ်မြိုင်ရိပ်နှင့်
 ကိုယ်စိတ်မွေ့ရာ ဌာနေသော၏။

တိမ်လွှာခွေလိပ်၊ တောင်ယံထိပ်မှ
 ငြိမ်သံတိမ်မွေ့၊ ဂန့်ငံရေသည်
 ကျောင်းခြေဝန်းကျင် စိန်စမ်းဆင်၏။

နေခြည်ဖြူဖြူ၊ တလက်လက်နှင့်
 ကြာရွက်ကြာပန်း၊ ရေပေါ်စမ်းမှာ
 ဆွမ်းအာရုံ အလှစုံ၏။

လေပြည့်ညိုသက်၊ နေအတက်မှာ
 ကျေးငှက်သံနော၊ ရိုးတောင်တောက
 အမောပန်းပြေ နှစ်သိမ့်စေ၏။

ကျောင်းသစ်စမ်းမှ
 စီးဖြန်းထွက်လာ၊ တရားစာနှင့်
 နားသာပီယံ၊ ကြားစည်သံတို့
 ရင်ခံချမ်းမြေ့၊ နှလုံးမွေ့သည်
 ရက်နေရာစာ မင်္ဂလာတည်း။

ချစ်ကိုဗေ

Come Silver Seagull

By Mya Thae (Research)

- Damsel was boring because the neighbour was quiet.
- She watched the view along the river bank.
- She saw a beautiful seagull.
- It was flying not far.
- She enjoyed it enormously.
- Damsel beckoned the seagull so much.
- Among the silver waves' music, it teased her indulge.
- Besides the seagull forgave her not to apart.
- Oh! pity seagull, I call you.
- Come to stay with me too.



Based on Daw Mar Mar Aye's song. "Come silver seagull"

Seesaw

(A poem for children)

By Minthuwun, Translated by Myint Zan

he is below
 and I'm up
 she is up and I'm below
 aiming up to the clouds
 in the sky above
 'tis very smooth to ride
 (the seesaw)

Composed in 1956
 Translated on 10 January 2025



ဆီးဘော

သူနိမ့်လို့ ငါထောင်
 သူထောင်လို့ ငါနိမ့်။
 ထက်ကောင်းကင် တိမ်ယံနီးအောင်
 စီးလို့ လှန့်ငြိမ်း။ ။

မင်းသူဝဏ်
 (သူငယ်တန်း ပြန်မာဖတ်စာ၊ ၁၉၅၆)

NATIONAL Entertainment

Marizza

FAMOUS rock music artiste Marizza passed away at Bahosi Hospital in Yangon on 23 January. The singer has huge applause from fans for his own-tuned songs (original melodies).

During his 30-year experience in the music industry, he released eight series and created unique songs: Hmyaw Lint Chin La Min, Swell Arr, Shwe Yaung Kaung Kin and Alwan Mate Swe, especially for young audiences. The 58-year-old singer died of kidney disease, and the funeral occasion took place at Yeway cemetery on 25 January.



Ah Nge

ROCKER AH NGE, who once said no matter how difficult life gets, it is OK if I have a rock song, organized his one-man music concert at The Square Theatre in Mandalay on 25 January. The One Man Show was accompanied by Rock Star Band, and he sang his unique songs "Akyi", "Ko Yay Yazawin", "Htut Ma Way Buu" and "Khar".

Phyo Myat Aung

VOCALIST Phyo Myat Aung performed for RAP & ROOL NIGHT on 24 January (Friday). The event also included Sai Sai Kham Leng and Mi Sandi. It took place at JUDSON Entertainment Bar in Mingala Taung Nyunt township in Yangon.



Kaung San

COMEDIAN KAUNG SAN, who suffered from a stroke four times, is now receiving medical treatment. Kaung San is the son of Academy Moe Di, and U Moe Di takes care of his two sons to date.

Chaw Yadana

ACADEMY CHAW YADANA, who plays a villain role in movies, recently received the nickname "Villain Head" from her fans. She also made a post on her social media that she was satisfied with that name. The actress also made comments regarding the Academy Award ceremony saying the event offers fashion awards for actors and actresses, so they can expect to win these awards. I also want the officials to award the designers.



Khay Sett Thwin

ACTRESS KHAY SETT THWIN, who recently got married, and now is having a peaceful family, stars in the 'Candy Friends' movie. The Cele Show of the move took place at Mingala Nay Pyi Taw cinema on 24 January. She participated in that movie when she got pregnant. The movie was directed by director Pyae Phyo Naing, and the cast includes Yair Yint Aung, Tryon, Shin Mway La, Khay Sett Thwin and Than Tha Moe Theint.—Htun Htun/KTZH



CELEBRITY BRIEF

Connie, Wai Gyi to organize Chinese New Year Free Show

VOCALIST Connie and singer-cum-composer Wai Gyi will perform for the Chinese New Year Free Show at Inya Lake Garden in Yangon. "Most of the audience like our "Say" song. So, I will sing new songs composed by Wai Gyi together with him. We will sing songs proposed by the fans and so let's meet at Inya Lake Garden," said Connie. The event will take place at 7 pm on 29 January (Chinese New Year Day). It will feature the Daily Gita Band.—ASH/KTZH



NATIONAL

Weekly Roundup

21 January

53rd Myanmar Health Research Congress commences

State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing sent a video message to the opening ceremony of the 53rd Myanmar Health Research Congress, highlighting that Encouragement needs to focus on the emergence of young researchers and intellectuals. The congress took place at the head office of the Medical Research Department in Dagon Township of Yangon Region from 21 to 24 January.

SAC Order 6/2025 issued

The State Administration Council has appointed and assigned U Khin Maung Latt to the duties of a member of Nay Pyi Taw Council under Section 419 of the Constitution.

22 January

Vice-Senior General Soe Win holds talks with Thai General

Myanmar and Thai Tatmadaws plan to eradicate human trafficking and online scams in the border region, said SAC Vice-Chairman Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Soe Win at a meeting with Advisory Board Chairman of the Office of the Royal Thai Army Chief and Head of Army Operations Centre, Neighbouring Countries Coordination Centre (NCCC) General Direk Bongkarn at Bayintnaung Villa in Nay Pyi Taw.

23 January

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing visits Taungnyo Station

SAC Chairman Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing stressed the need for Tatmadaw members to continuously research, study, and expand the teachings on evolving military strategies, weaponry, and military sciences that have advanced with the passage of time on his inspection tour of the local training depot in Taungnyo Station of Nay Pyi Taw Command.

24 January

Chinese Embassy in Yangon hosts Chinese New Year reception

The Chinese Embassy in Yangon celebrated the Chinese New Year reception at the Inya Lake Hotel yesterday evening, attended by SAC Member Deputy Prime Minister and Union Minister at the Prime Minister's Office Admiral Tin Aung San, on behalf of State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing. — GNLM/TTA



This photo showcases the Mandalay Mayor's Cup Vegetable, Fruit and Horticultural Show in the previous year.

Mandalay to host 21st Mayor's Cup for Vegetables, Fruits, and Horticulture

THE 21st Mandalay Mayor's Cup Vegetable, Fruit, and Horticultural Show will be held from 11 to 14 February.

The event will take place at the Sinphyu Lake compound (east side) and will feature 23 competition categories.

For all categories, first, second, and third prizes, along with three consolation prizes, will

be awarded. Those who wish to participate in the competition must submit their vegetables, fruits, and horticultural entries to the administration office at Sinphyu Lake (east side) during office hours on 9 February.

For the floral design and fruit carving competitions, entries will be accepted until 11 am on 10 February. — ASH/MKKS

Thazi-Shwenyaung railway resumes passenger service post-repairs

THE Thazi-Shwenyaung railway section, damaged by Typhoon Yagi has been repaired and passenger train services will resume, according to the Myanmar Railways.

This railway section connects the Mandalay Region with the southern Shan

State. Starting from 31 January, Train No 141 from Thazi to Shwenyaung will operate every Friday, while Train No 142 from Shwenyaung to Thazi will run every Monday, beginning on 3 February.

Train No 141 will depart Thazi station at 5 am and Train

No 142 will leave Shwenyaung station at 7 am.

In turn, scenic charter train services including the Aungban-Kalaw and Kalaw-Myindaik rail sections with a capacity of 15 passengers per train have been operational since 24 January. — ASH/KZL



This photo of Myanmar tea leaf salad is a delicacy with a combination of textures and many flavours including green tea leaf, vegetables and crunchy beans.

MCHT seeks UNESCO recognition for Myanma Tea Leaf Culture

MYANMAR Cultural Heritage Trust is exerting efforts for Myanmar tea consumption culture to be inscribed on UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, said Daw Sanda Khin, chair of MCHT.

Following the Myanmar New Year Thingyan Festival added to UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage List, MCHT has been making efforts for Myanmar Thanaka Culture to be listed on UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. Myanmar will send proposals for Myanmar tea consumption culture in 2026 to enter UNESCO's intangible cultural heritage list.

"There are over 2,000 intangible cultural herit-

age elements recognized and listed on the national-level intangible cultural heritage list according to 2024 March's report.

The related society has to submit cultural heritage items to UNESCO. Only one element can be submitted to UNESCO per year. After UNESCO's inscription of the Thingyan Festival as a world intangible cultural heritage on 5 December 2024, Myanmar Thanaka culture will be submitted to UNESCO in March 2025.

Three Pyu ancient cities (Hanlin, Beikthano and Sri Ksetra) were designated as UNESCO's World Heritage Sites in 2024. The ancient archaeological site Bagan entered the list in 2019. — ASH/KK

ECONOMY WORLD

India, Indonesia to work together in defence manufacturing and supply chain: PM Modi

Modi highlighted the historical significance of Indonesia being the chief guest at India's first Republic Day and expressed pride that Indonesia will again hold this role as India celebrates 75 years of the Republic.

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi said that India and Indonesia have decided to increase cooperation in the defence sector by working together in defence manufacturing and supply chain.

In his press statement following meeting with Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto, he recalled that Indonesia was

the chief guest in India's first Republic Day and expressed it a matter of pride that Indonesia will again be chief guest as India celebrates 75 years of the Republic.

PM Modi said, "Indonesia was the chief guest country on India's first Republic Day and it is a matter of great pride for

us that as we celebrate 75 years of the Republic, Indonesia is once again part of this historic occasion. I welcome President Prabowo Subianto to India."

PM Modi said that he held "comprehensive discussion" with Prabowo Subianto on various aspects of mutual cooperation. — ANI



India and Indonesia have agreed to strengthen their cooperation in the defence sector, particularly in defence manufacturing and supply chains. PHOTO: ANI

Croatians boycott shopping to protest high prices



Many stores in Croatia were nearly empty on Friday as consumers heeded a shopping boycott over high prices. PHOTO: AFP

SUPERMARKET aisles were quiet across Croatia on Friday as consumers protested high food prices by joining a boycott

on shopping.

Fanned by social media campaign, Croatians largely stayed away from shops, with

daily sales volume down 50 per cent from last Friday, the country's tax administration said in a statement.

The protest, initiated by consumer groups, aimed to pile pressure on retailers they blame for surging inflation.

Only a few customers were in a central Zagreb supermarket at midday that is usually bustling with shoppers at that hour. "Retailers will not be financially harmed, but this is an important symbolic message that price gouging should stop", Danko Horvat, a barman from Zagreb who joined the boycott, told AFP. Consumer groups said they were satisfied with the response. — AFP

BRIEF: ECON

Catalonia eyes reversal of business exodus after big bank returns

SPANISH business circles believe banking giant Sabadell's decision to return its headquarters to Catalonia will entice back the thousands of firms that fled after the region's botched 2017 independence bid.

The European country's fourth-biggest bank announced on Wednesday it would return to the wealthy northeastern region because "the circumstances that motivated its move over seven years ago no longer exist".

Up to 7,000 companies moved their headquarters out of Catalonia after the regional government held a secession referendum deemed illegal by the courts, and unilaterally declared independence in 2017.

The upheaval -- Spain's worst political crisis in decades -- caused acute uncertainty for banks as the European Central Bank's deposit insurance scheme would have no longer protected their customers in an independent Catalonia.

Although the firms including CaixaBank and energy giant Naturgy continued to operate normally in Catalonia, the exodus was politically and symbolically important -- AFP

France asks EU to delay rights, environment business rules

FRANCE on Friday asked the European Union to suspend "indefinitely" landmark new rules on environmental and human rights supply chain standards, saying they were too burdensome for businesses.

The call comes as Brussels has vowed to make life easier for firms complaining about excessive regulation, as

the 27-nation bloc scrambles to revamp its economic competitiveness.

"Our companies need simplification, not additional administrative burdens," French European Affairs Minister Benjamin Haddad said on X in announcing the request from Paris.

He also asked for a review of a second

set of reporting rules on corporate sustainability that have come under attack from European business lobby groups.

EU chief Ursula von der Leyen told this week's gathering of the world's elites in Davos that Brussels "must make business much easier all across Europe". — AFP



The 27-nation EU is scrambling to revamp its economic competitiveness. PHOTO: AFP

China's new energy storage capacity exceeds 70 million KW

China's new energy storage sector grew rapidly in 2024, with installed capacity reaching 73.76 million kilowatts.

CHINA'S new energy storage sector has seen a rapid growth in 2024, with installed capacity surpassing 70 million kilowatts, said an official with the National Energy Administration (NEA).

Bian Guangqi, deputy director of the NEA's energy saving and technology equipment department said that by the end of 2024, the total installed capacity of new energy storage projects in China reached 73.76 million kilowatts, which represented an increase of over 130

percent compared to the end of 2023. The average energy storage duration is 2.3 hours, an increase of about 0.2 hours since the end of 2023.

New energy storage refers to energy-storage technologies other than conventional pump storage. An energy-storage system charges when wind power or photovoltaic power generates a large volume of electricity or when the power consumption is low, and it discharges otherwise. — Xinhua



An aerial drone photo taken on 6 January 2025 shows a partial view of the Shichengzi photovoltaic power station in Hami City, northwest China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region. **PHOTO: FENG YANG/XINHUA**

Italy's Monte dei Paschi bids 13.3 bln euros for Mediobanca

ITALIAN bank Monte dei Paschi di Siena said Friday that it was launching a bid for its larger rival Mediobanca, a potential 13.3 billion euro (\$13.9 billion) deal that could help reshape the country's banking sector.

The move – which a source close to Mediobanca said was hostile – comes amid a flurry of recent activity within Italy's banks including potential mergers and acquisitions.

The world's oldest bank, Monte dei Paschi (MPS) said the buyout offer for Mediobanca was valued at 15.992 euros per share, a premium of 5.03 per cent over Thursday's closing price. — AFP

Meta tests ads on Threads, its alternative to X

FACEBOOK parent Meta has begun testing ads on its newest social network Threads, an executive announced Friday, as the company continues to grow its alternative to Elon Musk's X.

Launched in summer 2023, its debut came eight months after Musk's acquisition of Twitter — now called X — when changes like paid subscriptions and reduced content moderation were driving away users and advertisers.

The introduction of advertising on Threads was expected, given that Meta derives most of its revenue from ads across its free platforms. "We're start-

ing a small test for ads on Threads with a handful of brands in the US and Japan," Instagram and Threads chief Adam Mosseri announced Friday. — AFP



PHOTO: AFP

Austrian real estate tycoon arrested in fraud probe

AUSTRIAN anti-corruption officials on Thursday arrested fallen real estate tycoon Rene Benko as part of a wide-ranging fraud probe, alleging that he had attempted to conceal assets.

Benko, once one of Austria's richest men,

founded the Signa real estate empire in 2000, but the debt-laden group crumbled in 2023 in the largest insolvency proceedings in the country's history.

Prosecutors have been investigating Benko on suspicion of fraud and other offences. Benko

"attempted to conceal assets" by holding them in a private foundation and tried to "evade access by authorities, trustees and creditors", the state economic crime and corruption prosecutor (WKStA) said in a statement about his arrest. — AFP

Japan's Seven & i mulls IPO of N American convenience store unit

SEVEN & I Holdings Co is considering an initial public offering of its North American convenience store subsidiary to raise cash to support a management buyout proposed by its founding family, sources familiar with the matter said Saturday.

The value of 7-Eleven Inc., a major profit-making division of the Japanese retailer, is estimated at around four trillion yen (\$26 billion) to five trillion yen.

Seven & i hopes to use the proceeds from the sale of the subsidiary's shares to help fund the management buyout, estimated at around nine trillion yen.

A member of the founding family proposed the buyout plan to fend off a takeover bid from Canadian convenience store giant Alimentation Couche-Tard Inc, the operator of Circle K convenience stores, but how to raise the necessary funds remains unclear. — Kyodo

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CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

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Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V ISEACO GENESIS VOY.NO. (249N)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **26-1-2025** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **AWPT** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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WEEKLY WORLD NEWS DIGEST

China's 2025 film market promising with strong start



China's film market shows strong 2025 start, with Spring Festival pre-sales surpassing 525 million yuan, boosting optimism. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

25 January

Spring Festival releases set the tone for the year's film trends, with China's market rebounding.

CHINA'S film market is off to a strong start in 2025, with box office pre-sales for the Spring Festival surpassing 525 million yuan (about US\$73.2 million) as of Saturday, fuelling optimism about the performance of the world's second-largest film market this year.

The Spring Festival, or the Chinese New Year, is the most important holiday on the Chinese calendar for family reunions and also one of the most lucrative

movie-going seasons in China.

"The Spring Festival often sees the release of quality films, and the box office performance during this period sets the tone for the development trends of the entire year," stated China International Capital Corporation, an investment bank offering consultancy services.

China's movie market rebounds, with 500 million yuan in ticket pre-sales. – Xinhua

24 January

Extreme climate events in 2024 disrupted 242 million students

AT least 242 million students in 85 countries or territories had their schooling disrupted by extreme climate events including heatwaves, tropical cyclones, storms, floods and droughts in 2024, exacerbating an existing learning crisis, a new UNICEF analysis revealed today.

In a report issued today by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) titled "Learning Interrupted: Global Snapshot of Climate-Related School Disruptions

in 2024," the organization highlighted the climate-related hazards that led to school closures and disruptions in education schedules. The report found that the primary impact was on children in primary to upper secondary education.

In 2024, heatwaves disrupted education, closing schools and affecting 118 million students. Typhoon Yagi in East Asia also impacted 16 million children, causing widespread disruption. – ANI

23 January

Anti-corruption body refers Pres Yoon to prosecutors

SOUTH Korea's anti-corruption body on Thursday said it referred arrested President Yoon Suk Yeol to prosecutors over his short-lived martial law declaration, through which he is accused of committing an insurrection.

The Corruption Investigation Office for High-ranking Officials, which does not have the authority to prosecute a president, requested prosecutors to indict Yoon, who imposed martial law on 3 December,

as the "ringleader" of the alleged insurrection, it said.

Yoon was a top prosecutor before running for the presidential election in 2022.

Except for about 10 hours of questioning on 15 January, the day Yoon was detained by the agency, the president has refused to be interrogated, the agency said.

Prosecution should decide on indictment after reviewing investigation records, official says. – Kyodo

22 January

EU allocates 60 million euros for Lebanese army

THE Council of the European Union has approved a 60-million-euro (about US\$ 62.6 million) assistance package under the European Peace Facility (EPF) to support the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF), the EU's delegation to Lebanon announced Wednesday.

The EU delegation's statement noted that the assistance would contribute to strengthening the LAF's capacities, enabling them to redeploy, secure, and

maintain stability in the South of the Litani Sector of the country in line with UN Security Council Resolution 1701.

It said the assistance measure will also enhance the LAF's operational capabilities and effectiveness to contribute to national and regional security and stability, thereby allowing displaced civilians on both sides to return to their homes. – Xinhua

21 January

Belgian court dismisses Covid vaccine case against EU chief

A BELGIAN court dismissed a lawsuit against EU chief Ursula von der Leyen centred on text messages she exchanged with the head of vaccine maker Pfizer during negotiations for Covid jabs, her lawyer said on Tuesday.

Another source close to the case confirmed to AFP that the Liege appeals court "declared inadmissible" a set of complaints brought in 2023 by Belgian former lobbyist

Frederic Baldan, as he could not prove suffering "personal harm".

The court "found the complainants wrong across the board", von der Leyen's lawyer Adrien Masset told AFP.

The EU moved swiftly after the Covid pandemic emerged in 2020 to secure vaccines for member countries to buy for their citizens and residents, at a time of massive global demand for the shots. – AFP

20 January

Biden pardons ex-medical advisor Fauci, ex-general Milley

US President Joe Biden on Monday pre-emptively pardoned Anthony Fauci, retired General Mark Milley and the 6 January congressional committee members and witnesses in an extraordinary use of powers of the presidency in his final hours to guard against potential "revenge" by the

incoming Trump administration.

"The issuance of these pardons should not be mistaken as an acknowledgment that any individual engaged in any wrongdoing, nor should acceptance be misconstrued as an admission of guilt for any offense," Biden said in a statement. – AFP

19 January

Palestinian president receives Gaza recovery plan

PALESTINIAN President Mahmoud Abbas received on Sunday the Gaza relief, recovery, and emergency response plan presented by the Palestinian government to deal with the emergency situation in the Gaza Strip after the ceasefire takes effect. The Palestinian News Agency Wafa reported that Abbas received the

plan during his meeting with Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Mohammad Mustafa.

Mustafa said that the plan represents the first phase of the government's response, focusing on emergency measures for Gaza during the initial six months following the ceasefire. – AFP

SPORTS

Gakpo stars as Liverpool rout Ipswich, Arsenal survive red card drama to beat Wolves

CODY Gakpo struck twice as Premier League leaders Liverpool thrashed Ipswich 4-1 to maintain their six-point lead over Arsenal, who survived Myles Lewis-Skelly's controversial red card to snatch a 1-0 win at Wolves on Saturday.

Arne Slot's side cruised to their second successive league victory thanks to a first half goal-spree at Anfield.

Dominik Szoboszlai's 11th-minute opener fizzed past Ipswich goalkeeper Christian Walton from Ibrahima Konate's assist.

Mohamed Salah doubled Liverpool's advantage in the 35th minute with a fierce strike for his 23rd goal in all competitions this term.

It was also the Egypt forward's 100th Premier League goal at Anfield.

Gakpo killed off Ipswich before half-time when he bundled home after Walton parried Szoboszlai's shot in the 44th minute.

The Dutch forward netted again in the 66th minute, heading past Walton from Trent Alexander-Arnold's cross.

Jacob Greaves' stop-

page-time diving header was little consolation for third-bottom Ipswich, who have conceded 10 goals in their last two league games.

Liverpool's 16th win from 22 league games this season keeps them on course for a first English title since 2020.

The quadruple-chasing Reds have a game in hand on second-placed Arsenal, who left it late before keeping the pressure on the leaders.

Arsenal, without ill captain Martin Odegaard, had Lewis-Skelly contentiously sent off for tripping Matt Doherty to stop a Wolves counter-attack in the 43rd minute.

It was a cynical challenge but Arsenal were furious, protesting that the tackle was too far from goal to warrant a red card.

The Premier League Match Centre confirmed on social media that the 18-year-old defender was sent off for "serious foul play".

But Wolves were also reduced to 10 men in the 70th minute when Joao Gomes earned a second booking for a foul on Jurrien Timber. — AFP

Yangon United clinches dominant victory in MNL match

YANGON United secured an emphatic 5-0 Myanmar National League victory over Rakhine United yesterday at the Thuwunna Youth Training Centre.

Team Yangon ended their winless streak with a commanding performance led by striker Yan Kyaw Htwe who scored a hat-trick to seal the victory. In turn, Rakhine United faces ongoing struggles and will need to continue their fight to escape the relegation zone.

Yangon United used a strong lineup including David Htan, Wai Lin Aung and Yan Naing Oo. Rakhine United also played with a complete squad including four foreign players. Yangon United's aggressive playstyle bore fruit early with Yan Kyaw Htwe converting a penalty in 27 minutes to open the scoring.

The team maintained the pressure and further goals came in 38 and 67 minutes, again from Yan Kyaw Htwe who completed a hat-trick. More goals were scored by Okkar Naing in 73 minutes and Aung Myo Khant in 79 minutes. Yan Kyaw Htwe was named Man of the Match for his outstanding hat-trick.



Yangon United and Rakhine United players in action during the Myanmar National League match. PHOTO: MNL

Following this match, Yangon United has accumulated 38 points from 17 matches while Rakhine United remains at six points from the same number of games.

For the third day of fixture 17, Myawady FC will face Shan United at 4 pm on 26 January (today) at the Thuwunna Youth Training Centre. — Ko Nyi Lay/KZL

Keys stuns Sabalenka in Australian Open final to win her first Grand Slam title



Madison Keys poses with the trophy during the awarding ceremony after the women's singles final between Aryna Sabalenka of Belarus and Madison Keys of the United States at Australian Open tennis tournament in Melbourne, Australia, 25 January 2025. PHOTO: XINHUA

AMERICAN Madison Keys, 29, lifted her first Grand Slam trophy on Saturday after denying

top seed Aryna Sabalenka from becoming the first woman in 26 years to claim three consec-

utive Australian Open titles.

The 19th seed started and finished strongly to stun Sabalenka 6-3, 2-6, 7-5 in a nerve-jangling final lasting two hours and two minutes on Rod Laver Arena.

The American hit 29 winners and prevented Sabalenka from becoming the sixth woman to win a hat-trick of titles at Melbourne Park. Swiss tennis legend Martina Hingis had been the last player to achieve the feat in 1999.

Keys' aggression and bravery to target the corners was rewarded as she capitalized on an unusually patchy performance from Sabalenka. — Xinhua

Walker joins AC Milan on loan

ENGLAND'S right-back Kyle Walker has completed his loan move from Premier League side Manchester City to AC Milan, the Italian Serie A giant announced on Friday. "AC Milan is pleased to announce the loan signing of Kyle Andrew Walker from Manchester City FC, with an option to buy," the club said in a statement.

The 34-year-old started his career at Sheffield United and then joined Tottenham Hotspur in 2009, making his Premier League debut in March 2010. In 2017, he moved to Manchester City, where he has played 319 matches and won 17 trophies, including six Premier League

titles and one UEFA Champions League trophy in 2023.

Walker debuted for England in November 2011 and has been capped 93 times. It's reported that his loan deal is free, but the Rossoneri will pay five million euros should it make the transfer permanent at the end of the season. Walker will wear No 32 jersey, which was donned by David Beckham during his two loan spells at San Siro.

According to the Italian outlets, Walker will not be included in Milan's squad against Parma on Sunday, but the veteran is expected to make his Serie A debut in the Milan derby in early February. — Xinhua

Saudi Arabia taps composer Zimmer to rework national anthem

SAUDI ARABIA HAS ASKED OSCAR-WINNING composer Hans Zimmer to work on a new version of its national anthem, a senior official said, as the conservative kingdom steps up an image makeover.

Zimmer, whose film scores include 1994's "The Lion King", "Dune" and the "Dark Knight" trilogy, has agreed to the "broad outlines" of the project, General Entertainment Authority chairman Turki Alalshikh said.

"We discussed a lot about many future projects that I hope will see the light of day soon... including rearranging the Saudi national anthem with different instruments," Alalshikh, the ringmaster behind several Saudi initiatives, posted on X.

Germany's Zimmer also discussed a Saudi-inspired musical called "Arabia", a "very large concert" and the soundtrack for "The Battle of Yarmuk", a forthcoming Saudi film, Alalshikh said.

"We agreed on the broad outlines of



Saudi Arabia has enlisted Oscar-winning composer Hans Zimmer to rework its national anthem. **PHOTO: OFFICIAL X ACCOUNT OF GENERAL ENTERTAINMENT AUTHORITY CHAIRMAN TURKI ALALSHIKH.**

all these projects and I hope we will reach a final agreement on them," he said.

The Saudi anthem "Aash Al-Malik"

("Long Live The King") was written in 1947 by Egyptian composer Abdul Rahman Al-Khateeb, at the request of found-

This move reflects Saudi Arabia's broader push for modernization, which includes significant social and cultural reforms.

ing monarch King Abdulaziz, according to nationalanthems.info.

The current version is in the "Arab fanfare" style common in the region in that era, the website said.

Saudi Arabia, the world's biggest oil exporter and home of Islam's holiest sites, is pursuing an ambitious revamp as it tries to diversify its economy away from crude.

After reopening cinemas, allowing women to drive and admitting the first non-Muslim tourists in 2018, the makeover has gone into overdrive with a slew of mega-projects including resorts and NEOM, a futuristic city in the desert costing \$500 billion. — AFP



Giant panda Bao Li eats bamboo during the public debut at the Smithsonian's National Zoo in Washington, DC, on 24 January 2025. **PHOTO: ANDREW CABALLERO-REYNOLDS / AFP**

Pandas, like Trump, are back in Washington

The pandas, who arrived from China in October, are part of a 10-year agreement following the return of the previous pandas in 2023.

MOVE over President Trump — the newest stars in Washington are two giant pandas who made their public debut on Friday in front of hundreds of adoring fans. Bao Li and Qing Bao rambled around their enclosure, played in the snow and munched on bamboo at the Smithsonian's National Zoo in the US capital.

The pair, who arrived from China in October, have been in quarantine while their home was renovated with new climbing structures, water features and rock zones. Bao Li and Qing Bao — both three years old — are part of a 10-year agreement with China, after the previous pandas in Washington returned home in 2023. — AFP

Japanese long-form documentary film up for Academy Award for 1st time

THE Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences on Thursday announced the nominees for this year's awards, with a long-form documentary directed by Japanese journalist Shiori Ito about her own sexual assault receiving a nomination.

According to the film's production company, it marks the first time a work by a Japanese director has been nominated in the category. Ito is a symbol of Japan's #MeToo movement after going public with a high-profile rape case.

The film documents the process through which Ito accused a former TV reporter of sexual assault. As it includes the unauthorized use of security camera footage, no decision has been made on whether "Black Box Diaries" will be screened in Japan.

The winners will be announced during the award ceremony in Los Angeles on 2 March. — Kyodo

The use of unauthorized security footage has raised questions about its screening in Japan, with the final decision pending.



Black Box Diaries, directed by Shiori Ito, is included in the nominees for this year's Academy Awards in the long-form documentary category. **PHOTO: SMITH RAFAEL FILM CENTER**